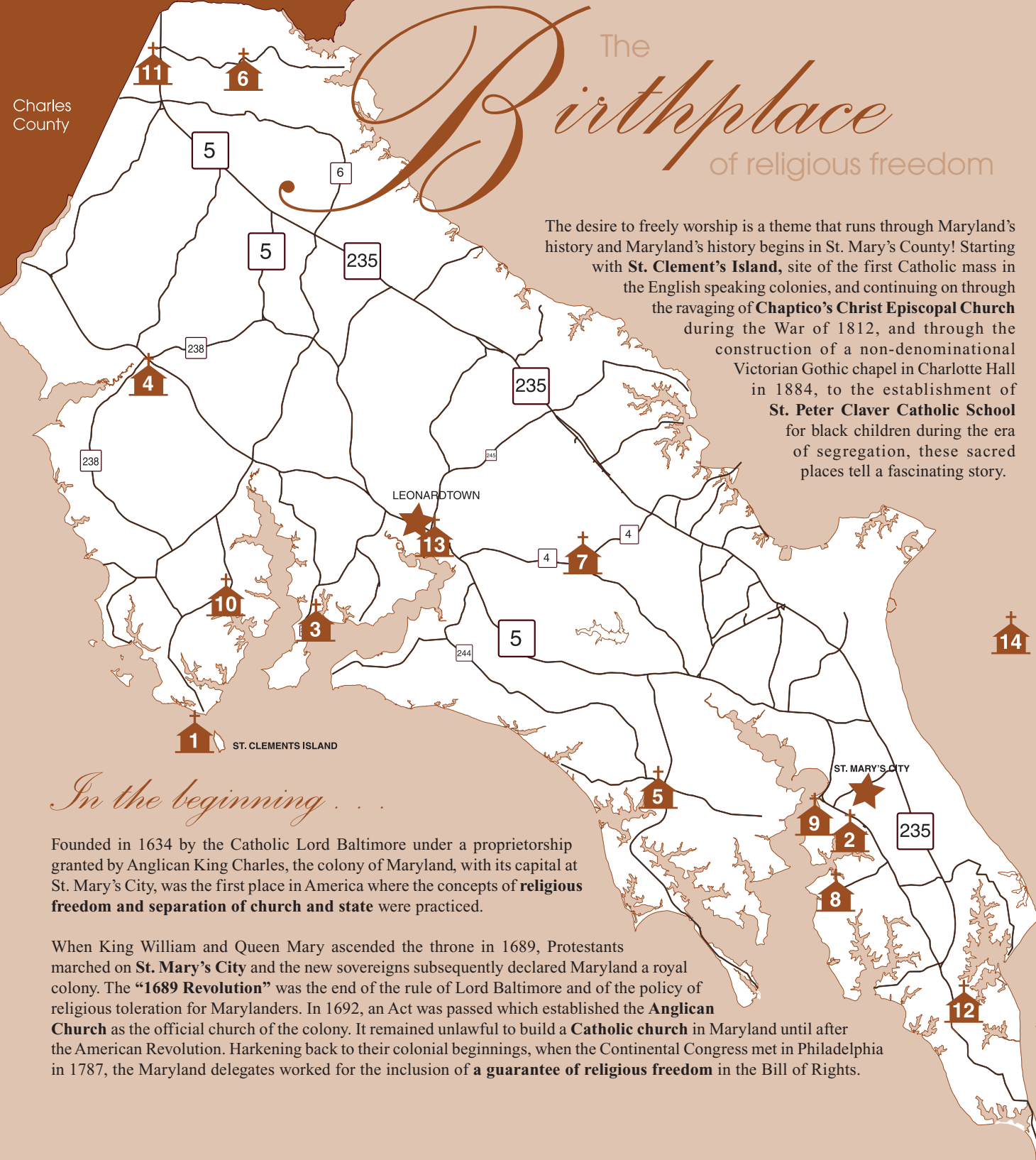


Charles County

The Birthplace

of religious freedom

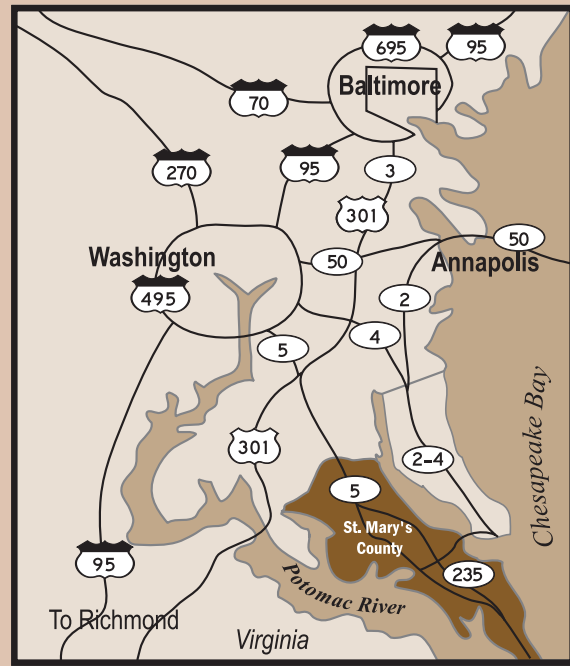
The desire to freely worship is a theme that runs through Maryland's history and Maryland's history begins in St. Mary's County! Starting with **St. Clement's Island**, site of the first Catholic mass in the English speaking colonies, and continuing on through the ravaging of **Chaptico's Christ Episcopal Church** during the War of 1812, and through the construction of a non-denominational Victorian Gothic chapel in Charlotte Hall in 1884, to the establishment of **St. Peter Claver Catholic School** for black children during the era of segregation, these sacred places tell a fascinating story.



In the beginning...

Founded in 1634 by the Catholic Lord Baltimore under a proprietorship granted by Anglican King Charles, the colony of Maryland, with its capital at St. Mary's City, was the first place in America where the concepts of **religious freedom and separation of church and state** were practiced.

When King William and Queen Mary ascended the throne in 1689, Protestants marched on **St. Mary's City** and the new sovereigns subsequently declared Maryland a royal colony. The "**1689 Revolution**" was the end of the rule of Lord Baltimore and of the policy of religious toleration for Marylanders. In 1692, an Act was passed which established the **Anglican Church** as the official church of the colony. It remained unlawful to build a **Catholic church** in Maryland until after the American Revolution. Harkening back to their colonial beginnings, when the Continental Congress met in Philadelphia in 1787, the Maryland delegates worked for the inclusion of a **guarantee of religious freedom** in the Bill of Rights.



St. Mary's County is just a short drive from Washington D.C., Baltimore and Annapolis.



St. Mary's County Division of Tourism
23115 Leonard Hall Drive PO Box 653
Leonardtown, MD 20650
301-475-4200 x 1404 or 800-327-9023

