

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JUL 15 1980  
DATE ENTERED SEP 23

**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

St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church

AND/OR COMMON

St. Peter's Church

**2 LOCATION**

WI K

STREET & NUMBER

7125 County Trunk K

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Ashton

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Second

STATE

Wisconsin

CODE

55

COUNTY

Dane

CODE

025

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

**ACCESSIBLE**

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Diocese of Madison

STREET & NUMBER

15 East Wilson Street

CITY, TOWN

Madison

VICINITY OF

STATE

Wisconsin 53703

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Dane County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

210 Monona Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53709

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

1977

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 816 State Street

CITY, TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53706

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input 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

St. Peter's Church is located in the village of Ashton, Town of Springfield, Dane County. In both size and quality of design, the tall structure dominates all other small structures in the village. One mile west of State Highway 12, the village is located in the midst of rolling farmland, giving added visibility to the church, whose spire can be seen from several miles around. The site of the nominated property includes a large Colonial Revival rectory, L-shaped cream brick old school/convent, buff-brick modern school, cemetery, and parking lot. ~~None of the other structures is included in the nomination.~~

*KOC - see tel. slip 8/26/80  
also letter 9/11/80*

The church's design is symmetrical, dominated by a center, staged square steeple rising from a two-story narthex/loft. The rough-cut coursed limestone walls are accented by stone-trimmed buttresses, water table, and pointed arches. Small apses project from the rectangular mass on the east and west just south of the narthex. On the south, the projecting tall apse (containing the altar) is framed by one-story ancillary sacristies connected by a one-story passage. Stone-trimmed limestone buttresses punctuate all wall surfaces, marking the nave and apses into bays into which pointed arch windows are set. The level of the front concrete steps (replaced in 1977) is maintained by a contrasting stone water table around the building.

The principal entrance is set within the steeple, recessed beneath a large pointed stone arch. The double wooden doors are enhanced by oversized, decorative black iron hinges. The jambs to either side are filled by three-quarter Corinthian columns; overhead, the tympanum is filled by a quatrefoil overlight behind a suspended lantern. The entrance is surmounted by a stone-framed rose window. The upper stages of the steeple contain triple lancet windows on each face, and large, pointed arch louvres in the belfrey beneath the steep, octagonal spire. The spire and the gable roof over the nave are covered with the original slate shingles.

The rectangular nave is contained by a wide, vaulted ceiling with gold-leafed rib and tiercerons. The vaulted apse at the south end contains the pinnacled altar, a larger version of the subsidiary altars in the raised sanctuary to either side. Decorating the expanded spandrels over the altar arches is a delicately-painted mural depicting Christ with his disciples. The nave is filled with two rows of oak pews divided by a center aisle, lighted by two rows of suspended lanterns. Set within the deep window reveals are windows of stained glass, varying in theme but of uniform high-quality design and tonality. Other interior furnishings included a simple table-like altar (a result of redecoration in 1977) placed in the sanctuary before the high altar, a large, carved wood pulpit with pinnacled canopy against the east wall, carved wood lecterns to either side of the center altar, and wood kneelers and chairs in the sanctuary. A choir loft with heavy wood balustrade overhangs the north end of the nave above the narthex. The apses to the east and west at the north end contain a baptistry and grotto respectively; the former is enclosed by an iron gate and contains an altar, and the latter is protected by plate glass windows and door providing a view of the rock formation and statuary within. Interior walls were repainted during remodelling in 1977, at which time the oak floors were carpeted.

The road-side site also includes the cream brick old school/convent on the west side of the church, and the grand clapboard Colonial Revival rectory on the east. The former, a two-story-plus-attic L-shaped house, has distinctive applied timbering in its front

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1901<sup>1</sup>

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Anton Dohman,<sup>2</sup> Milwaukee

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In many senses, St. Peter's Church of Ashton is that community's preeminent building. Constructed as the second parish church in 1901, the well-designed native limestone Neo-Gothic church still serves as a visual landmark and social and education nucleus of the area. Parish records document the social significance of the parish, and the degree of attention given to construction of the most significant piece of architecture in the vicinity.

### Architecture

Distinguished by the textural and technical quality of its exterior, constructed of blue limestone quarried at local farms, St. Peter's Church is further significant in the sophistication of its Gothic design. Essentially a small country church, its well-integrated subsidiary masses (narthex, side chapels, and apses) and well-proportioned details give the structure a monumentality belying its size. The retention of the original slate shingle roof contributes to the integrity of the structure and the coloristic quality of design. Of special note in the interior is the delicately-toned and finely-scaled mural over the sanctuary.

