

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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received FEB 4 1986  
date entered MAR 6 1986

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Monastery and Church of St. Michael the Archangel

and/or common St. Michael's Monastery

**2. Location**

street & number 2019 West Street NA not for publication

city, town Union City — vicinity of ~~congressional district~~

state New Jersey code 34 county Hudson code 017

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	NA	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

**4. Owner of Property**

name Hudson Korean Presbyterian Church C&C Associates  
c/o Waters, McPherson & McNeil

street & number 2019 West Street 400 Plaza Drive, Secaucus

city, town Jersey City, New Jersey — vicinity of state New Jersey

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Hudson County Administration Building

street & number 595 Newark Avenue

city, town Jersey City state New Jersey 07306

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1982  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Office of Historic Preservation

city, town Trenton state N.J.

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## 7. Description

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<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved    date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

THE MONASTERY AND CHURCH OF ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL at 2019 West Street in Union City, N.J., is found on approximately 13 acres atop a rise on the Palisades escarpment. The complex, built between 1863 and 1934 consists of a monastery church, chapel, six monastery buildings, two modern outbuildings, a small 20th century cemetery and landscaped grounds. These elements are found within a large granite and iron fence running along the property lines and are surrounded by open space and scattered groves of elm, oak, and maple trees.

The buildings are constructed in a variety of styles. The monastery buildings are, for the most part, Second Empire in design; the servants quarters, Victorian Italianate; and the church, a combination of Early Christian, Romanesque, Byzantine, and Renaissance architecture.

Although varied in style, the complex is unified by the continual use of indigenous rock wall surface and brownstone trim, as well as by use of arches in window heads and main door openings and the vertical emphasis of domes, cupolas, and rooflines. Further, all structures, with the exception of the servant's quarters and modern outbuildings, are literally connected and together form a complex H-plan. The church dominates the complex due to its high dome and twin towers, and its location near the main entrance.

Today the monastery grounds are among Union City's last areas of open space. The neighborhood, built for the most part in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, is densely developed (Union City is, according to the U.S. Census, the most densely settled municipality in the United States), and is divided into city-sized lots, usually 20 or 25 feet in width, and up to 100 feet in depth.

The discussion that follows is a description of individual structures in the complex organized chronologically. Although later in date, the church will be discussed first due to its overwhelming architectural importance and function as the focus of monastic life. The

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interiors of all structures were not accessible; those photos of the church interior were taken shortly before the church was closed to its congregation, and were provided by a parishioner.

Listed below is the order of building descriptions and identification numbers.

I. 1860s Structures

- A. Monastery Church, 1869-1875. Patrick C. Keely, Architect.
- B. Main Dormitory, 1864, Patrick C. Keely, Architect.
- C. North Extension of Dormitories, c. 1865, Patrick C. Keely, Architect.
- D. South Extension of Dormitories, c. 1914, originally planned by Patrick C. Keely in the 1860s.
- E. Servants Quarters, c. 1860, architect unknown.

II. 1920s Structures

- A. Dormitories, c. 1927, possibly Maginnis and Walsh, architects.
- B. Dining Room/Kitchen/Chapel/Library, c. 1927, possibly Maginnis and Walsh, architects.

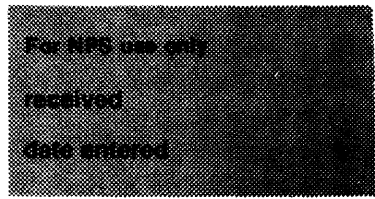
III. 1930s Structures

- A. Chapel of St. Gabriel (Chapel of the Passion), c. 1933-34, Maginnis and Walsh, architects.
- B. East Extension of dormitories, after 1934, Maginnis and Walsh, architects.

IV. 20th Century ancillary buildings and grounds

- A. Cemetery, c. 1934.
- B. Stations of the Cross, c. 1934.
- C. Garage, mid-20th century.
- D. Woodshed, mid-20th century.

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I. These structures, built in the 1860s, can be divided into three sections: the church; monastery buildings including a central pavilion and end wings; and a servants' house. All of these buildings, with the exception of the servants quarters, were designed by Patrick C. Keely.

I-A. MONASTERY CHURCH, 1869-1875. (Patrick C. Keely, Architect.)  
1924-1936: Restoration after fire. (Maginnis & Walsh, architects.)

The church, now unused, is placed on a longitudinal axis (east to west); this axis bisects the north-south side of the approximately square property of about 13 acres, forming a central axis. All of the main buildings are found to the rear of the church.

The church is a basilica plan with a nave of four stories and side aisles of two stories, with basement. The front facade has projecting twin towers of five stories and basement, and the crossing dome is also five stories. The front facade consists of five bays while the sides have ten bays. The foundation and wall material are rusticated deep-blue trap rock with vermiculated brownstone trim. The roof is steeply pitched with triangular gables at the ends of the nave and transepts. Each of the twin towers end in a metal cupola having four sides of convex profiles, four dormers, and a lantern. The double shell dome of the crossing is also metal, having eight sides of convex profiles and a lantern.

The facade (east end) is approached by six granite steps across the three central bays; the cast iron railings of the staircase consist of elaborate scrolls. The main entry, i.e., the three central bays, forms a triumphal arch of three arched openings of equal height. Entry is through three panelled bronze doors, with bronze tracery in the tympana. The facade fenestration consists of four rectangular basement windows, two on either side of the stairs. On the first story are two pairs of lancets, one

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pair on each tower. On the second to third-story are two round-headed, splayed, stained glass windows, one on each tower, abutting on each side the three central niches which contain sculpture. On the fourth story are two pairs of lancets, one pair on each tower, and a rose of stained glass in the central bay, beneath the triangular gable. The fifth story (towers only) has two round-headed shuttered openings again, one on each tower. The side fenestration patterns of the towers are mirror images of their facades.

Two sets of three rectangular mullion windows are on the basement level of each side; a recessed rectangular basement entrance is found on the south side. The side wall of each of the side aisles show four half-circle stained glass windows on the upper (fourth story or clerestory) level. The end of the south transept is lit by a stained glass rose at the fourth story level, a roundel opening in the gable, and three lancets on the second story. The end of the north transept has only the rose and the gable roundel, the main level having been altered for the connecting passage to the chapel.

The chancel has two arched stained glass windows on each side. The dome has an arched window on each of the eight sides of the drum, and eight smaller arched and louvered openings in the lantern.

Each of the tower cupolas has four dormers with an arched window in each, and a four-sided lantern with a rectangular shuttered opening in each side.

