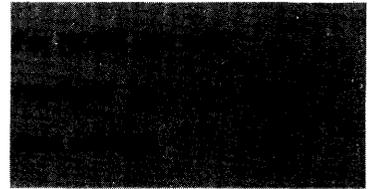


**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 St. Mary's Church, School and Convent

and/or common N/A

**2. Location**

U.S. 212

street & number Highway 212

N/A not for publication

city, town Zell (Faulk County)

N/A vicinity of

congressional district Second

state South Dakota

code 46

county Hand

code 059

**3. Classification**

**Category**

- district
- building(s)
- structure
- site
- object

**Ownership**

- public
- private
- both
- Public Acquisition**
- in process
- N/A being considered

**Status**

- occupied
- unoccupied
- work in progress
- Accessible**
- yes: restricted
- yes: unrestricted
- no

**Present Use**

- agriculture
- commercial
- educational
- entertainment
- government
- industrial
- military
- museum
- park
- private residence
- religious
- scientific
- transportation
- other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Multiple, see Continuation Sheet

street & number

city, town

\_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of

state

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Hand County Courthouse

street & number N/A

city, town Miller

state South Dakota

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title N/A

has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records

city, town

state

## 7. Description

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

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

The St. Mary's School, Church and Convent site consists of four structures and a cemetery in a seven acre site, which lies south of Highway 212. The community of Zell lies to the north, across the road. The features are all either historical or architectural landmarks.

St. Mary's convent was built in two sections. The first section was built in 1883 and is a rectilinear mass of two stories facing south. Five bays on the axial facades, the building's south facade is divided into three bays. Constructed of frame, the convent is covered with a gable roof, and supports a square belfry with plain louvered sides, an elongated concave roof shingled with cedar in decorative patterns and crowned with a cross over the south facade. An enclosed south porch protects the entrance and has a short mansard roof with fishscale cedar shingles and a flat deck. First floor windows are divided into four lights; the flat tops are ornamented with label molds. Second floor windows are also four-light but have segmental arches covered by label molds. The full-sized center window in the south gable is double-sash and flanked by smaller, square, single-sash windows. Each sash has a border of stained glass set in square muntins; all are covered with simple segmental pediments filled by central bullseyes and flanking raised panels similar in style to the upper back rail of Renaissance Revival furniture of the period. Three small, gabled dormers with four-light windows are evenly spaced on both sides of the roof, placed midway up the slope. To the north end of the convent a large rectilinear addition was added in 1911-12, placed lengthwise to form the upper bar of a "T" in plan. The two-story frame addition has four bays on the east, west, and north sides and on the south facade, where it joins with the earlier structure. Room allowed for one opening on the first floor where it projects beyond the older structure. The broad hip roof is dominated by large dormers on the east, west, and north facades which rise from the wall plane and are themselves covered with low, pitched hip roofs. An entrance porch is enclosed on the south end of the east facade of the 1911-12 wing, and another enclosed porch was added into the corner formed by the old and new wings on the west facade. Fenestration is similar to the older structure, but more plain. Both floors have single-pane, double-sash windows with shallower segmental arches on the second floor and less pronounced label moldings. Dormer windows repeat the design of those in the south gable: a full-sized, double-hung window in the center is flanked by smaller square openings with a single sash. Also like the ornamentation of the windows in the south gable, the flat lintels have segmental arched tops and are ornamented in the manner of those in the south gable. Here, however, the glass is set within wood muntins in a diamond pattern. Three chimneys rise on the eastern side of the building near the ridge line. A small covered entrance has been added on the front of the south porch next to the main entrance. The plain interior of the older wing has a central hall running from the south entrance to the center of the building with a stairway built on the side of the hall. Classrooms and offices were on the first floor and the upper floors divided into dormitory rooms. The 1911-12 addition has a stairhall across the south where it joins the older structure; the remaining space is divided by a folding door into two large classrooms on each floor. The rooms can be joined by opening the large folding doors. A full basement under the two wings contained workrooms and mechanical rooms, a kitchen and refectory.

The first Rectory, constructed in 1884, lies directly east of the Convent. It is a vernacular "T" form. A frame structure supports the two gable roofs. The roof of the

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eastern wing flattens on both the north and south sides to cover the porch which wraps around three sides of the ell, and across the face of the west wing. The porch has solid walls below the baluster level which are covered with clapboards. Above this are turned posts and simple brackets carved on a jigsaw. Double-hung windows light the second floor from each gable end of the west wing while the first floor is lit by windows under the porches. One window on the west wall has been removed, and small recent windows have replaced those of both floors under the north gable. Doors open onto the porches, and onto the enclosed entrance porch added to the west facade. One chimney rises from the center of the roof of the west wing.

The second Rectory, constructed in 1905, lies northeast of the Convent and between the first Rectory and the church. A common Midwest plan for the period, the house is a two-story, frame cube covered by a low-pitched hip roof. A large enclosed porch with a slightly raised hip roof wraps across the west and south facades on the first floor, and another enclosed porch with a shed roof is visible on the north facade. The second story of the west facade has four windows with the middle two grouped together and the second story of the south facade has three windows randomly spaced. A wide dormer with a hip roof rises from the center of the west facade, and a chimney is on the east side of the roof.