For information on all there is to see and do, call for your free visitors guide and calendar of events or visit us on the web.

www.stmarysmd.com/tourism

St. Mary's County Board of Commissioners: Thomas F. McKay, Kenneth R. Dement, Thomas A. Mattingly, Sr., Lawrence D. Jarboe, Daniel H. Raley

HISTORIC CHURCHES AND RELIGIOUS SITES

of St. Mary's County, Maryland



www.stmarysmd.com/tourism

1. St. Clement's Island

38370 Point Breeze Road
Colton's Point, MD 20626
301-769-2222
www.co.saint-marys.md.us/
recreate

In March of 1634, Father Andrew White stepped ashore at St. Clement's Island with the first Maryland colonists. It was there that he celebrated the first Catholic mass in the English speaking colonies. A 40' cross was erected on the island in 1934 to commemorate the mass and to mark Maryland's founding. The island is now a state park and is accessible by private boat or by a seasonal water taxi operated by the St. Clement's Island Museum.



2. The Brick Chapel of 1667

18751 Hogaboom Lane
St. Mary's City, MD 20686
800-SMC-1634
www.stmaryscity.org

This Roman Catholic Chapel, originally built in 1667, served as the focal point of the Catholic faith in Maryland until 1704, when the royal governor ordered the building locked and never again to be used for religious purposes. The Jesuits dismantled the building and used its brick to construct a new manor house at St. Inigoes Mission. The chapel is being reconstructed using 17th-century techniques on its original site at Historic St. Mary's City, an outdoor living history museum.



3. St. Francis Xavier Church

21110 Newtowne Neck Road
Leonardtown, MD 20650
301-475-9885

Built in 1766, St. Francis Xavier Church replaced the original Newtown Chapel (1662). Unusual features include the barrel vault ceiling and two octagonally shaped brick ends. Also on site is Newtown Manor (1789) whose Flemish bond brickwork indicates its early construction. The church and manor, and the 700-acre farm that surrounds it, is an example of a self-contained Jesuit community. National Register of Historic Places.