BASIC DIMENSIONS: Length-248'; width of nave-70';  
height of dome-175'.

The decorative trim throughout is brownstone, which binds and ties the architectural volumes into an integrated whole. This brownstone trim is used for the quoins at three corners of each tower. On the facade, the trim is used for the following: jambs and splayed voussoirs of the entry doors; two string courses under third story windows, and niches and rectangular panels on each bay between these

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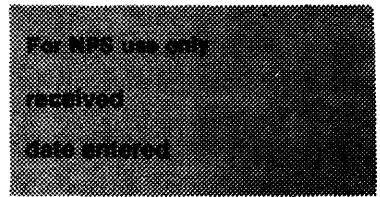
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courses; window and niche surrounds; impost level mouldings at the third story; moulded cornice at the fourth story and gable level, as well as the fifth story level of the towers, and in the gable's decorative bands and the three round inlaid panels which show the symbols of the Passion of Christ. The dominant panel, over the rose window of the gable, depicts a cross, a garland, nails and the words JESU XPI PASSIO.

The brownstone trim of the sides of the church include voussoirs and window surrounds, two string courses at the impost levels of the second and third stories, decorative bands in the gables, and a continuous band having mutule blocks.

The drum of the dome is of light colored stone, and has fluted and un-fluted pilasters beside the windows, a moulded cornice running along the sill level, and a bracketed cornice. Moulded window aprons are found on each side of the drum.

Alterations and Additions

The only significant alteration to the exterior church of the 19th century occurred in 1887, when the wooden steps at the east entrance were replaced by the present granite steps. In addition, the stone wall with its granite coping and the iron fence atop the wall were added at this time.

In 1926 three sculptures were placed in the niches of the east facade; from left to right, they depict St. Paul of the Cross, St. Michael the Archangel, and St. Gabriel.

On May 31, 1934, a fire of unknown origin started in the dome of the church, and before the fire was brought under control the dome and roof of the church had collapsed into the nave, thus destroying the interior as well.

Alterations to the exterior and redecoration of the interior after the fire were executed to the designs of Magginis and Walsh, Boston ecclesiastical architects. The

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principal exterior alterations include the following: the double shell drum was completely rebuilt in a style similar to the original but with a taller drum and more ovoid profile. The roof was completely rebuilt, this time with steel trusses. The cupolas of the towers were rebuilt to have taller, more ovoid proportions. The glazed area of the second/third story-level tower windows were reduced in size. On the east facade, three small glazed roundels were placed by a rose window and two round brownstone decorative panels. At each end of the transept, the original lunette on the third story level was converted to a rose. The major change occurred at the west end, where the depth of the sanctuary was increased by about twenty-eight feet, taking as much from the adjoining dormitory.

One further alteration to the exterior is the later addition of a one-story side entry vestibule on the south side of the nave and connected to the south transept. It is of brick, stone, and concrete, with a flat roof, parapet, three arched windows on the south side, and rectangular door on the east. Brownstone bands surround the door, continue the water table of the church proper, and form a roof line; the window voussoirs are of brownstone as well. This vestibule is non-descript in style, but is unobtrusive by compatibility with the materials and proportions of the church.

The interior dates from the mid-1930s due to the destruction of the original interior by the fire. The new design features a larger chancel with barrel vault space and four larger stained glass windows; a sacristy to the right of the high altar, two, 2-story high chapels on either side of the altar; a reinforced cement basement; and the addition of a wine cellar.

The main area of the church is described, as follows, by Charles D. Maginnis, FAIA, writing in A Souvenir of the Diamond Jubilee of the Passionist Fathers in the Diocese of Newark and of the Rededication of St. Michael's Monastery Church.

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"...The spacious narthex is roofed by a semi-circular longitudinal vault with penetrations, the walls being of Verde Marin marble with Botticino door enframements. To the right of the narthex is the baptistry...From the narthex the church itself is entered by three sets of doors of dark red leather studded with bronze nails in ornamental pattern."

The new dome "now assumes the dominant source of illumination...The four circular panels of the pendentives are accentuated by the paintings of the four evangelists at an impressive scale.

"The plinths of walls and piers throughout are rendered in red Pyrenees marble and the pilasters up to the level of the capitals of Red Altico. The pilaster capitals as well as the rest of the articulation are of composite materials richly accentuated with gold of subdued tone. The walls of the chancel for two-thirds of their height are paneled in Vert Antico with borderings of Verde Imperiale and by thin lines of Botticino. Above the wainscotted walls is a frieze of figure compositions, and high up over the monumental baldachin...is the great tympanum of Christ and the Saints. The baldachin is the dominating feature of the interior, erected on a platform of Portoro marble, the four columns supporting the canopy being of selected Brescia Medicea marble, with bases of Rosato marble. The surmounting canopy is of gilded wood of perforated design, richly carved.

"The altar proper is of Alerian onyx. Over the altar underneath the canopy is suspended a large crucifixion group carved in wood and rendered in color and gold. The altar rail, which is of balustraded design with gates of bronze, is done in Sienna and cream Pavanazza. The pavement of the chancel is of alternating Sienna and Unika marbles. The walls of the side chapels are executed in Royal Yellow marble which forms a harmonious background for the altars and their reredoses. At the north end of the transept and confronting the octagonal chapel is a large pedimented



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composition supported by columns of Fleur de Peche which enframes a great panel in bas relief of the Sacred Heart. This constitutes the reredos of this...altar which is built of Rosato marble with its railing of Porta Santa."

The stained glass windows are the work of the George Sotter studio of Halicong, Pennsylvania. The richly colored transept windows depict the coming and departure of Christ from the world. The aisle windows depict various biblical scenes.

The eight clerestory windows of the nave depict angels holding implements of the Passion. The clerestory windows of the sanctuary present the four great archangels, and the window on the east facade depicts Christ and the four evangelists.

The murals were executed by Hildreth Meiere of New York. The primary focus is the great tympanum at the rear of the choir over the high altar, depicting Christ surrounded by saints noted for their devotion to the Passion. A frieze extends around the sanctuary; the center composition depicts the Last Supper, flanked by pictures of St. Michael, patron of the church. The north sanctuary wall depicts the New Testament saints, while the south sanctuary wall presents Old Testament figures. Statues of various important saints, executed by the Daprato Statuary Company, are placed in niches between the arched windows in the crossing dome.

