

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Sacred Heart Cathedral, Cathedral School and Christian Brothers Home

Continuation Sheet

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Section 1 & 2 Page 1

1. Name of Property:

Historic name: Sacred Heart Cathedral, Cathedral School and Christian Brothers Home

2. Location:

Street & number: 211 and 206 W. 4th St., and 315 N. 2nd Ave. W.

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5. Classification:

Ownership of Property: (X) private

Category of Property: (X) buildings

Number of Resources within Property: 3 contributing buildings

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 2

6. Function or Use:

Historic Functions:

Cathedral: RELIGION/religious facility

School: EDUCATION/school

Home: DOMESTIC/institutional housing

6. Function or Use:

Current Functions:

Cathedral: RECREATION AND CULTURE/music facility

School: SOCIAL/civic

Home: work in progress

7. Description:

Architectural Classification: LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Late Gothic Revival
(for all three buildings)

7. Description:

Materials:

foundation: stone (for all three buildings)

walls: brick (for all three buildings)

roof: asphalt (for all three buildings)

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Description of Physical Appearance

The Christian Brothers Home, more commonly known as the Sacred Heart Convent, is located in Duluth's Central Hillside neighborhood, immediately adjacent to the Sacred Heart Cathedral School, and a half block south of the Sacred Heart Cathedral. This complex of buildings occupies lots at the intersection of 2nd Ave North and 4th Street West. The Sacred Heart parish served as the seat of the Diocese of Duluth beginning in 1889, and the construction of multiple parish and diaconal buildings distinguished the built environment of this intersection. Christian Brothers Home is one of five extant buildings representing this complex, and one of three that have retained their historic integrity. Sacred Heart Cathedral and Cathedral School were placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1986.

The Christian Brothers Home was designed and built in 1907 as a home for the Christian Brothers order. The Brothers were invited to Duluth by the diocese bishop, the Rt. Rev. James McGolrick, in order to add a boys' high school department to the parish school. The building was constructed on lots already owned by the diocese and occupied in large part by the 1904 Cathedral School. The new construction was sited on portions of lots 34 and 36, and an even smaller portion of lot 38, on West Fourth Street in the Duluth Proper First Addition. Positioned less than twelve feet away from School's southern facade, the future Home was essentially squeezed in between the School and an existing east-west alley.

The Christian Brothers Home and Cathedral School had architect William Bray in common, although he partnered with different men for each. Similarities in building materials, style and detailing between the Home and the Cathedral School are clearly evident, and the buildings appear as a "matched set" along the streetscape of 2nd Avenue West.

East (primary) Façade

Like the School, the Home was constructed of red brick in a running bond, with Gothic and Craftsman-style features. The three-story building's gable end serves as the primary façade, facing east to 2nd Avenue. The building is accessed here by a six-tread limestone stair parallel to the building's front. The building's entrance is slightly off-center, framed by a combed brownstone surround. A sloping, buttress-like brick pier juts from the building to the south of the stair landing.

The wooden entrance door sits in a Gothic arch opening framed by large, radiating brownstone panels. Six single lights are set in the wooden framing on each side of the door. The portal surround features a carved brownstone cross and coral-like wreath directly above the arch opening, with a raised bandwork resembling a cloth banner extending to each side under a molded drip cap. The drip cap and a small band of brownstone continue on a lower line above the single windows to the left and right of the door. These windows feature art glass with motifs of a cross and wreath and a spiral of stylized peace lilies.

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The first floor windowsills extend into a band course across the façade; both have flat brick relieving arches.

Three rectangular windows of original appearance (double hung, six-over six) are evenly spaced across the second story. A protruding belt course divides the second and third stories, wrapping around to the eastern and western facades. The belt continues on these facades for several feet, terminating in a stone shield. The third story gable is outlined with a smooth contrasting stone band. A cross bearing a heart and banner in stone relief (symbolically evoking the Sacred Heart) rises above the gable pinnacle. The upper portions of the two gothic-style windows in the third story have retained original tracery in glass tympania set in compound brick relieving arches.