St. Mary's Church, designed by Joseph Schwartz, lies on the northern end of the complex and is entered from the west, following liturgical practice. A corner tower with a broach spire rises from the northwest corner; the rectilinear church is covered by a large roof with a hip on the west end and a gable on the east, over the apse. Narrow clapboards cover the frame walls while the roof of both church and tower have cedar shingles. The tower rises in three stages and is capped by the spire. The double-hung windows with square label moldings are placed on the north and west sides of the first stage of the tower. Above a flared beltcourse both faces of the second stage contain a cluster of three elongated lancets joined together and covered with label moldings. Higher still is a wide band of paneling in a Gothic design. The third stage also flares at its base and as it is free on all four sides, each have a cluster of three lancets similar to those below but filled with louvres and with quatrefoils set into the heads of the arches. Each wall of the third stage of the tower tapers inward giving the tower its bulbous appearance. The narrow eaves of the spire, supported with simple brackets, extend only as far as the wall plane of the lower stages. Adjoining the tower on the west facade is an enclosed entrance porch with a shed roof broken by a gable in the center. Double doors with a four-centered, arched transom extending into the small gable are flanked by double-hung windows. Above the porch a large, three-light Gothic window extends into a central gable, decorated with Gothic bargeboards. To the right of the gable, three, small casement windows are tucked under the bellcast eaves of the hip roof. There is a single lancet below. Both the north and south walls have four, large, two-light Gothic windows and the wall is divided by a slight flair at the level where the arches spring. With its southern roof joined to the slope of the main roof, a sacristy projects from the southeast corner of the church; this small appendage has a gable roof, a door facing south and a double-hung Gothic window in the center of the north, east and on the narrow or west facades. A chimney rises against the east wall of the church between the sacristy and the shallow apse.

# 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 type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates**

**Builder/Architect**

Builder - Herman E. Stolte  
Architect - Joseph Schwartz

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Specific dates: Convent, 1883, 1911-12  
First rectory, 1884  
Church, 1905  
Second rectory, 1910

St. Mary's Church, School and Convent are significant in the areas of architecture, education and religion. The convent was the first motherhouse of the Benedictine Sisters in South Dakota and the school was an early attempt to provide parochial education in the rural northeast area of the state. Of primary architectural significance are the oldest wing of the convent and St. Mary's Church. Both rectories are representative of common vernacular types of their period in this region. Joseph Schwartz, the architect of the St. Mary's Church, was one of the first architects to reside and work in the state. Other important works of Schwartz include St. Peter & Paul in Dimock, 1908, and the Sioux Falls Carnegie Library of 1903 (listed on National Register). St. Mary's Church is significant for its blending of Queen Anne and Gothic features. For a rural parish in this state the design is highly sophisticated and unusual, and the style is a rare departure from the Germanic Gothic Revival which was used almost exclusively by the Roman Catholics into the 1920s in Dakota.

Bishop Martin Marty, the pioneer Catholic leader of South Dakota, sought to establish a convent in the state to train religious teachers for the Indian schools. He was aided in his plans by a group of fifty devoted Austrian immigrants who in 1881 pledged to erect a convent and school at Zell. Two sisters, Radegundo Vogel and Jodoka Villiger departed their home convent at Maryville in Missouri, came to Zell and claimed land. Like any other settlers they lived in claim shacks the first year. They were soon joined by five new sisters. Financial hardships plagued the school throughout its history. In the early years the sisters taught in the public school to offset poverty. Yet despite the difficulties, the convent was erected in 1883. A rectory was built the following year. Bishop Marty called upon the sisters to open a school for parish children in 1886, the year Zell was platted.

These early years, however, were so difficult that when space became available in Yankton, the sisterhouse moved into quarters there. By 1890 the Zell convent was closed. This did not end the sisters' activities in Zell; five years later they were once again teaching in the convent school. Enrollment was so large that in 1911-1912 the convent was enlarged. In order to keep the school going the sisters began farming on the land in 1915 and continued the operation until 1963 when the school closed.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

NOT NOT VERIFIED

The Redfield Press, October 14, 1976, September, 1963.  
pamphlet, Souvenir of Zell, South Dakota, 1883-1908. no author

REFERENCE NOT VERIFIED

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 7

Quadrangle name Zell

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A 

114	5211	41010	419	711	31010
Zone	Easting		Northing		

B 

114	5211	51310	419	711	31010
Zone	Easting		Northing		

C 

114	5211	51410	419	711	01010
Zone	Easting		Northing		

D 

114	5211	41510	419	711	01010
Zone	Easting		Northing		

E 

Zone	Easting		Northing		

F 

Zone	Easting		Northing		

G 

Zone	Easting		Northing		

H 

Zone	Easting		Northing		

Verbal boundary description and justification See continuation sheet.

