

FORM A - AREA

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02116

Area Letter Form numbers in this Area

H	2445
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Newton, Mass. MRA

Town NEWTON (Nonantum)

Name of Area (if any) _____

Our Lady Help of Christians H. D.

Present Use _____

Church, School & Convent

General Date or Period 1875-1924

General Condition Good

Acreage 6.6 acres

Recorded by Kathlyn Hatch; Peter Stott

Organization Newton Historical Comm.

Date December 1976; April 1986

Photos (3"x3" or 3"x5" black & white). Indicate on back of each photo street addresses for buildings shown. Staple to left side of form.

Sketch Map. Draw a general map of the area indicating properties within it. Number each property for which individual inventory forms have been completed. Label streets including route numbers, if any. Indicate north. (Attach a separate sheet if space here is not sufficient).

(SEE ATTACHED MAP)

UTM REFERENCE

A	19.318960.4691250
B	19.318840.4691380
C	19.318950.4691480
D	19.319120.4691280

USGS QUADRANGLE
SCALE

NEWTON, MA
1:25,000

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

As an important complex of brick Gothic architecture in Newton, part of which was designed by the well-known church architect, James Murphey, and for its associations with the development of the village of Nonantum, Our Lady Help of Christians Church Historic District meets criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other areas within the community.

This complex includes the convent, rectory, and church of Our Lady Help of Christians, as well as Newton Catholic High School. Located on 6.6 acres of landscaped grounds circled by a wrought-iron fence, this well preserved group of buildings is unified by the use throughout of red-brick construction and the Gothic Revival style, expressed here in several phases beginning in the 1870s. Although the Newton Catholic High School, completed in 1924, continues the use of the Gothic Revival idiom, the building is considered as a non-contributing element because of its later construction date.

The Church was designed with a tall center tower capped by a steep broad spire decorated with Gothic gablets. The proportions of the nave are steep and narrow. A short-sloped gable roof covers the main block, with a deep clerestory above the shallow projections of the side aisles. Pier buttresses trimmed with granite coping appear at the building's corners,

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain historical importance of area and how the area relates to the development of other areas of the community.

The first Catholic church in Newton was organized in 1867 in Upper Falls, where services had been held as early as 1846. St. Bernard's, organized in West Newton in 1876, was the town's second independent Catholic parish. The rest of Newton, including Newton Corner, Nonantum, and Newtonville, remained a part of the old parish of St. Patrick's in Watertown. Each Sunday, its pastor, the Rev. Michael Green (1835-1885) conducted services in Union Hall, Newton Corner. Father Green became organizing spirit behind the new church: after surveying the district in 1872 to determine whether the town could support a third parish, Green obtained two lots at the corner of Washington and Adams streets, and until his death in 1885, he was the church's first pastor.

The congregation of Our Lady, originally known as St. Brendan's, was organized in 1872. It drew initially for membership on the increasing numbers of Irish immigrants who settled in the Nonantum-Newton Corner area during the Civil War era. The present brick Gothic Revival style church initiated an ambitious building program at the corner of Washington and Adams streets.

Construction of the brick edifice did not go smoothly. The cornerstone of the Church was laid the 31st of August 1873. Lack of funds seem to have delayed its completion. During the winter of 1874-5, with the walls not

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

(See Continuation Sheet)

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:	Form No:
Newton, Mass. MRA	Area H
Property Name: Our Lady Help of Christians H.D.	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

and its Gothic-arched windows are decorated with inset wood tracery. Shortly after 1900, a major remodeling program was undertaken to correct defects in the original construction of the building. Transcepts had to be added to support the main walls, and a facade in the form of three Gothic porches was constructed.

The Gothic Revival style rectory, constructed west of the Church in the late 1880s, is a 3-1/2-story building with a hipped roof and two shallow front pavilions flanking a narrow, recessed center bay that contains the main entrance. The gabled east pavilion, with a parapet and surmounting finial, is balanced on the opposite side by a hip-roofed projection. Below a subsidiary corbeled cornice at the third level the windows are capped with stone and brick lintels with inset wood tracery.