4. Christ Episcopal Church

37501 Zach Fowler Road
Chaptico, MD 20621
301-884-3451

Built of brick in a Flemish bond pattern with glazed headers in 1763, significant interior features include a semi-circular chancel, arched ceiling, crowned columns, and boxed pews. During the War of 1812, the British sailed up the Potomac River, vandalized the village of Chaptico, dug up graves, and stabled their horses inside the church. Several members of the Francis Scott Key family are buried in the Key Family vault. National Register of Historic Places.



5. St. George's Episcopal Church

19167 Poplar Hill Lane
Valley Lee, MD 20692
301-994-0585

The first wooden church was built here between 1638 and 1642. The current church built in 1799, is home to the oldest Episcopal Parish in Maryland and has held continuous services on site since 1638. National Register of Historic Places.

6. All Faith Episcopal Church

38885 New Market Turner Road Mechanicsville, MD 20659
301-884-3773
www.allfaithchurch.com

The Parish of All Faith was created in 1692. This church was built in 1767, replacing the original log structure. Highlights of the church include the rose window above the altar, the barrel-shaped ceiling, a slave gallery and original hand-wrought hardware. Complete records of its founding exist in the Hall of Records located in Annapolis.



7. St. Andrews Episcopal Church

44078 St. Andrews Church Road
California, MD 20619
301-862-2247
www.standrewssomd.org

Built in 1767, the church was designed by William Boulton who crafted the woodwork at nearby Sotterley Plantation.

It is an outstanding example of colonial architecture. The church's brick exterior has an unusual inset portico, a large Palladian window, and two towers. The interior features balconies, and original box pews. A hand-lettered altarpiece, or reredos, was painted in 1771, and is one of three surviving in the country. National Register of Historic Places.

8. St. Ignatius Church

17682 Grayson Road
St. Inigoes, MD 20684
301-872-5590

The first chapel of St. Ignatius was built in 1641 in St. Mary's City. In 1704, the colony's early policies of religious toleration were abolished and the chapel was closed. The church was dismantled and the bricks taken down river to land owned by the Jesuits. After the American Revolution, in 1785, the present day St. Ignatius Church was built. National Register of Historic Places.



9. Trinity Episcopal Church

16855 Point Lookout Road
St. Mary's City, MD 20686
301-862-4597
www.olg.com/trinitysmcmd

Originally established in 1638, the first Trinity Church was a wooden structure located on Smith Creek. In 1642, it was moved to St.

Mary's City and in 1694, when the state capital was moved from St. Mary's City to Annapolis, the local State House served as the church for 134 years. The present-day church was constructed in 1829 using brick salvaged from the original 1676 State House. National Register of Historic Places.



10. All Saint's Episcopal Church

21627 Oakley Road
Avenue, MD 20609
301-769-4288

The church began in 1642 when Thomas Gerard, A Roman Catholic, had a "chapel of ease" constructed for his Anglican wife.

The present church dates to 1846.

11. Dent Chapel

59666 Charlotte Hall Road
Charlotte Hall, MD 20622
301-884-8171

This chapel was erected in 1884 on the grounds of the Charlotte Hall Military Academy in memory of Reverend Hatch Dent, the



academy's first principal. Built of granite with a decorative brick belt, it is considered one of the finest examples of Victorian Religious Gothic architecture in Maryland.

12. St. Mary's Chapel

12960 Point Lookout Road
Ridge, MD 20680
301-872-5590

In 1884, Trinity Church, located in St. Mary's City, sold a portion of its land to the State and used some of the proceeds to establish a chapel of ease in Ridge for its members who had to travel long distances to services. The stained glass windows installed in 2002,

were designed in a "Victorian/Art Nouveau" style. National Register of Historic Places.



13. Leonardtown Nazarene Church

22730 Washington Street
Leonardtown, MD 20650

This Gothic-style concrete block building features six different types of concrete blocks molded on site. Pressed tin was used on the interior walls and ceiling of the church. It was built in 1915.



14. St. Peter Claver Church

16922 St. Peter Claver Road
St. Inigoes, MD 20684

When the original 1918 church burned in 1934, Philip Frohman, architect of the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., designed the new church which was completed in 1938. St. Peter Claver is the only predominantly African-American parish in the county. St. Peter Claver Catholic School was begun in 1916, and was the first Catholic school to provide education opportunities to African-American children in St. Mary's County.



A few of the sites included in this brochure are state parks or publicly-accessible museums. However, most are private churches. If you would like to tour any of the churches, we recommend you contact their administrative offices.