



INAUGURATION OF CABRINI STATUE

Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus | November 2024 | www.cabrineworld.org



Statue of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini at the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls in Rome.



Technical Notes

The statue was sculpted by Jessica LoPresti and Lou Cella at the Rotblatt Amrany studio near Chicago. A concrete base was poured in Sao Paolo. A granite pedestal will be placed on the concrete. The bronze figure, over eight feet tall, will be attached to the granite. The figure weighs 720 pounds. The granite is 44 inches wide, 50 inches long and 18 inches high. It weighs about 3,800 pounds.

Mother Cabrini returns to Rome!

The unveiling ceremony of the statue of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini at the Basilica of San Paolo Fuori le Mura was held in the Basilica's outdoor courtyard on November 13. Created by artists Lou Cella and Jessica LoPresti, it is the twin of the statue located in the Holy Name Cathedral in Chicago. The Rome statue was strongly desired by Ms. Carol Christiansen. Present were His Eminence, James Harvey, Sr. Kathleen Mitchell, FSPA, Chicago priest Father John Boivan, artists Lou Cella and Jessica LoPresti, General Superior of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Sr. Maria Eliane Azevedo Da Silva, a master of ceremonies, Deacon of Holy Name Cathedral in Chicago, Dennis Robak and the Father Abbot of the Abbey of San Paolo Fuori le Mura, the Right Reverend Dom Donato Ogliari.



The statue before being unveiled.

A group of pilgrims from Chicago participated with the MSCs and Cabrinian lay collaborators. The group was already in Italy and visited several Cabrinian places, such as Codogno and Sant'Angelo. The morning began with a Eucharistic Celebration at the Basilica. The dedication ceremony of the statue began at 11:00 a.m. After an address by Cardinal Archpriest of the Basilica, James Harvey, there were speeches by the Chicago priest who read on behalf of the Bishop of Chicago, the General Superior, Sr. Maria Eliane Azevedo Da Silva MSC and Sr. Kathleen Mitchell FSPA, who brought greetings from Ms. Christiansen. The statue was then blessed by the Cardinal who invited all



The statue of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini.

participants to a brief moment of prayer. The ceremony concluded with the presentation of two plaques by the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, one for the Cardinal and one for Ms. Christiansen and the handing over of a miniature of the statue donated by the benefactress to the General Superior.

WATCH THE EWTN SERVICE IN ITALIAN AND ENGLISH.

ADDRESS BY CARDINAL JAMES HARVEY

Friends,

I am James Harvey, Cardinal Archpriest of the Papal Basilica of San Paolo Fuori le Mura, one of the four major basilicas of the Eternal City of Rome. I would like to welcome all of you to this significant event of unveiling and blessing of the statue of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini. In particular, I welcome all the pilgrims from the Archdiocese of Chicago who have come for this dedication ceremony.



Cardinal James Harvey during the ceremony.

I would also like to extend a cordial welcome to Mother General and the Sisters of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, members of the Religious Institute founded in 1880 by St. Frances Xavier Cabrini. Your presence this morning is truly welcome because it demonstrates the importance of this brief but significant ceremony intended to testify to the esteem and veneration that Mother Cabrini deserves as an intrepid missionary and a woman of exemplary, heroic Christian virtue.

As is written on the beautiful plaque placed in front of the statue, like St. Paul the Apostle, St. Frances Xavier Cabrini was a great missionary and evangelizer, bringing the Gospel message of Christ's healing love "missio ad gentes." Her missionary zeal and care for immigrants was sustained by her union with the Heart of Christ, taking as her motto the words of St. Paul: "All things I can do in him who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13). She is said to have declared "I will go anywhere and do anything to communicate the love of Christ to those who do not know him or have forgotten him." This vow came at no small price for her. From her life story we know that as a child she was always afraid of water, unable to overcome her fear of drowning. Yet despite this fear, she crossed the Atlantic Ocean more than thirty times.

