

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 on a letter quality printer in 12 pitch, using an 85 space line and a 10 space left margin. Use only 25% or greater cotton content bond paper.

1. Name of Property

historic name Holy Hill
other name/site number Shrine of Mary, Help of Christians

2. Location

street & number 1525 Carmel Road N/A not for publication
city, town Town of Erin vicinity Hubertus
state Wisconsin code WI county Washington code 131 zip code 53033

3. Classification

Ownership of property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	contributing	noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>2</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>16</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>21</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
			<u>2</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

No. 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 X 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 X meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria. ___ See continuation sheet.

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official
State Historic Preservation Officer-WI

1/31/92
Date

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

entered in the National Register.
See continuation sheet

[Signature] 3/12/92

___ determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register.

___ other, (explain:)

[Signature] Signature of the Keeper Date

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

Religion/Religious facility
Landscape/Natural feature
Funerary/Cemetery

Religion/Religious facility
Landscape/Natural feature
Funerary/Cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(enter categories from instructions)

Romanesque

foundation Concrete
walls Brick
Steel
roof Asphalt
other Copper
Stone

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

General Description

Holy Hill is situated in the eastern part of the Town of Erin, Washington County approximately thirty three miles northwest of Milwaukee and seven miles southeast of Hartford. The main approach is from Holy Hill Rd. (167), seven miles west of Highway 41/45 and two miles east of Highway 83. Within a mile is Glacier Hills County Park, Daniel Boone Conservation League and Heilger Huegel Ski Club.

The linking hills of the Kettle Moraine, running through Washington County in a southwesterly direction, extend from near Green Bay to near Whitewater. The formations occurred when the Green Bay and Lake Michigan lobes merged and the glacial drift discharged formed a large moraine between the two lobes.¹ Geologically Holy Hill is a moulin kame, round and conical in shape, formed of gravel, sand, pebbles, cobblestones and boulders. Because this kame is built on the Kettle Interlobate Moraine and the moraine sits on top of the Niagara cuesta, Holy Hill is the highest and most picturesque peak in the chain of ridges and hills in the moraine region and the highest point in southeastern Wisconsin.² Kames were originally deposited in large holes (moulin) in the ice. The water washing into these holes filled them with sand and gravel, then when the ice melted, the material was left as a round conical hill or moulin kame. The ice, even in southern Wisconsin was probably 2,000 feet thick.

A mean of seven good barometrical observations taken by Increase A. Lapham, October 7, 1851, gave the elevation of Holy Hill's peak above Lake Michigan at 824 feet, add to that the height of that lake at 578 feet a total height of 1402 feet above the ocean and 275 feet above the surrounding grounds.³ In 1907 a more accurate

X See continuation sheet

¹Rex Peterson, Department of Geography_Geology, Wisconsin State University Whitewater, Geography of Wisconsin. Text and Workbook, (Madison: College Printing & Typing Co., Inc., 1965), 73.

²Ibid., 76.

³Increase A. Lapham, Civil Engineer, Antiquities of Wisconsin as Surveyed and Described, (Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1855), 40.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: nationally X statewide X locally

Applicable National Register Criteria X A B X C D

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

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

Religion

Architecture

Period of Significance

1914-1942*

1914 to 1938 *

Significant Dates

 X See continuation sheet

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Gaul, Hermann J.

Philipp, Richard

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

Holy Hill is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places at the state level as a site having significance to the history of religion (Criteria A). Holy Hill is important for the beauty of its location and its historical growth as a religious center. The church stands today as a concrete expression of the devotion and love of generations of pilgrims to the Virgin Mary, and as a grateful reward to the efforts of the early pioneers to preserve Holy Hill for religious purposes. Pilgrimage is historically important and continues today to be very important.

As contributing features to the site, the pilgrimage church and monasteries have local architectural significance illustrating early twentieth century Romanesque Revival style accommodated to monastic requirements (Criteria C). Though the style was primarily popular prior to 1900, the Holy Hill district portrays the perpetuation of traditional ecclesiastical design into the early twentieth century. The church and monasteries' design represent a later phase of the Romanesque Revival style when the style was firmly established in the architectural and religious community.

*The period of significance for Religion reflects the date of construction of the earliest extant building, and continues until 50 years prior to the present date

The period of significance for Architecture reflects the dates of construction for the contributing elements

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9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CRF 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 Building Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal Agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specific repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 21 Acres

UTM References

A	<u>1/6</u>	<u>3/9/2/4/0/0</u>	<u>4/7/8/8/8/8/0</u>	B	<u>1/6</u>	<u>3/9/2/3/0/0</u>	<u>4/7/8/8/4/5/0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>1/6</u>	<u>3/9/2/1/1/0</u>	<u>4/7/8/8/4/5/0</u>	D	<u>1/6</u>	<u>3/9/2/2/1/0</u>	<u>4/7/8/8/8/8/0</u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Point A lies at the N.E. corner of the S.W.1/4 of the N.W.1/4 of Sec. Fourteen, in Town Nine, Range Eighteen East, the starting point of a regular parallelogram. B is 1408' south and 317' west; C is directly west 634'; D is north 1408' and 317' east, and closes to A, 634' east. Sides AB and CD are 1460' in length. (See sketch map)

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

Holy Hill and all other elements on the nomination are enclosed. (See sketch map)

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Shirley du Fresne McArthur, Curator
organization North Point Historical Society date March 24, 1991; November 15, 1991
street & number Post Office Box 577 telephone (414) 271-2395
city or town Milwaukee state Wisconsin zip code 53201

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survey was conducted and found Holy Hill to be 1361 feet.⁴ Today, after two foundation excavations for the present shrine and its predecessor, the summit rises 1335 above sea level.⁵

Many government surveys were undertaken from Holy Hill: in 1873 the War Department determined the height of Lake Michigan; in 1881 the Treasury Department determined the base line between the Lakes Michigan, Superior and Mississippi; in 1891 the Department of Interior had a topographic survey; during World War I and again in 1953 when they placed a bronze tablet on the, so called, Blarney Stone, a huge boulder on Holy Hill a short distance from the Discalced Carmelite Cemetery.

Holy Hill is covered almost to its summit with a natural forest growth; for this reason its symmetry and commanding height are apparent only when viewed from a distance. White and red oak, elm, basswood, poplar, ash, hickory, groves of pine and an occasional white birch together with abundant shrubbery of hazel, sumac, wild plum, and hawthorn cover the hill.⁶

The shrine church and monasteries on its crest are visible from most directions evoking a sense of a European medieval fortress. (Photos 1 and 2) From the observation tower, at one hundred sixty feet above the summit, one can see an unobstructed view of the neighboring counties of Waukesha, Dodge and Milwaukee embracing miles of fields, woodlands, lakes and the broad fertile valleys of the Rock and the Oconomowoc Rivers. (Photo 3)

Holy Hill has always been a landmark in Wisconsin and the most popular religious shrine in the Midwest. In part, it is a veritable mountain in the midst of a comparatively level countryside, and in part, a symbol where more than half a million people yearly make the pilgrimage to its summit in search of spiritual renewal.

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⁴Wisconsin Oconomowoc Quadrangle, U.S. Geological Survey, George Otis Smith, Director; W. H. Herron, Geographer in Charge; Topography by A. T. Fowler. Edition, June 1909.

⁵United States Department of the Interior Geological Survey, Merton Quadrangle, photoinspected 1976.

⁶Landscape drawings of plants, shrubs, and trees set out around the new monastery and the Shrine Church. Dated 1938. Holy Hill Archives.

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Holy Hill and the shrine complex are synonymous. Use of the hill as a shrine dates from 1857 when the original oak cross was placed on its summit to the current church. The predecessor pilgrimage churches in the intervening years had to increase their size to accommodate increasing numbers of pilgrims. Since 1906, the caretakers of the hill have been the Discalced Carmelite Fathers who planned the cohesive grouping of architectural and artistic buildings and structures. They reflect the Carmelite community's ongoing effort to provide ministry to all who visit.

The Holy Hill district is built upon an elevated rural historic landscape and contains a Romanesque Revival church, Shrine of Mary, Help of Christians; two monasteries of the Carmelite community (the older monastery now serves as a retreat/guest house and public cafeteria); a Via Crucis which includes the entrance arch leading to fourteen carved life size outdoor stations; a small Carmelite cemetery; a replica of the Lourdes Grotto; a small hermitage, and a gift store/ guest house/ elevator tower/ esplanade complex.

Shrine of Mary, Help of Christians

Shrine of Mary, Help of Christians (1A on District Map) is a resplendent example of a pilgrimage church in Romanesque Revival style built in 1926-31. Bedford stone trim and walls of red Pennsylvania brick cover the steel skeleton.

The main body of the triple spired church faces roughly southwest and is essentially rectangular in plan with non-projecting transepts. There are four chapels within the church varying in size. The largest is the lower church known as the Chapel of St. Therese. Extending from each of the lateral arms of the church are the Sacred Heart Shrine and Our Lady of Holy Hill Shrine Chapels. The Oratory Chapel flanks the main altar on the left side. The church proper measures one hundred seventy by sixty-five feet wide with a cross-gabled roof and various other gabled roofed projections. The extreme facade width, including the towers at the southwest elevation is ninety feet and the rear northeast wall measures eighty. Arched corbel tables in brick decorate the facade, resting on pilasters at the gable returns on the main elevation.

The intersection of the transept/nave is surmounted by a copper clad wooden fleche rising to one hundred forty-four feet. The twin towers flanking the entrance are one hundred seventy-two feet including iron crosses. The side aisles framing the nave have a single slope or lean-to roof built against the vertical wall of the nave and quadrant vault ceilings. There are six bays in the nave with stained glass windows at ground level and larger windows in the clerestory.

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Abutting the northeast end wall is a gabled apse flanked by sacristy and oratory wings. High in the gable end of the apse, is an oeil-de-boeuf window; beneath it is a pedestaled carved stone statue of Christ on a fifteen foot cross under a triangular canopy supported by scroll brackets. (Photo 4) There is a two story projecting ambulatory, closed by a straight end wall with three wall dormers and balanced double-hung rectangular windows below. It spans the breadth of the apse and joins the wings. Attached to the Oratory Chapel of the main church on the northerly side, is the 1937 monastery. This entrance provides the friars ease in accessing the sanctuary in all seasons for church services. Adjoining the church off the sixth floor is the choir room, above the Oratory Chapel, where the friars chant at various times of the day, beginning at five o'clock in the morning.

Due to the peculiar formation of the apex of the hill, the church does not stand in true line with the primary points of the compass, thus the facade faces roughly southwest. Due also to its conical shape, the top twelve feet was leveled and on the platform came the 1881 church. When that church was dismantled September 9, 1925, another twenty feet was graded off for the current church built between 1926 and 1931.⁷ The monumental task of building the upper and lower church required a skip hoist cable track running up the steep incline of three hundred feet on the easterly slope of the hill to haul the materials.⁸

There are two separate church entrances: one for the main or upper church dedicated to Mary and one for the lower church, Chapel of St. Therese. The lower church was begun in 1926 and the corner stone placed on the near east side above the ground level church August 22, 1926. On November 7, 1927, the exterior of the church was completed and the first service celebrated in the lower church was on July 15, 1928. Further interior work was stopped in October 1929, due to the Depression and the consequent lack of funds. Dedication ceremonies were held on July 19, 1931.⁹

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⁷"Holy Hill Cornerstone Laying", Catholic Herald, August 28, 1926, p. 3.

⁸Photo postcard of hoist in Carmelite Photo Album.

⁹Discalced Carmelite Fathers, History of Holy Hill (Milwaukee: Discalced Carmelite Fathers, 1933), 36.

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The facade is well composed and symmetrical, made up of two substantial square towers flanking the projecting gabled nave. The frontispiece is composed of polygonal pillars joining a gabled tympanum which is topped by a cross. The pillars have crocketed pinnacles. The compound arched cut limestone gabled entrance is enriched with molded jambs and archivolt. This ornamental Romanesque portal was constructed by building the arch in steps, or breaks, each one wider than the one before it. Each ornamental step is carved and small Corinthian columns or jamb shafts are placed in the reentrant angles. The balanced medieval derived moldings are separated by bands of floral and leaf designs. Networks of interlacing lines represent the spread of the gospel worldwide. These design motifs are repeated in the canopy of the High Altar. The transom is glass with tracery of an enclosed circle above elongated arches. The paired wooden entrance doors each have three elongated narrow lights in the upper half, and the lower is paneled.

Above the frontispiece are three round headed windows topped by a sixteen foot "rose window". On each side of the centered window composition is a canopied stone niche fifty feet above the lower church floor line with statues on high pedestal standards. The niches were unadorned until 1955. Sketches were made by Tony Moroder of Moroder Studios for two seven foot double pure white Carrara marble statues of St. Mary on the Epistle side of the church and St. Joseph on the Gospel side.¹⁰ A centered oculus window encircled by double arched stone, is positioned high in the gable. At the cornice arched corbel tables are used extensively as a design element. (Photo 5)

Originally there was an elaborate Renaissance styled horseshoe shaped staircase leading to the church entrances. (Photo 6) Centered in the U form was the arched entrance to the lower church which tunneled to a doorway identical to the tower doors. The chapel or lower church entrance was not apparent from a distance then or now. In the early 1960s when the elevators, gift store and esplanade were built the stairway was demolished. Many expressed regret; however, the elevators have made it easier for the elderly and handicapped to visit the shrine. In 1981 an inaccessible area was landscaped into a low inclined walkway from the upper parking lot to the lower church to facilitate the flow of able pilgrims. (Photo 7)

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¹⁰Communication from The International Statuary and Altar Company, The Moroder Studios, dated August 9, 1955 and signed by Tony Moroder. The statues were added during construction of the Shrine Chapel in 1956. Holy Hill Archives.