More closely based on the Colonial Revival style, is the convent on Adams Street, built in 1893. This building is boxy in shape and also hip-roofed. Its rectangular cupola features a battered slate base, metal sheathing, and projecting hip roof. The design scheme for the facade of this well preserved residence includes a front pavilion, recessed entrance bay, and bow window with a conical cap.

Newton Catholic High School, which opened in 1924, is typical of late Gothic Revival design. It has a central loggia with flanking front pavilions. A new grammar school is attached to the rear.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

yet up, the congregation was still using the basement for services. After a fair held in the Spring of 1875, however, sufficient funds were raised for its completion. By September, with walls 100 feet in height, the contractor for the brickwork, J.W. Wentworth fell to the ground from scaffolding in a fatal accident.

Architect for the church was the Providence architect, James Murphy (1834-1907). As a church architect, Murphy was well known throughout New England "as a designer of some of the most imposing Catholic churches," his obituary noted, designing more than 300 churches, schools, and convents. Born in Ireland, he came to New York as a youth, beginning work with the New York church architect P.C. Kelly, with whom he designed Boston's Catholic Cathedral. From New York, he moved to Providence where he practiced for the remainder of his career. Other Boston area churches included St. Mary's Church, Cambridgeport (with P.C. Kelly); St. Gregory's Church, Dorchester Ave.; and St. Joseph's Church, Union Square, Somerville.

Most of the building program after 1890 related to the Parish's development of educational programs, under the direction of the church's second pastor, the Reverend Michael Dolan (1834-1915). Under Dolan's direction, the new three-story school building was constructed, a smaller heating plant, and a convent for the nuns who would staff the school. The original convent, constructed in 1890, was the personal gift of Father Dolan. The Adams Street school, demolished in 1962, housed eight primary grades, with Freshmen and Sophomores on the top floor. The school opened in September 1893 with 450 pupils. A ninth grade was added in 1894, and in

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newton, Mass. MRA	Form No: Area H
Property Name: Our Lady Help of Christians H.D.	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

the following year the first high school class was begun. As the classrooms in the school building were full to capacity, high school students were accomodated on the second floor of the boiler house, fitted with two classrooms, one each for junior and senior high school students. These rooms were used as the high school until the completion of Newton Catholic High School in 1924. The heating plant, which still stands and now serves as a "thrft and gift shoppe," is thought to be the first Catholic Parish High School in Massachusetts. With the opening of Newton Catholic High School in 1924, the classroom function was transferred to the new building.

The most recent addition to the complex has been the construction of a new Grammar School and Parish Center in 1960, attached to the north end of the 1924 building.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Atlases, 1907, 1895, 1886, 1874.
O.H. Bailey, "View of Newton, Mass.," (1878).
Boston Herald 14 September 1941.
"James Murphy," Providence Journal 4/20/1907, p. 12.
Newton Graphic Publishing Company, Beautiful Newton (c.1917), p.78.
Newton Journal 9/16/1873.
Newton Republican 6/5/1875; 9/11/1875; 10/9/1875.
Our Lady Help of Christians, Newton, Mass. and a History of Catholic America (1978).
Smith, S.F., History of Newton, Massachusetts (1880), p. 700.
Sweetser, M.F., King's Handbook of Newton (1889), pp. 60, 134.
Architect Files, Fine Arts Division, Boston Public Library.

Newton, Mass. Multiple Resource Area
OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS HISTORIC DISTRICT

Address	S-B-L	Historic Name	Date	Style	C/NC	Inven. #	Area
563 Washington St.	14-23-3	Our Lady Help of Christians Church	1873-5	Gothic Revival	C	2445	41,644
295 Adams St.	14-23-5	Convent	1890	Gothic Revival	C	2445	102,981
573 Washington St.	14-23-4	Rectory	late 1880s	Gothic Revival	C	2445	32,780
575 Washington St.	14-23-6	Newton Catholic High School	1924	Gothic Revival	NC	2445	99,000
Washington St.	14-23-1	V A C A N T L O T			NC		6,475
Washington St.	14-23-2	V A C A N T L O T			NC		6,260

6 properties with an area of 289,140 square feet (6.6 acres).