Decorative stonework like that on the Cathedral School distinguishes the Home's overall appearance. Brownstone quoins and offset pilasters emphasize the corners of the building on the third story. The base of each pair of corner pilasters is visually supported by corbelling in the form of a winged face below the beveled edge of the belt course. At the top of each pilaster is a cowl-draped face carved in stone. These faces bear a resemblance to carvings on Gothic buildings referred to as "grotesques," although these are clearly human. Minor deterioration of the stone makes it difficult to tell if each face is different, but at least three variations can be identified on the Home, including one face variant with a protruding tongue. The pilasters are topped with flat, squared stone caps and large, round stone finials.

South Façade

The broad southern façade of the Home provides a perspective on the building's size. This façade is divided visually into three bays defined by the roofline, with the eastern and western bays covered by deep eaves with extended and exposed wooden rafters evoking the Craftsman style. This overhang is supported on the southeast corner by a triangular wooden bracket. A single iron rod supports the western portion near the building's midpoint. A triangular gable that is bisected by a protruding chimneystack tops the narrower central bay. A second chimneystack protrudes from the southern bay and penetrates the eave to rise above the roofline

Pilasters with heavy stone caps and finials like those on the east facade frame the corners of the gable, with stone relief faces looking east and west. The third-floor windows to the left and right of the central chimney stack have gothic relieving arches, with long lintels separating the rectangular windows from the glass and tracery tympanum like those on the front façade. There are six windows across in each of the three stories, with all others narrow and rectangular. Stone lintels brace the bottom of each window opening. Basement windows are evenly spaced and set above a rough-faced limestone water table.

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West Façade

A three-story, wooden, stick-style veranda completely covers the western end of the building, providing a weather-protected and shaded entrance corridor to each floor on this side of the building via an enclosed staircase. The veranda is depicted in early Sanborn maps and an artist's illustration of the building. Posts with exposed diagonal bracing divide the veranda into three bays and support a roof similar to the deep eaves of the south and north sides, with exposed purlins/joists extending over the veranda's third story. The northern and central bays on the first floor are open; the southern bay is partially enclosed. Vertical boards with decorative cutouts along the top edge form the railings, with similar woodwork enclosing the southern end of the narrow veranda on the first and second floors. The veranda is accessed from the alley on the south end by a limestone stair and a partially enclosed doorway. Behind the veranda façade, central doors provide building access, with utilitarian windows to the left and right. The brick gable end of the building above the veranda roof is trimmed with a stone band and is otherwise without ornamentation.

North Façade

The north façade features the same three-bay division and deep eaves that are found on the southern side. Window openings on this side are of varying sizes and irregular in placement, marking the stairwell and other functional spaces on this side of the building. The central bay is the most architecturally distinctive, with a gable roof and a stone relief cross-and-heart at the pinnacle, a simpler version of that on the east façade. Stone faces mirror those on the southern gable. Three gothic windows in the central bay on the third floor mark the interior chapel space, with the upper portion of the central window painted to depict John Baptist de la Salle.¹

Interior

While interior spaces in the building have been considerably altered, a few distinctive architectural features remain. A central corridor on each upper floor provides access to rooms rowed along northern and southern sides of the building. A first floor kitchen is located to the rear in the southwest corner. In the main entryway, the woodwork of balusters and spindles on the staircase providing access to the upper floors is intact.

The second-floor lavatory space on the central north side of the building is raised several inches above floor level and is accessed from the central corridor by a broad wood step with rounded corners.

¹ While no specific documentation states that the man depicted is de la Salle, context and a comparison with a number of historic images of de la Salle on an untitled website of the international de la Salle Brothers of the Christian Schools organization confirm this identity.
<http://www.lasalle.org/English/Resources/ClipArt/iconog2.html>

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Art glass windows on the first and third floors are relatively intact, as are the arched window openings throughout the building. Barrel vault ceilings brace the central north side chapel and the opposite south side common room on the third floor (spaces indicated by the exterior gable peaks). A brick fireplace is found in the southern common room, with mantel edges beveled like those on the band course as it wraps around the exterior corners of the building. Stone relief faces on each corner of the mantel resemble the winged faces on the exterior corners as well.

Surroundings

The Home sits several feet above a sharply rising street grade, with the surrounding lot shored up on the south and east by a relatively intact rough-faced stone wall. The lot is accessed from the 2nd Avenue sidewalk by limestone stairs aligned with the northern edge of the building. The building is set back on the lot, rather than aligned with the Cathedral School's eastern façade. This exposes the southeast gable of the School, allowing more light into the building and exposing the architectural detailing on this portion of the School's facade.

