

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JUN 20 1975
DATE ENTERED MAY 24 1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON
* * Saint Elizabeth's Retreat Chapel (Catholic)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
2825 West 32nd. Avenue

CITY, TOWN
Denver

STATE
Colorado

VICINITY OF
CODE
08

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Number One

COUNTY
Denver

CODE
031

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 type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Sisters of St. Francis of Colorado Springs

STREET & NUMBER
P. O. Box 1060

CITY, TOWN
Colorado Springs

VICINITY OF

STATE
Colorado (08)

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Denver Assessment Division -- City and County of Denver

STREET & NUMBER
1445 Cleveland Place

CITY, TOWN
Denver

STATE
Colorado (08)

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The St. Elizabeth's Retreat Chapel was designed by Frederick G. Sterner and is Georgian in style. The plan is apsidal with a small side wing (which is the sacristy) projecting from the west wall. Its single, center tower is inset. This chapel is of yellow brick set in stretcher bond. The exterior wall design is pier and spandrel; the piers are decorated. The walls are surmounted by an entablature and frieze. There are three bays in the front, south facade. Each of the two windows flanking the main, center door are flat in shape with decorated pediments, moulded trim and decorated lugsills. They are the two sash and transom type, hinged, and of leaded, stained glass. The main center double doors are panelled, made of oak and recessed in a decorated ebraasure. The recessed blind transom is decorated and made of oak. The door opening is flat in shape with a decorated pediment and moulded trim. The plain, straight stairs mount to a portico whose four columns with ionic capitals support a decorated entablature and pediment. In addition, four round windows of leaded, stained glass decorate the facade. There is one above each bay and one in the center of the pediment.

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The interior of this chapel is lovely and in virtually perfect condition. The walls are of red brick with oak wainscoting. The oak ceiling is coffered. White, red, black, and brown mosaic tile covers the floor; a Lamb of God mosaic in these same colors decorates the floor in front of the altar. Red marble steps lead up to the oak and brass altar rail. Both the central and side altars are of oak and decorated. The columns supporting the brick arches above the sanctuary are red painted stone with corinthian capitals.

There are four beautiful stained glass windows in this chapel: smaller ones on either side of the altar depict trumpeting angels. There is one of Jesus preaching to the apostles over the side altar on the east wall, and one of Jesus and Mary Magdalene in what was formerly the baptistery. There are, in addition, seven semi-circular leaded, stained glass windows along the east and west walls.

The chapel's original pipe organ is located on the west wall in the sanctuary. To the east of the center door is the baptistery in which stands the statue of Christ the King given by Reverend Oakes to the sisters when they purchased the property. To the west of the center door a narrow curved, decorated oak staircase rises to the tower giving access to the chimes.

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The Chapel's interior has undergone minor changes. Stations of the cross have been added to the walls, long oak pews have been replaced by shorter ones, light fixtures have been changed and the floor beneath the pews has been covered with vinyl flooring. The sanctuary was, at the time of purchase, enlarged to include the original chancel.

The entire St. Elizabeth's Retreat complex consisted on nine buildings and was located between West 32nd and 33rd. Avenues of Eliot and Decatur Street. Its remaining chapel is a fine example of Georgian ecclesiastical architecture.

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 type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input 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 checked="" 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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The St. Elizabeth's Retreat complex, of which the chapel is a part, was originally the Oakes Home for Consumptives. Reverend Frederick W. Oakes for whom it was named was born in Troy, New York in 1860. He graduated from Bates College, Me. In 1888, received an M.A. from there in 1890 and a Bachelor of Divinity from Yale University in 1891. In 1892, with his wife Mabel Underhill Bates, he moved to Leadville, Colorado where he was pastor of the Congregational Church. In 1894, Rev. Oakes was consecrated by the Episcopal Church and named rector of All Saints Episcopal Church in Denver where he served three years. Also in 1894, with the assistance of Episcopal Bishop Spaulding who approved the plan and donated the site, Rev. Oakes founded the Oakes Home and served as its Superintendent and Chaplain. He retired in January, 1934. The home was closed that same year because of altered theories regarding the treatment of tuberculosis. Oakes Home was a nationally famous sanitarium; it was the first home for tubercular patients in Colorado and the second in the nation.

In December of 1902 Rev. Oakes visited Philadelphia and New York for the purpose of raising \$25,000 from the Episcopal congregations there for construction of a chapel at the home. He was successful and work was to begin after the first of January, 1903; St. Paul's Cathedral, London was to be its model.

In May, 1943 the Oakes Home complex was purchased by the Poor Sisters of St. Francis Seraph of Perpetual Adoration (these owners of St. Elizabeth's Retreat are now known at the Sisters of St. Francis of Colorado Springs) for use as the mother-house of the Province of St. Joseph. The sisters then, as now, operated St. Anthony Hospital in Denver. They first came to Denver in 1884 to staff a 66 bed hospital operated by the Union Pacific Railroad. After approximately eight years of soliciting donations from miners and railroad workers in Denver, Central City, Black Hawk, Idaho Springs and Cripple Creek, the sisters were able to build St. Anthony Hospital which was dedicated by Bishop Matz on June 13, 1893.

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The original buildings comprising St. Elizabeth's Retreat complex were razed in 1975 to make possible construction of a modern complex. The chapel is the only one of the original structures preserved. It remains intact abutting the new residential units.

St. Elizabeth's Retreat has been a North Denver Landmark since its construction. As the Oakes home, it was a nationally famous tuberculosis sanitarium. As St. Elizabeth's Retreat it was the mother-house for St. Joseph's Province of the Sisters of St. Francis. Young nuns were trained there, and from there the affairs of the entire community west of the Mississippi were administered.

The chapel is important in the story of religion and architecture in the West. The fundamental structure of the building, a two story little box form so prevalent throughout the city of Denver is highlighted by a central cupola and a Georgian facade. The religious symbolism of the spire and the dignity of the Georgian facade enrich the basic western box form.