

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	APR 3 1976
DATE ENTERED	APR 3 1976

**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



Immaculate Conception Church

(AHR Site FAI-030)

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

115 North Cushman Street

—NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Fairbanks

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

— VICINITY OF

at Large

STATE

Alaska

CODE

02

COUNTY

Fairbanks

CODE

090

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input 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	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input checked="" 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
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Catholic Bishop of Northern Alaska

STREET & NUMBER

1316 Peger Road

CITY, TOWN

Fairbanks

— VICINITY OF

STATE

Alaska

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

District Recorders Office, State Office Building

STREET & NUMBER

602 Barnette Street

CITY, TOWN

Fairbanks

STATE

Alaska

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Alaska Heritage Resources Survey

DATE

October 10, 1972

—FEDERAL STATE —COUNTY —LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Alaska Division of Parks

CITY, TOWN

323 East 4th Ave.

STATE

Senators: Ted Stevens/Mike Gravel Congressman: Don Young Anchorage, Alaska

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The present structure of Immaculate Conception Church is vernacular, accidental and eclectic. It has evolved over a period of years, primarily from 1904 through 1928. The nucleus of the present structure is the original rough frame house built hastily in September-October 1904. The site of that original structure was approximately 400 feet south of the present site, on the south bank of the Chena River. That was the first Roman Catholic church built in the interior of Alaska.

The original structure was of rough finished lumber, primarily of local origin. It measured 30 by 65 feet. That first autumn and winter there was no painting or finishing work -- little physical evidence to give the building identification as a church. The total cost of construction was \$6,512. The following spring and summer the living quarters were decorated and a library and reading room were opened.

In 1906 a church affiliated hospital was built across the river, set back several hundred feet from the river bank, which was occupied by a sawmill. A decision to move the church to the far bank of the river, to replace the sawmill, was executed in 1911. The church acquired the sawmill location. The old structures were torn down, the building site was cleared, basement area excavated, and a foundation frame was prepared to receive the original structure.

In late October 1911 the church on the south bank of the Chena was raised from its original foundation and prepared for relocation, at the same time the new site was being prepared to receive it. The contractor engaged for the moving job intended to bridge the river and move the building across the bridge. The cleric in charge thought otherwise and undertook the project himself.

The river had to be crossed diagonally, a distance of more than 400 feet. Two parallel lines were drawn on the ice, 30 feet apart, from one bank to the other, on the path along which the movement would take place. Holes were cut into the ice every 8 feet along each of these lines. Log sections were wedged into these holes and let freeze. The logs then were sawed to a height 2 feet above the ice to serve as piers to support the timber tracks on which the structure was rolled across the river, from the south bank to the north bank.

The north bank was steep, so the last step of the transit across the river was to raise the church 25 feet from the river's surface to the top of the newly prepared foundation. The move was executed and completed in mid-November. The weather, which had remained mild, turned bitterly cold, once the structure was set upon its new site. This structure has since served as the core for the subsequent development of the present main church structure.

In the spring of 1912 the rough basement excavation beneath the church was built into a parish hall and a separate residence building was constructed, leaving the church to serve wholly as a place of religious and ceremonial functions. Electric wiring was installed the summer of 1912.

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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input 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 1904 to present

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Rev. Francis Monroe, S.J.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In August 1904 the Rev. Francis Monroe, S.J., received orders at St. Michael, Alaska, to proceed to the gold rush camp at Fairbanks on the Chena River, and to build there a church to serve the emergent community. The discovery of gold in the Fairbanks area in 1902 had drawn prospectors from the boom towns that had emerged in the Klondike to the east and from Nome to the northwest. The town was in its second booming season. Choice lots in the center of the most occupied area of the town were no longer available. Father Monroe located a lot along the Chena River at the end of the built up area. His site had one most desirable characteristic. It lay along the main road to the major placer mining creeks.

Father Monroe begged funds to build his church and raised \$3,051.00 by the time he had secured a site. The following summer he raised an additional \$4,795.75, by continuing his personal solicitations, while traveling all over the placer creeks in his ministry. These funds paid for finishing the church inside and out, and for beginning the library and reading room.

When the impetus of the gold rush abated, the character of Fairbanks which emerged proved different from most other boom towns of the Klondike-Alaska gold rush era. Fairbanks had developed significant characteristics of permanency, which few other gold rush towns had. This element of permanency included her churches and their institutions, including the Immaculate Conception Church.

Construction of the hospital, across the river, was begun in 1906, also in response to vital needs of the emerging community. The subsequent move of the original church structure in 1911, across the Chena River to the hospital area, was designed to consolidate the main community services of the church onto contiguous sites. Even travel across the river was to be avoided during the long bitter cold winter months, which included twenty-hour nights at -60° f. So, the buildings were moved together. The functions of the hospital, the priests' residence, and parochial school (originally occupying the church basement), were then centralized in contiguous buildings.