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Flanking the vestibule entrances at both levels are two staged towers of lofty proportions, with arches, setbacks, and horizontal belt courses of projecting cut stone at the stages. Each tower has an entrance door at ground level and is decorated at the top with a collection of turrets, gables and stone balconies. Octagonal spires of the twin towers rise one hundred and sixty feet from the base, topped with twelve foot iron crosses. The bell tower on the left has a 1200 pound bell purchased in 1885 from McShane & Co. of Baltimore¹¹ and a 450 pound bell from E. W. Vanduzen Co., Cincinnati.¹² There are six cast iron standards in the bell tower for the bell supports. The observation tower on the right contains approximately 170 steps winding up to the open panoramic viewing platform under the stone balcony. (Photo 8)

There are two broad transept gables, fifty two feet wide, flanked by pinnacled buttresses which embrace a rose window within an arched window composition. Centered under the large round arched window, are gabled chapels of unequal size extending laterally. Originally the chapels were almost square. The special votive Shrine Chapel on the southeasterly side elevation was originally designed to be fifteen feet wide by thirteen feet deep and then enlarged to forty feet wide and fifty feet deep in 1956 by Chicago architects Gaul & Voosen, son and nephew of Hermann Gaul.¹³ (Photo 9) The foundation is poured concrete and the basement is six feet high. The first level storage room has a nine foot high by eleven foot wide overhead door on both sides. The overhead doors are flanked by three part wood frame and sash windows. The original gable of the transept was left intact. The peaked asphalt roof extension has a copper ridge and saddle, copper moldings, cornice and gutters. There are four eight foot round arched stained glass windows on the southwest side, and three on the northeast side with aluminum frames and ventilators. They were designed and fabricated by van Treek Studios, Munich, and in place in 1958.

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¹¹The bell was purchased for the 1881 church. However, it was too heavy for the steeple and a substantial tower was erected southeast of the church. It measured fourteen feet square and rose thirty-five feet high. Harry H. Heming, The Catholic Church in Wisconsin, (Milwaukee: Catholic History Publishing Co., 1896) p. 977.

¹²Letter dated March 3, 1909 from E. W. Vanduzen Co. A smaller 250# bell hangs in the cupola of 1919-1920 monastery. Holy Hill Archives.

¹³Blue prints of Shrine Chapel, Gaul & Voosen, 1955 Addition. Holy Hill Archives.

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The chapel terminating the north transept is known as the Sacred Heart Chapel and is the smallest of the four chapels and maintains its original dimensions of approximately fourteen by fifteen feet. It has a vaulted ceiling. The mensa and retable is of Botticino marble with a bas-relief carving of wheat sheafs and grapes with a honed background. It stands on a platform of Kasota stone. The statue and furnishings were designed and executed by The Moroder Studios.¹⁴ Above the statue is a mosaic icon of Our Lady of Pochaiv donated by the Ukrainian Eastern Rite in 1976. In the mid 1980s the Sacred Heart Shrine back wall was stenciled and gilded in gold tones. According to Conrad Schmitt Studios, "The character of decoration and ornamentation within this structure is based on the quiet orderliness of the Romanesque structure from which this architectural form was designed."

The fleche surmounts the crossing of the aisle and transept, rising from the intersecting roofs. The main frame of the fleche is of steel, similar to the twin towers. All sheathing for the entire exterior and part of the interior is of yellow pine flooring bolted to the steel frame. The copper cladding is 16 oz. crimped copper. The fleche rises one hundred and forty-four feet from the roof. The entire rear elevation has a copper cornice, ridges, flashing, gutters and moldings.¹⁵

Architect Hermann J. Gaul selected a twelfth century window motif of paired lights with a round opening in the plane above as a design motif used extensively on the exterior walls. Other distinctive details are the concentric moldings used as decorative features in the arches. All windows, some coupled, are round-arched. Some are accentuated with irregular cut limestone punctuating the jambs suggesting a variant of the Gibbs surrounds; others are enclosed in recessed brick arches.

The church structure is based upon a poured concrete foundation to carry the brick walls, and reinforced concrete spread footing pads to support the steel frame skeleton. The first floor of the church is terrazzo surfaced reinforced concrete supported by steel columns and beams. Additional columns are required to provide support for the first floor, which has an open width of sixty-five feet. These columns are evident in the lower church. Above the first floor and beginning at the eave plate line, the steel columns support a major truss system, designed to carry the roof and the suspended main vaulted ceilings. The bell towers are also supported by a steel column and beam system, resting upon heavily reinforced concrete footing pads.

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¹⁴Contract between The Moroder Studio and Discalced Carmelites of Holy Hill, dated July 10, 1950, Holy Hill Archives.

¹⁵Architectural blue prints by Hermann J. Gaul, 228 Superior St. Chicago, dated July 11, 1926. Holy Hill Archives.

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In addition, there is a separate footing and foundation system for support of the main altar. The interior columns are variously furred with cement, tile or bricks, and covered with decorative marble/plaster cast work or capitals according to location. The outside wall columns, beams and side braces are covered in brick and/or limestone. The structural steel skeleton is totally concealed by the various architectural materials. Of note, from the church plans, is careful foundation alignment required to conform with the sloping ground line after partial removal of unconsolidated materials from the hilltop. Messrs. H. Schmitt & Son of Milwaukee were the contractors of the church and Milwaukee Structural Steel assembled the skeleton.¹⁶

The Interior of the Upper Church

The main entrance opens into a fourteen foot deep by forty-four foot wide vaulted vestibule which has three entrances to the rectangular three aisled nave. The narthex or vestibule ceiling height reaches the floor of the gallery above. The nave and sanctuary have a forty-three foot ceiling with quadripartite vaults. At the transept crossing are ribbed vaults in sexpartite divisions. From the gabled transepts project two chapels: the Shrine Chapel on the southeast, and the smaller Sacred Heart Chapel on the northwest.

On each side of the nave is a single aisle and the divisions are made by arcades of nave piers with engaged shafts. The side aisle vaulted ceilings are lower than the nave. Plaster ornamentation on the capitals of the columns are mainly foliated and varied, some embellished with acanthus leaves, and some have young faces interspersed. The decorative capitals seem to have come from several different workshops. Some of the marble clad columns and piers are clustered, some square and some cylindrical; all articulated to carry the springing of the main arches and those that span the aisles. Above the arcades are clerestory windows. Greek wrought-iron letters are set into the hanging ceiling lamps in the nave that collectively spell out Hodegetria. Translation: Hod means "way" and egetria is "feminine leader or guide". In reference to Mary it means she is the guide of the "way" and leader for all pilgrims who search for the way or truth. (Photo 10)

All the stained glass windows were designed for the church by Frank E. Larscheid (1885-1944) and executed in Munich, by Gustav van Treek Studios. They portray biblical lessons and sermons on the life of Mary from birth to her coronation in heaven. The fourteen clerestory windows, seven on each side elevation, depict Mary's personal life and the two larger windows at the transept illustrate her relationship

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¹⁶Ibid.

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to the Order. At the main floor level are eighteen small windows, nine on each side, set in threes, symbolic of Mary's magnetism. The remaining ten paired windows, four on the south elevation and six on the north, have to do specifically with the rosary. The rose window above the gallery gives homage to the Immaculate Conception and the sanctuary side windows depict the Lamb of God and the Pelican, Christian symbols for Christ. Restoration and removal of the antique stained glass windows began in the summer of 1987 for releading and repair of bulging and buckling glass. The project is nearing completion. Application of exterior protective glass was also a part of the restoration.

Six confessionals of white oak occupied various recesses along the side walls of the church. They have been removed allowing unobstructed view of the eye level windows. Replacing the confessionals is a Reconciliation Room in the left tower. The pews are also in white oak with five different carved end designs; the monogram of the Holy Name, the Lily of Purity, Alpha and Omega monogram, three-leafed clover, and the Shield of Faith.

Romanesque in style, the main altar was designed in 1929 by Frank Larscheid, well-known Milwaukee artist and creator of ecclesiastical designs, "for churches and cathedrals throughout the nation".¹⁷ The decorative furnishings of Shrine of Mary, Help of Christians were also his inspiration and include the pews, votive stands, candlesticks, sanctuary lamp, Shrine Chapel altar and aureole of Mary and Child, communion rail, all the lighting fixtures, tabernacle, and throne.¹⁸ His work is teeming with symbolism and allegorical references gleaned from the study of cathedrals and monasteries of Europe.¹⁹ Mr. Larscheid was born in Minneapolis and received his art education at the Minneapolis School of Fine Arts under Professor Koehler. He also studied under Robert Tate Giles of London when he decided to go into designing stained glass.²⁰ From 1909 to 1918 he headed the art department of the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Works. He was with the Conrad Schmitt Studios in the early 1920's before founding his own company.²¹

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¹⁷"Artist Prays, Then Creates Masterpiece", Milwaukee Sentinel, January 5, 1930.

¹⁸Family Records of F. E. Larscheid and interviews with Joseph T. Larscheid July 7, 8, 14; August 5, 1990.

¹⁹St. Francis Seminary Annual, 1923.

²⁰Ecclesiastical Review, May, 1923.

²¹B. M. Donohue, "Shorewood Man Designs Altar for Holy Hill Church", The Suburban Herald, August 16, 1929, p. 2.

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The main altar, together with all its components, weighs over forty tons requiring three five foot square piers to support the weight. Two years in design and fabrication, this splendid altar seventeen feet wide by thirty feet high utilizes costly marble, stone, bronze and mosaic work in artistic harmony.

The high altar is the very heart of the church possessing a wealth of sacred symbolism. Completely surrounding the altar is a ciborium executed in marble and Cardova stone. The crest molding on the Romanesque arch is reticulated and symbolic of eternal salvation. The other medieval designs are repeated in the compound arched facade entry described earlier. The four Roman columns supporting the canopy are red Verona marble with green marble bases; each column is sixteen feet long and weighs more than two tons each.

The mosaic panels of the altar measure seventy-six square feet depicting celestial angels releasing poor souls from purgatory. They were assembled in Munich.²² The work is carried out in 3/16ths and 5/16ths tessera cubes. The mosaic panels contain a total of 90,000 tesserae and were completed in the summer of 1931.²³

The reredos is Floradine marble having eight carved original compositions of the Doctors of the Church: St. Alphonse, St. Bonaventure, St. Augustine, St. Cyril, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Bernard, St. Peter Canisius and St. John of the Cross. The twelve foot altar table or mensa and front panels are of Botticino marble supported by six columns. (Photo 11)

Conrad Schmitt Studios were the church decorators of the 1881 church in the early 1920s. They painted the present shrine church in 1930 again in 1952 and 1984-85. Currently the back altar wall is in textured gold and covered with gold leaf. The walls and ceiling are finished in plaster applied on metal lath. The sanctuary vaulted ceiling was frescoed with an application of gold leaf. The story of creation was painted in seven separate spheres around the sanctuary archway in gold and cream tones. The rest of the wall space in the nave is painted in gradations of beige and tans complimenting the terrazzo floor of beige and gold orange fleck in narrow striped borders of green.

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²²Letter from Kurt and Gustave van Treek, Bayer Hofglasmalerei, Munich, dated May 24, 1932. Holy Hill Archives.

²³Contract between the Discalced Carmelites and Larscheid-vanTreek in Milwaukee and Schwindstrasse 3, Munich, Bavaria, May 1, 1930. Holy Hill Archives.

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Rising from the sanctuary floor are three steps of pink veined Kasota marble with an overall measurement of more than fifteen feet wide by eleven feet deep.

The communion rail is crafted from forged iron and bronze by Emil Lehmann with the Latin text: "Comedit et Bibet Elias et ambulavit in fortitudine ubi illius usque ad montem Dei. Induxi vos in terram Carmeli ut comederetis fructum ejus et optima illius". The communion railing symbolized the temple veil of the old testament. The inscription acts as encouragement to all the pilgrims who visit the Shrine of Mary. Translated it reads, "Elijah (Elias) ate and drank and walked in the strength of that food unto the mount of God. I have brought you into the land of Carmel to eat its fruit and the best things there of." (Photo 12)

There are two side altars: one dedicated to St. Teresa of Avila (1515-1582) who in 1562 initiated the primitive Carmelite discalced reform, (Photo 13) the other is to St. John of the Cross (1542-1591), first Discalced Carmelite friar, Doctor of the Church and great mystical theologian.²⁴ (Photo 14) Both altars were designed in 1947 by The Moroder Studios of Milwaukee representatives for Moroder Studios in Tyrol (Austria). They were made in Savonier in the Tyrol Province of Austria in 1948. The altars and predellas were done in Botticino marble. The reredos, framing section encasing the mosaics, was quarried in southern Tyrol, a light tone stone similar and in harmony with the existing main altar. The altars are approximately seven feet in the extreme width and sixteen feet in height. The rounded columns are Rosato-Mandorlato and the square forms under the altar columns match the existing main altar. The platforms are pink Kasota stone.²⁵

The oratory and sacristy rooms flank the main altar: the oratory on the left is used primarily for baptism, small weddings and for overflow crowds attending a particular liturgy. The four stained glass windows in the Oratory Chapel were designed by van Treek Studios of Germany.²⁶

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²⁴Felician A. Foy, O.F.M., Editor, Catholic Almanac (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1989), 200.

²⁵The Moroder Studios sketches, letters and contract dated July 14, 1947. Holy Hill Archives.

²⁶Rev. P. Cyril, History of Holy Hill, (Milwaukee: Discalced Carmelite Fathers, 1923) 49.

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The gallery or choir above the main floor vestibule is as wide as the nave and may be entered from either tower stairway, a climb of thirty-six feet from the lower church. The ribbed vaulted ceiling height is twenty-four feet. It is used as a choir loft and is furnished with the original pipe organ installed by the Schaefer Organ Company of Slinger, Wisconsin. The low barrier is paneled oak similar to the pews. (Photo 15)

In the late 1950s, the southeasterly Shrine Chapel was substantially enlarged and refurbished. The interior walls are covered with Laredo Chiara marble. The altar back wall is a brick core covered with a circular patterned panel of honed Italian Travertine and Italian white polished marble. The ivory and gold leaf statue of Mary and Jesus is set against this starburst wall. The room has a barrel vault suspended ceiling of metal lath and plaster. The floors are terrazzo supporting eight one foot diameter marble columns with carved caps and bases of Cedar Tennessee marble. The two side aisles are formed by the columns. Six niches on the sides of the chapel have steel boxes with brass trim.²⁷

The shrine statue was made by Mayer & Co. in Munich and represented by the firm of Frederick Pustet of Regensburg - New York.²⁸ It was exhibited at the Philadelphia Exhibition in 1876. The exposition celebrated the centennial of American Independence. The aureole background, ten feet high and six feet wide, was designed by Larscheid in 1929 and handwrought in polished bronze by Emil J. Lehmann of Milwaukee.²⁹ The Virgin is represented in a bower of roses with angels supporting her at her feet while those above place a crown on her brow in commemoration of her coronation as Queen of Heaven. There are 245 jewels in the piece.

