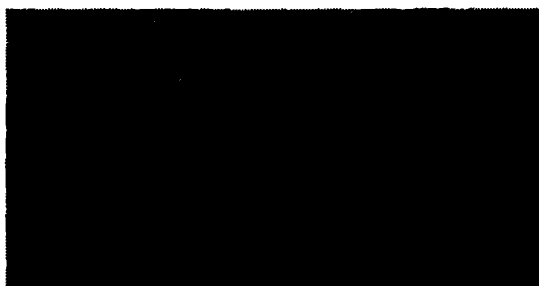


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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



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

1. Name

historic L'Église du Precieux Sang

and/or common The Precious Blood Church Complex and Chateau Clare

2. Location

street & number 94 Carrington Avenue and 61 Park Avenue N.A. not for publication

city, town Woonsocket N.A. vicinity of #1 Hon. Fernand J. St Germain
congressional district

state Rhode Island code 44 county Providence code 007

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 type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>N.A.</u> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: (sr. citizer housing)

4. Owner of Property

name Reverend René Gagne (Church and Rectory)/Myerson/Allen and Co. (Convent and c/o John L. Allen School)

street & number 94 Carrington Avenue 306 Dartmouth Street
Woonsocket Boston, Mass. 02116

city, town Woonsocket vicinity of _____ state Rhode Island

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. City Clerk's Office, City Hall

street & number 169 Main Street

city, town Woonsocket state Rhode Island

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Woonsocket, Rhode Island Statewide Historic
title Preservation Report P-W-1 has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date September, 1976 federal state county local

depository for survey records Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

city, town 150 Benefit Street Providence state Rhode Island

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 _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Precious Blood Church Complex, dating to the 1870s and constructed over a fifty-year period by a large French-Canadian Catholic parish, comprises five brick buildings (see site plan). The complex is split into two sections diagonally opposite each other at the intersection of Carrington and Park avenues in the city of Woonsocket, Rhode Island.

The immediate area is hilly, tree-shaded and basically residential, although a number of buildings close by the complex have been converted into professional offices. Moderate-to-large-scale, frame, late nineteenth-century dwellings are the predominant building form in this neighborhood. Carrington and Park avenues are fairly wide thoroughfares carrying considerable traffic; a stoplight controls traffic at the intersection.

On the lot at the northeast corner of Carrington and Park stands Precious Blood Church itself (fig. 1); to the east is the parish house, linked to the Church by a terrace overlooking the intersection. The parish's school buildings and convent occupy the lot at the southwest corner of Carrington and Park (figs. 3 and 6), diagonally across the street from the church. These buildings were sold by the diocese several years ago and converted into housing for the elderly, called Chateau Clare.

The church edifice, the focus of the entire, two-part complex, is a basilican structure with steeply-pitched gable roofs and a massive, semi-detached, 4-stage corner tower. A good, American architects' vernacular version of the "Streaky Bacon" style of polychrome High Victorian Gothic, this red-brick church has pinkish-red brick voussoirs and white stone belt courses, foundation facings, keystones and buttress caps. The main elevation is a characteristic composition in which the dynamic asymmetry of the whole is played off against the symmetry of its parts; a goodly number of Catholic churches built in this period followed the same compositional pattern.

Precious Blood has large lancet windows lighting the nave and only a minimal clerestory (fig. 4). The basilican form is modified somewhat by shallow transepts which create the suggestion of a cruciform plan. The sanctuary is apsidal. A balcony surrounds three sides of the central space of the nave and the six-bay interior has a full complement of Victorian Gothic ornamentation complete with fictive groin vaulting, lancet arches and clustered columns (fig. 5). The rich detail is executed in plaster. Unfortunately, stencilling and other painted finish has been greatly simplified. The ornate main altar, however, is intact.

E.J. Boyden & Son of Worcester designed Precious Blood Church in 1873 and Charles E. Clark of Woonsocket was the contractor. Construction began at once but proceeded at a conservative pace. The basement-level lower church was completed in 1874. The tower was capped off above its third-stage belfry, the walls of the upper church had been erected, and the roof had been framed-in when a severe windstorm destroyed much of the fabric in

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

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Continuation sheet 1

Item number 7

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February 1876. Reconstruction began that spring and the church was sufficiently complete for dedication in 1881. The tower, originally to carry a tall spire, was finished in the early twentieth century with a rather Elizabethan copper-covered clock turret surrounded by four, tall finials at the tower corners. It appears that the belfry was modified to its present form when the clock turret was erected.