The embellishment and decoration of the church, and the permanent additions and decorations over the years, reflected a constant level of increasing activity in support of the community's needs. The construction of military bases near Fairbanks during and after World War II -- Ladd Field (later Fort Wainwright) and Eielson Air Force Base -- called for additional support from the civilian religious community, and stimulated still further the role of the church in the growth of Fairbanks.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Golden Jubilee, Immaculate Conception Church. /Fairbanks, 1954/
 Archives, Catholic Diocese of Fairbanks, Alaska
 Church Records, Immaculate Conception Church, Fairbanks, Alaska

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	0 7	4 6 5 8 9 0	7 1 9 1 2 4 2	B					
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		
C				D					

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Commencing at a point 400.3 feet south from the N.W. corner of Block Four of the North Addition to Fairbanks, which said point is on the W. boundary of said block; thence N. 77° 47' E 91.8 ft. to a post; thence S. 11° 04' E. 155.2 ft. to a point on the S. boundary of said block; thence S. 54° 33' W. 34.7 ft; thence S. 62° 32' W. 65.0 ft. to the SW corner of said block; thence N. 10° 24' W. 186.2 ft. to the place of beginning.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Alfred Mongin
Architectural Historian
 ORGANIZATION Alaska Division of Parks DATE November 18, 1975
 STREET & NUMBER 323 East 4th Avenue TELEPHONE (907) 274-4676
 CITY OR TOWN Anchorage, STATE Alaska 99501

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE William M. Mervin

TITLE Deputy SHPO

DATE January 19, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
<u>Acting</u> <u>[Signature]</u> DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	DATE <u>4/3/96</u>
ATTEST <u>[Signature]</u> KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	DATE <u>3-30-76</u>
<u>Acting</u>	

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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RECEIVED	11/18/87
DATE ENTERED	11/18/87

Immaculate Conception Church

(AHRS Site FAI-030)

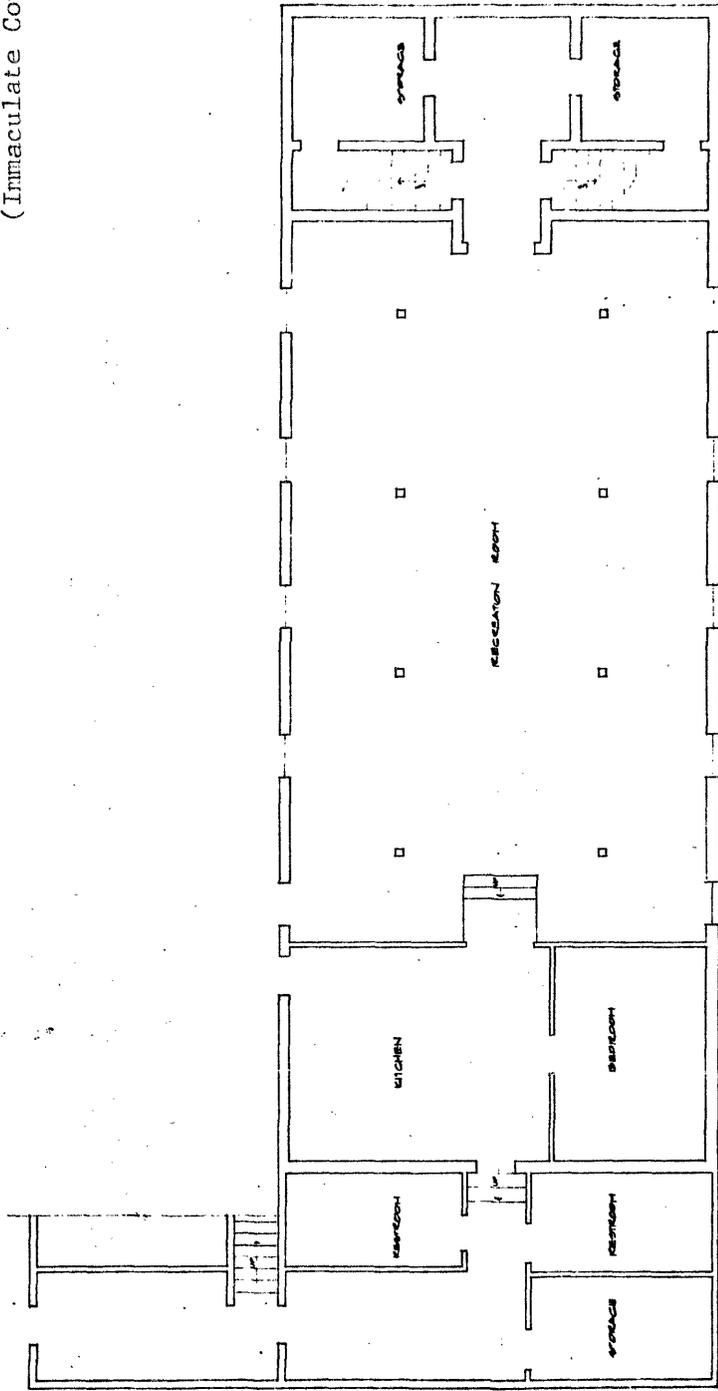
CONTINUATION SHEET

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Major additional construction was undertaken in the spring of 1914. The single-centre church tower and spire was built and a vestibule or lobby added to the front of the structure, separating the entry function from the main chapel. The walls were raised five feet in height, and the roof, while being elevated, was raised in pitch from 40° to 45°. A gallery was built for the choir, and the entire church was refinished with pressed decorative metal.