The shrine altar beneath the statue, also designed by Larscheid, is symbolic. Its richly carved marble face bears the family tree of Jesus according to the gospel of Matthew. On the carving appear the names of all the ancestors of St. Joseph, the spouse of Mary. The angelic salutation "Ave Maria gratia plena" also forms part of the altar's face. It rests upon a twenty-two foot Laredo Chiara marble predella. (Photo 16)

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²⁷Hutter Construction Company, contractors and builders, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin letter dated February 7, 1956 from George F. Hutter, Jr. to Rev. Stephen Dzuban, Prior. Holy Hill Archives.

²⁸The inscription on the statue.

²⁹Emil J. Lehmann, metal craftsman, carried out the Larscheid design of the tabernacle, candlesticks, and communion railing at his craftshop on Center Street, Milwaukee.

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The Lower Church, Chapel of St. Therese

Entrance to Chapel of St. Therese is opposite the Exhibit Hall and can be approached from the elevator, Stations of the Cross path or from a rustic walkway leading from the Old Monastery Inn. The cement side walls of the esplanade are the width of the nave and contain the Exhibit Hall. The church entrance is now covered by the new addition. There are two centered columns supporting the concrete esplanade above which frame the entrance. The concrete esplanade floor or ceiling of the exhibit area, conceals the uppermost part of the gabled porch entrance to the lower church. Paired protective outer glass doors framed in anodized bronze aluminum have been installed between the polygonal columns which come down to this level from the upper church entrance. (Photo 17)

The Chapel of St. Therese extends only as far as the sanctuary of the upper church. Total dimensions are one-hundred-eleven-feet long by sixty-five feet wide. (Photo 18) The painted plaster walls and reinforced columns are shades of sand rose and cream with gold highlights. There are two rows of columns and rows of piers on each side, enclosing the aisles. A center aisle divides the twenty-eight foot seating area into two sections. The reinforced columns with plaster Corinthian capitals support the furred beams of the eighteen-foot ceiling. The piers form arcades flanking the aisles. (Photo 19) The beam ceiling and the thirty columns and piers support the main church above. There are twelve round arched stained glass windows, six on each side.

In 1985 Conrad Schmitt Studios completely repainted the plaster walls of the chapel and applied a gold leaf decoration resembling a blossomless rose stem to the sanctuary wall. The rose is the traditional symbol of St. Therese. The stations of the cross are from the 1920 monastery chapel.

The Moroder Studios designed the St. Therese main altar, communion railing and gates, St. Ann and St. Joseph side altars and four foot six inch statues. The materials used were bronze, marble, and gold inlay; completed in 1950. The marble for the mensas, retables, and reredos are polished Botticino and Brecciato with Rosato columns. They are embellished with mosaic inlays. The canopy above St. Therese has an inner shell of gold mosaic inlay. Other inlays are of the symbols of the passion flower, rose and fleur de lis and a mosaic plaque of Elias in the desert. (Photo 20)

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The communion railing is Botticino marble measuring twenty-nine inches from the floor. The gates are five feet long in polished antique bronze symbolizing two peacocks of immortality. The total length of the communion railing is twenty seven feet. including the five foot bronze gates.³⁰

Historic Integrity

The historic relationship between the church and Holy Hill are firmly established conveying a direct link to the past and ongoing pilgrimages. The crest of Holy Hill has been a place of worship dating back to the early area Indians and since the pioneer settlement of the 1840s. As buildings for worship were enlarged, the crest was lowered for larger foundations and taller churches. The hill proper has changed only to provide vehicular traffic and parking for the increased pilgrims.

The main church since 1931 has undergone two major changes: the removal of a graceful horseshoe staircase patterned after the Lourdes Basilica Esplanade and the elevator/esplanade addition; and the lateral Shrine Chapel extension. The historic integrity of the church entrances has been compromised by the staircase removal, especially the unsympathetic treatment of the lower church entrance under the esplanade. Positively, it provides a covered protected entrance to the lower church for the disabled in inclement weather. The chapel extension and increased dimensions has discouraged people walking around the main church. The addition of the elevator/esplanade to the 1931 design relates to the pilgrim's needs for access and safety, particularly the handicapped and aged. The church entrances have always been somewhat obscured by other buildings (see Photo 33), and presently by mature landscaping concealing full view of the church. Observation of its architectural whole by a ground observer has always been limited at ground elevations, only aerial photographs could show this. The increased dimensions of the Shrine Chapel has discouraged pedestrian walks around the main church.

The moving force is the site which offers a splendid architectural presentation of the church from great distances....then and now. The interior furnishings are original and all decorating over the years has been done by Conrad Schmitt Studios in a tasteful and appropriate manner consistent with the architectural style.

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³⁰Correspondence between Rev. John Prah and Anthony A. Moroder, July 10, 1950, Holy Hill Archives. Twenty years earlier The Moroder Studios were represented in the United States by A. J. Moroder, sculptor and manager, under the style The International Statuary & Altar Co. on North Avenue on the East Side of Milwaukee.

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Monastery (1920)

The Carmelite friars added a stone block addition to the old Whealan farm house as their first monastery ca. 1908. A new monastery was necessary since the Carmelite community was growing and the Superiors of the Order had decided to establish their noviate at Holy Hill. (Photo 21) Richard Philipp designed the monastery set into the side of the hill below the church. It is connected to the shrine by a low inclined stairway. The footings and retaining walls for the monastery's structural steel skeleton were said to have taken more time to construct than the building itself.

The monastery was inspired by Italian Romanesque prototypes accommodated to monastic requirements. (2 on District Map) There was a major effort to gain approval from Rome for the design of the new monastery and several trips to Italy were made by Richard Philipp to study the historical styles. Correspondence relating to this is a part of the Holy Hill Archives. Philipp was known for his creative interpretations of historical styles. The monastery is carried out in deep red brick with trim in buff Bedford stone. The building is roughly an "H" plan with a long section flanked by gable projecting wings. The facade faces west, and this side is partially hidden because of tall trees and shrubs. The southwest elevation is what one sees when looking at the church from the upper parking lot. Though it is not the front of the monastery, Philipp designed the building to be imposing from any side. (Photo 22)

The monastery is built into the hill, creating two stories on the northeast side and three stories and a raised basement on the southwest. The asymmetrical facade has two gabled projections on the southwest end and projecting gabled porch creating a stepped appearance. (Photo 22) To the left of the round arched porch entrance was the sacristy on the ground floor. To the right of the porch was the sanctuary, projecting public chapel and church entrance. The total span is seventy two feet. Above the gabled front porch is a stucco three sided oriel window with a pyramidal roof rising slightly above the eave line of the low pitched roof. The east wing is fifty-two feet wide with a similar oriel window at the upper level. The north elevation has a matching stucco three story six-sided corner stairway tower facing the ravine. The wood framed windows on the main floor are flat arched and on the second and ground floor they are square with relieving arches above. All have stone sills.

The segmental-arched arcade on the southwest elevation has more recently been enclosed as a porch for overflow public dining. The balcony promenade is accessed from the second level. The intersecting roofs are asphalt shingle with metal ridges. The center section has a sheet metal bell tower with a bulbous shaped roof that houses the 250# bell which is supported by wood columns. (Photo 23)

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As originally built in 1920, the top two levels, main and second floor, of the seventy-five foot central section contained fourteen cells for the friars; each measuring ten by fourteen feet. There are seven rooms or cells on each floor, now serving as guest rooms for retreat participants. The east wing contained a twenty by thirty foot classroom on the main floor and above it the library; they now are used as lecture and meeting rooms and are unchanged. The west wing has, at the entrance level, a receiving desk and several reception rooms. Stairs on the left lead to the guest rooms above. The ground story of the west wing extension originally housed the chapel, sanctuary and sacristy and now serves as the dining area of the cafeteria. (Photo 24) The ground story central section contained the oratory, supply rooms, pantry, and kitchen. The east wing ground floor originally was the refectory. The friars sat on benches along the wall, the tables before them. This left a large space in the center which was reserved for guests. There was also a reading desk in the refectory. This room is now a private dining room.

The Carmelite Order does not encourage idle talk and the inscriptions about the building warn of the dangers of wordiness. These inscriptions, too, are still in place along with the antique brushed brass lighting fixtures designed by Richard Philipp for ease in reading them.

The west basement wing had space for wood storage and the east wing was the vegetable cellar and a separate room with shelves for bin storage, and in between was the boiler room, laundry and drying room.

Minimal interior alterations have been made since the building's conversion to a retreat/guest house, now known as the Old Monastery Inn. In the conversion of the chapel to dining, the stained glass windows were replaced with clear glass. (Photo 24) The former chapel windows are now in the Oratory Chapel of the main church. One wall partition separating the sacristy from the sanctuary was removed and the lesser room partitions, on the ground floor, were also removed for the cafeteria service. The library and class room are still in use as meeting rooms. Otherwise everything is virtually the same.

Monastery (1938)

By 1937 the 1920 monastery had become too small to accommodate the growing Carmelite community. The 1938 monastery was joined to the rear northerly side of the church. Both buildings were designed by Hermann Gaul and carried out with the same materials in Romanesque Revival style. (1B on District Map)

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The monastery has a cruciform plan with intersecting gabled roofs. At the apex is a copper and wood bell gable. The overall dimensions of the monastery are one-hundred-thirty-five feet long by fifty-four feet wide. The exterior is rather reserved and plain. There are arched windows centered in the facade and in the choir, however, all other windows are rectangular or square. Aside from the decorative though restrained entrance, there is a singular belt course of projecting cut stone at the first level.

The major adornment is the entrance constructed of light buff Indiana oolitic limestone with a fine rubbed finish. The shield of the Carmelite Order is affixed above the rustic medieval double wooden doors. Rather high above the shield, is a stylized three part glass tympanum set within the compound arched entrance which encases the doors. At level with the shield, just above and flanking the doors, are two lantern lights. The porch entrance vestibule is a flat roofed block with parapet walls and is twelve feet deep and thirty-six feet wide. It contains stairs to the first floor and a small reception office. (Photo 25)

The steel reinforced fire-proof building required exceptional engineering for it had to be built into a gravel hill. At the front, the building is six stories high. At the back, where it joins the sacristy of the church, it has three stories directly connected. Each floor is progressively longer than the floor below as the building rises up the hill. The fourth floor leads to the basement of the church. The fifth floor is on the same level as the floor of the upper church and is joined at the oratory room. Adjoining the church off the sixth floor is the choir where the friars chant or recite their community prayers at various times of the day. There is a flat copper roof over this level, the rest of the roof is asphalt shingled and gabled.

The configuration of each level is as follows. The sixth floor has a centered corridor with four store rooms, two on each side, and two large rooms. At the end of the corridor is the choir room joining the church. The fifth floor has seventeen cells and the oratory joining the church; the fourth floor holds thirteen cells, one novice master's room, a store room and an entrance to the basement of the church; the third floor has seven cells, a recreation room on one end and a library on the other; the second floor has two bishop's rooms, two guest rooms, a kitchen, two cells and the refectory. The refectory is fifty-four feet long and twenty-one-and-one-half feet wide; the walk up first floor contains the lobby with two offices, a corridor leads to four offices, a visitors reception room and four storerooms. The basement is equipped with three divided cellars, a storeroom, and a boiler room.

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A visit to the monastery, accessible to men only, (special consideration was made for this researcher) gives some idea of the Spartan way of life followed by the friars. The beds are planks supported by trestles. On the wall hangs a cross, and one or two pictures. The only other furnishings consist of a chair, a small table, and shelf for books.

The floors are terrazzo and stairwells within are reinforced pre cast terrazzo treads. The walls are plastered over hollow tile and diamond mesh lath, receiving three coats of plastering. Ornamental plastering of the moldings, beams for the ceilings of the refectory and the choir simulates wood moldings. All windows are box framed and double hung sash.

The roofing is asphalt shingle with copper flashing, copings, cornices and gutters.

The old freight/passenger elevator was replaced in 1989. In 1984 all the windows were replaced with double-paned energy-efficient glass set in bronzed aluminum.

Via Crucis

One of the principal features of Holy Hill is the Way of the Cross (4 on District Map), fourteen representations of the sufferings of Christ on His way to His crucifixion. Tradition informs us that Mary and the Apostles often went over the crucifixion grounds and in the early centuries of Christianity it was customary to walk and pray along the actual route that Christ walked. In the 12th and 13th centuries, the returning Crusaders set up small representations in their homes. These stations enjoy greater favor in the open and still more so since they lead uphill, reminiscent of Calvary.

The first stations at Holy Hill constructed in 1878, consisted of wooden pine crosses, eight feet high. In the center square of each was a picture commemorating a scene. In front was a low bench for pilgrims to kneel in prayer. After twelve fierce Wisconsin winters they decayed. Brick stations were built in 1889. The structures were seven feet and six inches high to the eaves and two feet and four inches wide and two feet four inches deep. The scriptural scenes were zinc casts in bas-relief with wooden doors and frames made in New York. Unfortunately the bricks contained lime pebbles and began to burst after absorbing frosts and melted snows of that first winter.³¹

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³¹Rev. Cyril, History of Holy Hill, (Milwaukee: Discalced Carmelite Fathers, 1923), 34-38.