4 buildings (1 non-contributing)

2 vacant parcels

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic GroupName Newton MRA
State Middlesex County, MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

11. Newton Lower Falls
Historic DistrictEntered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

12. Newton Theological Institution
Historic DistrictEntered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

13. Newton Upper Falls
Historic DistrictEntered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

14. Newtonville Historic District

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

15. Old Chestnut Hill
Historic DistrictEntered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

16. Our Lady Help of Christians
Historic DistrictEntered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

17. Putnam Street Historic
DistrictEntered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

18. Sumner and Gibbs Streets
Historic DistrictEntered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

19. Union Street Historic
DistrictEntered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

20. Webster Park Historic
DistrictEntered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

06001758

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Our Lady Help of Christians Historic District
(Newton MRA)
Middlesex County
MASSACHUSETTS

JUL 23 1986

Working No. _____

Fed. Reg. Date: 2/3/87

Date Due: 8/21/86 - 9/6/86

Action: ACCEPT 9-4-86

RETURN _____

REJECT _____

Federal Agency: _____

Entered in the
National Register

- ☐ resubmission
☐ nomination by person or local government
☐ owner objection
☐ appeal

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____

Reviewer _____

Discipline _____

Date _____

_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name _____

2. Location _____

3. Classification

Category	Ownership Public Acquisition	Status Accessible	Present Use
----------	---------------------------------	----------------------	-------------

4. Owner of Property _____

5. Location of Legal Description _____

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition	Check one	Check one
☐ excellent	☐ deteriorated	☐ unaltered
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ altered
☐ fair	☐ unexposed	☐ original site
		☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates
☐ boundary selection

8. Significance

Period Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- ☐ summary paragraph
- ☐ completeness
- ☐ clarity
- ☐ applicable criteria
- ☐ justification of areas checked
- ☐ relating significance to the resource
- ☐ context
- ☐ relationship of integrity to significance
- ☐ justification of exception
- ☐ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national ____ state ____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title date

13. Other

- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



Area H. Our Lady Help of Christians H.D.
View from Adams St. looking South.

- 1986-7/23

- Left: Church

- Center: Convent

- Right: Boiler House.





Area H.

Our Lady Help of Christians H.D.

(L-R)

