NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
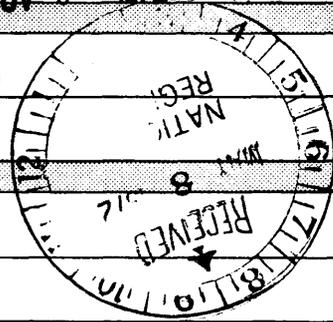## INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries – complete applicable sections)

STATE:
New Jersey
COUNTY:
Essex
FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
NOV 3 1972	

---

1. NAME

COMMON:

St. Mary's Abbey Church (Benedictine Abbey in Newark)

AND/OR HISTORIC:

St. Mary's Church, or St. Mary's Abbey

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

High Street and William Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Newark

STATE	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
New Jersey	34	Essex	013

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
☐ District ☒ Building ☐ Site ☐ Structure ☐ Object	☐ Public ☒ Private ☐ Both Public Acquisition: ☐ In Process ☐ Being Considered	☒ Occupied ☐ Unoccupied ☐ Preservation work in progress	Yes: ☒ Restricted ☐ Unrestricted ☐ No

PRESENT USE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

☐ Agricultural	☐ Government	☐ Park	☐ Transportation	☐ Comments
☐ Commercial	☐ Industrial	☐ Private Residence	☐ Other *(Specify)*	
☐ Educational	☐ Military	☒ Religious		
☐ Entertainment	☐ Museum	☐ Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:

St. Mary's Church

STREET AND NUMBER:

Same as above

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE
Newark	New Jersey	34

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:

Essex County Hall of Records

STREET AND NUMBER:

High Street

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE	CODE
Newark	New Jersey	34

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory   2186.33

DATE OF SURVEY: 1968   ☐ Federal ☒ State ☐ County ☐ Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

Historic Sites, Department of Environmental Protection

STREET AND NUMBER:

John Fitch Plaza,   P.O. Box 1420

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE
Trenton	New Jersey	34

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

7. Description

CONDITION	**(Check One)**					
	☒ Excellent	☐ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Deteriorated	☐ Ruins	☐ Unexposed

(Check One)		**(Check One)**	
☐ Altered	☒ Unaltered	☐ Moved	☒ Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Red brick; seats 1,000; early German Romanesque; has campanile (italian style bell tower) 125' high on front right; "basilica form in Romanesque style" - 7th or 8th Century.

The six points of the star of the round window of the upper facade have been noted with more curiosity by the laity than by the clergy.

The corner tower rises quite sheerly, without setback, through six large stages or stories, to its top cornices.

The interior is long with columns of the nave topped with Roman arches, with a rounded "east end" apse containing the large marble main altar, the whole being reminiscent of the basilicas of ancient Rome.

Kenneth B. Schnall, in his 1965 Thesis, A Survey of Ecclesiastical Architecture Built in Newark from 1810 to 1865, describes St. Mary's: "The church is located on a steep hill close to the center of the heaviest commercial area in Newark. It is on an east-west axis ...The building is constructed of red brick throughout with a stone foundation. In design the church is a simplification of the Romanesque style. The west gable end is flanked by heavy tower buttresses with recessed sides. The wall is further broken by a row of five long-set windows with semi-circular tops. A larger round window with a star tracery breaks the open expanse of wall just below the peak. A wide brick band in a lattice design under the stone cornice provides texture to the upper part of the flat wall. The north side wall at the front of the aisle is simple in design with a heavy stone cornice bordered by a band of brickwork. The side wall has long buttresses similar to those found on each side of the nave and is broken by a single semi-circular arched window. The porch, which was built after the church was erected, covers the lower part of the front nave wall. It has two side doors and a central entrance set deep under a semi-circular arch. The front door has been well intergrated into the building's design through the use of a peaked gable over the central arch which picks up and accents the sharp peak of the roof. The bell tower is in front of the south side aisle and has a separate outside door that leads through the tower into the church. Long deep-set panels divide the length of the tower in two. These provide room for double louvered semi-circular arched windows in the upper chambers and smaller glass windows at the lower levels. Deep-set panels of bricked circles within a rectangle provide the transition to the more elegant windowed area of the belfry. The use of the lighter windowed arches and the additional panels also lighten the wight of the tower. The wall is capped with a course of designed brickwork which terminates in a wide overhanging wooden cornice set on top of heavy curved wooden brackets. The side walls are high while the upper nave walls are short. The fenestration is similar at the top and lower side walls of the nave and aisles. The high windows at the side walls are long and narrow with semi-circular caps that do not really appear to carry weight but act rather as decorations for the wall. The buttresses end at a wide brick eaves board just under the overhanging roof. A high brick wall runs the length of the south side. The rear apse is high with window and buttressing similar to those in the side walls.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

PERIOD *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*
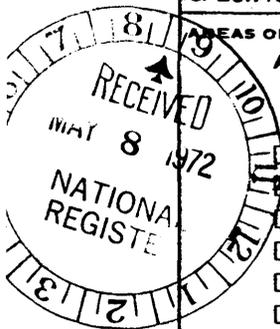
- [x] Pre-Columbian|
- [ ] 15th Century
- [ ] 16th Century
- [ ] 17th Century
- [ ] 18th Century
- [x] 19th Century
- [ ] 20th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) *(If Applicable and Known)* 1854 riot; cornerstone 1856; dedication 1857

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

Aboriginal
- [ ] Prehistoric
- [ ] Historic
- [ ] Agriculture
- [x] Architecture
- [ ] Art
- [ ] Commerce
- [ ] Communications
- [ ] Conservation

