# St. Stephen's Church

(The Church of Our Lade of the Scapular & St. Stephen)  
New York City, New York (1854)

**The Building:**Historic church featuring a 22,000 square-foot rib-vaulted wood lath and plaster ceiling and fresco paintings by the renowned Constantino Brumidi.

**An Innovative Solution to a Strange and Challenging Problem:**The ceiling was in a terrible state of dilapidation made worse by a previous ill-conceived and failed consolidation treatment attempt that left an impervious coat of sticky resin over the attic side of the plaster.

After a section of the ceiling collapsed, Historic Plaster Conservation Services (Canada) was called in to assess the plaster’s condition and to design a method of consolidation treatment that would meet the challenge presented by the coat of resin.

HPCS (USA) was contracted to carry out the prescribed work. A Fein MultiMaster oscillating saw was used to cut every second plaster key and lug throughout the resin-coated area in order to expose enough raw plaster to allow the HPCS consolidation products to thoroughly penetrate. This difficult work was carried out without incurring any additional losses of plaster. A variety of [HPCS products](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/products/) were then applied to consolidate and restore the ceiling. Subsequent independent testing, conducted by Dean Koga of Building Conservation Associates, confirmed a successful result. The project was the subject of an article that appeared in the [June 2013 issue of Traditional Building magazine](https://www.historicplaster.com/sites/default/files/Traditional%20Building%20article.pdf). It was also the subject of a presentation given to the 2012 Association for Preservation Technology International Conference.



A unique problem requiring a creative solution.

### HPCS Products Used

[CO Consolidant HPCS product category badge](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/products/consolidants/)

[CO S-20 Primer™](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/products/consolidants/)

[CO Consolidant HPCS product category badge](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/products/consolidants/)

[CO S-50 Primer™](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/products/consolidants/)

[CO Consolidant HPCS product category badge](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/products/consolidants/)

[CO R-100 Consolidant™](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/products/consolidants/)

[AD Adhesive HPCS product category badge](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/products/adhesives/)

[AD Premixed Plaster Lug & Key Replacement™](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/products/adhesives/)

[GR GROUT HPCS product category badge](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/products/grout/)

[GR Non-Shrink Grout™](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/products/grout/)