The 3-story, flat-roofed Precious Blood parish house (fig. 2), clad in early twentieth-century polychrome brick veneer intended to harmonize with the church, was built in the 1870s and was at first a 2½-story, mansard-roofed building. An architecturally unprepossessing building for convent and school, located behind the church and parish house on Hamlet Avenue, is no longer standing.

One further element of the church-parish house grouping merits note: a pedestal-mounted, bronze bust of Monsignor Charles Dauray which stands on the terrace in front of the church (fig. 3). Dauray is the central figure in the history of Precious Blood parish and a priest of key importance in the annals of the Rhode Island Catholic Church.

Opposite the towering church, the parish house and Dauray monument, stand the former Precious Blood convent and parish school buildings known collectively now as Chateau Clare (figs. 3 & 6). The oldest section of this group stands at the corner, facing the church. Long referred to as "Le Castel Dauray," it was built in 1894-95 in a picturesque and vaguely Francois I^{er} style executed in red brick with yellow brick trim (fig. 6). It unites a 2½-story, mansard-roofed school building and a 2½-story, mansard convent. As first built, the school had a tall, square entrance tower and the convent was accented by a circular corner tower with a conical roof. The complex was enlarged in 1911 with the construction of a new school wing, also in brick, and at that time the original school entrance tower was altered and two new entrance towers were built to its west; the school's central tower was given a high hip roof surmounted by a cupola. A chapel added to the convent in 1927 was the work of local architects Walter F. Fontaine & Son. A free-standing high school facing Greene Street, added to this group of academic buildings at the same time and designed by the same firm, is no longer standing.

The exteriors of the extant buildings are well preserved. The interiors, always very plain save for the chapel, have been remodified: classrooms and dormitories have been sub-divided into apartments. The chapel, too, has been converted for residential use, but in doing so as much of its original spacial character and detail as possible was retained.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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	humanitarian
<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1873-76/1876-81, **Builder/Architect** E.J. Boyden & Son, architects

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) 1894-95, 1911 Charles E. Clark, builder
Walter F. Fontaine & Son, architects

L'Église du Precieux Sang and its attendant parish buildings present physical testimony to the growth and development of Woonsocket's French-Canadian community, the dominant ethnic group in a multi-ethnic city. Of note architecturally and in the fields of religion and education, the primary significance of this complex lies in the area of social history and in its association with a man deserving wider acclaim: Father Charles Dauray.

Precious Blood Parish is the mother parish of Woonsocket's French Canadian population, a group which assumed a leading role in the city's history during the 1860s. Woonsocket blossomed as a Blackstone River textile center in the 1820s and '30s, achieving real stature in the 1840s. In the first half of that decade the community began to have a substantial non-Yankee populace. A local census taken in 1842 showed that less than one-tenth of Woonsocket's 4000 citizens were foreign-born, while a similar enumeration taken four years later revealed that immigrants represented over a quarter of the citizenry then. Among these immigrant residents, the largest national group was Irish, followed by English and French Canadians. During the mid- and late-nineteenth century immigration continued, preponderantly from Quebec. In 1875, 46% of Woonsocket's populace was foreign-born and 73% had at least one foreign-born parent. By 1900, Woonsocket was overwhelmingly French-Canadian and, although the number of foreign-born residents had declined to 37% of the total, fully 84% of the people were of foreign parentage, a more telling indicator of ethnicity. Woonsocket's numerous churches bespeak in brick and stone its multi-ethnic heritage, and most especially the heritage of the largest group, the French Canadians. This Franco-American patrimony is nowhere better heralded than in Woonsocket's Precious Blood Church Complex.

During New England's Civil War economic boom, Woonsocket textile manufacturers, led by Edward Harris, had agents in Quebec recruiting workers for their mills. By 1866, there were sufficient French-Canadian Roman Catholics attending Woonsocket's one Catholic church, St. Charles Borromeo (an Irish congregation), that plans were laid to create a separate French-Canadian parish. These plans failed, however, due to differences between the Woonsocket French and the diocesan hierarchy. Instead, the bishop sent a French-speaking missionary priest attached to St. Charles parish who ministered to the French Canadians, conducting services in their language. By 1869, a group of French Sisters of Mercy were conducting Sunday school classes and running various lay religious societies for the benefit of the Quebec natives: it became necessary to conduct the French services in a rented hall with greater seating capacity than St. Charles could provide.