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Through the gift of a generous benefactor new stations were planned. The sculptor was Joseph Aszklar (1867-1942) born in Poland, in the province of Galicia. He studied sculpturing in Krakow under Chodzinski and Wakulski. He came to Milwaukee in 1910 after spending two years in Chicago upon his arrival from Poland. He plied his craft with the Rauwold Ecclesiastical Art Manufacturing Company and Munich Statuary & Altar Co. before forming his independent business, Architectural Carving Company. He was known for his modeling and sculpturing in bronze, stone and wood. Among his works, he designed and made the General Casimir Pulaski monument for Pulaski Park in Cudahy.³²

Joseph Aszklar is best known for his Holy Hill Stations of the Cross. They took fourteen years to complete.³³ Aszklar did one station a year, working from 1914 to 1928. The scenes are carved from Bedford, Indiana limestone. The largest group was carved from a five ton block of stone. All the figures are life size and as one scrutinizes each individual figure closely, one observes all the obscure lines admirably and delicately finished. (Photo 26) It is believed he carved the church entrance archivolt and Christ on the cross statuary on the apse wall of the main church. The substantial protective fieldstone enclosures for each station were assembled by the Carmelite community who gathered the stones from nearby fields.³⁴ (Photo 27)

The stations are located within an ever upward winding pathway to the lower church entrance in a woods extending a half mile on either side. Devout pilgrims lay humble offerings such as small nosegays of bright flowers or a candle is sometimes burned while the penitent kneels in prayer.

At a much earlier time the only road leading to the shrine church was at the stone arched gate. A short distance from the gate was the first station. The Hill Side Hotel, formerly a farmhouse, stood just outside the entrance. It provided housing and dining facilities for the pilgrims ca. 1910. The other inn, Holy Hill Hotel, formerly a parsonage, overlooked a ravine was opposite the third station. Both are

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³²Associated Compilers of Milwaukee, 1931-33; page 148. Probate Records: File 227-428 and Microfilm 1355. Interview with Barbara Thuts, 414-425-5707, June 3, 1990, relative of Joseph Aszklar. Milwaukee Sentinel Obituary, September 9, 1942.

³³Discalced Carmelite Fathers, History of Holy Hill, (Milwaukee: Discalced Carmelite Fathers, 1928), 32.

³⁴"Pilgrimage to Holy Hill", Milwaukee Sentinel, September 25, 1948. Clipping file, Holy Hill Archives.

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now gone. Today the Entrance Arch (Photo 28) (3 on District Map) remains and the area outside of the arch is for picnicking. Stationway Road is still the access road to the Via Crucis from Highway 167, however, the public is invited to use the more formal approach to Holy Hill a short distance further west on Highway 167.

Carmelite Cemetery

Off the Via Crucis path and behind the seventh station is another path which leads to the small Carmelite cemetery. (5 on District Map) Several of the early Carmelites who came to Holy Hill from Bavaria are buried here. At the present time there are eighteen Carmelites interred. The cemetery is identified simply by a standing rustic wooden cross fronting upon flat engraved markers in orderly rows. Formerly the cemetery was behind the 1881 church. The bodies were disinterred before the 1926 construction and necessary grading for the present church foundation. This new location was appropriately landscaped with a natural background of trees and shrubbery and set aside for the friars who have or will pass on. (Photo 29)

Lourdes Grotto

The grotto reproduces the scene of a series of apparitions of Mary to Bernadette Soubirous in Lourdes, France, 1858. Thousands of pilgrims make annual pilgrimages to Holy Hill and take the Pilgrim's Walk. At the conclusion of their procession they pray for help and Mary's intercession. This is another special place at Holy Hill dedicated to Mary, proclaiming her unique role within the life and spirit of the Church. (Photo 30) (6 on District Map) This is the second grotto at Holy Hill erected in 1932. It was the last work of George Knetzger, Sr.³⁵ The first was built in 1897, under the supervision of Rev. J. A. Bertram before the coming of the Carmelites. It had to be dismantled in 1925 when the top twenty feet of the apex was removed for the foundation of the existing church.³⁶ The grotto is lined with stones gathered on and around the hill forming a background for the statues of the Mary and Bernadette. The iron statue of Mary was donated by the Hutton family of Chicago in 1895.³⁷

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³⁵Brother Francis's Picture Book - 1968. Holy Hill Archives.

³⁶Discalced Carmelite Fathers, History of Holy Hill, (Milwaukee: Discalced Carmelite Fathers, 1958), 61.

³⁷Brother Francis's Picture Book - 1968. Holy Hill Archives.

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The apparition of Mary in the mountainous grotto of Lourdes aroused the whole world. Large pilgrimages flocked to that spot. Devoted pilgrims of Mary wished to visit Lourdes or Mount Carmel but with cost and distance it was not within their reach. Therefore at nearly every shrine of the world a vivid reproduction of the grotto of Lourdes was erected.³⁸ "Today in America there is a shrine which had its inception about the time that Our Blessed Lady was manifesting herself to little Bernadette."³⁹ Holy Hill as a shrine to Mary brought many to pay homage. In the 1890s, the two hotels on the hill could accommodate four hundred pilgrims.⁴⁰

Hermitage

The Hermitage was built in 1985 by Brother Michael. It is located on the east side of the hill, nestled on a small knoll in the woods with a magnificent view of the countryside. It is a small cabin eighteen feet by twenty feet with a kitchen, bedroom and study with plain and simple furnishings. (Photo 31) (7 on District Map) It is a very short distance from the main church, located in a quiet place not easily reached by the public. It is used by the Carmelite community for prayer, quiet and solitude. The hermitage is part of the Carmelite tradition and spirituality. It is a non-contributing building due to its recent age.

Elevator Tower/Esplanade/Gift Store/Guest House Complex

The 1961 plan to introduce elevators had been under consideration for sometime. The concerns prompting the addition was over the inability of many elderly and handicapped people to walk up the steep hill from the upper parking lot to the church.⁴¹

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³⁸Rev. P. Cyril, History of Holy Hill. (Milwaukee: Discalced Carmelite Fathers, 1923) 34.)

³⁹Dedication of the Holy Hill Shrine July 19, 1931 Souvenir Book.

⁴⁰Sadie E. LeCount, Holy Hill, (Hartford: LeCount & LeCount, 1908), 15.

⁴¹"Elevator Will Carry Holy Hill Visitors", Menomonie Falls News, September 14, 1961. A conversation with Prior Fr. Columban.

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The expansion by architect Sylvester J. Stepnoski required an eighteen thousand cubic yard excavation on the front part of the hill. (1C on District Map) Following the excavation, three retaining walls had to be built totaling one hundred fifty tons of reinforcing steel and twenty five hundred cubic yards of concrete.⁴² The walls are terraced and landscaped. (Photo 32) Aside from eliminating step climbing, as the two elevators lift people to various levels, the expansion included a tunnel, a two story guest house and gift shop, a sixty by forty foot wide esplanade and an additional parking area.⁴³

The work began in October 1961 after two buildings were razed: a wooden gift store in front of the horseshoe-shaped staircase on the left side of the church front and the one hundred year old frame Whealan farmhouse (later with a concrete block addition) which served as a priest's residence, first Carmelite monastery, and finally as a guest house. A statue of Christ with outstretched arms now marks the spot. (Photo 33)

The gift shop combined with a second story guest house was built on a retaining wall one-hundred-fifty feet long and twenty-five feet high. It has a rectangular two story plan and a gabled asphalt shingle roof. The exterior of the elevator tower and guest house is red brick closely matching the existing Shrine Church. The approach to the elevators is from the gift store lobby through a tunnel. The tunnel walls, ceiling, stairs and platforms are exposed reinforced concrete with the exception of the elevator lobbies which are faced with structural glazed tile. The lobbies have quarry tile floors.

The elevator tower is three stories tall with a low-pitch hipped roof. The arched corbel table motif is repeated on the elevator tower in an attempt to blend the tower with the Romanesque main church. Centered within a panel of recessed brick are paired blind arches two-stories in height. Each elevation contains two windows at the upper and lower church floors. (Photo 7)

Brust-Heike designed the lobby and large restroom addition attached to the west side of the gift store in 1980.⁴⁴ It is rectangular in shape approximately twenty-seven feet by fifty feet. The window frames and doors are aluminum with dark bronze

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⁴²"Expand Shrine High on Hill", Milwaukee Sentinel, March 22, 1961.

⁴³Architectural drawings of S. J. Stepnoski. Holy Hill Archives.

⁴⁴Brust-Heike Drawings. Holy Hill Archives.

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finish. A front and side canopy ties into the existing building. Decorative detailing is broad arched blind arcading along the side wall across from the parking area repeating the elevator tower design motif.⁴⁵ (Photo 34)

The tunnel joining the gift shop lobby to the elevator tower is called Memorial Hall. The walls contain information relating to Holy Hill as a shrine and historical background on the Discalced Carmelites who care for the hill.

The Marian Hallway at level two contains symbolic murals painted on cement by Brother Francis Enders in 1969 relating to Mary. (Photo 35) The hallway leads to the Exhibit Hall where the 1857 fifteen foot white oak cross is displayed as are dioramas and a five panel visual history of Holy Hill by Fr. Patrick. (Photo 36)

The esplanade replaced the staircase and offers a broad entrance to the main church and acts as a panoramic viewing platform. (Photo 37) The unfinished concrete side walls have blind arcading, repeating the design motif. Landscaping tends to obscure much of the plain exposed concrete. Aerial photographs best represent the site and structures. The summit can, in part, be viewed from the upper parking area. (Photo 38) The Elevator Tower/Esplanade/Gift Store/Guest House Complex is non-contributing.

Inventory of Holy Hill buildings and structures

1A	Shrine of Mary, Help of Christians	1926-31	C
1B	Monastery	1938	C
1C	Guest House/Esplanade Complex	1961, 1980	NC
2	Monastery	1920	C
3	Entrance Arch	1914	C
4	Via Crucis (14 stations)	1914-28	C
5	Carmelite Cemetery (Site)	1925-26	C
6	Lourdes Grotto	1932	C
7	Hermitage	1985	NC
8	Holy Hill (Site)		C

⁴⁵Ibid.

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Religion

The word "pilgrimage" comes from the Old French pelegrinage, and Latin peregrinatio, and means a journey undertaken in a devotional spirit to some sacred place.¹ But the concept of pilgrimage is much older than the word itself. The custom of pilgrimage is ancient. The nature of pilgrimage sites to religious groups in general, and the similarities Holy Hill has to the general phenomenon, is supported by secular historians and comparative religion scholars.

Pilgrimages are characteristic of most of the higher religions, not limited to Christianity, but inclusive of Islam, Buddhism and Shinto, Pre-Columbian religions and Hinduism. Hindus visit the Ganges to be cleansed. Muslims make their way to Muhammad's tomb at Mecca, Buddhists to Sarnath near Benares and members of the Tenri-Kyo of Shintoism to Tenri Shi in Japan. There is a parallelism common in world religions. The participants are engaged in a search for spiritual advancement and their pilgrimage dramatizes their quest for the divine. Medieval Christians regarded pilgrimage as a penitential activity for remission of sins, and Muslims, when entering the gates of Mecca also pray for forgiveness.²

Pilgrimage centers are geographical locations, undertaken for a variety of motives with the object of gaining supernatural help, thanksgiving or penance, or for the sake of devotion. It is a place where holiness was believed to be present, could be encountered and acquired; a manifestation of divine power or having an association with a holy person. A visit to a shrine might be in hope of help - of a miracle - or in thanks, or to keep a promise made when asking heavenly help against sickness or danger. It also came to be considered a worthy act in itself, a good deed to set in the balance when it came to judgment.³

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¹Sidney Heath, Pilgrim Life in the Middle Ages, (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1911), 17.

²J. G. Davies, Pilgrimage Yesterday and Today, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1988), Chapter One, 1-79.

³Ibid.

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Most sacred shrines attract pilgrims united by cultural homogeneity, however the holy city of Jerusalem draws pilgrims from Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Pilgrims of different nations and cultural traditions with very different forms of worship and their interaction with different imaginings of Jerusalem does present a number of diverse and mutually contradictory ways. The pilgrims united within a single religious tradition, approach this place which they share not only with each other but also with the devotees of two other world religions.⁴

A pilgrimage today to Holy Hill represents an expression of genuine piety, a unifying and leveling force among diverse peoples and classes, and a medium for cultural exchange. In Jerusalem there is a continuous crossing and diverging, often marked by clashes of bodies, voices and religious artefacts. But what makes this city holy to the various groups is not something they find in the city but something brought from outside and matched up there with monuments to, and markers of, sacredness. Whereas, Holy Hill's essence is the site itself.

There were a great many pilgrimages during the Middle Ages. Chaucer's Canterbury Tales were composed expressly as a set of stories used by people to amuse one another on the road to Canterbury to the pilgrimage shrine of St. Thomas Becket. They were primarily in verse enlightening in terms of character painting, description, humor and pathos. All ranks of society were mingled together.⁵ J. M. Le Count's book

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⁴John Eade and Michael J. Sallnow, Contesting the Sacred: The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage, (London: Routledge, 1991), 98-121.

⁵Howard Loxton, Pilgrimage to Canterbury, (London: David & Charles, 1978); also interview with Professor David Hoeveler, Coordinator of the Comparative Study of Religion and Chair of the Department of History, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. October 17, 1991; and with Professor Martha Carlin, Medieval studies October 19, 1991.

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on Holy Hill includes verse in telling the story of Holy Hill.⁶ Kate Clark-Greene's pamphlet told of the virtues of Holy Hill.⁷ Poems, pamphlets and books written on Holy Hill, Shrine of Mary and the caretakers of the hill encouraged the spread of its popularity, in a sense to advertise its attractions. This was not unlike the popularity of the excursions to Canterbury. Special trains were made available from Milwaukee, Gary and Chicago to aid the pilgrims.⁸ Later regular scheduled bus service was available from the Plankinton Arcade for the Green Motor Bus.⁹ In Richfield horse-drawn carriages were offered from the train station to Holy Hill for those who chose not to walk the seven miles.¹⁰ In Chaucer's time the pilgrimage had become a pleasant holiday excursion for many people and today Holy Hill continues to be one of the top five tourist attractions in Wisconsin. Though pilgrimage does involve a tour and can be a real holiday; the nature and intent of the journey in each case are not the same.

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⁶J. M. LeCount, Holy Hill, (Hartford: J. M. LeCount and Son, 1891). Verses: "Lapham's Range" 14-15; "Holy Hill" 23-25; "The Pilgrimage" 93-93; "The Old Settlers" 183-188; "The Hermit of Holy Hill" 223-225; "The Last Interview" 238-240; and "Butte Des Morts" 254-256.

