

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JAN 23 1980
DATE ENTERED APR 2 1980

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Loretto Motherhouse

AND/OR COMMON

Sisters of Loretto at the Foot of the Cross

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Off KY 152

CITY, TOWN

Nerinx

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2

STATE

Kentucky

VICINITY OF Loretto

CODE
021

COUNTY
Marion

CODE
155

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT (23 bldgs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
		<input 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

Loretto Motherhouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Nerinx

VICINITY OF Loretto

STATE

Kentucky

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Marion County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Lebanon

STATE

Kentucky

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky

DATE

1977

— FEDERAL STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN

Frankfort

STATE

Kentucky

7 DESCRIPTION

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

Situated in the center of Marion County, Kentucky is the historic Loretto Motherhouse. This tightly packed complex of buildings encompasses approximately sixteen acres of fertile land. The structures themselves reflect good basic design and solid construction. There are 23 in number and they include the following:

A. Knobs Haven, built in 1873, was used as a guest house until 1974, when it became a retreat center. It is a two-story, brick structure with segmental arches over the bays.

B. Nerinckx House. Constructed in 1873 for use as a chaplains residence, this structure served as such until 1974. This two-story brick building is now a guest house. As with Knobs Haven, the brick is laid in common bond with segmental arches over the bays.

C. The 1873 House is a residence for sisters since its remodelling in 1975. It originally served as a home for the men who worked at the Motherhouse. A two-story frame structure, four bays wide, this building is very simple with little detailing.

D. Badin House was erected for Father Badin in 1816, and is said to be the first brick house constructed in Marion County. It is presently a guest residence. It is of Flemish bond brick, one-story in height, and has jack arches over the bays.

E. Rhodes Hall was built between 1832-34 and served as Loretto Academy until 1888. Later used as a museum, the building presently houses an art studio and gallery. This two-story, brick Federal style structure is seven bays wide and has parapet end chimneys. The brick pattern is Flemish bond and jack arches top the window openings. The fan lit entrance is covered by a one-story pedimented portico.

F. Stuart Hall is a prefabricated 1913 addition to Rhodes Hall. This two-story frame structure is presently a residence for the sisters.

G. St. Joseph's Infirmary was built in 1947-48 for the care of retired and sick Sisters of Loretto. The infirmary is brick, and three stories in height.

H. The Chapel of the Seven Dolours was constructed in 1863 after the previous chapel was destroyed by fire. An addition was built in 1898, and a wing attached in 1927. This gable-end structure is Gothic in style with traceried window openings and common bond brick. The projecting entrance way is flanked by short projecting pinnacles at the cornice. A similar cornice treatment was used on the rest of the structure.

I. The Novitate or Academy Building was begun in 1886, and completed two years later. This was Loretto Academy until 1918, when the school closed. It now serves as a residence for sisters and guests. The Academy Building is three stories in height and fourteen bays wide. It has a semi-projecting entrance tower with a mansard roof, and a semi-projecting bay at each end of the facade.

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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 Sisters of Loretto, founded in central Kentucky in 1812, was one of the first Catholic women's orders in the United States. Originally formed for the purpose of teaching local children, the order expanded into a world wide institution, with missions as far away as China and South America. Therefore the historic structures which compose the Loretto Motherhouse complex have a particular historical significance in their association with this important Catholic order.

Many of Kentucky's earliest settlers were Catholics, and could be counted among those who composed the settlement at Harrodsburg in 1775. Ten years later, twenty families from St. Mary's County, Maryland migrated to Kentucky and settled in the area of Pottingers Creek in Marion County. Later they were followed by others who established themselves around the Rolling Fork and Salt River (present day Marion County). This area soon became the most important Catholic community west of the Alleghenies. By 1787 the number of Catholics was so large that Bishop John Carroll of Baltimore appointed the first pastor to Kentucky--Reverend Father Whelen. In 1808, four American Sees (each the center of authority for a bishop) were created: Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Bardstown, Kentucky. Father Benedict Joseph Flaget was appointed Bishop of Bardstown.

In 1793 Bishop Carroll sent Reverend Stephen Badin to Kentucky and he settled in Marion County near present-day Loretto. Reverend Badin received as assistant Reverend Charles Nerinckx, a native of Belgium, who was to remain in Kentucky for nineteen years. The founding of ten churches is attributed to him.

Father Nerinckx also saw the need for quality education for the girls in the area. Consequently when Mary Rhodes, Christian Stuart and Ann Haven requested his help in establishing a school, Father Nerinckx established rules to govern their organization.

Formed on April 25, 1812, the order became known as "Friends of Mary at the Foot of the Cross." The farm which they established was called "Little Loretto" after a shrine in Italy. Father Nerinckx stayed with the sisters of Loretto for twelve years and traveled twice to Europe seeking aid for them.

Around 1824 a difference of opinion over the rules of the sisters occurred between Father Nerinckx and other clergy members. In order to avoid conflict Father Nerinckx left for Missouri to assist another convent. He died a few weeks after his arrival. Not long after that the Sisters of Loretto moved to their present location at Nerinx, Kentucky. This complex became known as the Loretto Motherhouse.