II-B. MAIN DORMITORY, 1864. (Patrick C. Keely, architect)

The central pavilion completed in 1864 was the first structure in the complex designed by P.C. Keely. The building is rectangular in plan and rises four stories. The structure has nine bays, with the central bay projecting on the east side, and a three-bay central projection on the west facade.

The wall material throughout is rock-surfaced trap stone with brownstone trim. A brownstone water table lines

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the base on both facades. The structure has a central door approached by a flight of eight stone steps. The stone doorway is a round-headed compound arch containing modern glass and aluminum doors. Except for the fifth bay on the east facade, which has two narrow windows per story, each bay has one window per story. The same is true of the west facade, except that the windows on the fifth bay are not aligned with the other openings. All windows are 2/2 and have pointed drop arch heads, brownstone sills, and quoin surrounds. Dormers are found over every bay, on both east and west facades. Each dormer has curvilinear heads and sides of brownstone. Two chimneys are found on the north and south ends, and a taller chimney is centered on the west side of the building. A wooden bracketed cornice and mansard roof tops the structure.

Alterations

Originally detached, two additions have been built off the north and south ends. An enclosed porch has also been constructed on the west facade at the central entry. The building once had a two-story cupola over the central projecting pavilion, which had been removed or destroyed by 1914. The original dormers had alternating porthole and swan's neck shapes, changed c. 1914 to a consistent swan's neck shape.

I-C. NORTH EXTENSION OF DORMITORIES, c. 1869. (Patrick C. Keely, architect)

This building is similar to Building I-B in material and decorative detailing. Completed circa 1869, this structure is rectangular in plan and is four stories high and two bays wide. 2/2 windows with brownstone sills, pointed arches and quoins are employed. The structure is topped by a wooden bracketed cornice and mansard roof.

Alterations

The building was extensively altered in 1934-1936, when the chancel of the Monastery church was extended. At this

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time approximately 28 feet of the east facade was demolished. When a new dormitory wing was built after 1923, the west facade of the structure was also effaced.

**I-D. SOUTH EXTENSION OF DORMITORIES, c. 1914. (Built to original plans by P.C. Keely)**

This building, although originally planned in the 1860s by P.C. Keely, was not constructed until 1914. This four story, 10 bay structure, however, is similar to the other 1860s dormitories in style, massing, and scale. Rectangular in plan, the building has a stone exterior, employing brownstone for use in window and door surrounds and water table. The structure is pierced by an entrance area in the ninth and tenth bays (from the left) consisting of a rectangular opening with a wooden door, a stone architrave over the doorway and adjacent sidelights (two to the left of the doorway, one to the right.) Three stone steps lead to this entrance. Otherwise, there is one window per bay, per story, including basement. The first bay on the south facade, at the west end, however, contains two windows that are not in alignment with other openings.

Further, the windows of the ninth bay are in pairs separated by a mullion. The windows, as in the 1860s structures, are 2/2. There are six single chimneys in irregular pattern, and at the east end there is a double chimney incorporating a window between the flues. A dormer having a curvilinear arch rises over every bay on the south and east facades, while the west facade has only one dormer. A bracketed cornice and mansard roof crowns the structure.

**Alterations**

In construction of Building III-A, after 1934, the east facade of the building was obscured.

**I-E. SERVANTS QUARTERS, c. 1860. (Architect unknown)**

The servants quarters, which possibly pre-date the first of the dormitories, was built in the Victorian

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Italianate style. It is a detached structure located near the southern gateway to the grounds, and is almost square in plan, two stories with basement, two bays per side. It is constructed of brick, and has a pitched roof with cross gable on each of the four sides.

There is a simple doorway on the north side, with one window per bay per floor, excluding the entry area. The windows are missing, but the window heads are segmental arches. There is a porthole window in each of the four gables, a single chimney, and wooden bracketed cornice.

II-A. DORMITORY, c. 1924. (Possibly, Maginnis and Walsh, Architects.)

This dormitory, constructed about 1924, is attached to Building I-C on the east and the later Building II-B on the west. It is a rectangular structure aligned on an east-west axis with the nave of the church, and has a central projecting pavilion on the south side.

It is three stories in height with a basement. There are six bays on the south side and four on the north. The first bay on the north projects slightly and forms a five story tower topped by a mansard roof with concave flashing and a lantern; the top level of the tower contains a roundel window on each of the four sides. Each bay contains one window, 6/6 double hung, per floor. A pair of mullioned windows is at the basement level of each bay. The wall finish is rock-surfaced blue trap rock with brownstone trim. Decorative brownstone trim includes a fascia-board cornice, a continuous string course, and watertable.

II-B. MULTIPLE-USE BUILDING, c. 1927, (Possibly, Maginis and Walsh, architects)

This building, constructed in 1927, was attached to the west end of Building II-A. It is a multiple-use structure containing a dining room and kitchen on the first floor and a chapel and library on the second. It is three stories in height on the north end, and two in height, albeit

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exceptional, on the south end. The building has seven bays on the west facade, six on the east, and three each on the north and south facades. The northern end of the building is similar to the other buildings of the dormitory complex; its four bays on the west side are essentially one window per floor per bay, but first floor windows are 6/6 double hung, while the second story of the building - the library - are 6/9. The curvilinear segmental arches of the 6/6 third floor windows penetrate the eave line, forming dormer-like projections. The roof of the northern half of the building is mansard with concave flashing.

The southern half of the building differs from the northern half in both roofline and fenestration. The roof at the southern end is taller than that of the northern end, and features four shallow upper slopes with four very steep lower slopes.

The second story - chapel - windows are almost two stories in height, each with its own gable, while the first floor features groupings of three mullioned windows in each of the three bays, each group clustered under a segmental arch. There is an end chimney centered on the south side of this building.

As in the rest of the monastery grouping, the decorative trim is brownstone, and includes the following: a fascia-board cornice, a continuous string course under the third story windows, the water table, quoins at the corners of the north and south ends, various window surrounds, and a medallion inset at the north end featuring symbols of the Passionist Order - a sacred heart, cross, three nails, and the words JESU XPI PASSIO.

III-A. CHAPEL OF ST. GABRIEL, 1933-34. (Maginnis & Walsh, Architects)

The Chapel of St. Gabriel (also known as the Chapel of the Passion) is located directly north of the north transept, to which it is connected. It is Italian Renaissance in style, and Greek cross in plan, with the

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south transept being slightly longer than the other three. Its four transepts are two stories in height, and the central round dome is three stories. The base of the dome has eight sides. Each transept is one bay wide, and they are separated by one bay of the dome's walls. The wall finish is rock faced trap stone with smooth finish brownstone trim, like the church. The foundation is stone. The roofs of the transepts are pitched, forming triangular gables, although the south transept connects to the church and thus has no gable. The dome is full round.

