



William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

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**ST. GEORGE ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH, LOWELL, APPROVED FOR NOMINATION TO
THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

Secretary of the Commonwealth William Francis Galvin is pleased to announce that the Massachusetts Historical Commission approved St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church in Lowell for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places at its March 12, 2008 meeting. The nomination will be submitted to the National Register of Historic Places at the National Park Service in Washington, DC, for final consideration and designation.

“The Massachusetts Historical Commission is dedicated to preserving the Commonwealth’s rich architectural, cultural, archaeological, and historic resources,” Secretary Galvin said. “Inclusion of this property on the National Register will help to protect our heritage for generations to come.”

The St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church sits on a small urban lot in the Acre neighborhood of Lowell and is surrounded by a mixture of single and multi-family housing. Built between 1879 and 1881, the church played a significant role in the development of the City of Lowell, having served as the first French Protestant Church erected in Lowell to serve immigrants from Eastern Canada who came to work in the Lowell mills during the 19th century. These immigrants were included in a large-scale plan by Protestant American leaders of New England to convert the masses of Roman Catholic immigrants to Protestantism during a time of anti-Catholic sentiment. In 1917 the church was converted to an Orthodox church for Christian Syrian and Lebanese immigrants who also settled in Lowell to work in the mills. Architecturally, the gable-front St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church, built of ashlar granite with red-brick trim, is a significant example of the use of the Romanesque style for Congregational churches in the United States during the mid-19th century.

The St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church is one of 8 historic resources around the Commonwealth approved for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places by the Massachusetts Historical Commission at this meeting.

Secretary Galvin serves as Chairman of the 17-member board, which meets regularly and considers historic resources eligible for the National Register four times a year.

The National Register is the nation’s official listing of significant historic resources. In Massachusetts, there are over 65,000 properties listed in the National Register. The Massachusetts Historical Commission has been administering the National Register of Historic Places program in Massachusetts since 1966.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission is the office of the State Historic Preservation Officer and the State Archaeologist. It was established in 1963 to identify, evaluate, and protect important historical and archaeological assets of the Commonwealth. Visit our website to learn more about the Commission’s programs (www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc).

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