The stained glass windows were installed during the years 1926-1928, and major work of landscaping and planting of the lawn was completed. These renovations presented the church with the appearance and structure it retains to this time.

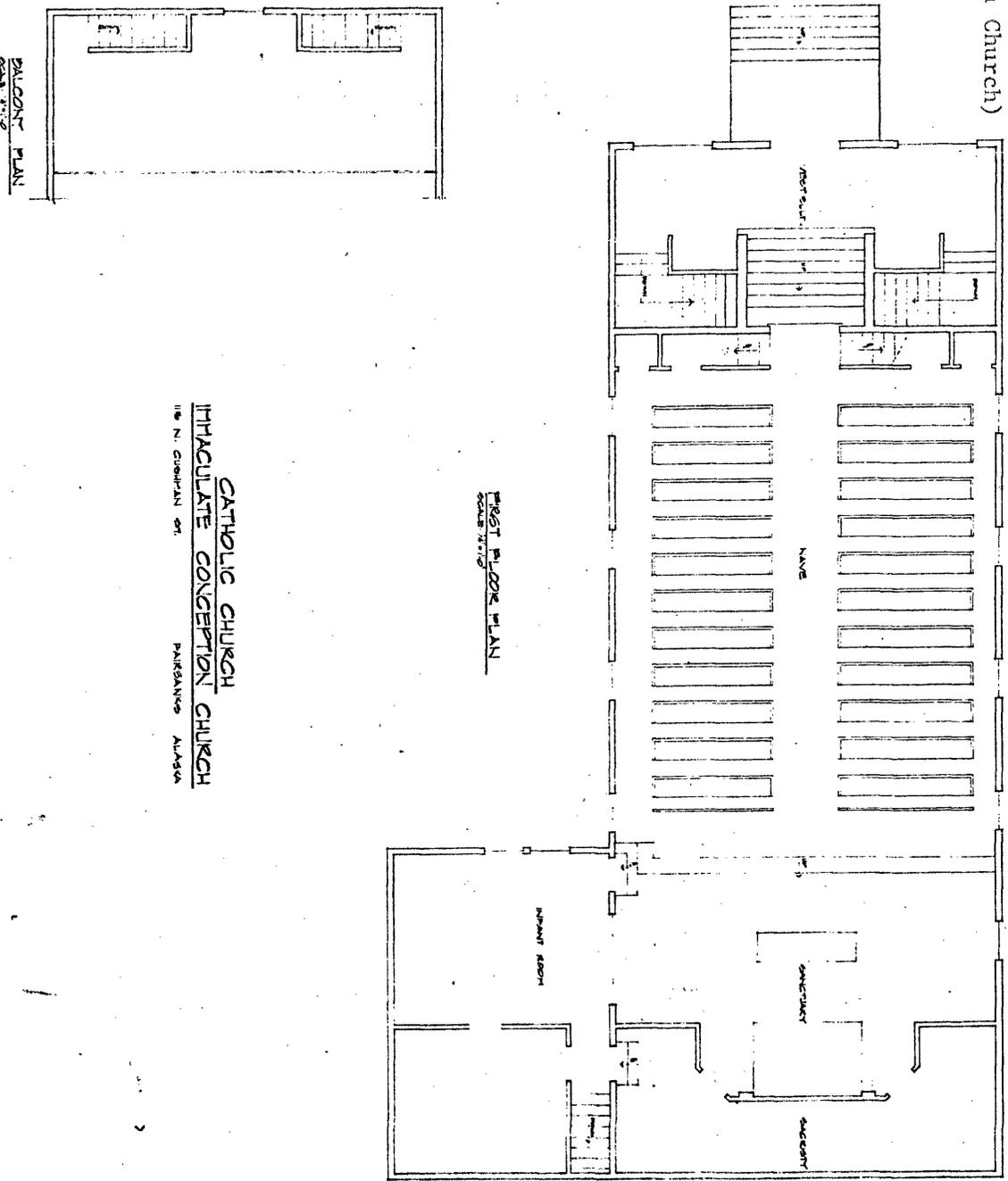
FILE: 3330-1
(Immaculate Conception Church)



BASEMENT PLAN
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

CATHOLIC CHURCH
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH
115 N. CUSHMAN ST. FAIRBANKS ALASKA

FILE: 3330-1
(Immaculate Conception Church)



CATHOLIC CHURCH
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH
110 N. CUSHMAN ST.
FAIRBANKS ALASKA

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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DATE ENTERED	APR 3 1976

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 11 PAGE two

and

Rev. Francis E. Mueller, S.J. - Chancellor
Roman Catholic Diocese of Fairbanks
1316 Peger Road
Fairbanks, Alaska