Foundation plantings are minimal; the open space on the western side (rear) of the building is overgrown. An extension of the southern wing of the Cathedral school on this side has added a sense of enclosure to this small "back yard."

An empty lot immediately across 2nd Avenue to the east was once the site of Cathedral High School. Upper story windows on the southern and eastern sides of the building offer notable views of downtown Duluth and the harbor area.

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8. Statement of Significance:

Period of Significance: 1896-1954 (for all three buildings)

Significant Dates: 1896 (Cathedral), 1904 (School), 1907 (Home)

Architect/Builder: Nystrom, Carl E. and Bray, William T. (Home Architects), and Fawcett, William (Home Builder)

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Statement of Significance

The nomination of the Sacred Heart Cathedral and Cathedral School is expanded to include the Christian Brothers Home that was built in 1907 as part of the parish complex. The three buildings represent the historical seat of authority of the Diocese of Duluth, and the Home represents the influence and importance of an educational monastic community during a period of education growth in the Duluth Diocese. The three buildings have statewide significance as religious properties under National Register Criterion A and Criteria Consideration A under the Area of Significance of Religion with a period of significance of 1896-1954. The buildings relate to the broad statewide context: Urban Centers (1870-1940).

The building was designed under the supervision of Duluth Bishop James McGolrick by the Duluth architectural firm of Bray and Nystrom, and exhibits both Gothic influences typical of religious buildings and Craftsman influences typical of the era.

In 1907, as part of an ongoing effort to expand Catholic education in the city, Bishop McGolrick solicited the educational skills of Christian Brothers monastic order for a new diocese boys' high school. McGolrick almost immediately provided the Brothers with a "commodious" new residence. The residence later served as home to the Benedictine Sisters, who provided instruction in the parish's adjacent Cathedral School. Two of the Sacred Heart Cathedral complex's five remaining buildings, Sacred Heart Cathedral and Cathedral School, were placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1986.¹

The Sacred Heart Parish and Diocese of Duluth

The Christian Brothers Home is one in a complex of related buildings that once surrounded the Sacred Heart Cathedral, with at least nine different parish and diocese buildings constructed on various lots at the intersection of 2nd Avenue West and Fourth Street North over a span of forty years.

In 1870, the Vicar General of Northern Minnesota² obtained lots from the Western Land Association in this location, where the parish's first church and parish house were subsequently constructed. The first

¹ The rectory and chancery, located just west of the Cathedral, were razed and replaced in the early 1950s.

² While property ownership is generally attributed in references to the diocese and parish, the early property abstract lists individual owners, beginning with Rupert Seidenbusch. Seidenbusch was Vicar General of Northern Minnesota; he later conveyed the property to Duluth Bishop James McGolrick. Probate court records after McGolrick's death in 1918 declare that, although the property was listed under his individual name, McGolrick was "a trustee administrator, and not the absolute owner

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parish school, led by Benedictine nuns from St. Joseph, Minnesota, opened in 1881. After intermittent starts in various locations in the city, a permanent parish grade school, dedicated to St. Thomas Aquinas, was built on lots owned by the parish across from the church on the south side of 4th Street. This school opened in 1886.

The Diocese of Duluth was created in 1889 and at this time, the Sacred Heart parish became the seat of the Diocese of Duluth. The Diocese included a vast area of northern Minnesota, covering nearly 40,000 square miles.

A number of parish buildings were built, refurbished, and relocated in the coming years. In 1890, as the parish continued to expand, a Catholic Association Hall was constructed next to the St. Thomas school. Clubrooms were also built to accommodate parish groups. The first church and the parish house burned in 1892. These were replaced with the Sacred Heart Cathedral and a new residence in 1894, with enlargements to both in 1905. In 1902, growing enrollment in the parish's St. Thomas school led to plans for a new facility that would serve a larger number of students. The St. Thomas school was moved to lots near St. Mary's hospital.³ The Association Hall and Club Rooms were sold and moved as well.

