

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

For NCRS use only

received SEP 30 1980

date entered

NOV 19 1980

1. Name

historic Church of St. Agnes

and/or common Church of St. Agnes

2. Location

street & number 548 Lafond Avenue _____ not for publication

city, town St. Paul _____ vicinity of congressional district 4th

state Minnesota code 22 county Ramsey code 123

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 Church of St. Agnes

street & number 548 Lafond Avenue

city, town St. Paul _____ vicinity of state Minnesota

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registry of Deeds, Ramsey County Courthouse

street & number 15 West Kellogg Boulevard

city, town St. Paul _____ state Minnesota

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic St. Paul Buildings has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1964 _____ federal _____ state _____ county local

depository for survey records St. Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development
25 West Fourth Street

city, town St. Paul _____ state Minnesota

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<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 type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Situated on the southeast corner of Lafond Avenue and Kent Street in St. Paul, the Church of St. Agnes is a monumental stone edifice executed in the Baroque Revival Style. The church occupies the western portion of the block, the remainder of which is apportioned to the rectory, convent, school, and parking lot. The church is the primary architectural element, although the entire block is organized into a unified complex.

The Church of St. Agnes was constructed in two stages. The first stage consisted of the construction of the basement level. This level is accessible from grade and has semi-circular window and door openings. The architect, George J. Ries, undoubtedly designed the basement with the design of the complete church in mind, as it is sheathed in Bedford limestone and conforms to the floor plan of the church above. The basement was occupied as a church from 1901 through 1908.

In 1909, Ries was directed to oversee the completion of the church. The first Mass was held in the completed structure in June of 1912.

The basic plan of St. Agnes takes the form of a Latin Cross with exceptionally short transepts. Contrary to popular practice in ecclesiastical design, the campanile (or bell-tower) is situated to the rear of the structure, at the epistle (right) side of the apse rather than on the principal facade. A vestibule projects slightly from the main body of the building and is approached by a monumental staircase and terrace. To either side of the narthex and slightly set back from the front facade are two low polygonal projections. The one on the right is the Baptistry and that on the left, slightly larger in scale, is the "Maria Hilf" or Blessed Virgin Chapel. The entire structure is sheathed in Bedford limestone and is crowned by a high, tile-covered Mansard roof. The roof of the tower is copper.

The exterior design is noteworthy in its utilization of Baroque architectural motifs. Bays are defined by two-story stilted Ionic pilasters; these are paired at corners. Window openings are semi-circular arched and embellished by heavily carved hoods and projecting surrounds. Pedimented gables are placed above the front vestibule and the transepts. The front gable is provided with a central recessed niche for statuary, whereas the gables on the transepts have central bulls-eye windows. Each gable is surmounted by an ornate cross and coped raking cornice; urn-shaped stone finials are placed on the frontables. Entrances are placed within columned portals with scroll-type broken pediments. Small sculpture niches are also located on the second level of the vestibule where they flank an ornate window for symmetrical accent.

The campanile rises 205 feet above grade line. It has an open belfry; the bells are visible through a balustraded and colonnaded arch on each face of the tower. A clock occupies the space above the arch and directly beneath the onion-dome. The onion-dome is, in turn, capped by an octagonal cupola and an ogee-curved spire with golden cross.

(see continuation sheet)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED	NOV 19 1980

Church of St. Agnes

CONTINUATION SHEET

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The interior plan is typical of the Latin Cross arrangement. Primary entry is gained either through the vestibule or directly into the narthex. The organ loft is located above the narthex and projects slightly into the nave. The length of the nave from the narthex to the communion rail is 132 feet 6 inches. The width of the nave is 72 feet 10 inches and is divided into a central double row of pews with two flanking side aisles. The ceiling is vaulted and supported by pillars and pilasters covered in scagliola with gilt capitals. A dome marks the crossing of the nave and transept; the dome rises 60 feet above the nave floor. The height of the nave is 50 feet. The nave ceiling is constructed of plaster on steel framing.

The walls of the nave and sanctuary are decorated with stencilled and marbelized patterns. The sanctuary is raised two feet above the nave floor and is flanked by secondary apses, altars, and an oratory. The present high altar was installed in 1930, and is in keeping with the Baroque style of the church.

The Church of St. Agnes continues to serve its parish and remains in a well-preserved state of architectural and historical integrity.

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 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 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 1901-1909-1912

Builder/Architect George J. Ries

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) Builders: John Fischer, Lauer Brothers, and John R. Schmitt

The Church of St. Agnes is significant as one of the truly outstanding examples of Baroque Revival ecclesiastical architecture in Minnesota. In addition, it is historically significant as a testament to the importance of religion in the life of the German-speaking Austro-Hungarian immigrant community of St. Paul. Constructed in a style frequently found in southern Germany, Austria, and Jugoslavia, the Church of St. Agnes is a well-known St. Paul landmark; its prominent onion-domed tower is visible from many distant vantage points. The present congregation comprises many decedents of the first parishioners, immigrants who had found employment in the Great Northern Railway's Dale Street shops, and who had constructed their church at great expense. At the beginning of World War I, St. Agnes parish was the largest German-speaking Catholic parish in Minnesota.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Silberne Priester-Jubiläum und an die Grundsteinlegung der neuen St. Agnes-Kirche,
 17 October 1909.
 Fiftieth Anniversary of the Church of St. Agnes, St. Paul, Minn., 1937.

10. Geographical Data

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED **UTM NOT VERIFIED**

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1
 Quadrangle name Sr. Paul East, MN Quadrangle scale 7.5

UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>5</u>	<u>4</u> <u>9</u> <u>0</u> <u>2</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>9</u> <u>7</u> <u>8</u> <u>2</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

Southeast corner of Kent and Lafond, St. Paul. Lots 1 through 5 and 16--25 of Smith's Subdivision of Block 2, 6, 7, & 8 of Stinson's Division of the NW quarter of Section 36, township 29 range 23.

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 Reverend Richard J. Schuler/Charles W. Nelson, Historical Architect
 organization Church of St. Agnes/Minnesota Historical Society date 29 May 1980
 street & number 548 Lafond Avenue/240 Summit Avenue-Hill House telephone 612/226-5103 / 612/296-9073
 city or town St. Paul/St. Paul state Minnesota

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 Russell W. Fridley
 title State Historic Preservation Officer date 9/24/80

For HCRS use only
 I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register
 Keeper of the National Register Forney W. Ran date 11/19/80
 Attest: Jessie Stant McClelland date 11-17-80
 Chief of Registration