

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only
received **SEP 16 1982**
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Ecclesia St. Bonaventura (B009-1)
and/or common St. Bonaventure Church Complex

2. Location

street & number N/A off NE 14 N/A not for publication
city, town Raeville N/A vicinity of Third congressional district
state Nebraska code 31 county Boone code 11

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Archdiocese of Omaha, c/o The Most Rev. Daniel Sheehan, Archbishop
street & number 6605 Farnam Street
city, town Omaha N/A vicinity of Nebraska state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Boone County Courthouse, Register of Deeds
street & number N/A
city, town Albion state Nebraska

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date On-going federal state county local
depository for survey records Nebraska State Historical Society
city, town Lincoln state Nebraska

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The St. Bonaventure Church Complex is located in Raeville, Nebraska approximately 17 miles north of Albion, the county seat of Boone county. The German-Catholic congregation owns 12.25 acres of land. The complex includes a Romanesque Revival brick church with two prominent towers, built in 1917-19, a three story vernacular eclectic brick school (1910), the two story frame vernacular Georgian Colonial Revival rectory built in 1920, and the parish hall, a one story frame building. The nomination also includes the church cemetery and orchard. Structural and historical integrity of the site and grounds has been preserved except for minor alterations made to the church and parish hall. The steeples have been recovered with asphalt shingles replacing the original clay tile roofing. A concrete ramp has been added on the south facade to provide handicap access to the church. Window openings in the front facade of the parish hall are no longer extant, having been boarded up. Frame additions were added in later years after the building was converted from a horse barn to a recreational hall. Metal sheeting now covers the wood shingle roof.

The St. Bonaventure Church complex is located in Raeville, Nebraska (1979 pop. 25). The town of Raeville is situated approximately two miles east of Nebraska Highway 14 between Petersburg and Elgin, Nebraska. The church complex, nestled in a valley, is a dominant feature of the rolling countryside in Boone county, and the cathedral's twin towers are visible for miles (see photo #1). The complex consists of four major structures; St. Bonaventure Church, school, rectory, and parish hall, and the church cemetery and orchard. The nomination includes a total area of 12.25 acres, which comprises all land presently owned by the St. Bonaventure congregation. The school, church and rectory, situated north to south, respectively, form the eastern boundary of the town with all main (front) facades facing west (see photo #3).

The present St. Bonaventure Church was erected in 1917-19, in the Romanesque Revival style of architecture, with Jacob M. Nachtigall of Omaha serving as architect. Readily identifiable design features are present including the semicircular arches used in all door and window openings and the round arch form repeated in miniature in the arcaded corbel table. St. Bonaventure, 70 feet along its north-south axis and 150 feet along its east-west axis, features a three-portal entrance flanked by two symmetrical towers at the north and south corners of the west (front) facade (see photo #4). The engaged corner towers are corner buttressed and battlement topped. Pierced by round-arched windows, the belfries carry the pyramidal steeples, capped by Latin crosses.

The building is of brick construction, layed out in a modified Latin cross plan, with a gable roof covered with Ludivici tile. Much of the detailing is in brick, including hoodmold details above doors and windows and corbeling. Buttress weatherings, battlement copings and water-table are all in stone.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) ethnic

Specific dates 1910, 1917–19, 1920 **Builder/Architect** Anton Kettler/Jacob M. Nachtigall

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Henry Woerth/Joseph Guth

St. Bonaventure Church is significant to north-eastern Nebraska for providing the spiritual, social and cultural base of a group of German immigrants settling in Boone County in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The church complex is significant to Boone County as an assemblage of four buildings closely related to instructional needs of German-Catholic families, and stands as a landmark in the Raeville community. Architecturally, the complex represents an intact grouping of German-American architecture with vernacular interpretations of the Romanesque Revival, Georgian Revival and Classical Revival styles.