The chapel is entered either from the north transept of the church or by the wide, rectangular entrance on the east side of the south transept. This latter door is approached by a bank of eight steps, a landing, a second bank of seven steps, another landing and a final door sill. This flight of stone steps is bordered by a simple iron railing.

Each of the three "free" transepts has a pair of basement windows (rectangular) and an elongated empty niche; the four walls of the central space also have a pair of rectangular basement windows. The drum of the dome has a porthole stained glass window on each of its eight sides, the frames of which stand in relief over the top edge of the roof line.

Brownstone trim, as in the church, is used throughout; a rectangular door frame with a moulded architrave, a continuous water table, basement window surrounds, quoins on each of the three "free" transepts, a continuous moulded fascia-board cornice and a raking cornice on each of the gables; and each entire niche, consisting of a sill on brackets, a pedestal, side pilasters, a moulded arch with keystone, and the inner facing of the niche. The main entrance doors are panelled bronze with a transom, and two lamps of iron flanking the doors.

The interior of the chapel features three separate altars. The center altar is dedicated to St. Paul of the Cross, founder of the Order. The east, or right altar, is dedicated to St. Gabriel, and the left, or west, altar is

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dedicated to the Blessed Gemma. Panels by muralist Hildreth Meiere adorn each altar. The dome, penetrated by a great central window in golden glass, is penetrated by the eight roundels carrying symbols of the sufferings of Christ. The chapel's walls are done in Royal Italian gold marble, bordered in Botticina, and the niches and floor borders are of crimson Numidian onyx. The floor is overlaid in marble of Alps green and levanto, with a central medallion of various marbles in light color. The altars are of Algerian onyx, flanked by pillars of richly colored marbles.

III-B. EAST EXTENSION OF DORMITORIES, after 1934.  
(Probably Maginnis & Walsh)

This building is also rectangular in plan. The two-story, 6 bay structure is similar to the 1860s dormitories in appearance. The building has one window, 2/2 double hung, per floor, per bay, and one rectangular single window per bay at the basement level. At the second story level, there is one extra window inserted between the fourth and fifth bays. The stone facades are decorated with brownstone elements including window and door surrounds consisting of pointed drop arch heads, quoins, and sills. Unlike the other dormitories, this building has no mansard roof or cornice. Instead, a parapet roof with brownstone coping is employed.

IV-A. CEMETERY, c. 1934.

The cemetery is located immediately to the south of Building II-B. It dates from the point of reconstruction of the Monastery Church, when the burial crypt was replaced by a finished basement, and the bodies interred there were re-interred in the new cemetery. It is circular in plan, and a central gravestone or monument with cross is surrounded by smaller rectangular shaped stones all of the same design. At the east end of the cemetery, flanking the main path, are two sculptures depicting praying angels.

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IV-B. STATIONS OF THE CROSS

The carved Stations of the Cross are found north of the church. Planned in a large circle, they depict in sculpture the suffering of Christ. Each of the fourteen scenes is found on a fieldstone pedestal. At the center is a large wooden cross with hood, containing a stone sculpture of Christ.

Other Landscape Features include a 20th century grotto of fieldstone and concrete in the northwest corner of the property. A basketball court is located along the north central boundary, and a handball court of concrete is to the west of buildings II-A and II-B.

IV-C & D. OTHER

Other buildings include a cinderblock, one-story, eight bay garage with flat roof, and a cinderblock one-story, one-bay woodshed. They are of no architectural or historical interest or consequence.



## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1860-1934

**Builder/Architect** P.C. Keely/Maginnis & Walsh

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The complex which incorporates St. Michael's Monastery and the Monastery Church of St. Michael the Archangel is an harmonious blend of the works of some of the nation's most eminent ecclesiastical architects and artisans of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Historically, the complex is significant because it is the earliest standing Catholic monastery in New Jersey and was the second Passionist complex in the United States.

### ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The structures are architecturally important for their use of continuous indigenous rock surface, eclectic styles, and interlocking plan. Compatible in plan, design, and detailing, these buildings were designed over a seventy year period by various architects renowned for their ecclesiastical designs.

At least three major United States architects were responsible for the designs of the monastery buildings:

#### 1. Patrick C. Keely

The architect of the original 1860s monastery structures, Patrick C. Keely, was born in Ireland in 1816. Most of his training was under his father, also an architect who had specialized in ecclesiastical architecture. Keely has been called the "Pugin of America", but there is no evidence that he actually studied under Pugin. He arrived in the United States in 1840 and settled in Brooklyn where he established his practice and, like his father, specialized in church architecture. His first attributable commission was the Church of Sts. Peter and Paul in the Williamsburgh section of Brooklyn. His reputation spread quickly, and in 1849 he executed the design for the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Albany, New York. Throughout his career he designed many noted churches and cathedrals in the United States, including the Roman Catholic cathedrals in Chicago, Rochester, Buffalo, Erie, Cleveland, Toledo, Hartford, Boston (Holy Cross), Brooklyn (St. James Pro-Cathedral), Halifax, and Charleston, S.C.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

"Souvenir of the Diamond Jubilee of the Passionist Fathers in the Diocese of Newark, and of the Rededication of St. Michael's Monastery Church", 9/29/36.

(continued)

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 13 + \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name WEEHAWKEN

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

A 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Union City Block 108, Lots 1-A, 1-B, 1-C.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state NA code county code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title CHARLES E. WYATT, CONSULTANT

organization CHARLES WYATT ASSOCIATES

date APRIL 1982

street & number 706-A JERSEY AVENUE

telephone 201-659-1878

city or town JERSEY CITY,

state NEW JERSEY 07302

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

Deputy

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*Allen C. Deusch*

title Asst. Commissioner for Natural Resources

date January 28, 1986

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*Jayne M. McPherson*  
for Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the  
National Register

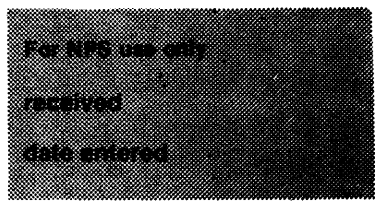
date 3/6/86

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
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One of his most noted works is the Church of St. Francis Xavier on 16th Street in New York City. By the time of his death in 1896, he had designed between five and six hundred churches and cathedrals.

