

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination FormSee instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only

received

MAR 2 1983

date entered

1. Name

historic Notre Dame Parish Thematic Resources

and/or common NA

2. Location

street & number various-see continuation sheets (Item 7) not for publication

city, town Chippewa Falls vicinity of

state Wisconsin code 55 county Chippewa code 017

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" 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	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> thematic	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
<input type="checkbox"/> group	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" 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: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name Diocese of LaCrosse, Frederick W. Freking, Bishop

street & number P.O. Box 69

city, town La Crosse vicinity of state Wisconsin 54601

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Chippewa County Courthouse

street & number 711 N. Bridge Street

city, town Chippewa Falls state Wisconsin 54729

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Wisconsin Inventory of
Historic Placeshas this property been determined eligible? yes ☒ nodate 1978 federal ☒ state county local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

7. Description

Condition

☐ excellent

☒ good

☐ fair

☒

deteriorated

☐ ruins

☐ unexposed

Check one

☒ unaltered

☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site

☐ moved

date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Introduction

The Notre Dame Parish thematic nomination includes two properties erected by the parish- Notre Dame Church and the attached Goldsmith Memorial Chapel (1870-72; 1894) and the McDonell High School (1907)- which are architecturally significant as representative examples of various periods of construction.

Survey Methodology

The structures included in the Notre Dame Parish thematic nomination were first identified in a reconnaissance survey of the city of Chippewa Falls conducted by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin in the summer of 1978 as part of the Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places. Additional field work in the fall of 1981 including research and inspection of all buildings owned by the parish confirmed the architectural importance of these buildings.

General Description

Crowning a bluff known locally as "Catholic Hill" and overlooking the Chippewa River valley are the buildings of Notre Dame Parish. These substantial brick and stone structures, landmarks within the city of Chippewa Falls, are in distinct contrast to the small frame buildings first erected by the congregation. A frame church was constructed in 1856 and a rectory and school followed in 1860, as the potential of the city at the falls gained recognition.

In 1869 a dynamic young priest, Father C.F.X. Goldsmith, became pastor of Notre Dame Church and immediately embarked on a church building program. To finance the new building, Goldsmith made lengthy trips up the Chippewa River to the lumber camps which flourished in the pinery. With a substantial sum in the treasury, the priest organized a building committee and work was begun on the church in 1870. The locally quarried stone building was completed in August, 1872, and consecrated in November, 1887.

Following the construction of the church, a new school was erected in 1876 and in 1885 enlarged and placed under the direction of the Sisters of Notre Dame. The school addition contained two grade rooms and a high school room. Also in 1885 the parish, which had originally been known as St. Mary's of the Falls, was incorporated under the name Notre Dame. Father Goldsmith died in November, 1890, and as a memorial to his service to the parish, a chapel was erected, with work beginning on the brick and stone structure in 1894. The small building was placed at the northeast corner of the church.

Early in the twentieth century (1907), the McDonell High School was constructed with

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Thematic Resources

funds donated by A.B. McDonell, a prominent Chippewa Falls lumberman. The imposing Classical Revival structure was designed by Minneapolis architect, Charles S. Sedgwick. Additional structures erected in the following decades include the convent (1915) which is attached to the church/chapel complex, a grade school (1924, addition 1956), and rectory (1931). These buildings and a power plant and garage also owned by the church are undistinguished architecturally but are described below. These structures are not included in the nomination. (Note: The convent is a non-contributing addition to the church and chapel structure.)

Description of Individual Properties

NOTRE DAME CHURCH (1870-1872) and GOLDSMITH MEMORIAL CHAPEL (1894)

Location: 117 Allen Street
Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin 54729

Father Goldsmith initiated the construction of Notre Dame Church in 1869 with the appointment of a building committee which he himself headed. A local builder, James Lawler, supervised the construction which began the following year and was completed in 1872.