The Cathedral Schools

In 1904, with lots cleared following the removal of St. Thomas School, the Cathedral School was constructed and opened across from the Sacred Heart Cathedral on 4th Street. This became the parish grade school and, by 1910, served as the Girls' High School as well. The Benedictine Sisters staffed both levels.⁴ Educational efforts in the Duluth and other state dioceses were already quite extensive, with nine parish schools staffed by the Benedictines by this time, and 32,426 children attending parochial schools throughout Minnesota.⁵

Following the construction of the Cathedral School, Sacred Heart parish priest Father Timothy Corbett worked to liquidate the debt on the Sacred Heart Cathedral. The successful retirement of the Cathedral's \$20,000 mortgage in 1906 apparently allowed for yet more construction in 1907 as the parish and

thereof," and ruled that McGolrick had in effect held the land for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Duluth. Notes from the Duluth diocese archives indicate that McGolrick's real estate holdings were extensive and complicated (including shares in a Montana copper mine), and considerable time and legal effort was required to sort out his estate.

³ These lots were located at Third Street East and Third Avenue, adding to a complex where the Benedictine Sisters had constructed their motherhouse, the Institute of the Sacred Heart, in 1894.

⁴ Laughlin, Sister Margaret James. Summary notes from M.A. thesis, University of Minnesota, July 1954.

⁵ *The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume X*. Copyright 1911 by Robert Appleton Company Online Edition Copyright © 2003 by K. Knight. <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10326c.htm>

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diocese expanded their educational mission. At this time, the Rt. Rev. Bishop James McGolrick negotiated for the arrival of four members of the Christian Brothers, a religious order dedicated to helping the poor and to the education of boys. They opened a "special department for boys" in the Cathedral School.⁶

The educational efforts of the Brothers proved to be so successful that in 1910, a school expressly for boys (eventually encompassing the 7th through 12th grades) was constructed on the east side of 2nd Street, across from the Christian Brothers Home and the parish's Cathedral School. Operating under the auspices of the Diocese of Duluth, the upper two floors of the four-story school were finished in the coming years as capacity demanded. The building was referred to both as "The Brothers' School" and the "Boy's Cathedral High School." As enrollments varied through the years, the high school girls, high school boys and grade school students of the parish used both school buildings in various combinations.

Students in the schools were initially children of Duluth's populations of Irish, Polish, French, Scandinavian and German immigrants. In later years, as immigration subsided, subsequent generations in these families often followed the tradition of parochial education.

The Christian Brothers in Duluth

Attracting and retaining Christian Brothers for developing Catholic schools required patience and skilled negotiation. From the inception of the Midwest district of the Christian Brothers in 1870, the Provincial was "deluged" with requests at a time when willing Brothers were in short supply. "Bishops and priests kept an ongoing correspondence in pursuit of a positive reply."⁷

Fortunately for the Duluth diocese and Sacred Heart parish, an experienced negotiator eventually arrived.

In 1889, under the guidance of Father James McGolrick, the Immaculate Conception Parish School opened in Minneapolis. Father McGolrick was considered "the driving force behind securing the Brothers for his parish school." His negotiations resulted in the following:

"A simple contract was drawn up. The parish was to provide a 'dwelling house,' with some furniture and large enough for four Brothers. The Brothers were to collect a modest tuition which, if the total amount exceeded \$300 per Brother the extra money was to be turned over to the parish and if the total collected did not equal that amount the parish was to make up the

⁶ Lydon, Rev. Patrick J. History of the Diocese of Duluth. Greer Print Co. Duluth: 1914. p. 257.

⁷ McLaughlin, Brother Terence, FSC. "Schools Once Upon the River" in: *Partners in Mission*, Autumn/Winter 2003/2004, p. 12.

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shortfall. It also state that the Director was free to expel students, but only after consultation with the pastor.”⁸

In 1890, immediately following these negotiations, Father McGolrick was promoted to Bishop of the Duluth Diocese.⁹ In Duluth, McGolrick re-entered negotiations with the Christian Brothers in 1906, “applying to Rev. Brother Gerardus, F.S.C. Provincial of the Christian Brothers of St. Louis, for Brothers to conduct a high school for boys in the Cathedral parish.” In 1907, these discussions with the Christian Brothers ended successfully.