⁷Kate Clark-Greene, A Pilgrimage to Holy Hill, (Hartford, WI; Herald Printing Co., n.d.).

⁸A promotion pamphlet by Wisconsin Central Ry. Co., "Holy Hill" , Passenger Department, Milwaukee, Wis., February, 1900. Holy Hill Archives.

⁹A promotion pamphlet "A Pilgrimage to Holy Hill, the Shrine of Faith and Hope" by the Wisconsin Motor Bus Lines operated by The Milwaukee Electric Ry. & Lt. Co., Milwaukee. Issued August 1, 1925. Holy Hill Archives.

¹⁰Benny Dickel, proprietor of the Dickel Hotel and Livery was operating out of Richfield in 1903. Newspaper article in Holy Hill Archives "Picture Book" unidentified name of newspaper with no date. The article was by News Staff Writer, John Nelander, "Driver traveled hard road to Holy Hill".

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Jusserand beautifully describes a happy lot of humble devout souls of the Middle Ages:

Arrived at the end of the journey, all prayed; prayed with fervour in the humblest posture. The soul was filled with religious emotion when from the end of the majestic alley formed by the great pillars of the church, through the coloured twilight of the nave, the heart divined, rather than the eye saw, the mysterious object of veneration for which such a distance had been traversed at the cost of such fatigue. Though the practical man galloping up to bargain with the saint for the favour of God, though the emissary sent to make offering in the name of his master might keep a dry and clear eye, tears coursed down the cheeks of the poor and simple in heart; he tasted fully of the pious emotion he had come to seek, the peace of heaven descended into his bosom, and he went away consoled.¹¹

Christians go to Jerusalem to visit the places consecrated by the presence of Christ, via the places where he walked, preached, suffered, and died. It is the location of divine power, not in a person, nor in a place, but in a text. Bowman calls it a "textual pilgrimage". The place is relevant only in so far as it illustrates an authoritative text, recited by a group leader at the appropriate sites.¹² The Via Crucis ritual is observed at Holy Hill and is an integral part of the "Pilgrim's Walk". Going from station to station is a means of education by the processional method, because at each pause instruction is conveyed about what has happened or is believed to have happened there. The pilgrims are encouraged to offer

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¹¹Jean Adrien Antoine Jules Jusserand, English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages, trans. from the French by Lucyn Toulmin Smith, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1939), 357-358.

¹²John Eade and Micahel J. Sallnow, Contesting the Sacred: The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage, (London: Routledge, 1991), 8, citing Glenn Bowman, "Christian Ideology and the Image of a Holy Land: The Place of Jerusalem Pilgrimage in the Various Christianities", 99-107.

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relevant prayers. Pamphlets were published and distributed at Holy Hill and made available for this purpose.¹³ In this way they are not simply spectators, but active participants in a round of continuous spiritual exercises. Marching together as a group reinforces a sense of belonging and of being united with Christ. There are numerous photos of groups on their knees at various stations at Holy Hill. This re-enactment was customary in the Middle Ages - to follow literally in the footsteps of Jesus.

Another famous pilgrimage center in Europe is Spain's Santiago de Compostela, supposed to be the burial place of St. James the Apostle discovered in the year 813, and where God had performed miracles through him. It is a place where for over eleven hundred years the apostle James has been revered. It was believed that such a holy place could be the scene of renewed divine activity. A center of power and by visiting them, pilgrims could acquire some of the holiness that inheres in the saints not only by being there and by engaging in devotional exercises, but also by simple physical contact.¹⁴ There is nothing superstitious in that nor any sound reason for terminating the pious practice.

If asked: why go to Santiago? because the cathedral houses the remains of the apostle and where St. James still is honored. In 1150, when the Book of St. James was written, the pilgrimage had become of world wide significance. The basilica was finished, the hostels for the pilgrims abounded and the roads leading to the apostle's shrine were thronged. With rapid mass travel today and elimination of dangers, discomforts and delays on the way to the Compostela today has created "pilgrimages without tears" for the millions, which is in complete antithesis to the original idea of pilgrimage transmitted by the saints to the Middle Ages.¹⁵

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¹³Several Priests, Manual of Prayers for Pilgrims at Holy Hill, (Chicago: John P. Daleiden Publisher, 1896), 128 pages.

¹⁴Alan Kendall, Medieval Pilgrims, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1970), 103-108.

¹⁵Walter Starkie, The Road to Santiago: Pilgrims of St. James, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1965), 40 and 323-324.

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Why go to Holy Hill? The strength of Holy Hill today is in the faith of the pilgrims and their devotion to Mary as their leader or guide of the Way. Sumption says:

The cult of the Virgin remained independent of relics. Their place was taken by statues which received the same veneration as relics and worked miracles. Coutances Cathedral had a miracle-working statue of the Virgin in wood. Chartres Cathedral possessed the tunic of the Virgin, but it also had a celebrated statue in the crypt which, by the beginning of the fifteenth century, entirely monopolized the attention of pilgrims.¹⁶

Chartres is the sanctuary of a pilgrimage that is one of the most ancient and renown for the worship of Mary. The church received the veil of Mary from King Charles. Chartres was then what Lourdes is today. Sick people were nursed in the crypt. The statue referred to by Sumption was placed in 1510. During the Revolution the statue was burnt in December 1793. In 1857 a new wooden statue was carved for the crypt coinciding with the promulgation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception and in 1976 the crypt was restored and the 19th century statue was replaced by a new one closer to the original burnt during the French Revolution.¹⁷

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¹⁶Jonathan Sumption, Pilgrimage: An Image of Mediaeval Religion, (London: Faber & Faber, 1975), 277.

¹⁷Etienne Hovet, Chartres Cathedral, rev. Malcolm B. Miller, (Chartres: Hovet-La-Crypte, 1990), 3-16. Conversation with Malcolm Miller, English guide of Chartres Cathedral, during visit September 1990.

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And it was in the High Middle Ages that the Virgin Mary came into her own as the compassionate intercessor for hopelessly lost souls. A legend of the age told of the devil complaining to God that the tender-hearted Queen of Heaven was cheating hell of its most promising candidates. Christianity became, as never before, a doctrine of love, hope, and compassion.¹⁸

While the Carmelite friars' life are prayer-centered, they also minister to the pilgrims' needs.

It was not until the latter half of the 19th century when there was a revival of the custom of pilgrimages, especially in France. The shrine at Lourdes has its origins in a series of eighteen apparitions of the Virgin Mary during the year 1858, the same year Holy Hill was dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Although the shrine was associated with the development of official church teaching concerning the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, its popular attraction was bound up with the reports of miraculous cures involving the spring uncovered by Bernadette during one of her visions. Here, place, and the power of place are paramount.

The suffering bodies of the sick pilgrims play a central role in the journeys of organized groups and their lay pilgrim helpers to and from Lourdes and at the shrine itself. The sick pilgrim assumes a symbolic identity of supernatural significance. The sick are treated like celebrities and given the central place in the rituals at the shrine. Strangers approach them, speak, touch or stroke them, give them small gifts and request their prayers. The healthy pilgrims of all nationalities approach and treat the sick pilgrims in a way analogous to the way saints are treated. The pilgrims respond to the the gotto where the apparitions occurred as a place where Mary still resides and they described praying there as speaking directly to Mary.

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¹⁸C. Warren Hollister, Professor of History and Chair of Medieval Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara, Medieval Europe: A Short History, (New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, 1990), 189.

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Above, in the rock of Massabielle, in the grotto, there are a number of old crutches testifying to cures. A similar grouping of crutches are at the entrance to the Shrine Chapel at Holy Hill. Lourdes water was said to transmit Marian healing power; it is the medium through which Mary communicates to the pilgrims. There is a definite mood and atmosphere that surrounds the pilgrim at Lourdes. Daily one can still see tens-of-thousands with an undying faith in miracles.¹⁹

There are over four million pilgrims and tourists who visit Lourdes each year, the majority from western Europe.²⁰ In the last century less than a hundred cures at Lourdes have been officially certified by the Roman Catholic Church as being of miraculous origin.²¹ None at Holy Hill has been officially certified, however, Holy Hill was declared a shrine.

Leo XIII granted Holy Hill the privilege of Portincula Indulgences for August 2, 1903, and for the following seven years. The document granting this privilege was sealed with the Fisherman's ring and dated July 6, 1903, the twenty-sixth year of his pontificate.²²

Holy Hill is also listed in a guide to Catholic shrines.²³

Lourdes and Holy Hill are both Marian Shrines. The wooden cross of Holy Hill was mounted in 1857 and a processional dedication of Holy Hill to Mary in 1858.

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¹⁹A personal visit to Lourdes. October 1990 and May 1991.

²⁰Eade, 34.

²¹Sumption, 88.

²²Sister M. Eugenia Heppe, O.S.F. "A History of Holy Hill Washington County Wisconsin", a M.A. diss., DePaul University, 1941), 66. The Catholic Citizen, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, August 22, 1903.

²³Ralph L Woods and Henry F. Woods, Pilgrim Places in North America, (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1939), 151-153.

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Healings and cures were reported at Holy Hill in 1847 but more reports were noted between the 1860s and 1880s. The pilgrimage procession of the shrine statue from St. Hubertus to the log chapel was in the late 1870s. Robert Ousterhout suggests that a sort of topographical transfer occurs at shrines by which the sanctity of the original site, in this case Lourdes, could be recreated at the copy.²⁴

There are many organized bus pilgrimages to Holy Hill but are not strictly devoted to the ill. The pilgrims of Lourdes and Holy Hill possess an earnest faith, though varied, not all who make the journey do so with religious intent; there are a significant number who do make the pilgrimage with the object of gaining supernatural help; and not unlike a pilgrimage to Lourdes, there are some who are simply curious.

Many cases of cures were published in newspapers and books. The first reported cure at Holy Hill was in 1847. Mary McGuire's remembrance of the area farmer whose wife was seriously ill. She climbed to the top of the hill to pray and was cured. Her recovery was believed by many to be miraculous and soon other sick persons began visiting the hill, hoping for similar experiences.²⁵ Whether miracles took place or not, it was believed that they did happen. According to anthropologists Victor and Edith Turner, pilgrimage sites "are believed to be places where miracles once happened, still happen and may happen again".²⁶

Published accounts by LeCount and Quickert disagree over minor particulars on the legend of the hermit as told by an old farmer. Having been cured of paralysis on his visit to Holy Hill, the recluse lived in a hut on the east slope of the hill. As a penitent, he prostrated himself in daily prayer at the hill's crest from 1864 to

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²⁴Robert Ousterhout, The Blessings of Pilgrimage, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 97.

²⁵LeCount's Holy Hill has a section in his book called Miraculous Cures, 195-214; W. A. Armstrong, Miracle Hill A legendary Tale of Wisconsin, (Milwaukee: Cramer, Aikens & Cramer, 1889), Part Six: "Some of the Cures", 65-73.

²⁶Turner and Turner, Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives, (New York: Columbia Press, 1978), 6.

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1881. The hermit may have been the first recorded pilgrim who came to Holy Hill in favor of a holy life in self-exile; not unlike St. Jerome who lived in Bethlehem for 35 years in self-exile because he felt renunciation of the worldly life; for the holy life was the true pilgrimage. This same concept of the pilgrim is reflected in the teaching of the Buddha and which made John Bunyan call his allegory A Pilgrim's Progress.²⁷

In the early 1850s, mounds of stone and mold on the crest of Holy Hill were found by Increase Lapham. They were not identified as being constructed by the Menomonee or Potawatomi Indians in the area. "Other tribes may have had their hunting grounds in Washington County and stood upon a higher level of the savage state prior to the Menomonee and Potawatomi Indians. Some of the tribes may have disappeared altogether long before the Algonquin or any other of the known Indian Nations."²⁸ Much later, white men and women also felt Holy Hill to be hallowed ground. Around these motives sprang up wooden crosses followed by various architectural creations. If it were not for religious sentiment and devotional superstition, the material fabric of the Shrine of Mary would not exist.

J. G. Davies' point on pilgrimage as a complex subject because it is the point of intersection of many themes: devotional, liturgical, historical, theological, social, and anthropological. Today there still are barefoot penitents at Lough Derg in Donegal and many devoted who climb the rough slopes of Croagh Patrick in County Mayo; on their knees on the Scala Sancta in Rome, at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico, the Oratory of St. Joseph at Montreal or Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. There is abundant evidence of the appeal of pilgrimage at all its levels. "They are journeys of spiritual refreshment," says Loxton, "of cultural richness, of separation from the world around - for each it may mean something different, but it still seems to have a contemporary role".²⁹

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²⁷Howard Loxton, Pilgrimage to Canterbury, (London: David & Charles, 1978), 92-93.

²⁸Carl Quickert, History of Washington County, Wisconsin, (Chicago: S.J. Clarke, 1912), 12.

²⁹Loxton, 115.

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Western Europe's more than 6,000 pilgrimage centers generate a conservatively estimated 60 to 70 million religiously motivated visits per year. The total annual visitations at these shrines, including casual tourists, curiosity seekers, and persons referred to as "art history pilgrims" by West German shrine administrators - almost certainly exceed 100 million.³⁰

A world wide fervor to a new cult drew many pilgrims to Mount Krizevac in the early 1980s where apparitions of Mary were reported by six young people in the small village of Medjugorje, Yugoslavia.

Almost one hundred years earlier, Harry H. Heming wrote eleven pages on the virtues of Holy Hill. He begins:

Holy Hill, Wisconsin

This noted center of religious fervor, which has gained, not only a national, but a world-wide reputation as a harbor and refuge for those whose abiding faith is placed in the Mother of God as an all-powerful and beneficent mediator....³¹

Pilgrimages serve in a common cultural and religious consciousness, as well as to help either the growth or economy of the phenomenon area. Regarded from any standpoint - religious, archaeological, economic or architectural, pilgrimages as a subject is a vast one.

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³⁰Mary Lee Nolan and Sidney Nolan, Christian Pilgrimage in Modern Western Europe, (London: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), Introduction.

³¹Harry H. Heming, History of the Catholic Church in Wisconsin, (Milwaukee: Catholic Historical Publishing Co., 1895-1898), 967.