(See Continuation Sheet #2)

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Conley, Patrick T. and Matthew J. Smith: Catholicism in Rhode Island: the Formative Era; Providence; 1976.
- Chase, David; Woonsocket, Rhode Island: Statewide Historic Preservation Report, P-W-1; Providence; 1976.
- Cichon, Joseph J., Jr: Church of the Precious Blood, Woonsocket, Rhode Island; Woonsocket; 1975.

10. Geographical Data

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle name Blackstone

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	9	2	9	2	2	0	0	4	6	5	2	8	0	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

Woonsocket Assessor's plat 15, lots 155 (the church and parish house) and 203 (the former convent and school, now Chateau Clare).

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

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David Chase, consultant

organization Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission date October, 1980

street & number 150 Benefit Street

telephone 401-277-2678

city or town Providence

state Rhode Island

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

Frederick Williams

title

Frederick Williams

date April 19, 1982

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Continuation sheet 2

Item number 8

Page 2

In 1872, steps were again taken to establish a French-Canadian parish, this time successfully. From this date, offerings made by St. Charles' French-Canadian parishioners were set aside in a special building fund for their own church. In 1873, when newly established Precious Blood Parish numbered over 3000 members, the church lot was purchased, plans were drawn, and construction began--all this despite a crippling depression which closed many mills. When in 1875 dissension in the parish stopped work on the new church, the Bishop of Providence transferred the priest in charge and appointed a new pastor: Reverend Charles Dauray, the first French-Canadian priest to serve Precious Blood. This capable, energetic, much-beloved cleric remained at Precious Blood for 55 years. He was a partisan of his faith, his parish, and his cultural heritage: from Precious Blood sprang seven new parishes during Dauray's tenure; all the buildings in the church complex were erected during his pastorate; he founded several schools, an orphanage and a home for the aged; and served numerous French-Canadian cultural, civic and fraternal organizations, including the largest such organization in the United States, L'Union St.-Jean-Baptiste d'Amerique.

As noted, the structures erected under the Dauray administration for Precious Blood Parish are representative examples of American Catholic Church architecture, the church edifice and "Chateau Dauray" (the 1895 convent and school) possessing the greatest interest. The church's layout, high basement, triple entrances, corner tower, facade organization and Victorian Gothic detail are very characteristic for Catholic churches of the '70s and this church is one of Rhode Island's best surviving examples.

As cultural phenomena, such church complexes reflect the uniquely encompassing role national or ethnic Catholic parishes played in the lives of their communicants. For French Canadians, this pervasive role had special import, for the Church had long been the guardian of their culture. French Canadians had to struggle to preserve their heritage in an English-dominated homeland: the phrase "La Langue et Le Foi" was their rallying cry. Schools fostered their ethnic identity not only through religion but also through the use of the French language and the teaching of French-Canadian history, customs, and mores. The schools founded by Father Dauray at Precious Blood accommodated boarding students as well as day students. The outlook of the parish under Father Dauray was never narrow: Precious Blood Parish assumed a broad mission, nurturing the language, faith and heritage of habitants not only in Woonsocket but in the diocese and the region.

For all these reasons, the Precious Blood Church complex deserves to be recognized by nomination to the National Register of Historic Places: through it we come to know an important aspect of the nation's pluralistic heritage.

HAMLET

AVENUE

CHURCH
1873-76 / 76-81

PARISH
HOUSE
c. 1875 / c. 1910

DAURAY
MONUMENT

CARRINGTON

AVENUE

GREENE STREET

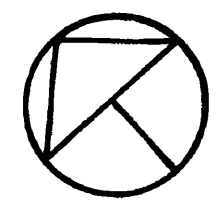
SCHOOL
ADDITION
1911

SCHOOL
1895

CONVENT
1895

CHAPEL
1927

NOV 17 1980



PRECIOUS BLOOD CHURCH
COMPLEX
WOONSOCKET, RHODE ISLAND
SITE PLAN - NOT TO SCALE

PARK