The precedent of the “simple contract” in Minneapolis suggests that the construction of new “Christian Brothers Home” may well have been part of the agreement in bringing the Brothers to Duluth. “Brother Baldwin, director, Brothers Emery and Heremeus Michael, teachers, and Brother Levian Benedict, housekeeper” arrived in September and lived in the parish residence until the Home was completed in the middle of October.¹⁰

McGolrick’s pursuit of the Brothers for a boys’ high school in Duluth likely had at least three driving forces. The first was the church’s general mission to promote a Catholic education. The second was the desire to recruit and train more boys for service to the church. Finally, throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century, many boys simply left school after their First Communion, around the ages of twelve or thirteen, to join the labor force. While Duluth offered a public high school education to boys by 1907, there may have been hope that a *Catholic* high school education would convince more families in the growing urban center of Duluth to enroll their boys in educational pursuits.¹¹

From another perspective, the school in Duluth was important to the Christian Brothers themselves. Their work in Duluth was considered significant in the larger scope of American Christian Brothers’ schools, with an entry in the 1910 *Catholic Encyclopedia* noting:

“The district of St. Louis contains 19 houses, the majority of the Brothers of which are doing parochial school work. They conduct large colleges at St. Louis and Memphis, and important academies and high schools at Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Duluth, St. Joseph and Santa

⁸ McLaughlin, p. 14.

⁹ McGolrick’s departure threatened the financial survival of the Minneapolis school and the provincial threatened to withdraw the Brothers, especially after the “dwelling house” was found to be incomplete and inadequately furnished. However, in 1900, the Brothers returned to Minneapolis to found De La Salle High School. McLaughlin, p. 14.

¹⁰ “History of the Boys’ Cathedral High School” in *The Catholic Outlook*, January 1926.

¹¹ McLaughlin, p. 13.

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Fé. They also have charge of the Osage Nation School for Indian boys at Gray Horse, Oklahoma.”¹²

The presence of the Christian Brothers in Duluth was also a symbolic victory for the order in troubled times. The order had recently undergone great upheaval due to “the Latin question,” whereby Superiors in France had banned the teaching of Latin in schools run by the Brothers, feeling that it connoted exclusivity and an upper-class prejudice, thus violating the order’s mission of teaching the poor. Several Brothers in the United States left the order or protested and were ostracized, as American Brothers deemed Latin essential for all boys, not only as a classical discipline, but also because many professions required its mastery - as did the seminary. The elimination of Latin subsequently had a detrimental effect on enrollment in the Christian Brothers’ schools.

“[C]olleges and academies were having a hard struggle to subsist. Some were actually closed... It was not until 1907 that the Brothers opened a second high school since the decision regarding the teaching of Latin. This was in Duluth, where they were invited by Bishop James McGolrick to do so. Four Brothers began teaching classes of high school level in September, in the existing grade school building, in the cathedral parish. Two years later the construction of a special school commenced.”¹³

The construction of the Boys’ High School and its essential support building, the Christian Brothers Home, reflects the significant growth of boys’ parochial education during the first half of the twentieth century. In 1910, when the school opened, the Christian Brothers in the United States were educating thirty thousand pupils.¹⁴ By 1948, this number had increased to 43,000.¹⁵

The relationship between the Boys Cathedral High School and the Christian Brothers continued until 1942, when the Cathedral boys’ and girls’ high schools were reorganized as a co-educational school for juniors and seniors. One Christian Brothers historian defensively noted: “In 1942, because of financial conditions entirely beyond their control, the Brothers regretfully relinquished the direction of the school after thirty-five years of service to the Catholic boys of the city.”¹⁶ The financial circumstances created by the initial decline of parochial school enrollment contributed to the schools’ merger, but the

¹² *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volume VIII. Copyright 1910 by Robert Appleton. Company Online Edition Copyright © 2003 by K. Knight. <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08056a.htm>.

¹³ Battersby, William J. *The Christian Brothers in the United States 1900-1925*. St. Mary’s College Press, Winona: 1967. p. 259.

¹⁴ *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. VIII.

¹⁵ Gabriel, Brother Angelus. *The Christian Brothers in the United States 1848-1948*. The Declan X. McMullen Company, Inc., New York:1948. p. xi. This number did not include students in Duluth, as the Brothers had withdrawn six years earlier.

¹⁶ Gabriel, p. 365.

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withdrawal of the Brothers themselves was due to the Brothers Rule, which limits them to the education of males. Parish priests and the Benedictine Sisters continued to staff the grade school and merged high school.