The history of the St. Bonaventure Church began when two brothers, Thomas and James Rae, came from Canada and settled on a tract of land, approximately three miles south of the present town of Petersburg. This tract of land became known as Rae Valley and was eventually shortened to Raeville. The first Catholic settlers came to the area in 1875. They were Nicholas and Mary Henn, Mike and Maggie Ottele, Nicholas and Barbara Ottele and Nicholas Ottele, Jr., who came to the United States from Prussia and settled in Dubuque, Iowa before coming to Nebraska. They established their dugouts about a mile west of where Raeville now stands. The first Catholic service was celebrated in a sod house in 1881 by the Reverend Wunibald Wolf, at the time a pastor from Crete, Nebraska. In 1882, Father Horn was given charge of Raeville as a mission. He purchased 40 acres of land and erected a small church. In 1883, School District #45 was established and public school was opened. The following year Father Horn passed away leaving the St. Bonaventure parish without a pastor.

Father Maxmillan Klein had the oversight of St. Bonaventure Church from 1884–86. These years were a period of significant growth and prosperity for the Raeville community. In 1887, Father Bonaventure Faulhaber was assigned to the Raeville parish. A new and larger church was built in 1888 on the old site, and the former small church joined to serve as additional rooms. Under the guidance of Rev. Bonaventure Faulhaber, the people of Raeville voted against a railroad station passing through their town. This decision fulfilled Father Faulhaber's desire to isolate the church and the community from the railroad and from the world. Father Faulhaber was reassigned in 1890 and Rev. Kollmeyer came to serve the parish. When membership continued to expand, the people desired a resident pastor, and Rev. John Mueller arrived in Raeville in August of 1892 to serve this need. During this time the first parochial school was built and an addition was made to the church.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 12.25 acres

Quadrangle name Elgin, Nebraska

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>4</u>	<u>5</u> <u>7</u> <u>8</u> <u>7</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>6</u> <u>3</u> <u>8</u> <u>5</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

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

C	<u>1</u> <u>4</u>	<u>5</u> <u>7</u> <u>8</u> <u>5</u> <u>8</u> <u>5</u>	<u>4</u> <u>6</u> <u>3</u> <u>8</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>
---	-------------------	-------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------

D	<u>1</u> <u>4</u>	<u>5</u> <u>7</u> <u>8</u> <u>5</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>6</u> <u>3</u> <u>8</u> <u>5</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>
---	-------------------	-------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------

E	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
---	-------------------	-------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------

F	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
---	-------------------	-------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------

G	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
---	-------------------	-------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------

H	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
---	-------------------	-------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------

Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
-------	-----	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Joni Gilkerson, Preservation Associate

organization Nebraska State Historical Society date August, 1982

street & number 1500 R Street telephone (402) 471-3850

city or town Lincoln state Nebraska

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Marvin Oxenell* 8/27/82

title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society date

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	Entered in the National Register
<u><i>Alona Byers</i></u>	date <u>10/19/82</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

The cathedral is entered through triple doors, with concentric arches expanding away from the door, and each of the three rounded portals are flanked by an engaged quatrefoil Ionic column. Round arched corbeling is repeated in the gablet above the entrance. Directly above the gablet is a rose window decoratively encircled by concentric round arches. In the niche at the top of the gable is a statue of the parish's namesake, St. Bonaventure (see photo #4). A Latin cross is situated at the gable peak. The 100 foot tall twin towers are perhaps the most striking feature of the church and give the structure a strong symmetrical arrangement.

The three-arch theme of the portals is repeated in the tower design. Recessed quatrefoil windows are located above the arches. A four-part arched arcade is found around the upper portion of the belfry. Each tower is capped by a pyramidal-shaped steeple with triangular pediments and dentilled cornice. The three arch theme is repeated in recessed brickwork in the steeple pediment.

The north and south facades show buttresses framing the stained glass windows forming four bays along the nave. The transept wings display corner buttresses, brick corbelling, round arched rose window with four arch theme and a Latin cross at the gable apex. At the rear of the church (east facade) is the pentagon-shaped apse, additional entries, and two external chimneys (see photo #6). A statue of Christ is situated at the front of the church, immediately west of the main entry (see photos #4, 5).

