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NATIONAL REGISTER

Ala. Historical Commission

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Saint Matthew's Catholic Church  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 1200 South Marine Street  not for publication  
city, town Mobile  vicinity  
state Alabama code AL county Mobile code 097 zip code 36605

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

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

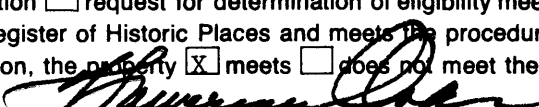
Number of Resources within Property

Contributing 1 Noncontributing 0  
\_\_\_\_\_ buildings  
\_\_\_\_\_ sites  
\_\_\_\_\_ structures  
\_\_\_\_\_ objects  
1 0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
Historic Roman Catholic Properties in Mobile, Alabama, 1848-1928

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.  
  
Signature of certifying official \_\_\_\_\_ Date 5-21-91  
Alabama Historical Commission (State Historic Preservation Office)  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

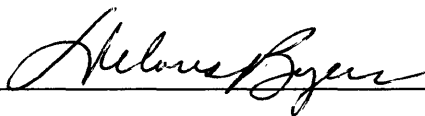
In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.  
Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

5. National Park Service Certification

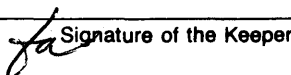
I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
- See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Entered in the National Register



7/3/91

 Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion/religious structure

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Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion/religious structure

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concretewalls Brick

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roof Ceramic tileother 

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**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

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Saint Matthew's Roman Catholic Church rests on the southwest corner of Marine and Garrity Streets in the south Mobile neighborhood of Oakdale. Indeed, an entire block is taken up by the church, church school, parish hall, rectory and parking. Only the church itself is historic and it of course dominates the block. It is a 3x8 bay, brick, 1½ story gable to the front Mediterranean Revival structure. The building's form includes a central 1½ story block with flanking one story wings. There is a concrete water table scored to simulate ashlar. The facade is dominated by a monumental inset arched opening with three sets of double wooden doors, a pair of one story fluted Ionic columns with full entablature which continues all around the building except for the rear and large stained glass lunette divided into three sections by two square pillars above the entablature. The entablature includes a decorative frieze band, dental blocks and egg and dart molding. There is an escutcheon either side of the lunette. The gable roof features exposed rafters and a red tile roof, with a small white cross on top. Round top stained glass windows are to either side in the one story wings and there are finial urns up top here. The side elevations feature round top stained glass windows in arched brick panels, creating an arcaded rhythm along the sides. There is one exterior brick chimney at the north rear.

At the south rear elevation is a four story square bell tower with a hip roof. The first section is delineated by the frieze band and includes paired rectangular windows in each face. The second section is delineated by narrow white belt courses and includes paired rectangular windows as well. The third section is plain brick while the fourth features a Palladian opening in each face with a bracketed balcony, all in white stone. The bell may be seen within and a cross is on top of the hip roof.

Saint Matthew's Church is entered through a vestibule and three pairs of double wooden doors with windows. The interior plan consists of a nave with two rows of pews and side aisles with pews. The aisles are delineated by Corinthian columns with full entablature (decorative frieze band, egg and dart molding). There is a clerestory over the nave with round top stained glass windows and a stenciled pattern of brown rectangular blocks with white and green bands running across the gabled ceiling at each bay and two bands run the length of the ceiling. Stained glass windows are along the length of each aisle, interspersed by sculptures of the

lx See continuation sheet

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Continuation Sheet**

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stations of the cross. There is a balcony above the entrance which features an arcaded Corinthian balustrade. The large stained glass lunette dominates. The chancery rail is the same as that of the balcony. The altar stands in the apse and there is a niche on each side. The apse ceiling features a painting of Christ on the cross and vine-like patterns.

Integrity

Saint Matthew's Catholic Church retains its integrity of location, design and materials. The only exterior changes of note are the concrete Art Deco cheeks on either side of the entrance steps added in 1941. Interior alterations are limited to the tile floor and sanctuary decorations which also date from 1941.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

1913  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1913  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

NA  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

NA  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder

Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Criterion C: Architecture

Saint Matthew's Roman Catholic Church is significant under National Register Criterion C as the finest Mediterranean Revival religious structure in Mobile. The building displays a high degree of style and workmanship in superior materials, so typical of Catholic architectural endeavors in Mobile. As is usual with religious architecture, St. Matthew's displays a higher degree of style than any of the secular buildings in the neighborhood.

\* \* \* \* \*

Saint Matthew's Parish was formed around 1900 as the southern sections of Mobile began to grow. The area up to that time had been lightly settled with scattered farmers. The land for the church was donated by one of the wealthier area families. Early Masses had been held in a simple frame building. Construction of a more ambitious building began in 1913, by which time some six hundred people belonged to the Parish.

Saint Matthew's Church was dedicated on 21 September 1913 and the Mobile Item noted "the new house of worship is considered one of the most complete in the diocese." Besides the usual duties of a Catholic Parish, Saint Matthew's ran a school from 1938 to 1974. After the closing of Brookley Field in the mid 1960s the Parish suffered from inner city blight. The church still conducts a Latin Mass at Saint Matthew's once a month.

Criteria Consideration A

Criteria Consideration A applies to St. Matthew's Church because of the building's high style and integrity. The church is a rare Mediterranean Revival religious expression in Mobile and displays a high degree of craftsmanship.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Mobile Item. 1913.

The Catholic Week. Friday, 23 November 1979

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

**Specify repository:**

Mobile Historic Development Comm.

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property Less than one

**UTM References**

A 

1	6
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3	9	8	6	6	0
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3	3	9	2	5	3	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

Begin at the SW corner of South Marine Street and Garrity Street, proceed thence W 200' to a point, thence N 106' to a point, thence E 156' to a point, thence in a SE direction 120' to the point of beginning.

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary has been drawn to include the church building without the attendant nonhistoric buildings on the property.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title John Sledge/Architectural Historian; Steven Kay/AHC Reviewer  
organization Mobile Historic Development Commission date 1 October 1990  
street & number P.O. Box 1827 telephone (205)438-7281  
city or town Mobile state Alabama zip code 36633

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number photo-  
graphs Page 1 Saint Matthew's Catholic Church

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1. St. Matthew's Catholic Church  
1200 South Marine Street
2. Mobile, Mobile County, Alabama
3. John Sledge, photographer
4. February 1990
5. MHDC Negative File--MB #177

Photo #	Description (Frame #)
1.	Facade. Camera facing W. (29)
2.	General. Camera facing NW. (30)
3.	Side elevation. Camera facing S. (32)
4.	Rear general. Camera facing NE. (35)
5.	Interior, nave. Camera facing W. (25)
6.	Same, south aisle. Camera facing W. (24)