2. Jeremiah O'Rourke

Jeremiah O'Rourke, the first architect to establish a practice in Newark, was also an immigrant from Ireland, and also specialized in ecclesiastical architecture. O'Rourke planned the design for the redecoration of the Monastery Church of St. Michael the Archangel in 1897. His major works include Sacred Heart Cathedral and St. Michael's Hospital, both in Newark, and the main building of Seton Hall University in South Orange, New Jersey. He suspended his private practice when he was appointed by President Grover Cleveland as Supervising Architect for the United States Treasury Department. While in this position, he was responsible for the design of the Federal buildings in Buffalo and Kansas City.

3. Charles D. Maginnis

The firm of Maginnis and Walsh, of Boston, was the architect for the Chapel of St. Gabriel, for the reconstruction of the Monastery Church after the fire in 1934, and probably for other twentieth century extensions of the monastery complex. Walsh died the year of the fire, and the design and reconstruction was overseen by Charles D. Maginnis (1868-1955).

Like his predecessors who worked on the Monastery Church, Maginnis too was an immigrant from Ireland. He studied at Cusack's Academy of Art in Dublin, and came to Canada in 1885. In 1889 he entered the office of Edmund Wheelwright in Boston. He was an early critic of Catholic church architecture, and set out to raise it from what he perceived as commonplace design. His earliest commission was St. Patrick's Church in Whitinsville, Massachusetts. He designed many churches and cathedrals in the United States and Canada, was president of the American Institute of

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Architects, and twice received the gold metal of the A.I.A. for excellence in design. (In 1925 for the Carmelite Convent in Santa Clara, California, and in 1927 for Trinity College Chapel in Washington, D.C.). His other major works include the Tower grouping at Boston College, the Boston College Science building, the apse of Trinity Episcopal Church, Boston, and the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.

The Artisans

The sculpture and art found in the Monastery Church of St. Michael the Archangel was executed by some of the country's most skilled craftsmen. Most of this work dates from the early 20th century.

During the 1897 redesign and redecoration of the church undertaken by Jeremiah O'Rourke, the decorative redesign was executed by the Rambusch Studios. Although most of the 1897 interior was destroyed by the fire, the church's two major works of sculpture of this period remain, a Pieta and an Ecce Homo by Joseph Sibbel (d. 1907).

Sibbel's best known work is the large statue of St. Patrick in the namesake Cathedral in New York City; a number of subordinate statues that adorn the Cathedral are also his work. In the present Monastery Church, these works are located in the main floor level of the bell towers, though whether that was their original location is not known. (It seems likely, however, considering the devastation of the remainder of the church by the fire).

The stained glass windows of the reconstructed church were executed by the George Sotter Studio. Sotter (1879-1953), of Halicong, Pennsylvania, was a widely-known landscape painter and stained glass artisan, whose other works include Our Lady of Lourdes in New York, and Sacred Heart in Pittsburgh. He was professor of Painting and Design at the Carnegie Institute of Technology.

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Murals for the reconstructed church, as well as altar panels, dome murals, and stained glass in St. Gabriel's chapel, were done by Hildreth Meiere (1893-1961). She served as president of the American Society of Muralists, and her other major commissions include murals and mosaics at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church in New York City, crypt mosaics at Washington's National Cathedral, mosaics, tapestries, doors, ceilings, and dome of the Nebraska State capitol in Lincoln, and metal panels on the liner America and on the exterior of Radio City Music Hall in New York City.

Architectural History

In 1863 the Passionist Order began construction of a monastery near the site of Our Lady of Mercy, an early Catholic Church. Patrick C. Keely, a Brooklyn architect, was selected to draw up the plans and supervise the construction.

The cornerstone of the new monastery was laid in August 1863, and it was dedicated thirteen months later. Construction continued thereafter on an adjoining building on the north to include assembly rooms, library, classroom, and a public chapel. The need for worship space, however, quickly outgrew the small chapel as increasing numbers of Irish and German Catholic immigrants moved into the area.

Thus, in 1869, the cornerstone was laid for the immense monastery church. Again, Patrick C. Keely was chosen to execute the design. Construction continued for six years, using for the most part materials quarried from the site. (The stone bluffs of the Palisades, lying between the Hudson and Hackensack Rivers, were the site of many quarries and provided building materials for both New York and New Jersey construction projects).

By the spring of 1870, the basement chapel had been finished to a point where services could be held, and on July 22, 1870, the last service was held in Our Lady of Mercy Church. Work on the church structure continued, and

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at its completion it stood prominently atop the Palisades, by far the tallest structure along the bluff, visible from all parts of Hudson County, from across the river in New York, and from across the vast reaches of the meadowlands.

When completed, the enormous church was 195 feet in length, with an additional sanctuary depth of 25 feet. The width of the nave was 70 feet, and the distance from the floor of the church to the top of the great crossing dome was 193 feet. The interior was richly ornamented with large oil paintings and numerous statues of the saints. The style was eclectic, although not in a derogatory sense. There was great harmony in the Latin cross plan, and the use of native materials gave an organic unity to the work, with great vertical movement emphasized by the domes, cupolas, and steeply pitched roof. This upward movement was further emphasized by the use of tall, segmentally arched windows, doorways, and niches at the second and clerestory levels.

During these early years of the monastery presence in West Hoboken (as the community was known until 1925), settlement of the area intensified, particularly in the vicinity of the monastery property. As a result the Passionist Order found its property being encroached upon. In 1887 the first Official Map of the town of West Hoboken was drawn, and at that time the Passionist Order agreed to draw back their fence on West Street about seventy feet, and adjusted the boundary on the south side as well to allow the development of Union Place (18th Street). These adjustments were made on the condition, however, that no streets were ever to be put through monastery property. After the line of West Street, on which the Monastery Church fronts, was permanently set, the entrance to the church was altered; the wooden steps were replaced by granite, and the stone wall, granite coping, and iron fence were added in 1887-88.

In 1897, the year after Keely's death, a redecoration of the interior of the church was undertaken to the plans of Jeremiah O'Rourke. O'Rourke's redesign of the interior simplified the decor. Statues and oil paintings were replaced by "alto relieveo". Instead of plaster, Mycenaian

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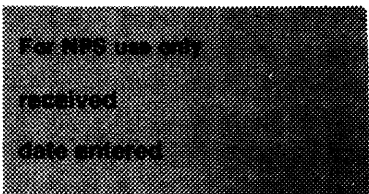
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marble, Mexican and California onyx, and Numidian and Carrara marble were used in the construction of pillars and altars.