The interior plan consists of a nave, transept, chancel, ambulatory, and two sacristy areas. The vestibule, balcony and baptistry area are located at the west end of the church. Within the chancel is the high or main altar and altar table with a side pulpit situated directly north. Altars to the Blessed Virgin and Joseph are located to either side of the chancel area (see photo #7). Architect Nachtigall employed the wood scissors truss in the construction of the church, thus requiring very little steel in the design of St. Bonaventure.

The highly decorated style of groin vaulting is composed of transverse and diagonal ribs which cross at a boss (see photo #7). The nave arcade area is delineated by wall, transverse and diagonal ribs, intersecting at a boss, forming narrow groin vaults (see photos #9, 10). All columns in the church interior are constructed of wood and are circular in shape, with the exception of the four clustered columns marking the transept. The columns are crowned with Corinthian capitals.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

The interior design of the church was exclusively planned by Father Frigge. He selected the Hackner Company of LaCrosse, Wisconsin to furnish the altars, communion rail and pulpit. Upon the recommendation of Mr. Hackner, Father Frigge contacted the Conrad Schmitt Company of Milwaukee, Wisconsin for the decorative mural painting and stencilling. The stencil designs consist of delicate bands of linear ornamentation following the contours of the vaults throughout the church interior. The artwork is done in such a fashion as to give the illusion of delicate tile mosaic patterns (see photo #11). Mural paintings, representing biblical themes, are located above the high altar in the chancel area (see photo #8).

The largest, most significant painting directly above the high altar portrays Father Frigge offering a small replica of the church to the Christ child. It may be that Father Frigge is offering the people of St. Bonaventure parish to the Christ child or it may represent Father Frigge's personal effort and labor in building the magnificent temple of God. A man holding a model of the school and a woman with a prayer book and rosary are also included in the painting.

A dominant feature of the interior design is the 21 stained glass windows in the church. Created by the Emil Frei Studio of St. Louis, the windows of St. Bonaventure continue the didactic tradition of this medium. The nave of the church portrays the seven corporeal works of mercy: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, shelter the homeless, clothe the naked, care for the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead. Each window is identified in German, revealing the community's commitment to their native language. The eighth window shows God's relationship with man. The large transept windows portray the two parables of the new testament - the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son. Each transept window is capped by a rose window. Situated directly above the tabernacle in the high altar is a stained glass window depicting the Christ figure.

In the second story of the apse are the stained glass windows portraying saints. The windows serve a two-fold purpose. First, the different themes clearly mark nave, transept and chancel, and second, in each area of the church we learn its function through the theme of the windows: the nave is mankind's domain; the transept is where human beings and God interact, and the chancel is God's realm.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 4

The present St. Bonaventure rectory was built in 1920-23 in the Georgian Colonial Revival style of architecture. Emphasis is on formal arrangement of plan and facades and the use of classical ornament. The two and one half story frame rectangular house has a brick foundation and gabled roof with overhanging eaves and pedimented gable ends. The roof is penetrated with symmetrically arranged pedimented gabled dormer windows. Each dormer is trimmed with corner pilasters, and the tympanum is filled with imbricated shingle siding. Small pedimented gabled dormer windows. Each dormer is trimmed with corner pilasters, and the tympanum is filled with imbricated shingle siding. Small pent roof extensions protrude from the tympanum base. The west (front) facade features a full-height pedimented portico supported by six massive columns crowned with Corinthian capitals. The tympanum is faced with imbricated shingle siding and has a round arched window, and pent roof extension. The raised central entry has sidelights and a fanlight above. Fenestration on the first level consists of two prominent three-window arrangements with a hood mold reminiscent of Palladian design (see photo #13). All other windows are of the double-hung type with one over one and two over two pane arrangement, with mutins in the upper frame, and flat window hoods with cornice lintels. The south facade has a one story extension, and the north facade features a drive-through carriage portal. The rectory is presently occupied by the parish priest, the Reverend James McCluskey. The fish pond, a half-circle shaped concrete block structure, is located immediately south of the rectory (see site plan #7).