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title John Burrows and Carolyn Torma

organization Historical Preservation Center

date 13 July 81

street & number University of South Dakota

telephone 605-677-5314

city or town Vermillion

state South Dakota 57069

# 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*James A. Fullerton*

title Director, Office of Cultural Preservation

date May 3, 1982

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

*William H. Brahm*

date 7.19.82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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The parish church's history is also one of setbacks. The sisters deeded ten acres of land to the parish in 1886. The church was begun in 1884, but due to financial hardship was not completed. Finally in 1905, the building was erected over the the 1880 s basement. The last structure, the second rectory, was completed in 1910.

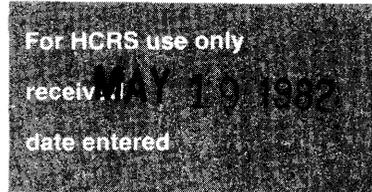
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This site is composed of two tangential rectangles, the first is the graveyard and the boundary is delineated by the fence. The rectangle to the north shares the fence and extends westward in a line from there to an imaginary line 30 meters west of the west wall of the convent. The east boundary extends from the east cemetery fence north to the highway. The west boundary lies 30 meters west of the convent and extends north to the highway. The south curb of Highway 212 forms the north boundary. The site is located in NE 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of Section 2, T116N and R66W, Hand County.

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St. Mary's Church, School and Convent

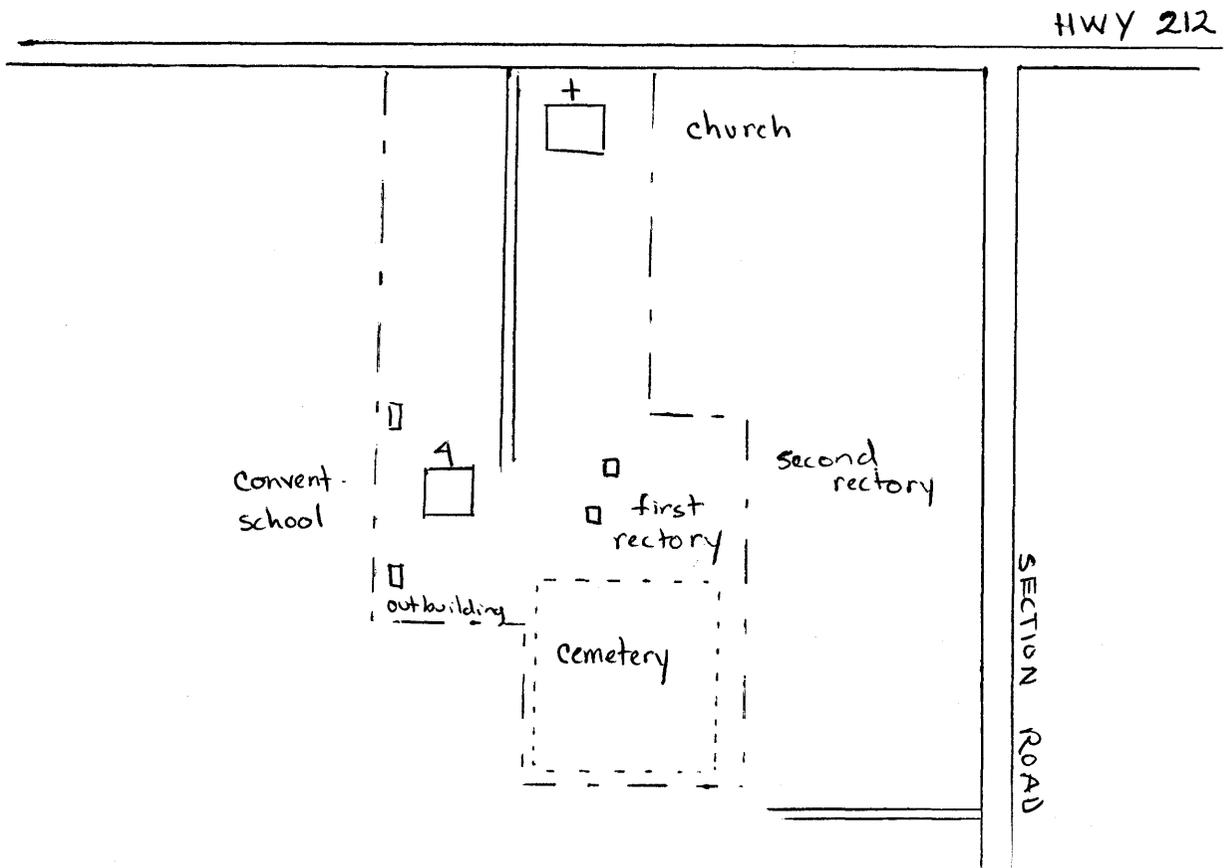
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TOWN OF ZELL



↑  
N

ST MARY'S COMPLEX  
ZELL, SD

- - - - boundary

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Myron Gruenwald  
RR 2  
Redfield, SD 57469

(First Rectory)

James Gruenwald  
RR2  
Redfield, SD 57469

(First Rectory)

Reverend John J. Mulvaney  
and the Diocese of  
Zell, SD 57483

(Church and Second Rectory)

Mr. T. L. Bruning  
227 Palo Grande  
San Antonio, TX 78232

(convent-school)