- [ ] Education
- [ ] Engineering
- [ ] Industry
- [ ] Invention
- [ ] Landscape
    Architecture
- [ ] Literature
- [ ] Military
- [ ] Music

- [x] Political
- [x] Religion/Phi-
    losophy
- [ ] Science
- [ ] Sculpture
- [ ] Social/Human-
    itarian
- [ ] Theater
- [ ] Transportation

- [ ] Urban Planning
- [ ] Other *(Specify)*

_____
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The St. Mary's Abbey Church is significant for its architecture - German Romansque - 7th or 8th Century - "basilica form in Romanesque style" - of the early date 1856-57, by nationally-noted architect Patrick C. Keely, and because of its extraordinarily rich history, simultaneously, as parish church, abbey church, and prep school chapel, also German parish (orig.) and severe anti-Catholic riot of 1854.

1) St. Mary's Church - a local parish
2) an Abbey Church to the Benedictine Abbey in Newark, formerly St. Mary's Abbey, partly removed to Morristown
3) chapel to St. Benedict's Preparatory School.

Outline of history:

- 1838 German services held in old St. John's Church result in German parish being organized as St. Mary's.
- 1842 Original frame church built on another site; services in by January 31, 1842, dedicated fall 1842
- 1843 First German parochial school organized
- 1846 Original frame church moved to present site
- 1854 September 4 or 5: "Know Nothing" anti-Catholic riots by Orangemen, nearly destroys original building. Huge mob of over 3,000 reputedly headed for St. Patrick's but became confused and hit St. Mary's instead.
- 1856 Parish assigned to the Benedictines, a number of whom arrive from Metten, Bavaria
- 1856 November 1, building committee and cornerstone laying, present church
- 1857 December 20, dedication, present church, noted Catholic architect Patrick C. Keely.
- 1858 Sept. 11, property deed given to Benedictines by Bishop Bayley
- 1882 Present Rectory and Abbey begun
- 1883 St. Mary's Abbey established (Benedictine)
- 1893-1896 St. Mary's Abbey, Newark founds and builds St. Anslem's College, Manchester, New Hampshire
- 1920 Prep School addition

Keely, Catholicism's most prolific archtect, reportedly did perhaps 800 churches, including, supposedly, 500 in New York State.

Congressional Representation

Harrison Williams, Clifford Case - U.S. Senators
Congressman Peter W. Rodino, Jr. - Congressional District 10

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- . Ambrose, Abbot of Abbey 1971, Certain verification after consulation
   Flynn, Joseph, The Catholic Church in New Jersey
   Kervick, Francis Patrick Charles Keely, Architect - A Record of his
        Life and Work
   Schnall, Kenneth B. Thesis, 1965 Newark State College, Newark Public
        Library, A Survey of Ecclesiastical Architecture Built in
        Newark from 1810-1865.
   Newark Daily Advertiser, October 31, 1856
   Newark Daily Mercury, December 21, 1857
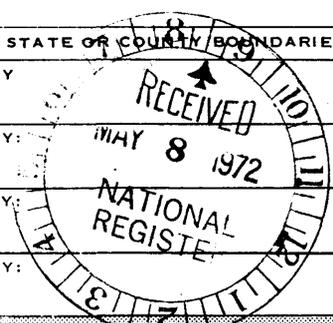   Newark Sunday News, February 11, 1968

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES					
CORNER	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		LATITUDE			LONGITUDE		
	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "		° ' "		40°	44 '	06 "	74°	10 '	50 "
NE	° ' "		° ' "							
SE	° ' "		° ' "							
SW	° ' "		° ' "							

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

RECEIVED
MAY 8 1972
NATIONAL REGISTER

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
   Donald W. Geyer, licensed "professional planner" and architectural histor-ian

ORGANIZATION	DATE 9/71

STREET AND NUMBER:
   351 Broad Street

CITY OR TOWN: Newark	STATE New Jersey	CODE 34

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

   National ☐   State ☐   Local ☒

Name Richard J. Sullivan

Title Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection

Date May 1, 1972

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 11/3/72

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date

Form 10-300a
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE New Jersey

COUNTY Essex

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
NOV 3 1972	

(Number all entries)

St. Mary's Abbey Church
New Jersey   34
Essex   013

7. Description

The central nave is high with a slight span in the arched roof. A thin molding divides the ceiling from the front of the church at the organ to the chancel forming five bays in both the north and south aisles. The upper wall above the piers is pierced by six sets of double round arched windows. These are located just under a heavy hang molding at the top of the nave wall under the ceiling. The side aisles are narrow and are located under the lowered side aisle. The heavy stone piers rest on high square bases so that they are fully exposed above the surrounding pews. The nave walls are thick and the supporting piers have highly carved capitals. Heavy wooden pews in the side aisles are set against a high wainscoating. The side altars are set deep within the walls at the front of the aisles. They are framed by heavy arches with engaged pillars capped with carved capitals. The ceiling within each side altar is square and has a square window for a ceiling height. The altar in the north aisle has architectonic element while the south altar is much more simple due to the fact that it was burned out in 1956. The apse is set deep within a semi-circular stilted arch and is set on two engaged columns. They have handsomely carved capitals in an angel design which provide textured areas against the flat wall surfaces. Deep-set side windows and a small overhead oculus in the (semi-domed) apse provides a low light to the area. The walls are also broken by a door in the south side to the sacristry, which is located behind the side altar. The interior of the apse is faced with a gray marble that is unlike any other in the interior of the church.