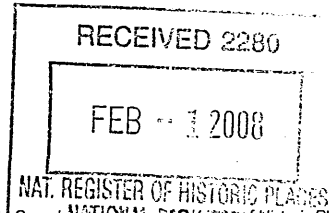


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



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This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable". For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name St. Anselm's Catholic Church, Rectory and Parish Hall

Other names/site number The Cathedral of the Sandhills/ CU01-001, 002 and 003

2. Location

Street & number NE 2nd St Not for publication

City or town Anselmo Vicinity

State Nebraska Code NE County Custer Code 041 Zip code 68813

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Michael J. A. P.
Signature of certifying official

1-29-08
Date

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register.

see continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.

see continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain): _____

Edson H. Beall 3.12.08

[Signature]
Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

St. Anselm's Catholic Church, Rectory & Parish Hall

Name of Property

Custer County, Nebraska

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- Private
- Public-local
- Public-state
- Public-federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4		Buildings
		Sites
		Structures
		Objects
4	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/religious facility

RELIGION/church-related residence

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/religious facility

RELIGION/church-related residence

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19th and 20th CENTURY REVIVALS/ Late Gothic Revival

LATE 19th and 20th CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/ Craftsman

No Style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Foundation Concrete block

Walls Brick

Roof Asphalt Shingle

Other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

St. Anselm's Catholic Church, Rectory & Parish Hall

Name of Property

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This Late Gothic Revival church is a rectangular shaped, brick structure with an asphalt shingle, gabled roof. It has a concrete block foundation and brick walls with stone details. The façade contains a central entrance under an enormous Gothic arched window with a drip molding, which is common to the style. There are four doors, two in a pair in the center and one on each side: all feature a Tudor arch, with the pair creating the arch between them. The doors are paneled, with nine wooden panels and three panes of glass at the top. Above the entrance, a message from Psalm 42:4 in Latin, INTROIBO AD ALTARE DEI, entreats the parishioner to "Walk into the house of God." An Alpha and an Omega are carved over the single doors in a gothic script. The entrance is located on the gable end, however, the appearance of the gable is minimized by the fact that there is no rake overhang and the building features a shaped parapet. The engaged buttresses on the front of the building almost create a stepped appearance to the parapet above, and a cross is affixed to the peak.

The dominant feature of the church is the square Gothic bell tower on the northeast corner of the building. The tower has an enormous footprint, and narrows only slightly as it gains in height. It is strengthened by engaged buttresses at the corners, built in brick, with stone caps and detail at the top. The four sides have Gothic openings with tracery to help carry the sound of the bell. Further tracery carved in the stonework itself enhances the Gothic design, culminating in four elaborate Gothic pinnacles on the four corners of the tower. Two smaller pinnacles are located on each side of the tower. Three tall narrow windows are located on each side of the tower, presumably upon each turn of the stairs up the tower.

There are six Tudor arched window openings, with Gothic arched windows within each Tudor arch, along the sides of the church. These windows all have stone sills and brick lintels. Engaged buttresses and limestone caps are found between each window along the north and south side. A stone belt course runs around the circumference of the building at the level of the top of the steps into the narthex and the sanctuary.

Upon entering the church, the Tudor arch motif is repeated several times: the doorways, the ceiling of the sanctuary, the altar, and the sides of the pews themselves. There is Gothic tracery in the woodwork of the paneling that surrounds the altar, as well as the altar itself. Additionally, the original light fixtures feature quatrefoil motifs, another prominent motif of the Gothic style. The sanctuary's rafters terminate in brackets with volutes.

On the walls to the north and south of the altar, tripartite stained glass windows depict the Holy Bible, the Sacred Heart, and the cup and Communion wafer. The marble altar is decorated with the Greek letters Alpha and Omega, referring to Revelation 22:13: "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End." It also has the Greek symbols Chi and Rho superimposed in the center of the altar, and is the first two letters of the Greek word for Christ. It is an ancient symbol that invokes the image of the crucifixion, and represents Jesus Christ. The high altar itself also depicts an image of Jesus' crucifixion, carved in wood. A small door in the paneling off to the left is labeled in Latin "OLEA SANCTA", or Sacred Oil, and contains the blessed oil used in Mass. A door nearby leads to a room where the priests dress for Mass, and contains a built-in oak wardrobe for vestments. A small passage behind the altar leads to another room, which is also accessible from a doorway off the altar on the right side. This room is an office for the priest.