School, Rectory, Church

View looking east





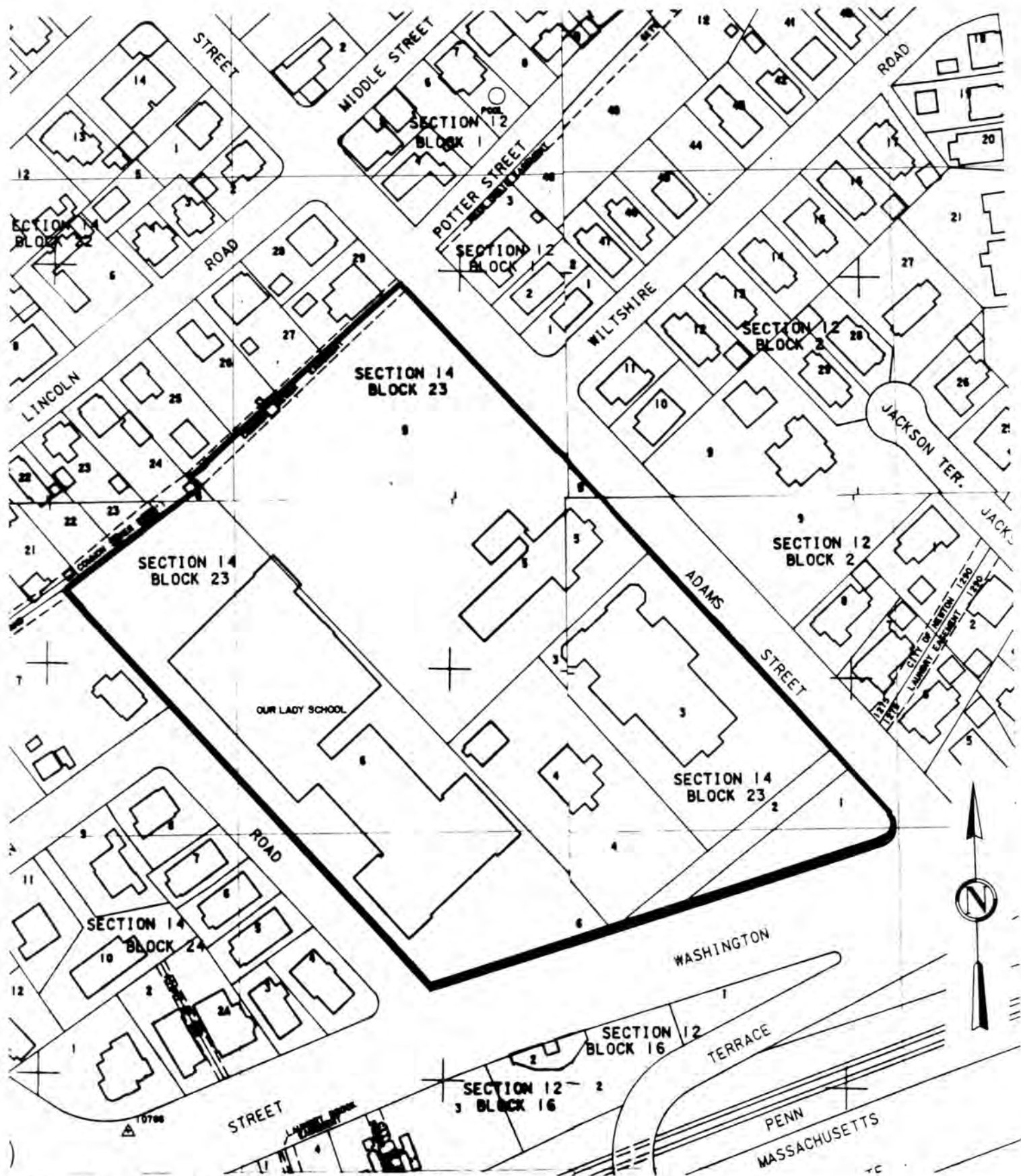
Area H

Our Lady Help of Christians H.D.

Church and Rectory

View looking northeast





City of Newton Assessor's Maps. Sheets 18,19,32,33
 Metric Series, 1979
 Scale: UTM grid line interval = 100 meters (328 feet)

Newton, Mass. MRA
 AREA H
 OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS HISTORIC DISTRICT



JAN 02 1990

NEWTON, MA-MHA

AREA

FORM NO.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

Our Lady Help of Christians National
Register District extension

NO-070

Photo (3"x3" or 3"x5", black and white) Indicate address of property on back of photo. Staple to left side of form.

Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection(s).
Indicate north

see attached map

Town Newton (Nonantum)Address 575 Washington StreetHistoric Name Newton Catholic High School(Our Lady Help of Christians)Use: Present schoolOriginal same

DESCRIPTION

Date 1924Source Water & Building Dept. recordsStyle Gothic RevivalArchitect Edward T.P. GrahamExterior Wall Fabric brickOutbuildings see district

Major Alterations (with dates) _____

rear addition-1960-NCCondition goodMoved no Date n/aAcreage 99,000 sq.ft. C 2.28ASetting located on major thoroughfare:part of Our Lady Help of ChristiansComplex (NR: 9/4/86)UTM REFERENCE 19/318940/4691340USGS QUADRANGLE NEWTONSCALE 1:25000Recorded by Candace Jenkins/Susan AbeleOrganization Newton Historical Comm.Date 1/1987; rev. 3/1988

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

Newton Catholic High School possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. It is significant as Newton's most architecturally distinguished parochial school and as one of the finest schools of the period overall. It was a handsome 20th century addition to the existing Our Lady Help of Christians Complex (NR-1986). The school contributes to the historic character of the district and meets criterion C of the NRHP.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.