In the spring of 1910, preparations were made for the construction of a new parochial school. Joseph Guth of Omaha was chosen as architect and Henry Woerth of Scribner served as the contractor. Designed with Romanesque and Classical Revival elements, the school is a vernacular product of eclecticism and was constructed at a cost of \$24,757.00. The two-and-one-half story rectangular brick structure has a raised basement, and a low hipped roof penetrated by wall dormer windows reminiscent of Palladian design. A pressed metal wall cornice encircles the entire building. The front (west) portion of the school features a stone water table, corner pilasters with stone capitals, classical detailing and block modillions. Fenestration consists of rectangular window openings with double hung sash of one-over-one pane arrangement, flat stone window hoods and lugsills. The front entrance pavilion features corner pilasters with stone capitals and block modillions visually supporting the pressed metal wall cornice and pedimented gable. The tympanum is pierced by a fanlight window surrounded with a brick arched window hood and stone lugsill. A latin cross is situated at the apex of the gable. Symmetrical arched windows with geometric design display the date "19-10" and are capped with brick and stone window hoods (see photo #15). The central window is composed of two double hung rectangular window openings with a transom above. The window is capped with a fanciful hood design of brick and stone work. The raised entry has double doors and a transom window. The one story

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 5

brick porch features a pressed metal wall cornice with classical detailing and brick parapet wall. The brick walls are pierced with key hole window openings with stone arched window hoods and stone lugsills.

The rear (east) portion of the building is devoid of excessive ornamentation. Fenestration is similar to that of the west wing, including flat and arched window openings with brick arched window hoods and flat stone window hoods and lugsills. The raised south porch (see photo #16) provides entry to the Sisters quarters with an additional entry below ground level leading to the basement. Entries are also found on the north and east facades.

The interior plan includes a full basement and four large class rooms on the first and second floors of the west (front) wing. The third floor was used as a ballroom for dances and school plays. The east (rear) portion of the school was used as a convent. Kitchen, dining and living facilities were located in the lower level.

The public school, begun in 1883, closed when the new parochial school opened in 1910. It remained open until 1965. Presently, school district #45 rents it for use as an elementary school.

The parish hall is a one story frame rectangular shaped building with a gable roof, and stepped gable false front facades with rounded gables (see photo #17). The north and south facades are pierced with small rectangular window openings of a four-pane arrangement. The east (main) facade displays a one story frame addition with a shed roof and an exterior chimney. A one story frame addition has been added on the north facade to provide bathroom facilities. The original wood shingled roof has been covered with metal sheeting.

The parish hall was originally constructed as a barn to house the horses and buggies while parishioners attended church. With the advent of the automobile, the building was renovated for a recreation hall.

A long path, originating at the church rectory, leads to the parish cemetery, which is situated directly south adjoining the church orchard. The wrought iron gate (1905) bears the blessing "Huhet in Frieden." (Rest in Peace) (see photo #18). The cemetery grounds (see photo #19) include a small one story square brick casket house with a wood shingle gable roof and round arched window and door openings with round arched brick decorative hoods (see photo #20). The casket house is located at the south-western most

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 6

corner of the cemetery (see site plan #12). Situated at the cemetery's highest point is the crucifixion group, made in Italy of white carrara marble at a cost of approximately \$2,000 (see site plan #11). The crucifixion group was donated by parishioners and dedicated by Father Frigge in 1927. The original large cross was damaged and replaced in 1970. The cemetery is surrounded by weeping willow, elm and cedar trees.

The church orchard, located directly south of the rectory, contains a variety of tree species including apple, cherry, mulberry, and black walnut (see photo #21).

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

In 1902 Father Mueller was transferred and Father Frigge, "the greatest community developer in Raeville's history,"¹ was installed as resident pastor. Father Frigge's first major project was the building of a new parochial school and in the spring of 1910 preparations began for its construction. The school required loads of brick, sand and lumber hauled from Petersburg. The loss of the railroad was now felt by the town. From 1910-17 Father Frigge was busy improving the lifestyle of the Raeville residents. Under negotiations by Frigge, Raeville was to have its first railroad station. Frigge was also instrumental in establishing a grocery store, bank, telephone system and electric lights. Unlike Father Faulhaber who wished to shelter his parish from the outside world, Father Frigge desired to make Raeville a major Catholic center and the focal point of the German-Catholic settlement in Boone and surrounding counties. The Raeville Cornet Band was organized in Raeville in 1908 under the efforts of Rev. Fr. Frigge. The band played for the Corpus Christi procession for St. Bonaventure Church until the early 1940's.