The Rectory is located west of the church. This Craftsman residence is a rectangular shaped, two story brick structure with an asphalt shingle, front gable roof with a small hipped projection on the northwest corner of the house. It has a concrete block foundation. The façade contains a central entrance into an enclosed porch. The door has sidelights and an arched transom, all found under a Tudor arch in brick. The windows of the enclosed porch are all multi-light versions of the same Tudor arch, to complement the church. The one story enclosed porch has a flat roof, which creates a balcony for one of the second story bedrooms, providing a view of Anselmo and the church grounds. The brickwork at the top of the closed rail of the balcony creates a belt course that runs around the circumference of the rectory, helping to create a

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St. Anselm's Catholic Church, Rectory & Parish Hall

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horizontal impression, which is indicative of the style. Another belt course is found running along the tops of the windows into the basement. Under the gable, the bricks have been laid in a stacked bond, which creates a decorative pattern.

Most of the windows in the house are either two-over-two double-hung or six-over-one double-hung windows, and all are original. A two story projection off of the back of the house has multi-light casement windows that lead to the impression that these rooms were sunrooms. The rectory has dark woodwork throughout, with broad baseboards, French doors, a telephone nook, and a nice but not elaborate Craftsman stair with newel post. The kitchen, which has been largely modernized, still has a built-in butler's pantry with glass cabinet doors and an array of drawers below. Built-in bookshelves and cabinets are found in the priest's office or library. The rectory has eight rooms and a full basement. It measures 40 feet by 32 feet in size.¹ The rectory is not currently lived in by a resident priest. The building is used for classes.

A contributing garage is located just southeast of the rectory. It is a simple, frame, one-car garage with exposed rafter ends and a single garage door.

The parish hall was the original St. Anselm Catholic Church, built in 1905. It was replaced with the one described above in 1929. It is not used for church services, but it is used for a multitude of fellowship activities, such as spaghetti feeds and other parish gatherings. The parish hall is a rectangular shaped, one story (with choir loft) frame structure with a metal end gable roof. There are imbricated shingles under the gable on the façade, but not on the rear gable. A shed addition was added at some time to cover stairs providing access to the basement, where the kitchen and fellowship hall are located, and it covers the original door, although a round arch is visible over the addition. There are two eight-over-two double-hung windows on the façade, largely boarded over on the inside. On the sides of the church, four tall two-over-two double-hung windows are flanked to the north and south by a smaller one-over-one double-hung windows. A small, one story addition with a gable roof was added to the back side of the building, and contains bathrooms.

The interior of the parish hall is, for the most part, one large space on the first floor. A former choir loft has been enclosed with plywood. The hall retains its pressed tin ceiling and cornice. Although the pews have largely been pushed aside to the walls to allow for flexibility in use of the space, it very much reads as a church. A basement kitchen and fellowship hall was added when it was moved to the site in 1941. As in the hall above, the basement is largely a big open space, with a large kitchen included. There is a pie closet with numerous shallow shelves for storing pies for various church feeds.

Integrity

St. Anselm's Catholic Church, Rectory and Parish Hall as a complex of buildings exhibits excellent historic integrity. The church underwent some changes as a result of Vatican II, such as the loss of its altar rail and changes in its confessionals, but this is common to Catholic Churches. In every other way, this church has been beautifully maintained and cared for. Likewise, the rectory has not experienced a great deal of change, aside from its kitchen which has been modernized since it was built in 1929. The parish hall has experienced the most change during its 102-year lifespan, and yet its origins as a church are still readily obvious to the most casual observer. As an ancillary building to this complex, its integrity is sufficient to help convey the story of St. Anselm's Catholic Church.

¹ *Custer County Chief*, 5 September 1929, "Many Attended Dedication of Anselmo Church."

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** Removed from its original location.
- C** A birthplace or a grave.
- D** A cemetery.
- E** A reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** A commemorative property.
- G** Less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1905

1929

Significant Dates

1905

1929

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

M.S. Lahr and Carl Stangel of Omaha, architects

Leo Worth and John Brock of Columbus, contractors

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- Previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- Designated a National Historic Landmark
- Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location for additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

St. Anselm's Catholic Church, Rectory & Parish Hall

Name of Property

Custer County, Nebraska

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 7.3 acres

UTM References (place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet).

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	14	427815	4607313	3.			
2.				4.			