Mother Cabrini's compassion and dedication can still be seen in the various apostolates of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart as well as in the thousands of her followers, not yet canonized, who care for the ill in hospitals, nursing homes and the like, and spread the Gospel message in classrooms and various educational settings in many countries around the world. Her charism and message for the Church and the modern world are still relevant. However, in the context of Pope Francis' current pontificate, her initial charism of outreach to immigrants in the Americas is particularly relevant today. It is Pope Francis' commitment to migrants worldwide that motivated the donor of this gift, Ms. Carol Christiansen, to honor His Holiness by commissioning the statue of Mother Cabrini. The donor's desire was to place it in the shadow of the



Moment of the blessing of the statue.

Basilica where the remains of the People's Apostle rest, thus concretely linking Mother Cabrini's remarkable missionary efforts to the Church's first and arguably greatest missionary, St. Paul.



Moment of the blessing of the statue.

I cannot fail to acknowledge the work of all those who made this day possible: the sculptors of this beautiful statue, Lou Cella and Jessica LoPresti, the supporters of the initiative of Holy Name Cathedral of Chicago, all those who collaborated on the project and, last but not least, Ms. Carol Christiansen, who unfortunately cannot be here due to illness. Let us pray for the intercession of St. Paul and St. Frances Xavier Cabrini for renewed missionary zeal in the Church and greater concern for the plight of migrants around the world. I thank you from my heart.

SPEECH SISTER MARIA ELIANE AZEVEDO DA SILVA, GENERAL SUPERIOR MSC

"It is with great emotion that today, we, the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, see the statue of our Foundress, St. Frances Xavier Cabrini placed at the Basilica of San Paolo Fuori le Mura, one of the most prestigious Basilicas in Rome. For this, I would like to thank His Eminence Cardinal James Michael Harvey, who so cordially allowed the day of the 86th anniversary of the Beatification of St. Frances Cabrini, the day on which we celebrate the feast of the Saint, to be marked by such an important event.

In fact, in this beginning of the Jubilee Year with its theme, "Pilgrims of Hope," the figure of St. Frances Cabrini, here in the Basilica of St. Paul, can be a symbol of evangelical mission enlightened by Christian hope. Mother Cabrini used to say that Hope increases strength a hundredfold. She spoke of strengths as spiritual and missionary energies that the Holy Spirit infused in her and that she wished for us missionaries, urging us to ask for this strength: "for," she said, "the Holy Spirit works with you, prays with you, communicates its enlightenment, its grace and its treasures."

A big thank you goes to Ms. Carol Christensen, benefactress of this statue brought to Rome from Chicago together with many pilgrims, to the artists Jessica LoPresti and Lou Cella, and to those who along with her wanted this statue, for the love,



Sr. Eliane during his speech.

dedication, and enthusiasm with which they fulfilled this desire of theirs. I also wish to thank all of you here - pilgrims, civil and religious authorities, journalists and all of you who represent the world of Christian faith, culture and civil society. We are all bearers of a life project at the service of hope in the world in which we live.

Mother Cabrini's presence in this place is not accidental but a providential sign that the Sacred Heart of Jesus gives us in the year in which we also celebrate the Jubilee of the Sacred Heart. And right at the time when Pope Francis in his new Encyclical 'Dilexit Nos' invites us to return to the "heart" of all things, to the profound meaning that Mother Cabrini gave to her entire life and work - the love of the Heart of Jesus.

Pope Francis concludes the Encyclical 220 thus: "I pray to the Lord Jesus that from his Holy Heart rivers of living water may flow for all of us to heal the wounds we inflict on ourselves, to strengthen our capacity to love and serve, to impel us to learn to walk together toward a world just, supportive and fraternal." This is what Mother Cabrini desired; what she fought for, suffered for and worked for. For she whom the Church proclaimed Patroness of Emigrants in 1950 also lived and suffered the drama of so many of our emigrant brothers and sisters. We are deeply grateful to you, Your Eminence, and to all those who made possible the unveiling of the statue of St. Cabrini on the premises of this splendid Basilica. Let us repeat the motto that Mother Cabrini followed and lived by throughout her life, in the very words of St. Paul to the Philippians, "I can do all things through Him who gives me strength" (Phil. 4:13). We wish you all courage and strength, to live and work in this Jubilee season for the greater glory of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, so that indeed, we may walk and grow in synodality



MSC during the inauguration.

toward a civilization of Love. A few days before the beginning of the Jubilee Year, Mother Cabrini arrives in Rome. She has crossed the ocean again, from America to Rome, also herself becoming a pilgrim of hope among all of us. Thank you all.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart.