Newton Catholic High School is one of the finest schools in the city, and is far and away the most distinguished parochial school. It is a two story hip roof structure of rectangular plan with cross-gable end pavilions. The first story of the central section is taken up by a pointed arch arcaded porch with medallions in the spandrels. Directly above each arch at the second story are large three part windows with transoms. Three part window, segmentally arched at the second story, are also found in the gable end sections. A copper clad cupola rises from the center of the roof. A large 1960 addition is located to the rear.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.

Three parochial schools opened on the north side of Newton in the early 20s, Our Lady's High School and St. Bernard's in 1924 and St. Jean's in 1925. Built at a time when the city was also building new public schools, particularly the Davis School (1922; WN-J) in West Newton, F. A. Day Junior High School (1922) and the Underwood School (1924) in Newton Corner, these schools give further indication of population increases in the city. However, in recent years, declining enrollments have affected parochial schools as well as the public schools. Of the three, only Our Lady's, now Newton Catholic High School, remains open.

Our Lady's began to provide a primary education for children grades 1 through 8, in 1892. In 1903 they completed a small high school building, which is thought to be the first Catholic Parish High School in Massachusetts. The new 13 room high school building opened in 1924, designed by architect Edward T. P. Graham. Chemical and physical laboratories, and a motion picture booth in the auditorium were among the up to date facilities in the building. In 1960, an addition was built at the rear of the high school building to house the grade school and a parish center.

Architect Edward T.P. Graham was also responsible for the Church of Mary Immaculate of Lourds (1909) located on Elliot Street in Newton Upper Falls.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Building Department Records: 535 Washington Street

Newton Graphic 9-19-24

NR: 9/4/86 Our Lady Help of Christians H.D. Area H - #2445

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY Our Lady Help of Christians Historic District
NAME:

MULTIPLE Newton MRA
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Middlesex

DATE RECEIVED: 1/02/90 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 2/16/90
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 86001758

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: Y PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 2/16/90 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Locally significant architecturally distinguished parochial school. Originally classified as noncontributing due to its construction date outside the parameters of the survey from which the Newton MRA was generated, the Newton Catholic High School is now classified as contributing to the 20th-century significance of the district.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept Documentation
REVIEWER Swasey
DISCIPLINE Architectural History
DATE 02-16-90

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

CLASSIFICATION

☐ count ☐ resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

☐ historic ☐ current

DESCRIPTION

☐ architectural classification
☐ materials
☐ descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ applicable criteria
☐ justification of areas checked
☐ relating significance to the resource
☐ context
☐ relationship of integrity to significance
☐ justification of exception
☐ other

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

☐ acreage ☐ verbal boundary description
☐ UTM's ☐ boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

☐ sketch maps ☐ USGS maps ☐ photographs ☐ presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

Phone _____

Signed _____

Date _____

~~Deletes~~ —
This is already listed — see
attached.

This is only add. info
changing it from nc to
contributing in
OLH of Ch. HD.

BS.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ~~NOMINATION~~ ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY (Newton Catholic High School) Our Lady Help of Christians Historic
NAME: District (Newton MRA)

MULTIPLE Newton MRA
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Middlesex

DATE RECEIVED: 1/02/90 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/16/90
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 2/01/90 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 2/16/90
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 90000033

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 2/16/90 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Locally significant architecturally
distinguished Parochial school.
Already listed as part of Our Lady
Help of Christians Hist. District -
the school is now classified as
contributing rather than noncontributing.*

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept C
REVIEWER George
DISCIPLINE Architectural History
DATE 02-16-90

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

CLASSIFICATION

___count ___resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

___historic ___current

DESCRIPTION

___architectural classification
___materials
___descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

___summary paragraph
___completeness
___clarity
___applicable criteria
___justification of areas checked
___relating significance to the resource
___context
___relationship of integrity to significance
___justification of exception
___other

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

___acreage ___verbal boundary description
___UTMs ___boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

___sketch maps ___USGS maps ___photographs ___presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

Phone _____

Signed _____

Date _____



Newton, MA-MRA

Newton Catholic H.S. (Our Lady Help of Christians)
575 Washington St.

Newton, MA
Middletown, CT

C. Jenkins

1/87

ing. @ Jackson Homestead

near - NNW

87-4-7