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jill E. Dolberg/ Historic Buildings Survey Coordinator
 organization Nebraska State Historical Society date December 17, 2007
 street & number 1500 R Street/ Box 82554 telephone (402) 471-4773
 city or town Lincoln state NE zip code 68501-2554

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name/title Catholic Diocese of Grand Island
 street & number PO Box 1531 telephone _____
 city or town Grand Island state NE zip code 68802-1531

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determined eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, (15 USC 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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St. Anselm's Catholic Church, Rectory & Parish Hall

Name of Property

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Anselmo is located in Custer County, which is roughly in the center of the state of Nebraska and had a population of 159 as of the 2000 Census. Anselmo is 198 miles northwest of Lincoln, Nebraska's capital. It is found on Nebraska Highway 2, the historic Potash Highway, which leads into the Sand Hills, and Anselmo is the doorway into this fascinating landscape. Hence, St. Anselm's Catholic Church has been termed the Cathedral of the Sandhills. St. Anselm's Catholic Church, Rectory and Parish Hall are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for their architectural significance. The three buildings together illustrate the importance of religion to the Catholic community in and around Anselmo, both through the scale and elaboration of their design and the care with which they have been preserved. These buildings were not built without effort and sacrifice on the part of the community.

The first St. Anselm's Catholic Church was constructed in 1905, and was built of frame construction in a simple hall design. It included a few elaborations, such as an arched entrance over the door and imbricated shingles in the gable. However, this building was not large enough to suit the purposes of this growing Catholic community for long. When Father Francis Keller was pastor of the church, he and the parishioners realized that the church was too small for the growing congregation, and a larger facility was needed. A five acre site was selected in the southern portion of Anselmo, on land owned by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Downey. The Downeys donated half of the land required, while Mrs. Mart Johnson and her father, Angello Dondero, donated the other half.²

The congregation selected architects M.S. Lahr and Carl Stangel of Omaha to draw the plans for the new church and rectory. Soon after, Leo Worth and John Brock of Columbus were chosen to build them. Although they hired contractors, the men of Anselmo contributed much to the strenuous work of building the new church. They excavated the site, hauled materials from the depot to the building site, and continued to work until the buildings were completed. The bell tower's spires and the window traceries were made of limestone which was carved by stonecutters in Kansas, where the stone originated.³ The finished limestone pieces were shipped to Anselmo via the railroad, and put in place by the work crews of the community. The building measures 112 ½ by 47 feet in size.⁴ The tower stands 95 feet tall. The walls are constructed of brick, steel and concrete, and the roof is supported by steel beams. A cornerstone was laid on 23 September 1928. Eleven months later, the buildings were complete, and Bishop James A. Duffy blessed and dedicated them for service to the community. Twenty-five members of the clergy and over 500 laity celebrated the event.⁵

Father Keller was instrumental in getting the project completed. Not only did he donate all of his yearly salary, but he also cashed in his life insurance policy to purchase new pews for the building. The parish continued to donate money for further projects as well. In 1930, they donated \$544 for a bell for the bell tower. Another parishioner donated \$150 for carpet in the sanctuary. As the Great Depression progressed, however, donations began to dry up. Father Keller continued to refuse to accept his salary, and in fact took no salary through the time he was replaced in 1942. Of the \$1,557.20 the church paid for the new pews, Father Keller paid \$1,133.32. He also gave \$1,000 to the building fund. During his tenure as pastor, he donated a total of \$7,960 in salary and cash donations of \$2,133 to St. Anselm's.⁶

² "St. Anselm's Catholic Church, Anselmo, Nebraska, 1928-2003," Unpublished pamphlet.

³ Harold Knight, "Saint Anselm's Church, Anselmo," *Victoria Creek Neighbors*.

⁴ *Custer County Chief*, 5 September 1929, "Many Attended Dedication of Anselmo Church."

⁵ *Custer County Chief*, 5 September 1929, "Many Attended Dedication of Anselmo Church."

⁶ "The Building of St. Anselm's New Church," Unpublished pamphlet.

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St. Anselm's Catholic Church, Rectory & Parish Hall

Name of Property

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Father Daniel Devine succeeded Father Keller as pastor in 1942. He also made major improvements to St. Anselm's. He oversaw the installation of the marble main altar, the carved oak reredos and a redecoration of the church's interior in 1948.⁷ He also undertook the substantial repayment of the building loan.

The parish hall was moved onto the grounds of the new church in 1941, at great expense of the parish. At this time, the congregation excavated a basement for a fellowship hall with an extensive kitchen. The move allowed the congregation to gather more comfortably socially. While the new church is very large, it was not built with a space for fellowship in mind. It has only a small narthex, a large sanctuary, offices and a utilitarian basement. The repurposing of the parish hall allowed the parish to gather for more purposes, including fundraising and social events.

St. Anselm's Catholic Church, Rectory and Parish Hall are three architecturally significant buildings. The church itself is a striking example of the Late Gothic Revival style, featuring Tudor arched doors and window openings with Gothic windows within. The arches are repeated in the shape of the high altar, the pews, and the ceiling itself. Other Gothic motifs are found as well, such as the quatrefoils in the light fixtures, and the tracery both in the carving of the altar and the limestone of the bell tower. The bell tower itself is the most striking Gothic feature of the building. Standing 95 feet tall, the pinnacles at the top soar toward the heavens. The 1930 bell is visible through the stone tracery.