The Building

The provision of generous living quarters was undoubtedly an essential factor in securing the Brothers' services in Duluth. Perhaps taking a lesson from the difficult experiences in McGolrick's former Minneapolis parish, the Duluth Christian Brothers were accommodated in a "commodious residence erected by the parish at the cost of \$22,600.00."¹⁷ The building was constructed just behind and in the style of the Cathedral school, facing 2nd Avenue West. The architectural details of the façade and relatively spacious three-story Christian Brothers Home indicate that the Brothers were invited not just to occupy a "dwelling," as in Minneapolis, but as reflected in its name, a dignified and attractive "Home."

While details and plans related to the building's construction are elusive,¹⁸ a few lines jotted by McGolrick in a journal he kept throughout his career provide crucial facts, with McGolrick recording the following on July 11th, 1907:

Brothers House –	Wm. Fawcett	15,957.00
	St. Germain-glass	97.00
	Waugh, Kealy & Co. electrical work	251.00
	Stack Bros. Plumbing	1,335.01
	McGurrin Heating	96.00
	Brey & Nystrom architects	773.51

The bottom of the page shows a few corrected numbers, including a total for William Fawcett of \$16,349.29. Fawcett signed the building permit as the "builder," and is listed as a carpenter in Duluth city directories of the era, with other Fawcetts also involved in the building trade as contractors and bricklayers. The permit itself records that the cost of the building, not including the lot, was projected to be \$18,000. McGolrick's amended notes on building costs suggest a total around \$20,500.

¹⁷ Lydon, p. 257.

¹⁸ Inquiries for additional information on the building and the Christian Brothers in Duluth were made at St. Scholastica Priory Archives, the Diocese of Duluth Archives, City of Duluth offices, the Archdiocese of St. Paul Archives, and the Brother I. Leo O'Donnell Midwest Province Archives at the Christian Brothers University, Memphis, Tennessee.

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The reference to the St. Germain, a Duluth glass company that began operations in 1891, is most likely connected with the portrait window of St. John Baptist de la Salle in the third floor chapel. Art glass is also found in the front windows on the first floor.¹⁹

Architects Carl E. Nystrom and William T. Bray practiced between 1906 and 1914 as partners in Duluth, as well as in other partnerships over time. They were likely an obvious choice, as Bray and former partner I. Vernon Hill designed the adjacent 1904 Cathedral school during their one-year association. The School and Christian Brothers Home share major exterior design elements and materials, clearly making them a "matched set." The firm of Bray and Nystrom also built several other schools and private residences, including "many buildings built in Duluth and the Iron Range cities. Among these were the Holland Hotel, St. Louis County Court House of Virginia and grade and high schools at Eveleth, Gilbert, Keewatin, Biwabic, Mountain Iron and Virginia."²⁰

The Benedictine Sisters

While the presence of the Christian Brothers in Duluth and in the monastery building had a definite beginning and end point, the history of the Benedictine Sisters in Duluth began even earlier and continues yet today. Benedictines from St. Joseph, Minnesota arrived and began teaching in 1881. Their ongoing efforts had a significant impact both on Duluth's built environment and all manner of demographic groups. Their work resulted in the construction and staffing of hospitals, homes for orphans and the elderly, and schools, with educational efforts culminating in the creation and continued development of the College of St. Scholastica and the Benedictine Health Care system.

Interviews with Benedictine Sisters indicate that their order began occupying the Christian Brothers Home in 1942 after the withdrawal of the Christian Brothers. By about 1958, the building was known as the Cathedral Convent, and later as the Sacred Heart Convent. From 1942 to 1962, approximately forty-five Sisters occupied the "big" (Sacred Heart) convent, as well as the "yellow" convent, which provided additional sleeping quarters in a stucco house immediately to the south across the alley. Sisters from both buildings took their meals and held prayers in the Sacred Heart Convent.²¹

This twenty-year span was one of significant growth in parochial school education and for women's teaching orders.

¹⁹ Some records attribute a painting in one of the Sacred Heart Cathedral windows in 1910 specifically to Axel Bergholtz, an artist with the company. Reed, Frances L. The Sacred Heart Church, 1870-1985. Service Printers, Duluth:1985. p. 41.

²⁰ Northwest Architectural Archives files. A letter in the files to Kathryn Eckert at the State Museum of Michigan Oct. 27, 1976, (signature unclear) lists the buildings attributed to Bray and Nystrom.

²¹ Telephone conversation with Sister Mary Carol Braun, September 23, 2004.