In 1917, after plans had been negotiated with railroad officials for a new station, work began on the construction of the new St. Bonaventure Church. In selecting the church site, Father Frigge broke the traditional northern orientation of the town layout by building the school, and later the church and rectory, on the extreme east edge of town facing west. The original town appeared to grow south from the northern, commercial edge, but now Raeville would expand westward, from the eastern boundary of school, church and rectory. The pattern was further reinforced by the fact that the eastern boundary was situated at the crest of a hill, thus giving the appearance of culmination at the church or perhaps symbolizing the fact that all life in the community flowed out of the church.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of the St. Bonaventure Church is its relative isolation. Surrounded by rolling hills and a vast agricultural landscape, the church stands as a landmark in the countryside. Because Raeville is an exclusively German-Catholic community, the complex is significant to the heritage of the state as a representative ethnic, religious hamlet. Hamlets of this type are significantly scattered across the Nebraska landscape. St. Bonaventure church is significant as a model representation of German ethnicity, being designed and decorated by both a German-American architect, interior decorator and window manufacturer.

1. Christlieb, Kris. "St. Bonaventure Ecclesia", p. 8.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

Jacob M. Nachtigall of Omaha was chosen to be the architect for the new St. Bonaventure Church. Known as the "architect for the Catholics"² Nachtigall came to the United States from Germany in 1883 when he was eight years old. He was employed as a laborer in Omaha until 1898 when he was hired as a draftsman for the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition. This position gave him sufficient qualifications to gain employment with architect Thomas Rogers Kimball. In 1899 Kimball was one of the few professionally trained architects in Nebraska. Nachtigall was employed as a draftsman by Kimball from 1900-08. During this time Kimball was chosen to design St. Cecelia's Cathedral in Omaha (see NRHP, Jan. 25, 1979). Perhaps in working on the design for St. Cecelia's, Nachtigall gained the experience necessary to design the St. Bonaventure Church 16 years later. In 1909 Nachtigall opened his own office. During his career he designed numerous buildings including Father Flanagan's House (see NRHP, Sept. 6, 1979), St. Joseph's Memorial Hospital, St. James Orphanage, Duchesne Academy of the Sacred Heart, Our Lady of Lourdes and Immaculate Conception Church -- all in Omaha.

Mr. Anton Kettler of Dubuque, Iowa was awarded the construction contract. He brought his own crew of skilled laborers to work on the church. No union labor was employed and local parishioners were given all the unskilled tasks to perform.

The interior design of the church was supervised by Father Frigge. He selected the Hackner Company of LaCrosse, Wisconsin to furnish the altars, communion rail and pulpit. Upon recommendation of Mr. Hackner, Father Frigge employed the Conrad Schmitt Company of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Conrad Schmitt, founder and president of the Conrad Schmitt studios, was born in Fussville, Wisconsin and came to Milwaukee at the age of 14. He became an apprentice to Professor Adolph Loeffler, a leading church artist. He also studied under Professor Jan Sukaczynski, a famous mural artist, and in later years he studied in Rome under Professor Joseph Wilpert, an ecclesiastical artist and art authority. Mr. Schmitt's work is found in cathedrals and churches throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico, the Phillipine Islands and New Zealand. Ruppert P. Schmitt, son of Conrad, became associated in business with his father in 1907. He became president of the firm in 1940 and served until his death in 1953. The studio remains in business in Milwaukee and is the oldest stained glass firm in the city.

2. Christlieb, Kris. "St. Bonaventure Ecclesia," p. 14.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 4

Emil Frei, who owned the studio responsible for the stained glass in St. Bonaventure Church, was a professionally trained artist, and a graduate of the Munich School of Arts and Crafts. Mr. Frei's studio is still in existence today.

