

# The Religious Freedom National Scenic Byway

The Religious Freedom National Scenic Byway follows the Potomac River from Point Lookout where the Potomac River meets the Chesapeake Bay to the town of Indian Head. Recreational and educational opportunities enable children and adults to learn about our nation's beginnings, experience the outdoors and appreciate the region's natural beauty. Come and explore a place as beautiful now as when the first colonists arrived in Maryland in 1634.



★ **Christ Episcopal Church, Old Durham Parish**  
8685 Ironsides Road, Nanjemoy, MD 20662  
301-743-7099 • [www.christchurcholddurham.org](http://www.christchurcholddurham.org)  
Old Durham Church was one of the original 30 Episcopal churches chartered in Maryland by the Colonial Assembly in 1692. Its history is tied to the establishment of the Episcopal Church as the official religion of the colony at the end of the 17th century. The church building dates to 1732.

★ **Thomas Stone National Historic Site**  
6655 Rose Hill Road, Port Tobacco, MD • 301-392-1776  
[www.nps.gov/thst/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/thst/index.htm)  
The Thomas Stone National Historic Site is a 322-acre site that tells the story of the relationship of Thomas Stone and his family in the social, political, and economic development of the region from early settlement through the Revolution.

★ **Chiles Homesite**  
Lower Potomac Field Station, Bureau of Land Management  
10406 Gunston Road, Lorton, VA 22079  
(703) 339-8009 • [www.wm.edu/wmcar/chiles](http://www.wm.edu/wmcar/chiles)  
This site features the remains of the home of the Reverend William J. Chiles, a former pastor for Nanjemoy Baptist Church during the 1800's. Rev. Chiles is noted for helping the Nanjemoy Baptist Church flourish during the 19th century, his work in the local temperance movement, and his involvement with the African-American Baptist community in Newburg.

★ **Mount Carmel Monastery**  
Carmel of Port Tobacco  
5678 Mount Carmel Road, La Plata, MD 20646  
[www.carmelofporttobacco.com/index.html](http://www.carmelofporttobacco.com/index.html)  
The first Carmelite Monastery in the United States, Mount Carmel was established in 1790 by Mother Bernardina Matthews, her two nieces, Sister Mary Aloysia and Sister Mary Eleanora, and Sister Clare Joseph.

★ **St. Ignatius Catholic Church, Chapel Point**  
8855 Chapel Point Road, Port Tobacco, MD 20677  
301-934-8245 • [www.chapelpoint.org](http://www.chapelpoint.org)  
St. Ignatius Church, one of the oldest continuously active Catholic Parishes in America, has one of the most spectacular views along the Byway. Francis Neal, a former pastor at St. Ignatius, is responsible for bringing the Carmelite Nuns to America in 1790.

★ **St. Clement's Island Museum and State Park**  
38370 Point Breeze Road, Coltons Point, MD • 301-769-2222  
[www.stmarysmd.com/recreate](http://www.stmarysmd.com/recreate)  
Situated on Coltons Point across from St. Clement's Island State Park, the St. Clement's Island Museum tells the story of the English colonists who reached the Potomac River in their two small ships, the Ark and the Dove. Exhibits document Maryland's beginnings as a colony founded in the spirit of religious toleration and trace the region's rich river heritage, which featured crabbing, fishing and oystering.

★ **Trinity Episcopal Church, St. Mary's City**  
47477 Trinity Church Road, St. Mary's City, MD 20686  
301-862-4597 • [www.olg.com/trinitysmcnd](http://www.olg.com/trinitysmcnd)  
Construction on the present Trinity Episcopal Church began in 1829 using bricks salvaged from the original 1676 State House, the seat of Maryland colonial government until 1694. From 1695 to 1829 the State House was used as a church for the Protestant faith. The church and surrounding graveyard is located on a scenic bluff overlooking the St. Mary's River.

★ **Piney Point Lighthouse, Museum and Historic Park**  
44702 Lighthouse Road, Piney Point, MD 20674  
301-994-1471 • [www.stmarysmd.com/recreate](http://www.stmarysmd.com/recreate)  
The Piney Point Lighthouse was built in 1836 and retired by the U. S. Coast Guard in 1964. It was known as the "Lighthouse of Presidents" because several American presidents spent

their summers on Piney Point. Today the Museum chronicles the construction and operation of the lighthouse and documents the efforts of the U. S. Coast Guard to provide safe passage for boats on the Potomac River.

★ **Historic St. Mary's City Museum**  
18751 Hogaboom Lane, St. Mary's City, MD 20686  
800-762-1634, 240-895-4990 • [www.stmaryscity.org](http://www.stmaryscity.org)  
Historic St. Mary's City is a museum of living history and archaeology located on the site of Maryland's first capital. Costumed interpreters, re-created colonial structures, and modern exhibits engage visitors in stories of the state's founding and its contributions to religious freedom.

★ **Point Lookout State Park**  
11175 Point Lookout Road, Scotland, MD • 301-872-5688  
[www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/southern/pointlookout.asp](http://www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/southern/pointlookout.asp)  
Point Lookout State Park offers recreation amidst St. Mary's County's most beautiful water views. The park offers camping facilities, the Marshland Nature Center, the Point Lookout Lighthouse built in 1830, and the Civil War Museum which documents the park's history as a prison that held an estimated 52,264 Confederate soldiers during the Civil War.

**There are many more sites...**  
beautiful views and things to do along the Religious Freedom National Scenic Byway. For more information, visit...

[www.bit.ly/rfsbyway.com](http://www.bit.ly/rfsbyway.com)

[www.destinationsonthernmaryland.com](http://www.destinationsonthernmaryland.com)  
[www.charlescounty.org](http://www.charlescounty.org)  
[www.visitstmarysmd.com](http://www.visitstmarysmd.com)