Sr. Eliane, the Cardinal, the General Assistants and the sculptors.



Sr. Eliane holding the miniature statue, a tribute from artists Cella and Lo Presti.



From left: Lou Cella, Jessica Lo Presti, Sr. Kathleen Mitchell, Fspa, Sr. Maria Eliane Superior General, Fr. John Boivan, Deacon Dennis Robak, Father Abbot of the Abbey of St. Paul Outside the Walls, Rev. Don Donato Ogliari and the master of ceremonies.

Focus on the Basilica of San Paolo Fuori le Mura

The Basilica of San Paolo Fuori le Mura is one of the seven basilicas of Rome. The Basilica of San Paolo Fuori le Mura is one of the four papal basilicas in Rome, the second largest after St. Peter's. The church stands on the site where, according to tradition, the apostle Paul was buried. After the Edict of Milan in 313, thanks to which Christians were granted freedom of worship, Emperor Constantine decided to donate two basilicas to the newly emerging church, erected on the tombs of Peter and Paul. Later, however, in the fifth century, given the continuous influx of pilgrims to the tomb and the limited size of the original building of St. Paul's basilica, the three emperors ruling at the time, Theodosius, Valentinian II and Arcadius, were obliged to construct a larger building, reversing its orientation to the west. It was not until 1854, finally, that the present monumental basilica was inaugurated by Pope Pius IX, and inside it still preserves, what according to tradition is the chain that bound the Apostle Paul to the Roman soldier while on guard duty awaiting trial.



Exterior of the Basilica of St. Paul

Testimony from Dr. Pasquale Cialdini of Santa Francesca Cabrini Parish in Rome



Exterior of S. Frances Xavier Cabrini Church

"The ceremony of the unveiling and blessing of the splendid statue of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini was very beautiful and touched the hearts of all those present and especially those who, like me, belong to the Roman parish dedicated to the Saint. Our parish was established on December 22, 1949, right on the thirty-second anniversary of her ascent to heaven. The ceremony on November 13 has a very important significance right here in Rome where Pope Leo XIII told her to go to America and care for the many immigrants from Italy who were marginalized and resented by the American population. Frances obeyed, set sail, arrived in America and did not follow the advice given to her by the Bishop of New York to return to Italy immediately because he thought that she and her sisters

were too weak and inexperienced to carry out such a difficult task alone. Francesca trusted in the Lord's help and believed in St. Paul's word "I can do all things through Him who gives me strength." She stayed in America and in a few years alleviated the plight of Italian migrants, creating schools, orphanages and hospitals. The statue unveiled in St. Paul's Basilica reminds us of St. Frances' conduct and invites all of us to imitate it. In particular, I am struck by her gaze that inspires us with confidence, her right hand over her heart that invites us to ask the Sacred Heart of Christ for help, and her left hand that invites us to take care even here in Italy of the migrants who are arriving in these years in large numbers from the poorest countries in the world. I think it is very important to bring young people especially, including those who feel incapable because they have no degree and no special charism, to look at this statue. As they look at it, we must invite them to let themselves be guided by its teaching, to constantly ask the Sacred Heart of Christ for help and never to become discouraged. I think that the Roman Parish of St. Frances can be a meeting point, starting with the Jubilee that is about to begin, to remind all pilgrims of the work of this great Saint and to invite them to follow her example by trusting fully in the help of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ."

THE STATUE BEFORE INSTALLATION



Sculptor Lou Cella and Cardinal Harvey on installation day.

On September 26, the statue left the foundry and soon arrived in the hands of the shipping company! The installation took place on November 8 and lasted between two and four hours.



The statue at the Chicago foundry before leaving for Rome.



