

Name: Glenn Irwin

Nomination: The Ocean City Development Corporation would like to nominate St. Mary's Star of the Sea Catholic Church and Holy Savior for its attractive renovation of this older building and construction of the adjacent building adjacent to this Church.

St. Mary's Star of the Sea Catholic Church was built about 1877; it is the oldest building in Ocean City. It was constructed just a few years after the founding of the Town of Ocean City and is a historic and architectural treasure. It is located at 208 S. Baltimore Avenue, at the corner of S. Baltimore Avenue and Talbot Street, in downtown Ocean City. It is an important part of downtown and it has historical significance in the original development of the Town of Ocean City.

Improvements to this existing Church have included: repainting of the full Church, new air conditioning units, restoration of several stained-glass fixtures, new sprinkler system for fire safety, bell tower repair and restoration, soffit repairs, new exterior doors, handicapped ramp improvements, new flooring, new roof, and restoration of perimeter metal fencing. Almost all these improvements were paid for by parishioners.

Immediately south of St. Mary's was the rectory/residence that was demolished in 2016, due to its poor condition; specifically, mold intrusion that made it inhabitable for residents and visitors. The demolition of this structure also impacted the operation of the older church as it contained its restrooms facilities. Since demolition, St. Mary's has relied on portable restrooms to accommodate attendees, which is not considered an acceptable solution and it was only to be provided as a temporary service. Besides daily Mass, this older church is often used for weddings, baptisms and funerals.

As a result of this necessary demolition, St. Mary's has constructed modern restroom facilities, a new sacristy, and a changing room (for events such as weddings), a raised covered walkway, and an ADA compliant ramp to provide access to the main Church entrance. In addition, the construction of an attractive meditation garden with landscaping is seen by passersby along S. Baltimore Avenue.

This new structure is physically linked to the church and its design and architecture style reflective of the older church.

St. Mary's diligently planned for this project for the past two years. It set up a design and building committee that has provided advice. This process involved the selection of an architectural firm (MAD Design Group, Inc.) to complete design and construction plans, the selection of a construction firm (T&G Builders), the receipt of building permit approval from the Town of Ocean City, and approval from the Diocese of Wilmington to proceed with the proposed plans.

The Church renovation and improvements have turned out very well and a capital campaign is still nearly finished to provide the necessary funds to complete this project. Almost all this renovation work is nearly complete. The renovation work and new addition greatly enhance this specific property, as well as the general revitalization efforts for downtown Ocean City.

(Sent via [*Ocean City Life-Saving Station Museum*](#))