

Where Time Stands Still

Test your knowledge of cathedral architecture!

Questions refer to number on wall title card.

Answers are on the back of the page.



No. 1 Washington National Cathedral is its official name. True or false?

No. 1 Whose idea led to the construction of Washington National Cathedral?

No. 2 What is the “crossing” in cathedral architecture?

No. 2 When and where did the Gothic style begin?

No. 3 In general, it took 250-300 years to construct a Medieval-era Gothic cathedral. In what year did construction of Washington National Cathedral begin and when was it completed?

No. 4 The theme of the west rose window of National Cathedral is "Creation." How many pieces of stained glass does it contain?

No. 5 The abstract stained glass windows at Holy Name Cathedral were designed to create an atmosphere of prayer and reflection, while making maximum use of light. Were they created in Murano, the center of Italian glass-making or Milan, Italy, home of Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper?

No. 5 It is not unusual for a cathedral in Europe to be devastated by a fire such as the Notre Dame de Paris fire in 2019. Holy Name Cathedral has suffered two fires, the most recent in 2009. In what year did another fire play a significant role in the history of the cathedral?

No. 6 What is a “lancet arch”? Note its extensive use, including decoratively.

No. 6 What is the “apse” of a cathedral?

No. 8 What is the significance of a spire on a cathedral?

No. 8 The pavilion's wings, called Brise Soleil (French for sun breaker) are shown closed in this image. When open, the wings resemble sails full of wind, outstretched wings of birds in flight, or the bow of a ship cutting through a wave. What is the functional role?

No. 9 What is a nave and where did the term come from?

No. 12 How does this photograph make you feel?

No. 14 What does this photograph remind you of?

No. 15 How does the absence of color influence your response to these photographs?

Answers

No. 1 The official name of Washington National Cathedral is the Cathedral Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul.

No. 1 In 1791 U.S. President Washington commissioned Major L'Enfant to create a visionary plan for the nation's capital. It was L'Enfant who first imagined "a great church for national purposes."

No. 2 The crossing is the place where the nave and the choir are intersected by the two transepts. It is the "cross" intersection of the Nave, Transepts and Chancel in the central space of a church or cathedral.

No. 2 The renovation of Saint-Denis Cathedral in France, completed in 1144, is the first structure in the Gothic style.

No. 3 Construction of Washington National Cathedral began in 1907 and was completed 83 years later, in 1990.

No. 4 The window contains more than 10,500 pieces of stained glass.

No. 5 The stained glass windows were created in Milan, Italy.

No. 5 In October 1871, the Church of the Holy Name and the Cathedral of Saint Mary were destroyed in the Great Chicago Fire. The cornerstone for the new Cathedral of the Holy Name was laid in July, 1874 and the cathedral dedicated in November, 1875.

No. 6 A lancet arch is a pointed arch used in doors and windows, resembling the tip of a spear. It is structurally more sound than a round arch because of its ability to distribute weight. The pointed arch was first developed in Islamic architecture and became a prominent feature of French Gothic architecture beginning in the 11C. The arch signifies the opening of new perspectives and the ability to see beyond the present.

No. 6 The apse, generally shaped like a half circle, is a vaulted extension found at the east end of a church or cathedral and usually contains the altar.

No. 8 In Gothic cathedrals and churches, where the spire is most commonly used, it symbolized the heavenly aspirations of the builders.

No. 8 The Burke Brise Soleil is a sun screen designed to manage the level of sunlight entering the cathedral-like glass ceiling of Windhover Hall. Implementing technology not available to medieval builders, it helps manage the interior temperature.

No. 9 The nave is the central part of a cathedral where the congregation sits or stands. The word is derived from the Latin word "navis" meaning "ship" because the nave resembled the shape of an upturned ship.

No. 12 There is no wrong answer.

No. 14 There is no wrong answer.

No. 15 Black and white images eliminate the distractions and complexity of competing colors. The emphasis is on line, shape, tonal value, perspectives and texture. Black-and-white images convey a timeless quality.