Perhaps the most astounding feature of this church is its size. In 1930, Anselmo had reached the apex of its growth as a community with 472 residents.⁸ The area had several churches to serve the area, in addition to St. Anselm's Church, including a Methodist Church and other "Christian" churches, therefore not every resident would be attending the new church.⁹ Nonetheless, the church drew congregants from the surrounding countryside, and often on Christmas Eve or on special days if one did not arrive in a timely manner, one would find themselves standing in the back. This church was built to appeal to more than the few that lived in Anselmo. It was to be a regional destination – the Cathedral of the Sandhills.

The rectory is likewise architecturally significant. It is an elegantly built Craftsman style house with just enough elements of the Gothic style from the church adjacent to indicate that they are a matched set. The bricks are the same, and most significantly, the windows and door on the enclosed porch mimic the Tudor arch motif that is so prevalent in the church. In all other ways, the house is indicative of the Craftsman style. Its broad eave overhangs and belt courses emphasize the horizontal nature of the style. The decorative brickwork under the gables is a charming but unnecessary elaboration that bespeaks the style, as is the hipped projection on the main façade. The woodwork within is simply executed but elegant. It is a large rectory for a parish that almost always had only one priest, but the rectory also served as a space for housing traveling clergy, and extra space was necessary.

The parish hall, former church, was a lovely example of a hall form church of no particular style. A bit of elaboration had been added to the building through the addition of fishscale shingles under the gable on the front façade and the arched entry above the door, however, the building was always simple and its form followed its function. It was moved onto the property adjoining the church and rectory in 1941 to provide a parish hall, and was altered in the moving. A basement was constructed underneath the hall in order to provide a kitchen and fellowship hall. A shed addition was placed on the front of the building to cover stairs to the basement from the weather. Later, a one story addition of modern bathrooms was added to the rear. However, the important character defining features of this former church, now hall remain: the large open space of the former sanctuary remains with its original pressed tin ceiling and cornice, as well as the repetitive

⁷ Harold Knight, "Saint Anselm's Church, Anselmo," *Victoria Creek Neighbors*.

⁸ 1930 Census.

⁹ Mead and Hunt, Inc., *Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey: Custer County*, Prepared for Nebraska State Historical Society, July 2006.

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St. Anselm's Catholic Church, Rectory & Parish Hall

Name of Property

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windows along the sides. Even the pews are still present in the building. None of these alterations are sufficiently troubling to preclude the building's listing in the National Register as a part of this complex of buildings. Its role in the life of this parish more than makes up for the few blemishes that it has endured that are visible from the front of the building. The rest are of negligible importance.

Criterion Consideration A

St. Anselm's Catholic Church, Rectory and Parish Hall are eligible for the National Register due to their architectural value. The church meets the requirements established under Criterion Consideration A in that it derives its primary significance from its architectural distinction. The sheer scale of the church and its accompanying buildings show the importance that this community placed on religion. The central location of the church within the town mimics the symbolic central nature of the church to its community. The church has always been the spiritual and social center of Anselmo, and the edifices that they built to house these functions reflect this well. St. Anselm's Catholic Church is massive compared to the size of Anselmo itself. It was built in this scale in order to better serve the entire Catholic community of the surrounding vicinity. Its dominance on the landscape and its architectural distinction illustrates the importance placed on its planning and design.

Criterion Consideration B

This property meets the requirements established under Criterion Consideration B in that one building, the former church now serving as a parish hall, was moved from its original location after its period of significance. The former church retains sufficient physical integrity to convey its architectural significance despite its relocation.

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St. Anselm's Catholic Church, Rectory & Parish Hall

Name of Property

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Section 9

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Knight, Harold. "Saint Anselm's Church, Anselmo." *Victoria Creek Neighbors*.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997.

Mead and Hunt, Inc. *Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey: Custer County*. Prepared for the Nebraska State Historical Society, July 2006.

Rifkind, Carole. *A Field Guide to American Architecture*. Penguin Books: New York, 1980.

"St. Anselm's Catholic Church, Anselmo, Nebraska, 1928-2003." Unpublished Pamphlet.

Section 10

Verbal Boundary Description

Part of Northeast of the Southeast Section 17, Township 19 North, Range 22 West.

Boundary Justification

The boundary described above encompasses that property historically associated with St. Anselm's Catholic Church, Rectory, and Parish Hall.