Benefactress Carol Christiansen told us:
 “I also want to tell you that since the Mother Cabrini statue was installed in Holy Name Cathedral in October 2022, the Cathedral has started “Cabrini Ministries,” intended to serve the poor and marginalized, but especially all the migrants who have arrived in our country in recent months. Most came from Venezuela, Central America and Mexico. In addition to the ministry, the Cathedral gave an award (the second one this Sunday) to a group or individual who puts into practice the work and spirit of Mother Cabrini. This Sunday, together with Sr. Kathleen (Katie), I have the privilege of presenting the award during the Mass that will inaugurate the 175th anniversary year of the Chicago Cathedral. The recipients of the award are two Sisters of Mercy, both elderly, who have done wonderful things for migrants.”



Pictured are artists Lou Cella and Jessica LoPresti, Carol Christiansen and Father Ramil Fayardo.

From Chicago... in the footsteps of Mother Cabrini

Chicago's Holy Name Cathedral is celebrating its 175th founding anniversary this year. As part of the celebrations for this anniversary, a pilgrimage to Italy was organized and included Cabrinian sites. The group of pilgrims visited Codogno and Sant'Angelo Lodigiano from November 7 to 9. Accompanied by Sr. Thérèse Hope Merandi MSC, the group followed the history of Francesca Cabrini through her birthplace and the foundation of the Institute. It was also an opportunity to delve into Cabrinian spirituality and the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The group then travelled to Rome to attend the dedication of the statue at St. Paul's Basilica on November 13.

Brief history of the sculpture

Mother Cabrini's statue in Chicago

The dedication ceremony of the statue of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini in the Holy Name Cathedral in Chicago was held on October 13, 2022. This is the “twin” of the statue later also made for the Basilica of San Paolo Fuori le Mura in Rome, on November 13 two years later. Holy Name Cathedral in Chicago, Illinois, is the seat of the Archdiocese of Chicago. She was the first American citizen saint who died on December 22, 1917 in Chicago and was canonized by Pope Pius XII on July 4, 1946! In 2022, the diocese celebrated a special jubilee year to honor the 75th anniversary of Cabrini's canonization. Among the MSCs was Sister Barbara Staley, former General Superior of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, along with other sisters who also participated in the celebration.



Pictured are Carol Christiansen and artist Lou Cella unveiling the statue of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini at Holy Name Cathedral in Chicago.

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The sculpting process – History of the creation of the statue

STEP 1: Using proportional tables, a basic “skeletal” armature is created by welding metal pipes. After familiarization with all the measurements and gesture, plywood is attached to the metal framework and a network of screws and aluminum wire to which the clay will adhere is created. Then the amount clay added is greater than the measurements require so that it can be worked reductively. In the reduction process, some clay is removed and the work is revised. The model takes on a rough cubist form.

STEP 2: The shape begins to be defined and the folds of the clothes and the general shape of the body under the clothes are added. The face is sculpted using numerous photos of the head photographed from different angles for reference. The sculpted face is near completion.

STEP 3: Details are added (e.g., clothing texture, patches, stitching, laces, etc.). The statue is also refined using a grid system to compare the clay model with an actual photo of the subject. Most customers usually visit the studio for the approval process while others approve the clay model through digitally exchanged photos.

STEP 4: Once customer approval is received, the mold making process begins. The figure is divided into strategic sections. Four layers of liquid rubber are applied. When the rubber has hardened, the mother mold is created in plaster. Once the plaster is completed, each section of the mold is disassembled and prepared for delivery to the foundry.

STEP 5: A wax cast of each piece of the mold is created at the foundry. After the wax is detached from the rubber coating, the artist goes to the foundry to review and touch up each piece of wax. After approval, the wax is closed (to allow the bronze to vent) and dipped several times in a ceramic paste/shell. Once several layers of ceramic have dried, the shell is placed in a kiln where it hardens and the wax melts. The



bronze is then poured into the shell. Once cooled, the shell is sandblasted, revealing the bronze piece inside. Each piece of bronze is examined for approval. The individual pieces are soldered together, recreating the entire figure. The artist returns to the foundry to review the joints created by the welding and to ensure that the structure has been recreated as originally sculpted



STEP 6: A patina or pigment is applied to the bronze, then the sculpture is sealed and waxed. A bronze sculpture of the “Saint of Chicago” - Mother Cabrini - was made at Rotblatt Amrany Studio by artists Lou Cella and Jessica LoPresti. The attention to detail and personal touches that characterize our studio's figurative work are evident in the fabric of Mother Cabrini's dress, the engraving and intricacy of her cross and ring, and the delicate violets among which she walks, which were known to be her favorite flower. The goal was to show

Mother Cabrini reaching out from the heart to the people of Chicago and to whoever came to visit her.