The monastery itself was expanded again in 1914, when a south wing, (Building I-D), was added. This building had been planned by Keely at the outset, and was constructed of the same materials and in the same "Second Empire" style. Additional expansions of the monastery occurred c. 1927 (Building II-A and II-B.) There is no record of the architect for this period, although it seems logical that this may have been the initial involvement of the third ecclesiastical architects, Maginnis and Walsh, of Boston.

Aside from the 1897 redecoration of the Church's interior, no significant changes were made to the Monastery Church itself until 1933-34, when St. Gabriel's Chapel (also called the Chapel of the Passion) was added on the north side. The octagonal chapel, in the Italian Renaissance style, was the work of Maginnis and Walsh, and was reached from the Church itself, as well as from the exterior, through an enlarged south transept of the Chapel which was connected to the north transept of the Monastery Church. The octagonal chapel, which contained altars to St. Paul of the Cross (Founder of the Order), St. Gabriel, and the Blessed Gemma, was surmounted by a rounded dome atop an octagonal drum. The dome was penetrated by a great central window of stained glass, and featured eight roundel windows in the drum.

The event of greatest significance to the architectural history of the church occurred on May 31, 1934, when a fire broke out in, or near, the dome. The fire destroyed the dome and the timber-trussed roof, and their collapse gutted the interior of the church. The exterior walls and east facade bell towers, however, remained standing.

Reconstruction began immediately, to the plans of Maginnis and Walsh, who had been on the site at the time to plan redecoration and alteration. Steel roof supports were installed at this time, and the new dome, though similar in

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appearance to the original, was more ovoid in appearance and utilized a double shell construction. The new lantern was also more elongated. To match and/or complement the new dome, the domical roofs capping the north and south bell towers on the east facade were made taller and more ovoid as well. The half-circle windows in the north and south transepts were replaced by rose windows, and a similar rose was placed in the east facade, supplanting the center of the original three small roundels beneath the gable. The flanking roundels were replaced by brownstone medallions. The arched windows at the loft-level of the bell towers were reduced in size, although the aperture remained the same. Interior modifications included a concrete basement, which necessitated the removal of the bodies of fifteen passionists buried in the crypt, and their reburial in the cemetery on the grounds. A small one-store addition, built of complementary materials and trim, was constructed in the corner formed by the nave and the south transept to permit entry into the basement chapel as well as the south transept. The primary structural alteration to the original walls of the Keely design was the extension 28 feet westward of the sanctuary. This increase in depth was intended to square off the sanctuary, and to direct attention to the massive arched and pyramidal baldachin. This extension necessitated demolition of portions of the north wing (Building I-C), which had receive some fire damage. No other major changes have taken place since the 1930s.

History

Because the area was densely forested, settlement in north Hudson came relatively late. Prior to the Revolution, most of the land was owned by Samuel Bayard, a prominent New York merchant. Bayard was Tory sympathizer, and thus during the Revolution his land was confiscated and sold afterwards to the Stevens family of Hoboken. They, in turn, resold portions of the tract to the DeMott, Traphagen, Van Ripen, and Kerrigan families.

The first Catholic presence in the area was recorded around 1851, and the small group met in the coach house, no



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longer extant, of the summer estate of Mr. James Kerrigan. Kerrigan, an Irish immigrant, had become a successful New York tanner, and with his wealth purchased from the Stevens family several hundred acres atop the Palisades. At the request of Father Anthony Cauvin, the first Roman Catholic priest to serve the area, Kerrigan donated a tract of land for establishment of the county's first parish, and in 1851 the Church of Our Lady of Mercy opened near the site of the present monastery. It was also at Father Cauvin's request that the Passionists came to New Jersey to establish a monastery, and purchased twenty acres from Kerrigan for their use.

The Passionists at St. Michael's numbered approximately 35 in the 1860s, and consisted of a Father Superior, the priests or Passionist fathers, students, and lay brothers. At the monastery prayer, study, and functions of everyday life were performed. Here lay brothers cooked, cleaned, and acted as tailors, shoemakers, carpenters, and the like. The priests, who devoted their lives to penance, mortification, and obedience, were missionaries and strong advocates of the temperance cause. All members of the monastery were clothed with a black habit and wore on the left breast the badge of the Order: a heart surmounted by a cross and inscribed JESU XPI PASSIO ("The Passion of Jesus Christ").

Unlike the monastery, which excluded women, the Monastery Church was open to all Catholics in the vicinity for daily worship. The Passionists also were responsible for the founding of numerous Catholic churches in the Diocese.

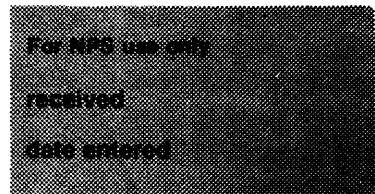
Throughout the late 19th century and early 20th century, the Passionists Order at St. Michael's grew in number, causing the construction of additional dormitory and work space. By the middle of the 1970s, however, the loss of members and of parishioners forced the Order to move to smaller quarters and to abandon the Monastery and church.

The Passionist Order at St. Michael's was the second of that order in the United States. The first arrived in

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western Pennsylvania in 1855 at the request of the Bishop of Pittsburgh. The founder of the order, St. Paul of the Cross, was born in the Republic of Genoa in 1694. He became a preacher and lived under rigid monastic rules as to food and raiment. In a hermitage on a mountain, Paul built the first retreat and founded the religious order. By the 1770s the Order was recognized and confirmed by the Catholic Church.

Conclusion

The Monastery, its siting, and its activities have been important to the citizens of Union City from that municipality's inception. (It was incorporated in 1861 as the town of West Hoboken; a merger in 1925 with the adjacent town of Union resulted in the creation of the larger municipality of Union City.)

At the time of its founding, the monastery was given a tract of 20 acres, now reduced to approximately 13, by Mr. James Kerrigan. This tract, known as Kerrigan's Woods, has survived as virtually the only undeveloped open space remaining in Union City, which is, according to the 1980 census, the single most densely populated municipality in the United States. It has served as a parish church and community center for generations of Catholic immigrants from Ireland, Germany, Slavic countries, and, most recently, from Latin America and the Carribean. The towers of the monastery are an important landmark visible from throughout the metropolitan New York/New Jersey area, and the special masses and novenas that the Passionists held, through the 1960s, attracted thousands of pilgrims annually to the church. Christmas services from the church were frequently broadcast on national radio networks.