St. Bonaventure Church was dedicated on July 14, 1919. Built at a cost of approximately \$100,000.00, it could seat up to 600 people. Optimism for continued growth and prosperity flourished in the community during the early years. The parish became the mother house for the American Novitiate of the Benedictine Missionary Sisters of Tutzing Bavaria, and became the mother church of the Elgin and Petersburg parishes. However, because of the delay in establishing a railroad in Raeville, the community suffered many setbacks in the years to follow. Today the bank, post office and railroad are gone. The current population of Raeville is approximately 25 people.

On the second Sunday after Pentecost the church holds a procession to the orchards, in keeping with the 100 year old tradition "to bless the fields." The ceremony represents a piece of history that began in May, 1872 when Thomas and James Rae left Columbus. As was recalled in their journal, "the day after reaching Albion we ascended a high hill and saw what is now Raeville stretched out before us. . . It was one of the most beautiful sights we had ever seen. So far as an eye could reach, for miles and miles over hills and valleys covered with the most beautiful mantle of green. . . This promised land." (Sunday World-Herald, June 18, 1978).

St. Bonaventure celebrated its "100 years of faith" Centennial in June, 1982. The church was filled to capacity for a special eucharistic liturgy and over 1900 people were served at the centennial dinner. The two-day celebration ended with a dance in the parish hall with over 600 people attending. (Review, Elgin, Nebraska, June 30, 1982).

Architecturally significant, the St. Bonaventure Church exemplifies the Romanesque Revival Style of architecture. The term Romanesque refers to the art style that appeared in western Europe in the early 11th century and lasted until the advent of Gothic architecture in the middle of the 12th century. The style is characterized by massive articulated wall structures, round arches and powerful vaults. The Romanesque Revival featured the reuse of massive Romanesque forms in the second half of the 19th century. The semi-circular arch form is the most characteristic decorative feature of the style. (Harris, Cyril M., Historic Architecture Sourcebook).

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 5

The architecture of the Romanesque period is magnificent and dedicated to the glory of the church. The church became dominant influencing the lives of all persons, and represented the wealth and luxury that existed and was centered in the church. (Alexander, Harold H., Design, Criteria for Decisions) The plans for Romanesque churches derived from the early Christian Basilica, which evolved into the form of a Latin cross by the introduction of the transept. The church was oriented on an east-west axis, with the front facade to the west. This enabled worshippers to face eastward toward the altar. The Roman semi-circular arched vault appeared not only in the construction of the roof but was used for the shape of all door and window openings as well. Eventually, the arch-form was used for purely ornamental purposes. The ornament used in the interiors of Romanesque churches was primarily informative or instructional in nature. The artwork depicted scriptural subjects, allegorical scenes indicating the rewards of virtue and the punishment of vice, historical events etc. Abstract patterns, also used in surface ornamentation, included designs of the checkerboard, the chevron, zigzag, rosettes and fret-like motifs (Whiton, Sherill, Interior Design and Decoration).

The St. Bonaventure rectory represents a vernacular interpretation of the Georgian Colonial Revival style of architecture. The Georgian style of architecture was prominent in the 18th century in Great Britain and the North American colonies. The style derives its name from the reigns of the four King Georges (Early, Middle and Late Georgian), with features from Classical, Renaissance and Baroque architectural forms. The Georgian Revival was a revival of American Colonial forms, the majority derived from Georgian styling. It occurred as a reaction to the picturesque styles of the Victorian era and strived for a return to order. Paramount among its visual qualities are formality and restraint -- both characteristics serve as hallmarks of the style.