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Site.

Holy Hill embraces forty acres of land according to government survey. The entire tract is an assemblage of hills and peaks huddled together by narrow and deep ravines. The surface is rough and uneven. The highest of the grouping of hills is Holy Hill, rising two hundred and eight-nine feet above its base. Any direction one approaches the Kettle Moraine range of hills, Holy Hill's symmetry and height draws attention and admiration. The sides are heavily wooded, giving a rounded appearance.

The eastern and southern slopes are most abrupt and steep. The earliest approach or path to the summit was from the northwest corner of the hill. In 1878, the first Stations of the Cross, were at the beginning of the ascent. Access was then only by foot and a climb to the summit was two hundred and sixty feet treading a pathway one-thousand-eight-hundred-and-sixty-two feet in length or an average rise of about one foot in nine.³² Today that path has changed very little. The automobile road is a winding road from Highway 167 to the lower and upper parking areas.

The natural appearance of the hill historically or currently has not been diminished. In 1879 barely twelve feet was removed for a sixty foot high church and in 1925, twenty feet had to be leveled for a one hundred and seventy-two foot high church. If anything, the hill has been enhanced with its heavenly reach.

No place could be more alluring for meditation; none so elevating for the wholesome aspirations of life. The glacier which had dropped this load upon the landscape left for the generations a natural setting for the delivery of the Sermon on the Mount.³³

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³²LeCount, 91.

³³Fred L. Holmes, Alluring Wisconsin, (Milwaukee: E. M. Hale, 1937), 363.

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Historical Background

Legend says missionary and explorer, Father Jacques Marquette, in 1674 with ten canoes of Indians left the portage opposite Sturgeon Bay and coasted back to the mouth of the Chicago River. They were forty days making the journey, less than two hundred miles.³⁴ At one time they were delayed, some say as long as five days, about fifteen miles north of Milwaukee, in Mequon. It is believed a trip was made inland to the west, in hopes of finding the Rock River, a distance less than twenty miles. The traditions of the Potawatomi and Menomonee Indians say that they only went as far as Holy Hill, and failing to discover the Rock River, Pere Marquette planted a cross on Holy Hill, coining it Butte des Bois, and dedicating it to his patron saint, the Virgin Mary.³⁵ In later years, Irish pioneers, heard from the Potawatomi Indians and their Chief Kewaskum, that some three generations before, a black robe chief, wearing crucifix and rosary, had planted a cross on the hill. Chief Monches of the Menomonee Indians confirmed the Potawatomi story and when speaking of the event would always illustrate his story by marking the shape of a cross either in the snow or sand or whatever soft substance happened to be the most conveniently at hand.³⁶

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³⁴The distance along the west shore of Lake Michigan from Chicago to Sturgeon Bay is 224 miles, and from Sturgeon Bay to St. Francis Xavier Mission, another 50 miles, in all two weeks journey. Jean Delanglez, S.J., Ph.D., Litt.D., Professor of History Loyola University, Life and Voyages of Louis Joliet (1645-1700), (Chicago: Institute of Jesuit History, 1948), 128.

³⁵John S. Gregory, Editor, "The First White Men", Southeastern Wisconsin: A History of Old Milwaukee County, (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1932), 1091-1092. W. A. Titus, "Holy Hill: A Wisconsin Shrine on a Picturesque Peak", Wisconsin Magazine of History (March, 1926), 291-292. LeCount, 243-244.

³⁶LeCount, 244-245.

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There are many accountings of those who followed the example set by Father Marquette, and for several years after, expeditions coasted the west shore of Lake Michigan between Chicago and Green Bay. Some were endeavoring to establish missions to proselytize the different tribes of Indians to the Catholic faith. Other expeditions were made in the interest of trade or discovery. On a journey in 1679 explorers La Salle and Hennepin traveled Lake Michigan and because of rough weather landed at the mouth of Sauk Creek. It was there they reported finding a village of Potawatomi. The Sauk Creek location is one referred to as a stop over for Louis Joliet and Jacques Marquette, in 1673. Local historians have written that at that time, Marquette made a side trip into Washington County and planted the cross on top of Holy Hill dedicating it to his patron saint Mary.³⁷ It was Father Jean Claude Allouez who established the second Jesuit mission spending a winter among the Potawatomi.³⁸

In reading old Jesuit journals, it is sometimes quite difficult to establish locations, for the writers were not always particular in giving geographical details. By piecing together several vague references and estimating distances traveled, one can assume certain locations. The published accounts written by missionaries describing mysterious lands and peoples circulated widely, and were gripping accounts in the Jesuit Relations of conquering multitudes for Christ.³⁹

There were some forty printed volumes of the Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents. The Jesuit periodical was a mission magazine, not a chronicle of all that went on, and even in telling of the Orders activity the rule allowed a Superior the same freedom in sorting the field notes from his missionaries as a newspaper rewrite

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³⁷Quickert, 103-6.

³⁸Reuben Gold Thwaites, Father Marquette, (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1902), 137.

³⁹Joseph P. Donnelly, S.J., Professor of History, Marquette University, Jacques Marquette, S. J. (1637-1675), (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1968), 20.

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editor employs with the stories from his reporters. Thus the Superior could fabricate facts where details of importance had been glossed over; and he had the privilege of cutting out what he thought to be lacking in interest to the prospective readers.⁴⁰

In territorial times, the area surrounding Holy Hill was inhabited by the Potawatomi and Menomonee who remained until 1838 when their right of possession was taken away by treaty. A few remained to pass on their tradition orally to the new settlers. It is reported Holy Hill had religious significance to Indians that this is the place where they worshiped Manitou, a supernatural force that according to an Algonquian conception pervades the natural world.

Archaeological digs have proven that villages of Potawatomi were located on the shores of Pike Lake about seven miles from Holy Hill in the Town of Hartford.⁴¹ As late as the 1840s the Menomonees had camps along the Oconomowoc River, from Loew's Lake to Fries' Lake, in the Town of Richfield. Old Monches was their chief.⁴²

In the early part of the nineteenth century, Increase Lapham, Wisconsin's first geologist, was scouring the countryside for clues to fit into the puzzle of ancient Wisconsin Indian cultures. In a book which details his findings, Lapham

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⁴⁰Father Raphael N. Hamilton, S.J., Marquette's Explorations: The Narratives Reexamined, (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1970), 51.

⁴¹Charles E. Brown, "A Record of Wisconsin Antiquities in Washington County", The Wisconsin Archaeologist, (Madison: State Archaeological Society, April-October, 1906), 397.

⁴²Ibid., 398.

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reported that upon entering Washington County from the south, he ascended a "very high, conical, isolated peak in the west part of Washington County". The hill was later named after him.⁴³

On the summit of the hill, Lapham found three artificially constructed mounds in a geometrical grouping. The central mound was six feet high, and the two mounds on either side were each four feet high.

While Lapham was on this trip he wrote to his wife from Merton:

October 7, 1851:

We hear of a hill so high that Lake Michigan can, it is said, be seen from the top of it.

October 8, 1851:

We left the main road to ascend a very high conical peak, Sec. 14, Town 9, Range 18 Town of Erin. It is a very remarkable alluvial pile with an acute apex. On the summit of this high pinnacle, we found three ancient mounds, the middle (and largest) one, we opened and found to be composed of stone and rich garden mold, such as could only have been found on the level below. It apparently had been made of stone and then covered with the mold. We found in it no remains to show for what purpose it had been erected. The labor of transporting so much stone and earth to the summit of this high and steep hill must have been very considerable.

The hill is made up of drift and gravel boulders; no evidence of rock in situ could be found. There are several other elevations in the vicinity but this towers above them all and is much more acute at the peak.

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⁴³The name Lapham's Peak has been removed from Holy Hill and applied to a ridge in southern Waukesha County, about five miles south of Delafield. It is marked with a tablet on a boulder reading: "Lapham Peak, elevation 1233 feet, named by the U. S. Geographic Board in honor of Increase A. Lapham, eminent scientist and useful citizen, MDCCCXI-MDCCCLXXV. Tribute of Waukesha County Historical Society, 1916."

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The people in the neighborhood propose, in consideration of the interest I took in examining this peak, and its mounds, and in ascertaining its height, to call this prominent hill "Lapham's Peak". Wisconsin, especially the southern and settled portion, present but few such displays of scenery.⁴⁴

The first permanent settlers in the Town of Erin were Irish Catholics. Michael Lynch on November 27, 1841 was the first to take up government land.⁴⁵ The first government entry on November 20, 1841 to January 1, 1844, declared that seventy-five families had purchased land at the price of \$1.25 per acre. Between the years 1840-1850 great numbers of the Irish were forced into exile. Oppression for religion's sake made it impossible for them to live even as outcasts in their native land. Holy Hill reminded them of the holy hills of Erin where their immediate ancestors were assembled around an altar of rough wood or the ledge of rock on which some outlawed priest offered Mass for a sorely distressed people. Those hills, where the "Mass-stone" remained for many years, were looked upon as sacred places by the Irish.⁴⁶

It was quite natural then that those early settlers in the neighborhood of the "Big Hill" called the hill Holy Hill and wished to reserve it as a place of divine worship. A log church was dedicated to St. John and built at Monches and the Erin settlers walked five or more miles to attend mass. It was not until 1857 that St. Patrick's Church in Thompson was built. It was a mission church and the priests of St. John's and St. Kilian's in Hartford ministered to the people of Erin. For more than a decade the settlement remained exclusively Irish.

Around 1854 several German families from Milwaukee purchased farms in the vicinity from the Irish residents who had decided to migrate to urban areas. These German farmers were also moved by the beauty and prominence of the hill and revered

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⁴⁴"Lapham's Peak", Milwaukee Sentinel, May 27, 1879, 3; col. 4.

⁴⁵Quickert, 49.

⁴⁶Rev. Columbus Walsh, O.D.C., History of Holy Hill, (Hartford: Hartland Times Publications, 1915), 5-9.

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it as a sacred spot. They believed it should be reserved for religious purposes and refused to purchase any part of it as homestead land. Not only had this idea taken firm hold on the minds of the people but also on the minds of their priests.

Father Francis Paulhuber was the local priest of the neighborhood and had charge of three parishes, St. Boniface in the Town of Germantown; St. Hubert's in the Town of Richfield and St. Augustine a little over a mile east of Holy Hill. He made a prophecy while visiting the Kohler farm in the fall of 1854 as he pointed to Holy Hill:

That beautiful hill yonder, reminds me very forcibly of a hill near our home in my native country (Salsburg, Austria). I feel very sure and the day is not far distant, when that hill will become one of the most noted places in all this land; when it shall be consecrated and made holy; a place of worship and a pilgrimage where tens of thousands shall yearly come to do homage to the Virgin Mary and her son. Only lately have I learned that the hill is still owned by the government, and it is my intention to secure it without delay.⁴⁷

The declaration was made in the presence of a number of his parishioners. Father Paulhuber entered the land from government, May 1, 1855 by duplicate #38710, a forty acre tract for \$50.00.⁴⁸

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⁴⁷LeCount, 45, 46.

⁴⁸Government entries for Ranges 18, 19, 20 of Washington County for the Years 1836-1857. West Bend, Wisconsin, page 157.

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Rev. Hasselbauer, formerly a pastor in Bavaria, was appointed pastor of the three churches, St. Hubert, St. Augustine and St. Boniface in 1857.⁴⁹ To comply with the wishes of all the pious settlers of his parishes, he erected a white oak cross, five by seven inches in thickness and fifteen feet high, on Holy Hill in 1857. The hill was dedicated to St. Mary by Rev. Hasselbauer in June 1858 who came over from St. Augustine's Church with a large procession, the first pilgrimage to Holy Hill.⁵⁰ For six years the cross was the solitary landmark on the summit.

The pioneers wanted a place of worship on the summit and the newly appointed pastor, Rev. George Strickner,⁵¹ took up his duties in July 1861 and was convinced of the necessity of erecting a log chapel, which was begun in the summer of 1862.

The task for the people of St. Augustine and Erin was extremely difficult for nearly all the material had to be carried up the very steep incline. The little log chapel was sixteen feet square on a stone foundation and fronted west a short distance in front of the oak cross. The structure was ten feet high from the ground to eaves and eight feet inside from floor to ceiling. The walls were plaster and adorned with religious paintings. In the southwest corner stood a number of crutches

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⁴⁹Father Hasselbauer was born on July 17, 1807, at Anger parish of Laaber, Bavaria, and was ordained to the priesthood at Wuerzburg in 1835. He came to America in 1854 and for some time was professor of mathematics at the Benedictine Convent in Pennsylvania. Later he joined the Diocese of Milwaukee and served Bishop Henni until August 1, 1863, when he returned to Europe. Harry H. Heming, The Catholic Church in Wisconsin, (Milwaukee: Catholic Historical Publishing Co., 1895-1898), 1028.

⁵⁰LeCount, 66.

⁵¹Father Strickner was born December 6, 1833, at Stadtkemmath, Diocese of Regensburg, Bavaria. He came to the United States in 1856 and completed his theological studies at St. Francis, Wisconsin, where he was ordained, December 16, 1859. He served at St. Boniface 1861-65. He retired in 1897. Taken from Heming, op.cit., 276 and 1048.

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and above them hung several other tokens of diseases, which had been left there, as evidence of cures, through sincere prayer.⁵² When the structure was completed, Father Strickner, on May 24, 1863, blessed it and dedicated it to Mary, Help of Christians, Maria Hilf Berg. It is said some fifteen hundred people gathered while he preached the first sermon from the doorstep of the little chapel. It was during the dedication that he attached the name "Holy Hill" to the site.

The existence of a hermit living on the hill is solidly based in fact, but the particulars of his life are sketchy, varying according to different sources. His arrival is recorded sometime between 1862 and 1864. He remained on the hill in devout prayer until the construction of the second church.

The legend as told to a local farmer was that Francois Soubrio (or Soubris) while studying for priesthood, fell in love. Having disgraced his family, he left France for a monastery in Quebec where he read the French manuscripts of Jacques Marquette. His attention was focussed on a side trip during the voyage. It told of a landing at the mouth of a creek and a one day trip west to a high cone-shaped hill upon which he erected a cross dedicating the hill to Mary and as a place of holy ground.