Jessica's notes on the statue: In our approach to creating the sculpture of Mother Cabrini, Lou and I hoped to represent not only her physical features, but also the essence of her mission to spread mercy and compassion through service to others. Her expression is one of serene determination, her eyes shining with a sense of purpose and warmth. With her arm gracefully raised and a hand over her heart, she invites the viewer to listen to God's Word and embrace the wisdom and love embodied in it.

Miscellaneous Notes: Because women tend to be underrepresented in sculpture and public art, creating a statue of Mother Cabrini that honors her legacy had special meaning for me because it embodies the strength and resilience of women and their important contribution to the betterment of society.

To unveil a statue of Mother Cabrini in my hometown of Chicago and again in the San Paolo Basilica in Rome is an extraordinary privilege and truly meaningful for many. It is an incredible honor to create a sculpture that can be seen by visitors from all over the world. May it continue to inspire with its message of mercy, love and compassion. Jessica LoPresti

Mother Cabrini's return to her homeland seemed like an impossible dream when it was first proposed. What I kept hearing from everyone involved was, “Have faith. Mother will guide us.”

It is said that “faith will move mountains.” In this case, faith and hard work moved a seven hundred and twenty kilo bronze sculpture from Chicago to Rome. Seeing Mother find her place in San Paolo Fuori le Mura was a spiritual experience. What Jessica and I had started years before became much more than either of us could have imagined. Cardinal Harvey was standing with me, observing the beauty of the work once it was placed, and asked me if I felt like crying. I laughed and said yes, because I already had tears in my eyes.

- Lou Cella



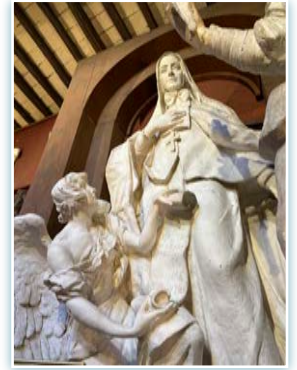
History of the sculpture of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome



Plaster model, detail of the face.

history of the beautiful statue. The famous sculptor Antonio Canova, who settled in Rome as a young man bought a property in January 1818, which he used exclusively for sculpture. Canova's intention was to favor his best pupil, Adamo Tadolini.

-On December 8, 1946, five months after her canonization, the statue of Mother Cabrini was placed in the central nave of St. Peter's in Rome in one of 39 niches designated for the figures of the holy founders of religious orders and congregations. It is about 39 feet high and stands next to the papal altar. It was Pope Pius XII, who had canonized Mother Cabrini on July 7, 1946, who decided to pay homage to her. At that time, the General Superior of the Institute of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart was Mother Antonietta della Casa, and we can assume that it was she, with her General Council, who decided to look for a prestigious sculptor who could capture the figure of Mother Cabrini in marble. Now, thanks to the research of the current General Superior, Sister Eliane Azevedo da Silva, we learn more about the



Full-length plaster model.



Photos of the float

The property was, and still is, in Via del Babuino, an area of Rome with an obvious artistic vocation. The workshop remained the property of the Tadolini family and the art of sculpture was passed from father to son: Adamo, Giulio Scipione and Enrico. Altogether they created more than 500 works, not only for European cities, but also for American and Asian cities. In 2003, the owners of the Anticuaria Benucci Gallery reopened the atelier's doors as a restaurant-café lodged in a museum.

Tables are arranged among sketches of statues of angels, archangels, saints, kings and pagan gods. These are 400 preparatory models for sculptures in marble, bronze, anatomical exercises, tools and documents. Everything has been registered by the Italian state and cannot be sold or moved. The Mother statue was carved from a 50-ton block of indigo marble from Gubbio di Querceta in the Apuan Alps after its plaster sketch was completed.