In 1979, the Order withdrew from St. Michael's to the Passionist Provincialate in South River, New Jersey. The church itself was abandoned in 1981. At that time the Order announced that it had contracted to sell the property to Pantlin Associates, a developer. Although Pantlin has not divulged plans for the property, it is widely assumed by

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citizens and public officials alike that redevelopment plans would not include re-use of the monastery buildings.

The citizens of Union City have rallied to save the Monastery and property, and the City of Union City negotiated a moratorium with the Order so that efforts could be made, thus far unsuccessful, to save the property.

In November 1982, the city assessed the property at \$2.5 million dollars maintaining that the church buildings were no longer used for religious or charitable purposes. The property was sold in 1984 and new proposals call for rehabilitation.

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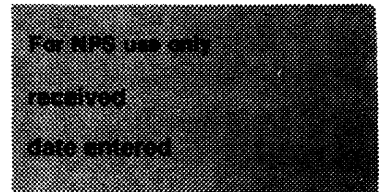
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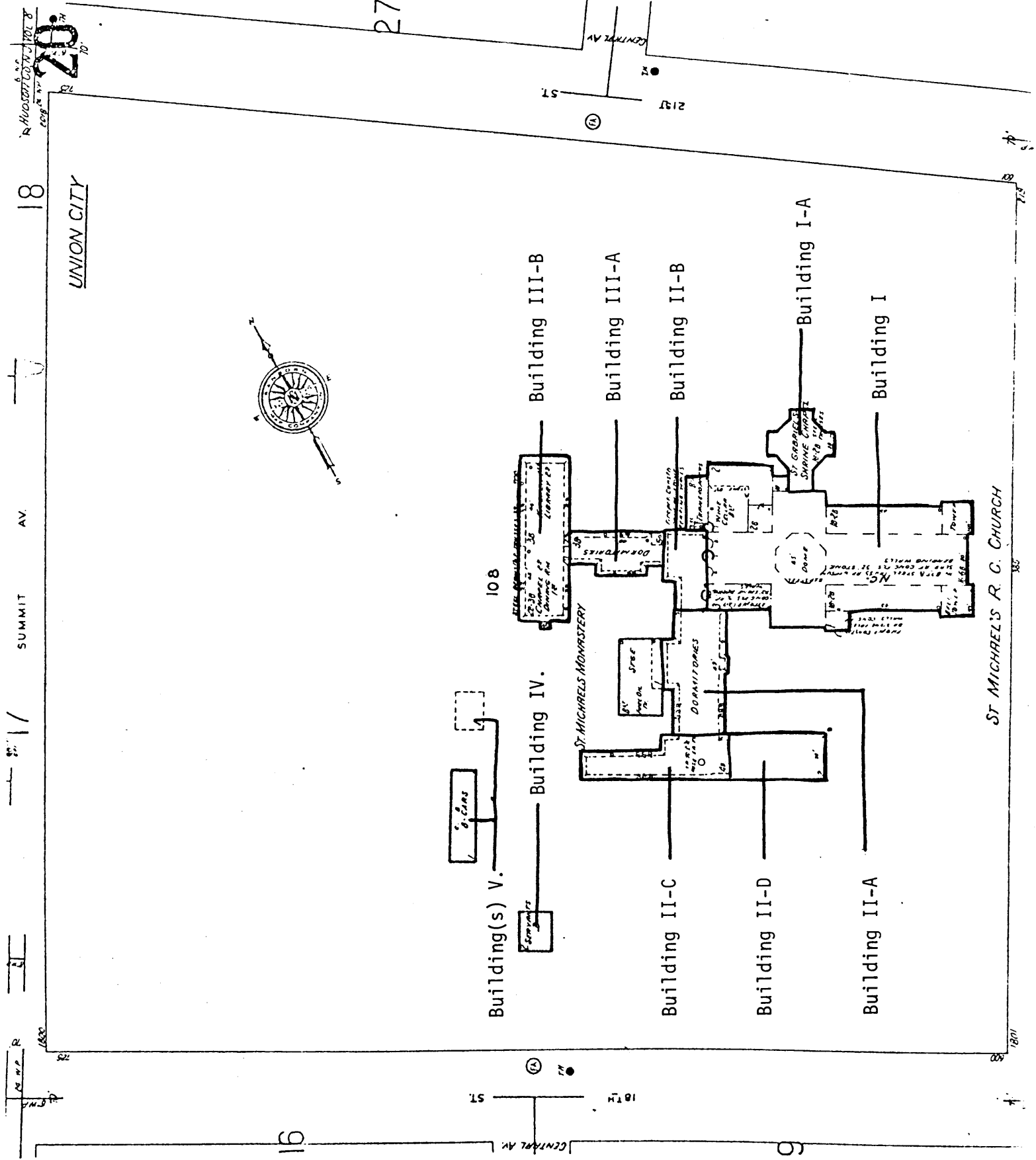
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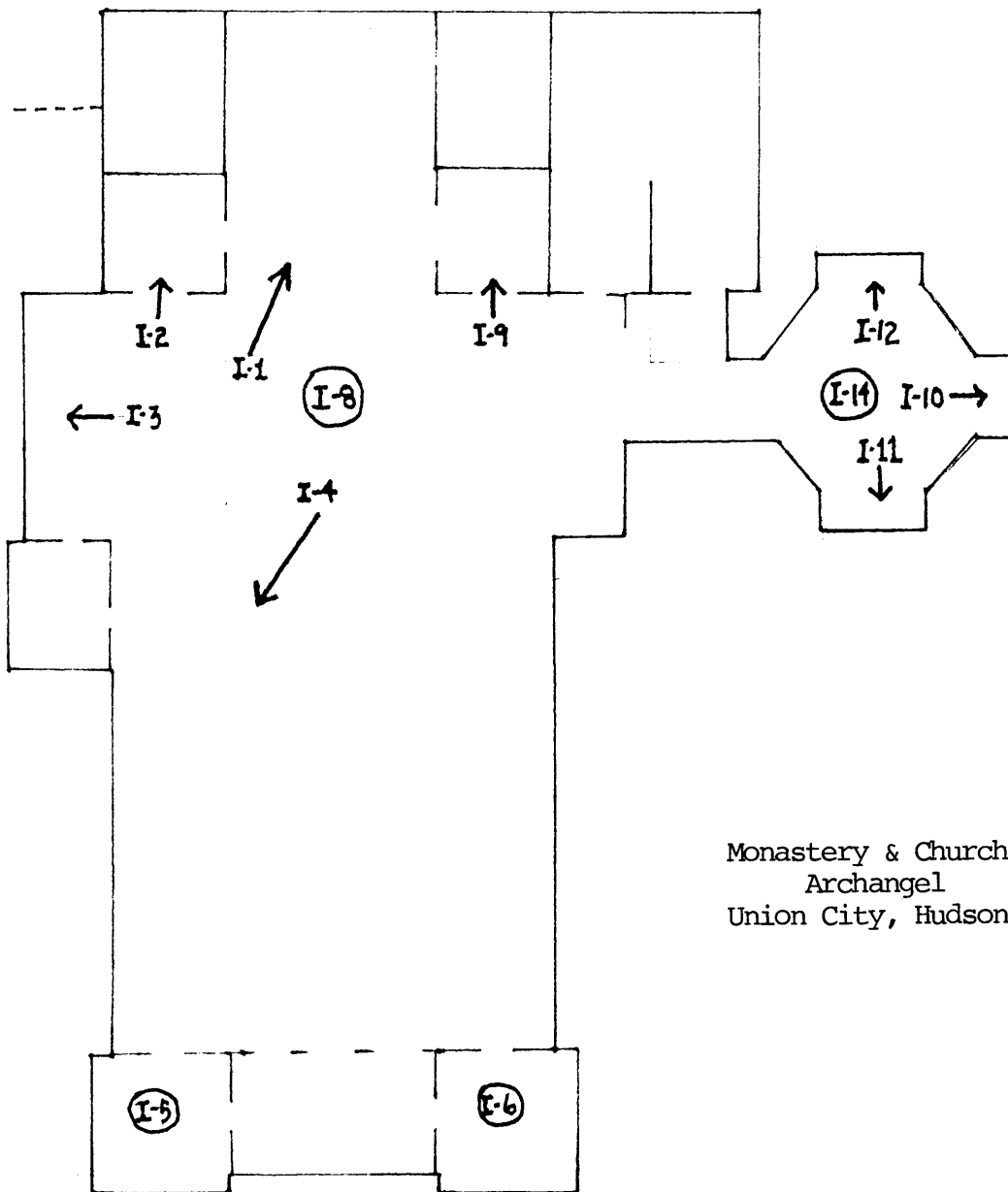
Monastery & Church of St. Michael the Archangel  
Union City, Hudson County, NJ