The St. Bonaventure School is a vernacular product of the stylistic tendency known as eclecticism. The building incorporates design elements from the Romanesque and Classical Revival styles of architecture. The eclectic period in America was popular during the years 1870-1925, and was characterized by the combination of diverse architectural styles. The Classical revival styles gained popularity in the U.S. in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Classical movement strove for "purer" architecture based on the Roman and Greek forms, in reaction to the flamboyant styles of the Victorian era. Joseph Guth a native of Germany, served as the architect for the school. Mr. Guth began his practice in Omaha in the late 1880's with J. E. Dietrick, under the name Dietrick and Guth. Shortly after, the partnership was dissolved and Guth continued his architectural practice alone. During his successful career, he designed and supervised the construction of many buildings in the Omaha and surrounding area.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Bibliography ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

Alexander, Harold H. Design, Criteria for Decisions, MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York, copyright 1976.

Christlieb, Kris, "St. Bonaventure Ecclesia", unpublished manuscript. 1980. On file, Nebraska State Historical Society.

"Church in Raeville is a Portrait of Yesterday," Sunday World Herald, June 18, 1978, p. 6-B.

Hagedorn, Rev. Eugene, "St. Bonaventure Church, Raeville, and other Boone County Churches," Franciscans in Nebraska, published by Humphrey Democrat and the Norfolk Daily News, Nebraska. July 1931, pp. 489-498.

Harris, Cyril M., Ph. D., Historic Architecture Sourcebook, McGraw-Hill Book Company, copyright 1977.

"J. P. Guth," Pen and Sunlight Sketches of Omaha and Environs, Phoenix Publishing Co., Chicago, 1892, p. 114.

McCluskey, Rev. Fr. James, National Register draft nomination, 1980, on file, Nebraska State Historical Society.

"Raeville Parish Notes Centennial", The Catholic Voice, Archdiocese of Omaha, Nebraska, July 2, 1982, p. 1, 6.

"St. Bonaventure is Renaissance jewel in Raeville's green velvet setting," Lincoln Journal, July 18, 1979, p. 9.

"Special events highlight St. Bonaventure Centennial" Review, Elgin, Nebraska, June 30, 1982.

Troshynski, Betti, Mrs. Leonard Meis, Della Bode, and Mrs. John Greitens, Century of Faith, The Pearl of the Plains, St. Bonaventure's Church, Raeville, Nebraska 1882-1982. Published by Norfolk Printing Co., Norfolk, Nebraska, 1982.

"What is a Renaissance cathedral doing in Raeville, population 25?", The Lincoln Star, July 18, 1979, p. 25.

Whiton, Sherrill, Interior Design and Decoration, fourth addition, J. P. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia-New York-Toronto, copyright 1957, 1951.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