Panel

The entire sculptural group weighs thirty-three tons, including the base. Considering these dimensions, it is logical that a specially equipped railroad car with sixteen rubber wheels was used to transport it to St. Peter's Square, and that access to the Basilica was made with 984 feet of large ropes and a gigantic manually operated winch, the same one that had been used to raise the obelisk in Vatican Square in the 16th century. This magnificent marble work was donated by the American architect Thomas Le Roy Warmer in gratitude for a grace received through the intercession of the Blessed Mother. This architect was later commissioned to build the Cabrinian shrine in Chicago. After a failed first attempt due to lack of courtesy on the part of the front desk, which refused to give information, Sister Eliane did not give up and went back a second time. The outcome was not promising but an attentive Romanian waiter named



Sr. Eliane with the plaster statue



Plaster model plaque



Statue of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini at St. Peter's Basilica.

Nicolas not only allowed her to enter the bar-atelier, but told everything he knew. Since a drink is required for access, Nicolás offered her a table right under the statue of the Blessed Mother, and it was possible to get a close look not only at the details, but also at a painting with photos of the different moments of the creation of the plaster model.

Museo Canova - Tadolini, Via del Babuino, Rome.



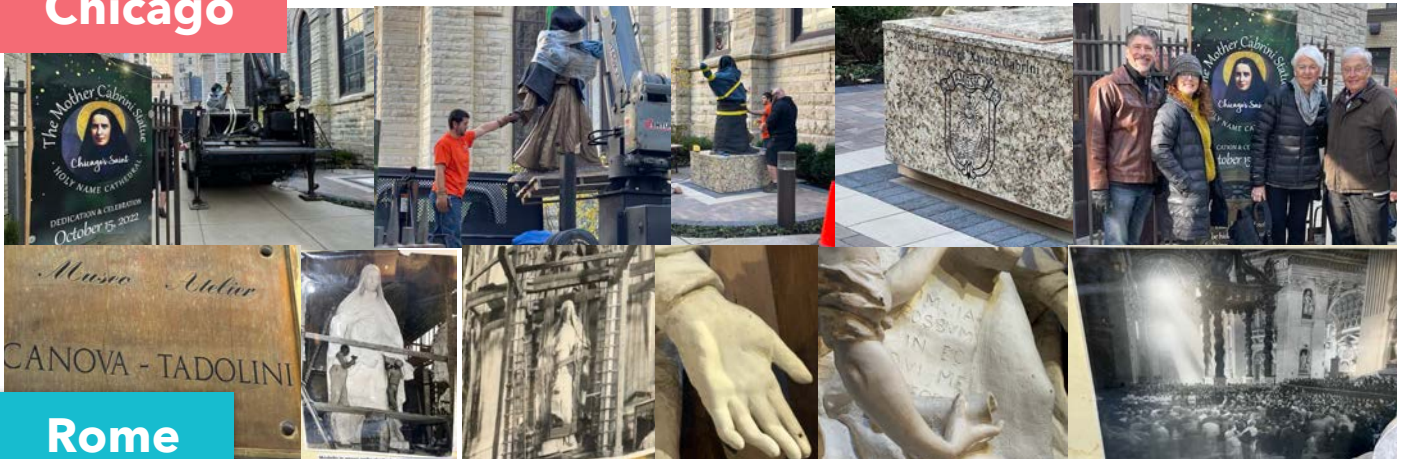
Building that houses the museum



Carol Christiansen, Mary Ann Miskieqicz and Joan Mc Glinchey MSC with the General Council in front of the statue of the young Mother Cabrini during their visit to the Generalate in Rome last February.

Thank you Carol!

Chicago



Rome

From left first row.: several shots of the 'installation of the statue of Mother Cabrini at Holy Name Cathedral in Chicago, base of the statue, artists Lou Cella and Jessica Lo Presti with Carol Christiansen and a participant in the installation. From left second row: shots taken deal Museo Canova Tadolini on the construction and unveiling of the statue of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.



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