The single story church, designed in the Romanesque Revival style, consists of a nave 138 ft. by 56 ft. with a transept 88 ft. by 30 ft. The exterior walls rise 36 ft. above the water table and are composed of Chippewa sandstone, laid as squared rubble with heavily trowelled joints (subsequently repointed). The primary facade of the church is the west gable end which contains the centrally located tower. The main entrance is recessed into the base of the tower and marked by an arched frame. A similar arch located above the entrance contains a pair of round headed stained glass windows surmounted by a circular window. The portion of the tower which extends above the gable roof includes two narrow, arched openings on each face. The tower is covered by a low pyramidal roof. The walls of the nave are pierced by four narrow round headed windows which are set beneath arches with stone voussoirs and keystones. The window composition of the tower (paired windows beneath an oculus) is repeated on the gable ends of the transept. A tracery rose window appears on the east end of the nave. Small stone additions have been appended to the southeast corner of the church. The first section matches the stone work of the church; the second section (ca. 1950) consists of smooth, regularly coursed stone blocks.

The church interior, extensively remodelled ca. 1965, no longer features the original frescoes and wainscoting. A balcony and crying room were added to the west end of the church in 1956. The basic plan configuration of nave and transept crossing and the tripartite altar on the east wall remain unchanged.

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Continuation sheet Notre Dame Parish Item number 7 Page 2
Thematic Resources

The Goldsmith Memorial Chapel, designed by a Chippewa Falls architect, H.F.Allan, was begun in the spring of 1894 and completed that fall. This diminutive brick building is located at the east end of Notre Dame Church, providing an interesting contrast in materials, scale, and size.

The foundation of the chapel is Chippewa River gray stone, pointed to accent the natural stone shapes. Above the stone rise walls of red pressed brick with buff stone accents. Dominating the gable end of the chapel is a large round arched stained glass window. Adjoining the gable end, to the west, is a tower containing the main chapel entrance on the first level. The entrance is surrounded by a brick frame which also encompasses a stained glass fanlight. Buff belt courses and brick corbel tables accent the tower. Three rows of small arched windows are disposed on the upper portion of the steeple; the top tier is open and marks the belfry. Balancing the tower on the northeast corner of the building is a bartizan-like element which rises above the gable roof. Projecting on the south side of the building is a three-sided apse containing two small stained glass windows. The interior of the chapel is relatively modest and has not been remodelled. The burial crypt for Father Goldsmith is beneath the chapel altar.

Attached to the chapel on the east is the convent, a simple three story building erected in 1915. The structure, considered a non-contributing addition which does not substantially detract from the integrity of the church and chapel, provides access to the interior of the chapel.

MCDONELL HIGH SCHOOL (1907)

Location: 3 S. High Street
Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin 54729

A.B. McDonell, a Chippewa Falls lumberman, donated the funds for the construction of the high school building, which was designed by Minneapolis architect, Charles S. Sedgwick, and erected in 1907.

The walls of the school building are constructed of buff colored brick and rise two stories above the raised basement. The stone blocks of the basement are scored to suggest rustication. Dominating the design of McDonell High School is a monumental tetrastyle portico with full pediment supported by the columns. An egg and dart pattern employed on columns and cornice becomes a unifying element as it continues around the building. The portico anchors the symmetrical design in which balance and restraint are governing principles. The vertical component of the design, introduced by the columns, is repeated in the pilasters which rise the two stories above the basement. Balancing this verticality are the strong horizontal lines of water table, entablature and cornice. Pilasters divide the facade into three units of

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Thematic Resources

rectangular windows on either side of the portico. The fenestration pattern on the remainder of the building, including the auditorium wing which extends to the east, presents a different pattern with wall surfaces divided into four units and the second story featuring round headed windows.

Use of the building as a high school was discontinued in 1964. The first floor windows are boarded over, however, many of the second story window panes are broken, resulting in the deterioration of the interior due to weather and animals.

ADDITIONAL BUILDINGS ASSOCIATED WITH NOTRE DAME PARISH BUT NOT CONSIDERED SIGNIFICANT AND NOT INCLUDED IN THE NOMINATION:

NOTRE DAME GRADE SCHOOL (1924)

The buff brick grade school was constructed in 1924; a one story brick gymnasium was added to the north side in 1956. The main block of the building stands three stories, with the walls terminating in parapets.