Complete records of the church's construction were kept. Architect Anton Dohman of Milwaukee, about whom little is known, was hired to produce the design for \$460. J. H. Owens of Mazomanie was the mason contractor; Paul Oppermann of Milwaukee was the carpenter contractor. Painting was contracted to Henry Riles of Middleton, and decorating to H. J. G. Gaetner of Milwaukee. Two Milwaukee manufacturers, Biersach & Wiedermeyer and C. Colnick, produced the iron work. Hardware was provided by Peter Paulus of Milwaukee, and the L. J. Mueller Company of Milwaukee furnished the furnace. E. Hackner of La Crosse, a well-known builder of sanctuary furnishings, built the three altars, pulpit, rail, altar furniture, and pedestals for statuary. All were made of butternut. Total cost of construction came to \$22,646, a substantial sum in 1901.<sup>3</sup>

### Social/Humanitarian

Inseparable from the predominantly German and French settlement of Springfield Township, St. Peter's parish records provide the history of the local populace, pre-dating state statistics. The first settler in the area, Joseph Spahn, Sr., arrived from Bavaria, Germany in 1848. During the next four years, Catholic families of Cologne, Germany and

<sup>1</sup>Cornerstone.

<sup>2</sup>Parish records.

<sup>3</sup>Parish records of St. Peter's Church

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Bier, Francis A., "St. Peter's Church: Centennial 1861-1961," Parish Centennial Committee, 1961.
- Catholic Historical Publishing Company, Geschichte der Katholischen Kirche in Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI, 1899.
- Parish Records, St. Peter's Church, Ashton, Wisconsin

**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.7

Quadrangle Name: Springfield Corners

UTM REFERENCES

Quadrangle Scale: 1:24,000

A 1, 6 | 2, 9, 3, 3, 5, 0 | 4, 7, 7, 9, 2, 6, 0  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C    |    |   

B    |    |     
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D    |    |   

### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Located in Sec. 27 & 28, T8N, R8E. Beginning at a point on County Highway K 160 feet west of its eastern intersection with a north-south town road, proceed south 280 feet along a western jog of said town road, thence east 260 feet to the east limit of the church property, thence north 280 feet to County K, thence west along K 260 feet to the point of beginning.

### 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

Msgr. Andrew R. Breines, Pastor

ORGANIZATION

St. Peter's Church

DATE

August 1979

STREET & NUMBER

Box 222, 7121 County Trunk K

TELEPHONE

(608) 831-4843

CITY OR TOWN

Middleton

STATE

Wisconsin 53562

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE   

LOCAL X

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Richard Murray*

TITLE Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

6/18/80

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*W. Ray Juce*

DATE

9/23/80

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

*Kristin J. O'Connell*

DATE

9/18/80

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 1

Description (continued)

gables and oversize contrasting brick voussoirs over the windows. The entrance in the center of the eastern leg of the "L" is covered by a small, open gable-roofed porch; the angle and western leg are spanned by a balustraded, half-hip-roof porch with latticed crawl-space underneath. The large, two-story-plus-attic rectory features a full, first-story open balustraded porch with Ionic columns, denticulated entablature, and concrete-block foundation. Picturesque elements of the asymmetrical design include a polygonal corner tower to the east, and Palladian gables on the north and east and a tall interior brick chimney set in the pyramidal roof.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

8

PAGE

1

Significance (continued)

Alsace-Lorraine began arriving, providing impetus for establishing a parish and constructing a church in 1861. In 1867, a school was constructed opposite the church by the congregation. Until a public school was constructed in 1920, St. Peter's School provided the community's sole instruction in reading, writing, arithmetic, and religion in both German and English, serving as the primary means of acculturation. Lay male teachers taught in the schools until the Franciscan Sisters of Manitowoc moved into the parish convent constructed in 1905. Even after the public school began to relieve some of the burden on St. Peter's, the Franciscans taught in that facility as well, providing an unusual example of co-operation between church and state.<sup>4</sup> The church continues to function as the dominant social organ of Ashton in its services and sponsorship of social activities.

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<sup>4</sup>Francis A. Bier, "St. Peter's Church Centennial, 1861-1961," Parish Centennial Committee, 1961.

FHR-8-300A

(11/78)

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HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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St. Peter's Church, Ashton, Dane County, Wisconsin

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 11

PAGE 1

FORM PREPARED BY (continued)

Diane H. Filipowicz  
Architectural Historian

Historic Preservation Division  
State Historical Society of Wisconsin  
816 State Street  
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

February, 1980

(608) 262-2970