MAP B: STRUCTURE KEY



Key to Interior photographs.

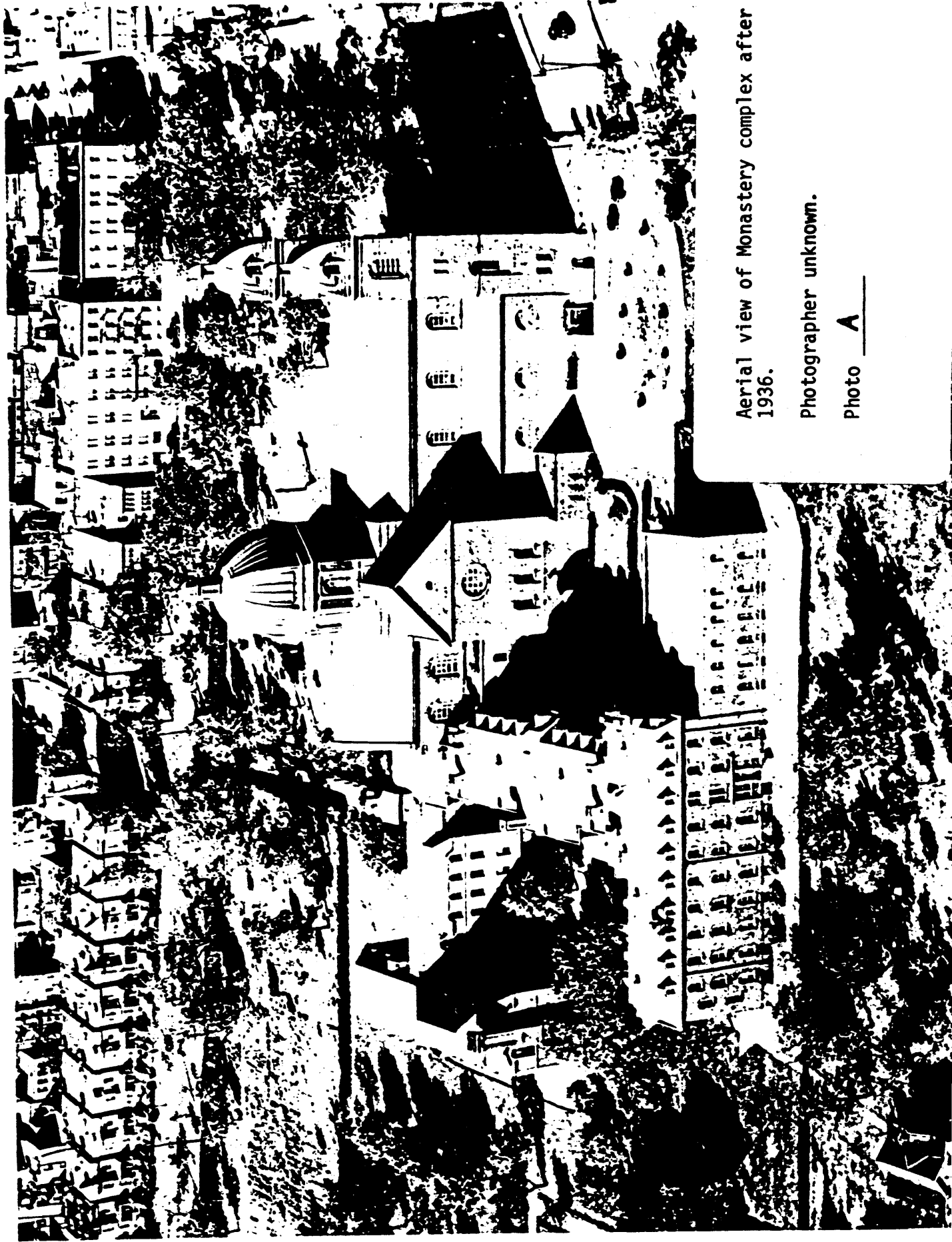
Rough scale 1" = 33 feet.



Monastery & Church of St. Michael the  
Archangel  
Union City, Hudson County, NJ







Aerial view of Monastery complex after 1936.

Photographer unknown.

Photo   A