

NINE GOOD REASONS

WHY OUR LADY OF LORETO SHOULD BE A NEW YORK CITY LANDMARK

Our Lady of Loreto Church (1908) is a distinctive part of the American Catholic and immigration experiences, but it also matters to the history of American architecture and to the cultural history of Brooklyn—and to a neighborhood that contributed in no small way to what the very word “Brooklyn” now means around the world.

1

Our Lady of Loreto was specifically created for Italian Catholics to offer services in their own language, and now remains the oldest original Brooklyn “National Church” still standing where it has always stood.

2

Our Lady of Loreto was built on land originally owned by the first Italian to settle in New Netherlands (1635), and marks a continuous contribution of Italians to the region, as well as the state and nation.

3

Our Lady of Loreto landmarks the very era that made this neighborhood Brooklyn’s own “Little Italy” and still exerts a magnetic pull on communities of Italian Americans around the region.

4

Three NYC historic districts include Italian Americans, but the city as a whole includes only four dedicated individual landmarks. If it survives to tell this story, **Our Lady of Loreto** would be the first such landmark not just in Brooklyn but on ALL of Long Island.

5

Our Lady of Loreto’s Renaissance facade--deliberately different from the typical Federal, Georgian, and Neo-Gothic styles of American churches of its time--may make it the only church in the US deliberately built by and for Italians to display their own architectural and artistic traditions.

6

This deliberate architectural choice testifies to the devotion and artistic conviction of the immigrant community, but it also tells of the high caliber of skilled Italian workmanship then available in the New York region. **Our Lady of Loreto** is the ONLY building in NYC OR New York State created by an entirely Italian cadre of talented artisans: architect, builder, sculptor, interior decorator and muralist.

7

Our Lady of Loreto is a major example of cast stone construction in the United States, exhibiting historically unique architectural and sculptural elements. After a century, architectural authorities still single it out as “an advanced example of the application of [cast] concrete to ornate architecture,” and for its remarkable “design-build [construction] by Federici Armezzani & Co.”

8

Our Lady of Loreto’s 35’ classical pediment on the front facade contains the largest sculpture ever produced by distinguished Italian American public sculptor Gaetano Federici (1880-1964). This fresh and lively representation of the miracle of Loreto (the 12th century flight of Jesus’s mother’s house to Italy from a Holy Land allegedly threatened by Saracen invaders) was produced when the artist was barely 28, and may be both the largest and most engaging sculptural representation of this extraordinary devotional subject in the world.

9

As a Marian devotion, Our Lady of Loreto is historically associated with Italian religious nationality, especially in the New World. But by now it has also stands for emigration and immigration, and symbolizes what was true of its neighborhood at the turn of the last century and is still true today: that peoples and cultures can transcend dislocating change, preserve their integrity AND and integrate themselves into new and different worlds.

LET’S HELP IT CARRY ITS POWERFUL MESSAGE
FOR **ANOTHER** CENTURY!

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CULTURAL CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE OF BROWNSVILLE/
EAST NEW YORK IN BROOKLYN, USA**