

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JUN 21 1977  
DATE ENTERED DEC 12 1977

## 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 Roman Catholic Church  
AND/OR COMMON

### LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER  
430 North Johnson Street  
CITY, TOWN  
Port Washington  
STATE  
Wisconsin 53074  
VICINITY OF  
Ninth  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
COUNTY  
Ozaukee  
CODE  
089

### CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

### OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME  
St. Mary's Catholic Church Congregation  
STREET & NUMBER  
117 East Van Buren Street  
CITY, TOWN  
Port Washington  
STATE  
Wisconsin 53074  
VICINITY OF

### LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
Ozaukee County Courthouse  
STREET & NUMBER  
109 West Main Street  
CITY, TOWN  
Port Washington  
STATE  
Wisconsin 53074

### 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE  
Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places  
DATE  
1976  
DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS  
State Historical Society of Wisconsin  
CITY, TOWN  
Madison  
STATE  
Wisconsin 53706  
FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input 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

St. Mary's Church is constructed of rock-faced random ashlar limestone mined three miles to the north at the Druecker Stone Quarry. It is a simple Gothic Revival edifice with a gable roof, a center-front tower and a tall five-sided east apse flanked by one-story sacristies. Wall buttresses, corbelling, pointed-arch windows and corner parapets are the major design details. The buttresses and openings have been enriched by the addition of lighter Joliet marble trim. The tower features a rose window above the center entrance. An octagonal spire surmounts a cross-gable roof and both are decorated with metal finials. The three bells in the tower were purchased from a manufacturer in Cincinnati in 1875 and transferred from the old church. The tower clock was donated by the citizens of Port Washington and placed in operation in January, 1885.

The resplendent interior takes the form of a hall church and is enlivened by a full complement of stained glass windows in the form of double lancets decorated in non-representational designs. Pastel polychromy and gold leaf enhance the slender square piers and the vaulted ceiling, and is especially rich on the apse vault. A magnificently ornate high altar built by E. Hackner and Son of LaCrosse was added in 1912.

The church crowns the highest hill in Port Washington overlooking Lake Michigan and serves as the focal point for Port Washington's main street.

# 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 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 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 1882-1884

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Henry Messmer, Milwaukee

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church is significant architecturally on a local level. When it was dedicated on October 9, 1884, it was hailed as "a splendid structure, an ornament not only to the city but the entire state."<sup>1</sup> More importantly, it is one of the major landmarks of Ozaukee County, owing its preeminence to its imposing site. In Port Washington it is rivalled only by the tall smokestacks of the electric company's generating plant.

In 1847 the first Mass held in Port Washington was read to three families in the home of Franz Gengler. By 1849 the congregation had increased to twenty families and they decided to build a church. Their selection of a site on the top of "Lighthouse Hill," which overlooked Lake Michigan and the community at the end of its main street, was most propitious. From that time to the present the site has been known as "Church Hill." The congregation erected a small frame church on land donated by Hiram Johnson, one of the first settlers in Ozaukee County. In 1860, the congregation had already outgrown their tiny church and they erected a larger, stone church. In 1881 the parish had grown to 250 families and another new church was required. Henry Messmer, an architect from Milwaukee, was commissioned to design the new stone structure.<sup>2</sup>

Although Port Washington is by no means a one-church town, St. Mary's has experienced a close relationship with the community which at least partially is a result of the physical dominance of the structure. In the 1870's the school of St. Mary's served as the district school in an unusual, and indeed illegal, situation in which it received state public school monies to operate. This occurred sporadically in Wisconsin communities, especially in those dominated by the Church. The practice at St. Mary's ended in 1884 when some local citizens objected. In 1885 the community donated a clock for the tower of the church, undoubtedly because it was the most easily seen spot in town.

But the influence of St. Mary's has extended far beyond the city limits. The church bells can be heard for miles around and the shining cross on the top of the church continues to serve as a beacon for sailors on Lake Michigan. Because of the simple beauty of its architecture and because of its prominent site, the church has served, ever since its dedication, when "many people from out of town... attended the solemn ceremony," as an unofficial pilgrimage shrine for tourists from all over the country.<sup>3</sup>

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.66 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A 

1	6
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4	2	9	5	8	0
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4	8	0	4	4	7	0
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 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

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 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 12, 13, 14 and 15, Block 2, Northeast Addition to the City of Port Washington.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Katherine E. Hundt, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

January 11, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

816 State Street

TELEPHONE

608/262-2970

CITY OR TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53706

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE   

LOCAL X

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

*Rubene Peewey*

TITLE

Acting Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

6/13/77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Katherine E. Hundt*

DATE

12/12/70

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

*Charles A. Henry*

DATE

12.9.77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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CONTINUATION SHEET

See  
ITEM NUMBER below PAGE 1

8. Significance

1. Port Washington Zeitung, October 16, 1884, translated from the German by Viola and Anna Ubbink.
2. The Catholic Church in Wisconsin, Milwaukee: Catholic Historical Publishing Co., 1895-1898, p. 1138.
3. Port Washington Zeitung, October 16, 1884; and St. Mary's Congregation Centennial, p. 7.

9. Bibliography

St. Mary's Congregation, Port Washington, Wisconsin, Centennial, 1853-1953,  
Port Washington: Ozaukee Press, 1953.

Port Washington Zeitung, October 16, 1884, translated from the German  
by Anna and Viola Ubbink.

State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Historic Preservation Division,  
telephone and mail correspondence from Viola and Anna Ubbink, May 31,  
1975 to January 12, 1977.

The Catholic Church in Wisconsin, Milwaukee: Catholic Historical Publishing  
Co., 1895-1898, p. 1138.