Francois, the hermit, wished to atone for what he had done. He found the map with the manuscript and set out for the hill, but became severely ill in Chicago. Both his legs were paralyzed. After some time he found the hill, crawled to the top and prayed the night. In the morning, the story goes, he was healthy again. He built a crude hut and found relief from his troubled conscience in prayer. Soubrio disappeared in 1881 as mysteriously as he had come.⁵³

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⁵²LeCount, 76-77.

⁵³There are several versions: W. A. Armstrong, Miracle Hill. A Legendary Tale of Wisconsin, (Milwaukee: Cramer, Aikens & Cramer, 1899), 16-20. Another taken from History of Washington and Ozaukee Counties, Wisconsin (Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1881), 457-458; LeCount, 215-222; "A Hermit's Tale", Milwaukee Sentinel January 13, 1889, page 7, col. 1: Quickert, 103-106.

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In 1878, one year before the new church was designed, Holy Hill had its second pilgrimage: a procession led by Rev. Raess from St. Hubertus to the little log chapel. Father Raess had purchased a carved wooden statue of the Virgin Mother and Child for the Shrine on Holy Hill. It was made in Munich, Bavaria and sent by the firm of Pustet to be exhibited at the Philadelphia World's Fair in 1876. The statue was carried by eighteen young girls, robed in white and escorted by a long procession of priests, men on horseback and delegations from all parts of the state.⁵⁴

Henry C. Koch, Milwaukee architect, designed the Gothic Revival church with brick made from a bed of clay found in the immediate neighborhood of Holy Hill. The summit was leveled twelve feet to allow for a foundation. The church dimensions were seventy feet long by forty-six feet wide. The wall height to the eaves was twenty feet.

Above the steep roof was a bell-tower with a large cross giving a total height from the stone water table of sixty feet. The church had fourteen Gothic windows, five on each side, and two at the rear and front. There was a rose window in each gable.⁵⁵ This church, with the thousands of pilgrims annually visiting the Shrine, soon was inadequate, however, it served until 1925 when it was removed to make room for the current church.

The last services held in the 1881 church was in 1925. A temporary church called The Little Flower Mission Chapel was erected to attend the pilgrim's needs when the present shrine was under construction. The mission chapel was built south of the 1920 monastery in a parking area. It served Holy Hill until the lower church was dedicated in 1928. At that time the Little Flower Chapel was dismantled and donated to Villa Jerome Boys Camp at nearby Friess Lake, now known as Glacier Hills County Park under the Washington County Park system.⁵⁶

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⁵⁴Walsh, O.D.C., 20.

⁵⁵Ibid., 18-20.

⁵⁶Brother Francis's Picture Book-1968. Holy Hill Archives.

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The naming of the temporary church and the lower church corresponds with the canonization of St. Therese in 1925. St. Therese is also known as Little Flower of Jesus.⁵⁷

In September 1905, two Discalced Carmelites, Father Killian Gutmann and Father Eliseus MacKina, came to the United States from the Province of Regensburg, Bavaria, for the purpose of establishing a foundation for their order in the United States. During their brief stay in the locality, these priests tried to find a suitable site for a monastery. Monsignor Rainer directed their attention to Holy Hill. While Archbishop Messmer was not eager to have another religious order in the diocese, (The Capuchins were established in the diocese before 1869) the Sisters at St. Francis however, interceded in behalf of the Fathers, and in November 1905 the archbishop finally consented to take them into his diocese. The invitation came, and the care of Holy Hill was placed in the hands of the Discalced Carmelites.

A document was sent to Rev. Messmer whereby after an audience with Pope Pius X on July 17, 1906, the secretary Aloysius Veccia announced that Rome had granted its apostolic sanction.⁵⁸

Since 1906, the Discalced Carmelites have retained the responsibility of caring for Holy Hill and the spiritual needs of pilgrims. These first Carmelites, Fathers Killian Gutmann, Eliseus MacKina, Irenaeus Berndl and Brothers Adam Modlmayer and Alphonse Merl were the first Discalced Friars to settle in the United States.

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⁵⁷St. Therese of Lisieux (1873-1897), died an unknown cloistered French Carmelite nun in an obscure convent in Normandy, Carmel of Lisieux. Born Therese Martin in Alencon, France, she was accepted in the Second Order of Discalced Carmelites at fifteen and died nine years later of tuberculosis. Her "little way" of spiritual perfection became widely known through her spiritual autobiography.

⁵⁸Letter written in Italian and translated by Nicole Goetz from Rome P. Rinaldo M. di S. Giusto, General Director of the Discalced Carmelites about the establishment of a new house at Holy Hill, dated July 21, 1906 and a document in Latin, Beneplicitum Apostolicum. Milwaukee Archdiocesan Archives.

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The Holy Hill Carmelite community formed the cornerstone of the Province of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, erected in 1947 in Hubertus. It also embraced the House of Studies in Washington, D.C.; a noviate in Brookline, Massachusetts, established in 1942, and the minor seminary of St. Joseph in Peterborough, New Hampshire, founded in 1953.⁵⁹

In 1921 Holy Hill took on the ministry of formation, providing a home for the novitiate until 1943, and again from 1982 to the present. This ministry was extended through the establishment of a minor seminary in 1934 and 1955, a school of philosophy, a Brothers' training programs and in 1984 the Postulancy.

A parish ministry function has been performed over the years. From 1916 to 1919 the friars agreed to care for St. Patrick's in Thompson, and from 1929 to 1943 for St. Augustine's by offering the 1920 Monastery Chapel for their temporary use after their church burned down in 1922. In 1924 the Carmelites provided priests for the newly established St. Mary's of the Hill parish.

The Shrine of Mary-Help of Christians is the center of no congregation. It has revenues only from the free will offerings of pilgrims from around the world. The Feast days at Holy Hill especially bring various societies and national ethnic groups in great numbers. The Central and Milwaukee Roads at the turn of the century and after World War I, brought excursions from the heartland of America from Pittsburgh to Minneapolis, from the Great Lakes to St. Louis. The Central Road took its excursionists to the station at Hubertus, and the Milwaukee Road to the Hartford Station.⁶⁰ Some of the earliest pilgrimages, numbering in the thousands, were the Slovaks and the Croatian who came principally from Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana and Illinois.⁶¹ From the train stations its members walked, in procession,

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⁵⁹Helen Walker Homan, Knights of Christ, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1957), 180-181.

⁶⁰LeCount & LeCount, Holy Hill, (LeCount & LeCount, Hartford, Wisconsin, 1908), Unnumbered pages). Chapter on "The Feast Days at Holy Hill".

⁶¹"Slovaks Plan Huge Pilgrimage to Holy Hill", The Catholic Herald Citizen, September 5, 1970.)

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sometimes with brass bands, the entire seven miles from the stations to the crest of Holy Hill.⁶² Hungarians call the Feast of the Assumption their "Lady Day". They came in great numbers from East Chicago or Milwaukee.⁶³

Today there are new ethnic groups, the Vietnamese, Hispanics, Koreans, and Philipinos. Within a three month period over 1,000 have signed the guest register from as far as Australia, Africa, U.S.S.R., Philippines, China, Japan, all countries of Europe Argentina and the list goes on.⁶⁴ Holy Hill is recognized as a Shrine nationally. Shrines in the United States come under the National Conference of Catholic Bishops office of Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees (PCMR). PCMR lists Holy Hill as a National Shrine. There is also movement toward designating Holy Hill a Basilica.⁶⁵ The office mailing list for 1990 was 27,700 and 11,000 new registrants (foreign not included).

Many thousands simply do not register.⁶⁶ "They come looking for healing - spiritual, physical, emotional, or whatever. Very often they come away from here healed. A lot of wonderful things have happened here whether you call them miracles or whatever."⁶⁷

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⁶²"To Dedicate Holy Hill Church July 19", The Milwaukee Journal, July 12, 1931.

⁶³"Holy Hill", Undated brochure, page 13.

⁶⁴Sue Mroz, "Throngs From Far and Wide Flock to Holy Hill", Catholic Herald, January 17, 1991.

⁶⁵Father Jude Peters, president, National Association of Shrine and Pilgrimage Apostolate, 1990-1991.

⁶⁶Sister Elaine Weber, O.S.F., Administrative Assistant, Holy Hill.

⁶⁷Father Fidelis, a member of the Shrine community, during an interview January 17, 1991.

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Multitudes have come, over half a million a year, to receive a spiritual uplift and healing of the sick. The cases of reported healings are numerous. The oldest recorded healing was reported in 1847 by a woman pioneer whose father bought a farm very near Holy Hill. A Swiss family by the name of Kohler had a son whose wife was "sickly most all the time". Mr. Kohler, Sr. told his daughter-in-law that "in the old country there are shrines where people get healed by praying. Here there is no shrine, but maybe if we go up on top of that high hill and pray, God will hear us and so you may get your health back." They did it. They pulled themselves up by the brush and prayed there often. "I saw her before, sickly, and I seen her afterwards, just as light on her feet, just as well as one could possible be".⁶⁸ The cases of apparent healing at Holy Hill are too numerous to be dismissed.⁶⁹

The term "shrine" signifies a sacred place or church to which the faithful make pilgrimages. All shrines instill in pilgrim's hearts the faith and confidence which performs the miracle. The world thinks only of physical miracles. At the Lourdes

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⁶⁸"94, Saw Epic of Holy Hill - Woman Pioneer tells of Miracle Cure in Early Days", Hartford Times, February 16, 1930.

⁶⁹"Cures Recounted in History of Shrine", Milwaukee Sentinel, September 18, 1881, page 5, col. 1; "Cured by Faith - Hundreds Journey to the Famous Mecca" Milwaukee Sentinel, May 9, 1886, page 8, col. 1; "Holy Hill - Mecca to Which the Lamé and Halt Resort", Milwaukee Sentinel, October 28, 1883, page 11, col. 1; "Reward for Prayer - Religious Services Resumed", Milwaukee Sentinel, June 21, 1884, page 8, col. 3; "Annual Pilgrimage Begins", Milwaukee Sentinel, May 25, 1886, page 4, col. 7. Both LeCount and Armstrong have full chapters documenting cures in their books.

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Grotto there have been 10,000 miracles.⁷⁰ For every physical cure there have been a thousand spiritual cures.⁷¹ It is this uplifting attitude found at Holy Hill, at times called the Lourdes of Wisconsin.

Architecture

The Holy Hill complex is architecturally significant as an assemblage of buildings illustrating the development of the German Romanesque Revival style. It is an anomaly in Washington County and the only elevated Shrine in Wisconsin. As a monastic center, it is sited magnificently. The Entrance Arch Via Crucis, and grotto retain a high degree of integrity and are in excellent condition contributing architectural significance to the whole. The craftsmen drew upon Romanesque construction of heavy walls and naturally thick arches of fieldstone, in this case, to frame the Bedford stone carvings, iron figure of the grotto and the arch itself. Aszklar's sculpture closely relates to Romanesque architectural design. Aside from the figures, ornament centers chiefly around the pillars and capitals. He encased some figures in temples with Romanesque decorations of pillars with carved and uncarved cushion type capitals.

The architect, Hermann J. Gaul (1869-1949) designed almost exclusively for the German Catholics in Chicago. Born in Chicago, he apprenticed with Louis Sullivan in

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⁷⁰Emmett J. Culligan, K.S.G., Triumphant Peace, (San Bernardino, California: Crestline Book Company. Printed in Ireland and in the United States, 1956), 55-61.

⁷¹A personal visit was made to Lourdes, October 1990. There are remarkable similarities between the shrines. At Lourdes the horseshoe shaped staircase leads to the esplanade and the Basilica of the Rosary, or underchurch. The Holy Hill staircase similarly composed, though on a much smaller scale, was removed in 1961. The Pyrenees (or Kettle Moraine) in the background dwarf the complex which appears to be in a valley rather than elevated. The church is on the Rock of Massabielle and below is the grotto adjacent to the Gave River. The penitent and ill are everywhere.

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the 1890s.⁷² He apparently limited his work to only German-American institutions, i.e., Catholic churches, schools, convents, orphanage buildings, and hospital wings. For a time Hermann Gaul practiced with his brother Christopher, but their relationship was strained and they established separate practices.⁷³ Hermann J. Gaul's practice spanned a half century.⁷⁴

Gaul designed six full scale German Catholic churches; four in Gothic and two in Romanesque. Gothic churches include Sacred Heart Church (1915-16), 7003 South May Street; St. Philomena Church (1922-23), 4130 West Cortland Street; St. Francis Xavier Church (1925-27), 3035 North Francisco Avenue; St. Nicholas's Church on Ridge Avenue in Evanston, typical of the German Gothic style, and located on an elevated site. His Romanesque churches were: St. Benedict, (1917-18), 2201 West Irving Park Road; and St. Matthias Church (1915-16), 2336 West Ainslie Street.⁷⁵

St. Benedict's Church on Irving Park Road in Chicago is one of Gaul's major grandiose Romanesque Revival projects. The work is heavy in comparison to Holy Hill, but its large scale and abundant ornamentation compare favorably to Shrine of Mary-Help of Christians. St. Benedict's was built in 1919. The parish was founded in 1906 and flourished. Over the years, they built a grade school, high school, two convents, rectory, gymnasium, education center and a chapel. The complex occupies a full city block.⁷⁶ This ambitious assemblage may well have been another reason why .rm 7.10"

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⁷²Chicago History, Fall 1985, 12, 13.

⁷³Interview with William M. Gaul, Architect of Gaul & Associates, 415 N. Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois, June 8, 1990.

⁷⁴Illinois Society of Architects, Monthly Bulletin, November 1949 - October 1950.

⁷⁵A History of the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago, (Chicago: Archdiocese of Chicago, 1980) 298-300, 618-20, 792-94, 834-36, 866-69. Diamond Jubilee of the Archdiocese of Chicago, (Chicago: Archdiocese of Chicago, 1920), 276-523.

⁷⁶George A. Lane, S.J., Chicago Churches and Synagogues, (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1981).

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the Carmelite community of Holy Hill invited him to design their needed church and 1937 monastery for the ever increasing number of pilgrims and friars in the Order, respectively.