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“By 1900 there were more than 500 sisters from Minnesota-based religious communities teaching in parochial schools. Twenty years later, that number had doubled to more than 1,000 sisters. By 1940 the total number of sisters teaching in parochial schools had reached almost 1600. Without flagging, the growth continued through 1960 when there were more than 2,000 sisters teaching children in parochial schools. ...So important was the work of teaching that religious communities assigned the vast majority of their members to staff parochial schools.”²²

Before the Convent became available, many Sisters lived in the Sacred Heart Institute (near St. Mary's Hospital) and walked to the Cathedral School – at least eight blocks – in all types of weather. The decision in 1942 to move Sisters to the newly vacant building was described as a decision of the parish priest or other parish leaders and viewed by the youngest Sisters as chaotic, especially as they were selected to frequently shift around the furniture until settled. That sisters would initially reside in different locations while staffing the school was not completely unusual. But “...in the majority of cases, the sisters who taught in parochial schools lived in housing provided by the parish.”²³

In staffing the Duluth parish school, the sisters provided a nominal income for their community-nominal being the operative word.

“[St. Thomas Aquinas School, 1886] was the first school in Duluth to be constructed expressly for Catholic education and the first to pay salaries to its teachers. The principal received a stipend of twenty-five dollars a month; and teachers were paid twenty dollars a month. These salaries became the norm for all parochial school teachers of Duluth during the next thirty years.”²⁴

Interviews²⁵ with Benedictine Sisters who formally occupied the Sacred Heart Convent indicate that monthly salaries during the 1940's hovered around \$30 and were paid to the order.

Both the Sisters' oral accounts and the building's permit history suggest that few changes were made to the building during its occupancy by the two orders. About fifteen Sisters slept in small rooms in the upper two floors, with some minor variations in partitioning over the years. One sister also occupied a

²² Raiche, Annabelle CSJ, and Biermaier, Ann Marie, OSB. They Came to Teach. The Story of Sisters Who Taught in Parochial Schools and Their Contribution to Elementary Education in Minnesota. North Star Press, St. Cloud:1994. p. 71.

²³ Raiche, p. 94.

²⁴ Mimeographed summary, ca. 1885, St. Scholastica Priory Archives, Duluth. Quoted in Raiche, p. 95.

²⁵ Interviews held at St. Scholastica Monastery, October 7, 2004, with Sisters Margaret James Laughlin, Ramona Ewen, Rebecca Burggraff, Mary Jean Tuttle, Agnes Alice, Mary Henry Landsteiner, Timothy Kirby, and Almira Randall.

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small room under the stairs just off the entryway, distinguished on the exterior by a small, oddly placed gothic window.²⁶

A common room was found off the central dining room on the first floor. The Sisters also recalled listening to music and viewing early – and officially sanctioned - television shows in this room. As during the Brothers' occupancy, a small chapel on the north side of the third floor with a barrel vault roof and gothic windows (one depicting Christian Brothers' founder St. John Baptist de la Salle) was used for devotions. Of particular amusement to the sisters was a set of six conjoined sinks (three facing sets) in the shared second floor lavatory dating from the Christian Brothers' era, which placed them face-to-face while brushing teeth. These the Sisters deemed "built for men" and called this arrangement "the waters of Shiloah," a biblical reference to waters that "flow softly." The sisters vividly remember the building's woodwork and handsome staircase, and using pieces of plate glass to scrape off the many layers of varnish put down by the Brothers on the floorboards to create "beautiful hardwood floors."

Geography and weather are tied to Sisters' memories of the Convent. The large window in the front common room offered a view of 2nd Avenue West and cars spiraling down the steep grade in icy conditions. The Sisters themselves experienced the same icy conditions as they tried to breach the inclined stretch of sidewalk in front of the Convent and along the Cathedral School to reach the Cathedral at the top of the rise. On a few occasions in the winter, they flooded the small back yard to create a skating rink.

The Sisters also recalled their relationship with the community while living in the Convent. Many mentioned frequent back door visits by "St. Josephs," homeless men seeking – and always receiving – food. Following a flood in August, 1972, the Sisters welcomed John and Bertha Undseth, an interracial couple, to the Convent, where they occupied a bedroom, sitting room and bathroom off the kitchen for three months until they could locate housing.²⁷

In the early 1960s, approximately 850 students were enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12 in the Cathedral schools.²⁸ However, the number of parochial schools in Minnesota peaked in 1963-64 and

²⁶ "The Rule of St. Benedict," written between 480 and 547 a.c.e., provides suggestions for a monastery's structure: "At the door of the monastery, place a sensible old man who knows how to take a message and deliver a reply, and whose age keeps him from roaming about. This porter will need a room near the entrance so that visitors will always find him there to answer them." (The Rule of St. Benedict in English (c. 480-547). The Liturgical Press, Collegeville:1982.) Whether St. Benedict's suggestions were perpetuated in twentieth-century monastic architecture could not be determined.