From this modest beginning, Loretto expanded to open other convents and schools throughout the West and overseas. The first school to be opened by the sisters outside Kentucky was in Missouri in 1823. In 1847 a school for Osage Indians

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Kentucky Heritage Commission. St. Joseph's Cathedral & College Complex." Nelson County, Kentucky. National Register form.
 Webb, Ben J., The Centenary of Catholicity in Kentucky. Louisville: Charles A. Rogers, 1884.

Information received of or supplemented by the owner.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTM NOT VERIFIED
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approximately 16 acres.

QUADRANGLE NAME Loretto Quadrangle

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	16	6	4	1	1	4	1	8	1	0
ZONE	EASTING				NORTHING					

B

1	16	6	4	1	1	4	1	8	1	0
ZONE	EASTING				NORTHING					

C

1	16	6	4	1	1	1	2	1	0	0
ZONE	EASTING				NORTHING					

D

1	16	6	4	1	1	1	2	1	0	0
ZONE	EASTING				NORTHING					

E

ZONE	EASTING				NORTHING					

F

ZONE	EASTING				NORTHING					

G

ZONE	EASTING				NORTHING					

H

ZONE	EASTING				NORTHING					

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See Continuation Sheet

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Jayne C. Henderson/Historian

ORGANIZATION

Kentucky Heritage Commission

DATE

November 1979

STREET & NUMBER

104 Bridge Street

TELEPHONE

502/564-3741

CITY OR TOWN

Frankfort,

STATE

Kentucky

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Donna C. Hopkins

TITLE Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE January 3, 1980

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

W. Ray Luce
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
 ATTEST: *Kristin O'Connell*
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 4/2/80

DATE 3/6/80

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Marion County, Kentucky

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J. Father Nerinckx's Cabin was brought from Little Loretto in 1895. This single-pen log structure served as his home from 1812 to 1824.

K. The Chapel of Virtue and Science was constructed in 1885. This brick, gable-end structure is seven bays deep and three bays wide. It has a pedimented, semi-projecting entrance way and a fan-lit opening.

L.-M. These three one-story, brick structures were probably constructed for residences for the sisters. All were built during the late 1800s, in a plain style with segmental arches over the bays.

O.,P. Presently used as storage units, these structures were probably built during the late 19th century.

Q. This 20th century frame cottage is a residence for some of the sisters. Rectangular in form, it is devoid of architectural detailing.

R. Similar in style to the other brick buildings on campus, this two-story, eight-bay, brick structure serves as a dormitory for the resident sisters. The brickwork is common bond with segmentally arched openings.

S.-V. These are all 20th century utilitarian structures which have no historical or architectural merit.

W. The maintenance building is a one-story, gable-end structure. It appears to have been constructed around the turn of the century.

The boundary for the Loretto Motherhouse Complex is drawn to include all of the historic structures, the cemetery, the recent buildings and land immediately surrounding the complex to incorporate an area important to the visual integrity of the site.

Non-contributing structures within the Loretto Motherhouse Complex.

S. Trailer

T. Cinderblock garages

U. & V. Pool House and Pool

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was established in southeast Kansas and in 1852 a school for Spanish children was begun in Santa Fe. Later the sisters were responsible for schools in Denver, Colorado and El Paso, Texas. As the parochial school system in the U.S. grew, Loretto responded by staffing many schools in the South and West. By 1920 Loretto sisters were teaching at many levels, including college. They opened two of the earliest Catholic Colleges for women: Webster in St. Louis (1916), and Loretto Heights in Denver (1918). In 1923 the sisters formed their first foreign mission in Han Yang, China. Eight years later, the need for missions spurred Loretto to found missions in La Paz, Bolivia, Tacna, Peru and Santiago, Chile.¹

In 1970, the central government for the Order of the Sisters of Loretto was moved to Denver from Loretto. This was meant to facilitate a new emphasis on response to the needs of the church in the modern world. Although no longer an education institution, the Loretto Motherhouse still provides essential services to the community and to the church.

The buildings that compose the Loretto Motherhouse complex range in date from early 19th to mid-20th century. The historic structures show a quality of craftsmanship which has been well-preserved over the years. The brickwork in most of the buildings is especially fine. The complex itself appears to have evolved in a well-planned way, still retaining its 19th century campus atmosphere.

¹Most of the missions and schools established by the Loretto Motherhouse are no longer extant.

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Beginning at the southeast corner of the Loretto cemetery, the boundary runs west approximately 300' and then turns northeast and runs approximately 400' to just behind Father Nerinckx's Cabin. The boundary turns northwest at that point and goes approximately 500' before turning north to run approximately 200', to a point behind the garage. The boundary continues northeast approximately 600' then turns southeast approximately 900' to a point just behind the 1873 house. The boundary line travels due south approximately 100' before turning southwest for about 700'. The closing line is due south and extends approx. 300' to stop at the southeast corner of the cemetery.