Verbal Boundary Description

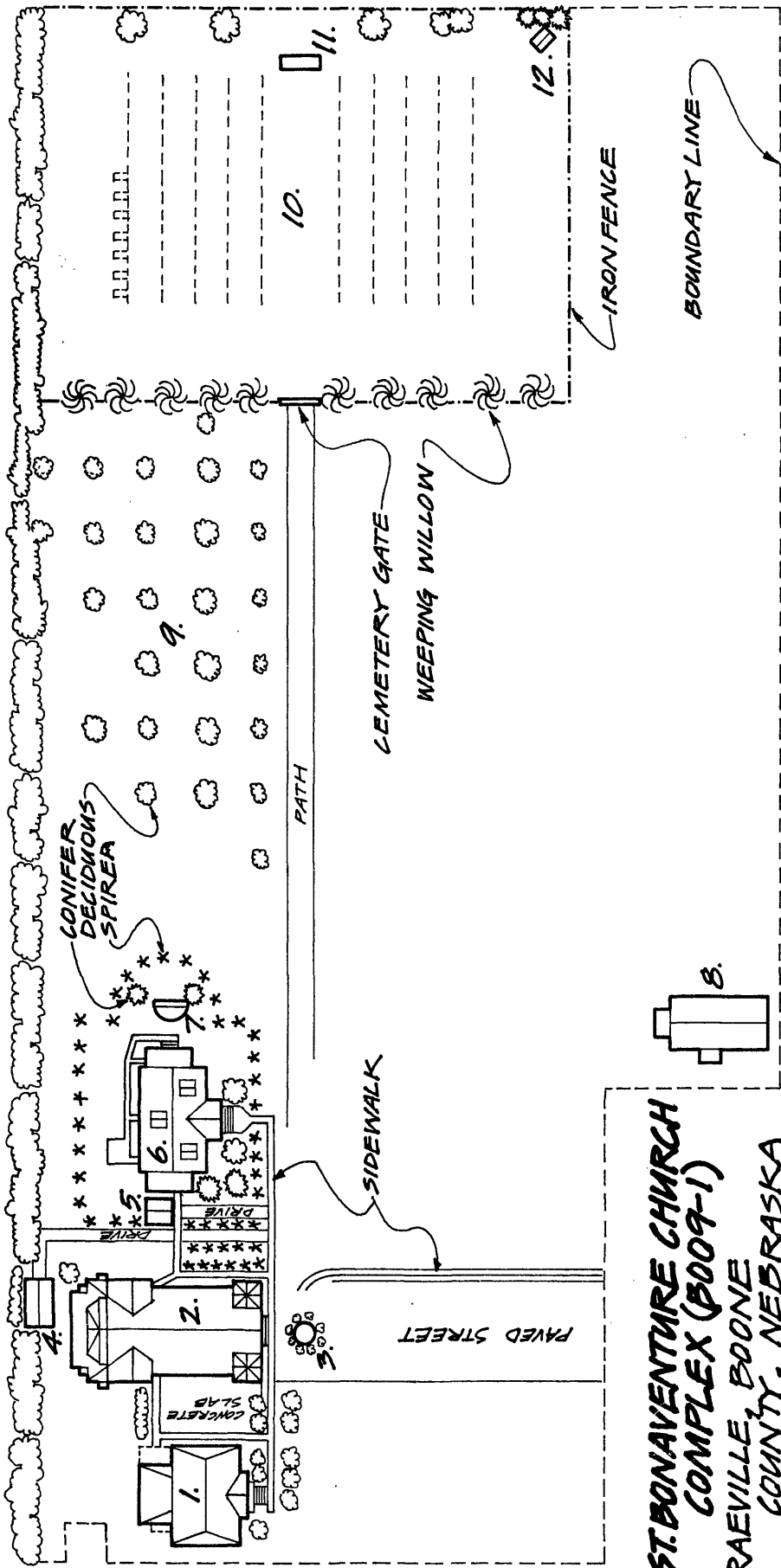
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

10

PAGE 2

The property is located on a fraction of the southwest quarter of the northeast quarter of Section seven (7) Township twenty-two (22), North Range six (6), West of the 6th P.M., Boone County, Nebraska described as follows: Commencing at a point fifty-feet south of the northeast corner of the southwest quarter of the northeast quarter of said section seven, running thence west two hundred seventy-one feet, thence south three hundred seventy-five feet, thence west one hundred thirty-one feet, thence south eight hundred ninety-five feet, thence east four hundred two feet, thence north twelve hundred seventy feet to place of beginning, except that part described as: beginning at a point 50 feet south and 25 feet west of the northeast corner of said southwest $\frac{1}{4}$ northeast $\frac{1}{4}$; thence south 25 feet parallel with the east line of said southwest $\frac{1}{4}$ northeast $\frac{1}{4}$; thence west 25 feet; thence north 25 feet; thence east 25 feet to the place of beginning, including all historically associated real estate.



**ST. BONAVENTURE CHURCH
COMPLEX (B009-1)
RAEVILLE, BOONE
COUNTY, NEBRASKA
NO SCALE**

MAP DRAWN BY STEVE RYAN
FROM FIELD NOTES BY STEVE
PONDELIS & JONI GILKERSON,
NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL
SOCIETY, JUNE, 1982.

KEY:

- 1. SCHOOL
- 2. ST. BONAVENTURE CHURCH
- 3. STATUE OF CHRIST
- 4. GARAGE / SHED
- 5. GARAGE
- 6. RECTORY
- 7. FISH POND
- 8. PARISH HALL
- 9. ORCHARD
- 10. CEMETERY
- 11. CRUCIFIXION GROUP
- 12. CASSET HOUSE

