

The Birth of the Catholic Church in West Virginia

Those familiar with West Virginia, especially the eastern pan-handle region, know that Catholicism has a rich and colorful history thanks to saints like Ignatius of Loyola. Why is that, when the founder of the Society of Jesus died 300 years before the state was even formed, having succeeded from Virginia as the Civil War began? In her presentation, history aficionado Nancy Cortese will tell us why, along with why West Virginians had a reputation for throwing Catholic priests into the Potomac! Nancy will also tell us why only three of the original 13 colonies allowed Catholics to vote, why Maryland was called the “tyranny of the majority,” and how Catholicism has grown exponentially, since Fr. James Frambach, a Jesuit, first swam to Maryland.

PRESENTER

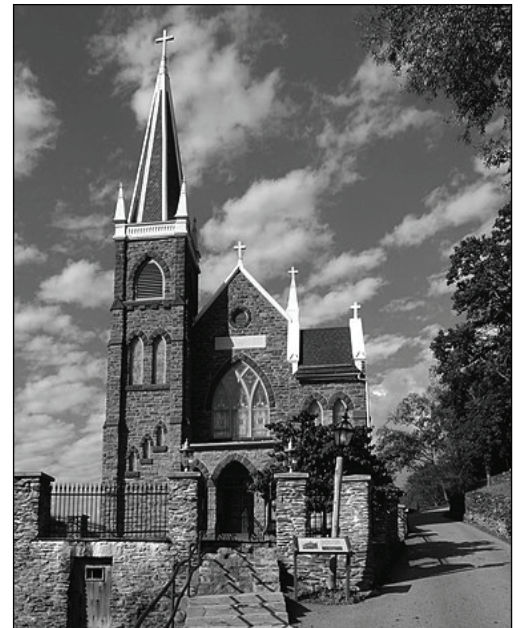
Nancy Cortese

Nancy was raised as a Methodist and has always loved Christ. As a student at James Madison University, she started attending the Mass on Campus. Ironically, she was drawn to the Church because of the spiritual strength she gained from receiving the Eucharist every week before knowing she wasn't supposed to be doing so as a Methodist. A year after graduation she completed RCIA and came into the Church in 1986. She has a degree in Computer Science which she uses as a Coast Guard Software Engineer. She's the proud mother of three sons, one in seminary. Nancy is a docent at Harper's Ferry National Historic Park and can tell you everything you need to know about the historic St. Peter's Catholic Church, including the history of the secret message hidden on the side of Maryland Heights mountain!



**HISTORY GIVES
ANSWERS
ONLY TO THOSE
WHO KNOW
HOW TO ASK
QUESTIONS**

—HAJO HOLBORN



St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia was built in 1833 and was the only church in Harpers Ferry to escape destruction during the Civil War. (Wikipedia)