²⁷ Kroening, Sister Mary Christa, OSB. "The Flood of August 20, 1972." One-page manuscript dated September 1, 2002.

²⁸ Reed, p. 28.

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declined thereafter.²⁹ The Duluth Catholic community weathered these shifts, consolidating and investing in new school facilities in a new location. Following the 1963 construction of a new Cathedral High School (today called the Marshall School), many Sisters left the Sacred Heart Convent for a convent at the new high school. The four-story Boys' Cathedral High School across the street from the Convent was demolished shortly thereafter. The Cathedral grade school was closed in 1970. For a short time, eight Sisters who taught in other Duluth parishes continued to occupy the Sacred Heart Convent building. Within the year, the sisters moved out. While the Grove Apartments were being built at the College of St. Scholastica, the Convent housed 15 junior nursing students. As the students moved out to the new apartments, a living group comprised of young working women was formed, occupying the Convent until 1978.³⁰

The departure of the Benedictine Sisters from the Sacred Heart Convent signaled a general era of changes for the Benedictine women. During approximately the same time period, coifs and habits became optional apparel. And, after a century devoted to teaching and nursing, with Sisters occupying convents with others performing the same duties, the Benedictine Sisters began to expand and specialize their skills to better support their mission, pursuing a variety of educational options and working in a diverse range of fields.

In 1985, the Sacred Heart parish merged with Duluth's St. Mary Star of the Sea parish, and the Sacred Heart Cathedral was no longer a parish church; it currently serves as a music recording studio and performance space. The Cathedral School is now the Damiano Center, which provides ecumenical social services to area residents. The other buildings in the remaining Sacred Heart complex, the chancery and rectory, now house the Center for American Indian Resources.

To relieve mounting costs accrued by the parish's numerous and aging buildings, the Sacred Heart parish sold the Sacred Heart Convent to the Duluth Diocese in 1983. The Diocese retained ownership until 1986, when it was sold into private ownership. Today, the building is slated for rehabilitation by the Women's Transitional Housing Coalition (WTHC). Echoing its history, and in unity with the mission of other remaining buildings in the Sacred Heart complex, the WTHC will provide permanent supportive housing for 11 women in the building. The facility will be staffed jointly by the Human Development Center (HDC) and the College of St. Scholastica to provide 24-hour, on-site social services.

²⁹ Raiche, p. 128.

³⁰ Kroening, Sister Mary Christa, OSB. Email correspondence, November 1, 2004.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS)

Previous determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

Primary Location of additional data:

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 2 acres

UTM References:

1. Zone 15 Easting: 568200 Northing: 5181740
2. Zone 15 Easting: 568240 Northing: 5181790
3. Zone 15 Easting: 568360 Northing: 5181680
4. Zone 15 Easting: 568290 Northing: 5181620

Duluth, Minn., 1953, Revised 1993

Verbal Boundary Description: The Christian Brothers Home Boundary includes the southerly 43.5 feet of Lots 34 and 36 and the southerly 43.5 feet of the easterly 21.0 feet of Lot 38, West Fourth Street, Duluth Property First Division.

Boundary Justification: The Sacred Heart Cathedral and Cathedral School boundary is expanded to include the Christian Brothers Home which retains physical integrity and which has historically been part of the parish complex.

11. Form Prepared By

Carmen Tschofen, 2667 Parkview Boulevard, Robbinsdale, MN 55422, 763/522-5709, November 2004

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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, I hereby certify that this documentation amending the Sacred Heart Cathedral and Cathedral School National Register Nomination (NRHP 1986, #86001382) meets the National Register 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 amended property meets the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the state level.

Patrick J. McCormack
Signature and title of certifying official
Patrick McCormack
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

March 29, 2005
Date

Minnesota Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

*Accept A, a for Keeper,
B. D. Savage, National Register of Historic Places
5/19/05*