Following World War II, Gaul's nephew John C. Voosen joined him as a partner. After Hermann's death, the firm Gaul & Voosen continued to build churches, schools and the Shrine Chapel addition (1956) at Holy Hill.

Prototypes for Milwaukee's Romanesque churches were mostly German and Italian, except for St. Paul's Episcopal on North Marshall Street which is based on H. H. Richardson's work. The oldest German Romanesque style church in the city, St. Francis of Assisi, was designed by William Schickel of New York for the Capuchin Fathers in 1876, and reflects the Capuchin liturgical requirements as a monastic church. Other buildings in the complex are similar in style. The limestone porch designed by Schickel was added in 1900. The monastery's west wing dates to 1869, the oldest part of the complex. The parish originated in 1871 a year after Schickel began his practice. He was the architect of choice for the Order in the United States and like Gaul for various German-American organizations. The church has little ornamentation and dates to almost fifty years earlier than Holy Hill. In Wisconsin, besides the St. Francis of Assisi complex, he designed St. Joseph's Church and School in Appleton and the St. Lawrence Seminary at Mt. Calvary, the first Capuchin establishment in the United States.⁷⁷

There are two other monastic churches built of common cream brick in Milwaukee and designed by William Schickel in the German Romanesque style: Holy Cross on West Bluemound Road built in 1879 and St. Elizabeth's Roman Catholic Church on West Burleigh built in 1905. They currently are active parish churches. Each structure has a single square tower, round arches and corbelling details with some eclectic embellishments.

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⁷⁷Henry F. Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased), (Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingalls, 1970) "Franciscan, Capuchin" New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol VI, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), 67. The Rise and Progress of the Province of St. Joseph of the Capuchin Order in the United States, (New York: Benziger, 1907), 160, 167.

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The earliest, 1876-77, Romanesque Revival style church built in Milwaukee, is St. Francis, designed by New York architect William Schickel, for the Capuchin Fathers. One of the later churches inspired by Italian Romanesque is St. Joseph's Convent Chapel, designed in 1914 by Richard Philipp. The isolated Carmelites chose the Romanesque style based upon their former associations long after they had generally fallen out of popularity. The first Discalced Carmelites to arrive at Holy Hill came from Regensburg, home of the great Gothic style twin-spired St. Peter's Cathedral (1275-1534). It is therefore not implausible that their first church on Holy Hill may have been inspired by this church. The Shrine exterior, though smaller than St. Peter's, is just as forceful in design, however, at Holy Hill the semi-circular arch prevails. It fits in with the region and the ground where it stands as if rooted in it.

German Romanesque elements are evident in Shrine of Mary-Help of Christians Church. Some notable ones are: a strong vertical emphasis, a solid chunkiness; and a tendency to break up the wall surfaces in rather elaborate ways. The steep sides of Holy Hill seem to call for tall towers with slender spires. The German Romanesque churches also have a dramatic skyline pattern created by the multiplicity of towers.⁷⁸

Arched corbel tables another design element developed in Germany are derived from the Lombard style of Northern Italy. This characteristic as adopted by the Germans was used as cornice detailing at Holy Hill. From Italian patterns was the conception of arcading as an all over pattern. The external walls of the Shrine church are articulated by means of projections, blind arcades and niches.

This pilgrimage church follows the general lines associated with the early pilgrimage churches in Europe. Monasticism flourished in the middle ages. The changes in ecclesiastical usage, developed the crypt or underchurch; the use of bell

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⁷⁸Bruce Allsopp, Romanesque Architecture, (New York: The John Day Company, 1971).

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towers designs; and many chapels and altars within each church became popular among the numerous pilgrims. These needs influenced Romanesque design elements and are evident and demonstrated in Holy Hill's Shrine.⁷⁹

The Shrine exhibits other pilgrimage church influences: carved portal, wide transepts, large sanctuary, and a lofty long aisled galleried vaulted nave. Other features are the side aisles with vaulted divisions made by arcades of piers or columns; these side aisles are roofed at a lower level than the nave as defined at Holy Hill.

Both Holy Hill monasteries, though built at different times and by different architects, reflect the Romanesque elements of the church, however the 1920 monastery designed by Richard Philipp reflects his preference for the Italian Romanesque prototypes.

Richard Philipp (1874-1959) entered the office of Ferry & Clas in Milwaukee as an apprentice in 1892. Ten years later he was one of their chief designers. In 1906 he formed a partnership with Peter Brust who was the engineering half of the firm. The partnership ended in 1927 but Philipp continued to create. His distinguished career lasted sixty-seven years.

Richard Philipp was associated with the Fathers of Holy Hill on another project in West Milwaukee at least five years before this monastery was built. In the spring of 1913, Archbishop Messmer prevailed upon the Carmelite Order to assume the responsibility for saving the St. Florian Parish founded by the Capuchin Fathers in 1911. The Carmelites had actually been thinking about establishing another monastery in Milwaukee and when approached they saw it as a realization of their dream,⁸⁰

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⁷⁹Doreen Yarwood, The Architecture of Europe, (New York: Hastings House, 1975), 134-175.

⁸⁰Father Sebastian Ramage, O.C.D., Golden Jubilee 1911-1961 St. Florian Parish. A commemorative booklet containing the history of the parish.

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and embarked upon long term building plans with Richard Philipp.⁸¹

Before any structure could be built for the Carmelite Fathers, permission and design acceptance had to be received from Rome.⁸² Philipp traveled to Italy before he executed St. Florian's Monastery design for the Carmelites. The spirit of the style is readily captured in the 1920 monastery at Holy Hill. He designed St. Florian Romanesque church connected to the monastery-rectory in two stages. The under or crypt church was constructed during 1923 and the upper church completed in 1939, almost pure Lombardic Romanesque, simple but stately in form.

Archaeological Activity

Of the three mounds known to have existed, one was uncovered in 1851 and the two adjacent were excavated in 1862. There are no other known archaeological sites on Holy Hill.

Criteria Exceptions

Criteria Consideration A

Shrine of Mary-Help of Christians complex is an exception to the National Register Criteria under Criteria Consideration A as a religious property that derives its primary significance from its outstanding interior and exterior architectural qualities. Holy Hill also has historical significance for its ability to convey how local religious history contributed to the development of the area.

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⁸¹Philipp had submitted plans ca. 1920 to enlarge the former 1881 church on Holy Hill. Part of the expansion was completed, the underchurch was built but not the enlarged steeple front. Holy Hill Archives.

⁸²Correspondence in Latin and Italian to Holy Hill giving design approvals on renderings submitted. Holy Hill Archives.

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Criteria Consideration C

The cemetery is not significant in its own right but an important element of the overall church complex. It is an integral part of the district and helps document the Carmelite community history. It is an historical document in and of itself and therefore is an exception to Criteria Consideration C.

Preservation Activity - The Shrine of All Seasons

The friars of Holy Hill have a long standing commitment to the continued preservation of all building exteriors and sensitive redecoration of interiors as demonstrated in the past. The preservation fund is made possible by countless donations of thousands of pilgrims.

To enhance the fund raising effort, the widely acclaimed Holy Hill Arts & Crafts Fair is held annually to benefit the creative arts and support the financial needs of the Shrine of Mary. The exhibit fees, admission fees and food sales are donated to Holy Hill. September 1990, marked the sixteenth annual fair.

The character of the hill has not been altered and there is the concerted effort to maintain the tranquility of the hill and to maintain the historical landscape of natural forest growth therein. The Discalced Carmelites own in excess of four hundred acres surrounding the complex.

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Holy Hill
Town of Erin, Washington County, WI
Photos by Shirley McArthur
Historic Photos: Holy Hill Archives
Late summer 1990
Negatives at State Historical Society of Wisconsin

- Photo 1 of 38 Telephoto view facing south from Highway 167.
- Photo 2 Telephoto view facing north from Donnegal Road.
- Photo 3 Aerial view facing northeast, ca.1960.
- Photo 4 End wall of apse sculpture facing west.
- Photo 5 Facade view from esplanade facing northeast.
- Photo 6 Aerial view facing east, ca. 1960.
- Photo 7 View of elevator/esplanade from rustic path to church facing north.
- Photo 8 Facade entrances, view facing north.
- Photo 9 Transept with attached Shrine Chapel facing north.
- Photo 10 Upper church interior facing northeast - High Altar.
- Photo 11 High Altar.
- Photo 12 Sanctuary with choir and oratory windows.
- Photo 13 Side Altar on the left or near west side.

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- Photo 14 Side Altar on the right or near east side.
- Photo 15 Upper church interior facing southwest - gallery.
- Photo 16 Interior view of Shrine Chapel.
- Photo 17 Lower church entrance under esplanade.
- Photo 18 Lower church - Chapel of St. Therese.
- Photo 19 Rear of Chapel of St. Therese facing wouthwest.
- Photo 20 Chapel of St. Therese Altar.
- Photo 21 Post card of monastery/farmhouse, ca. 1890
- Photo 22 1920 Monastery facing east.
- Photo 23 1920 Monastery facing east, ca. 1924.
- Photo 24 1920 Monastery chapel conversion facing southwest.
- Photo 25 1938 Monastery facing east.
- Photo 26 Station of the Cross life size carved figures.
- Photo 27 Station XI facing west.
- Photo 28 Entrance Arch of Via Crucis, former approach to
Holy Hill.
- Photo 29 Discalced Carmelite Cemetery facing east.
- Photo 30 Facsimile of Lourdes Grotto facing east.

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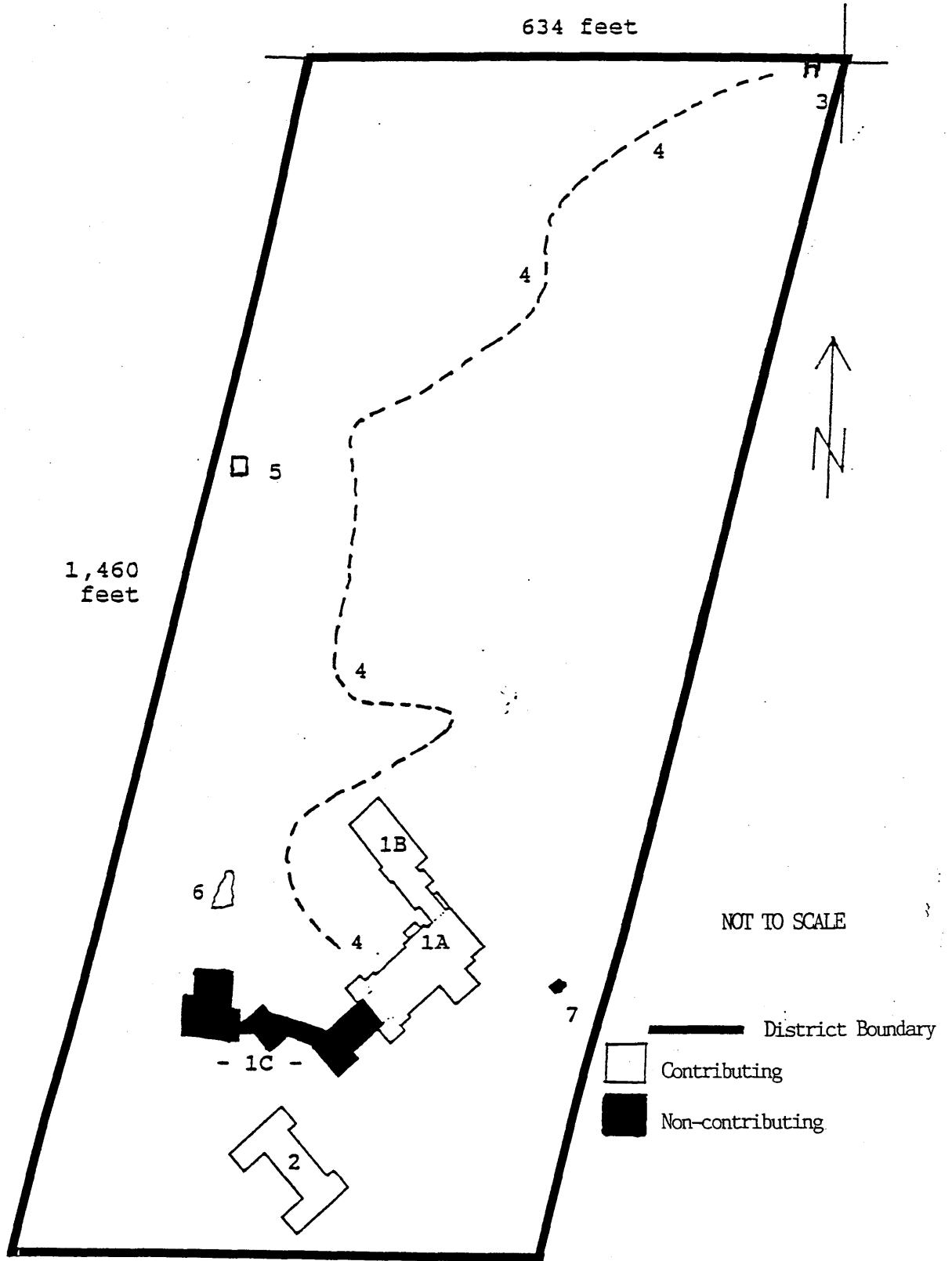
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- Photo 31 Hermitage view facing west.
- Photo 32 View from upper parking lot facing northeast.
- Photo 33 View facing northeast, ca. 1960.
- Photo 34 Gift Shop/Guest House facing west.
- Photo 35 Marian Hall from elevator tower to Exhibit Hall.
- Photo 36 Exhibit Hall facing east.
- Photo 37 Elevator Tower/Esplanade deck facing west.
- Photo 38 Summit of Holy Hill facing northeast.

HOLY HILL
 TOWN OF ERIN
 WASHINGTON COUNTY
 WISCONSIN



- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1A Shrine of Mary, Help of Christians | 4 Via Crucis (there are 14 scenes along the wa |
| 1B Monastery | 5 Carmelite Cemetery |
| 1C Guest House/Esplanade Complex | 6 Lourdes Grotto |
| 2 Monastery | 7 Hermitage |
| 3 Entrance Arch | |