NOTRE DAME RECTORY (1931)

The rectory is a two story brick building covered by a hip roof. The facade is unadorned with the exception of a parapet roof which marks the main entrance.

POWER PLANT

Due north of the rectory is a one story red brick power plant. The end walls rise above the gable roof to form a parapet. The smokestack adjoins the structure to the east; one story brick and block additions have been appended to the south and east. A concrete block garage is situated south of the power plant.

GROTTO

A stone grotto partially enclosed by conifer trees is situated west of Notre Dame Church. Constructed in 1940, the grotto is composed of fieldstones which provide a setting for the statue of "Our Lady of the Falls".

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 type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> 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
dates of construction: 1870-72; 1894; 1907 ¹		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
Specific dates	Builder/Architect James Lawler, builder ² ; H.F. Allan ³ ; Charles S. Sedgwick ;			

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The thematic resources of Notre Dame Parish, Chippewa Falls, represent the growth and development of one of "the oldest Catholic centers in the state of Wisconsin"⁵. The two buildings, Notre Dame Church, including the Goldsmith Memorial Chapel, and McDonell High School, are, within Chippewa Falls, architecturally significant individually as examples of various periods of construction and collectively as a local landmark.

Architectural Significance

The designs of the church, the attached chapel, and the school, reflect the progression of architectural styles employed in Chippewa Falls from the late nineteenth century to the early twentieth. Notre Dame Church, the oldest church structure in the community, is a locally significant example of the Romanesque Revival style. The exterior use of squared rubble stone in conjunction with stylistic details creates a medieval flavor, unusual in the northwestern section of Wisconsin. Contrasting with the solidity of Notre Dame Church is the more picturesque chapel addition which at the time of construction was described as "modern Gothic". The design is eclectic, combining a variety of materials and motifs in a manner which complements rather than overpowers the small scale of the building. McDonell High School is more restrained than the chapel design, with emphasis placed on mass and solidity. The disciplined design, one by Charles S. Sedgwick (1856-1922), who practiced in nearby Minneapolis from 1884 until his death, provides within Chippewa Falls a fine example of the Classical Revival style. An early and important example of the style in the city, the McDonell High School is also the most monumental and carefully detailed Classical Revival building in the community. The only comparable structure, the Carnegie Library, was demolished in 1978.

The siting of the church and associated buildings on a bluff above the Chippewa Falls and the river results in the creation of a strong landmark grouping. The church and high school, oriented to the west, exploit the location to the fullest, appearing particularly impressive in the early morning and evening light.

Historical Background

Chippewa Falls, located in the heart of Wisconsin's pinery at the site of one of the major falls on the Chippewa River, was surveyed and platted in 1856. Three years previous to the platting, Father Gauthier, a Catholic priest, began making regular semi-annual visits to the booming lumber center, which contained a large Catholic population. In 1856 a small frame church, "the first church edifice in the Chippewa Valley", was constructed on a prominent bluff overlooking the Chippewa River and its

(cont.)

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Continuation sheet

Item number 8

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tributary, Duncan Creek,⁶ At that time the parish encompassed all the territory north to Lake Superior and included members representing a number of different nationalities. Reflecting that diversity, Sunday masses were given in three languages - French, German, and English,

In 1869 the Reverend C.F.X. Goldsmith (1845-1890), "who became one of the best known priests in the state", was assigned to Notre Dame.⁷ This energetic individual was responsible for the construction of Notre Dame Church (1870-1872) and for the establishment of several churches (as of 1886 twelve churches had been organized) in the north-western section of the state.⁸ According to Goldsmith's biographer, Notre Dame Parish was given the distinction of being one of two churches in northwest Wisconsin (the other being the church at Bayfield) to be named a "mother mission church".⁹

Following Goldsmith's death (1890), the congregation raised money to build a memorial chapel. Erected in 1894 and attached to the church building, the chapel is a fine tribute to a dedicated priest.

By the twentieth century, Notre Dame Parish was a mature entity - no longer a "mission" church. At this time a number of buildings were constructed which reflect the church's permanent and established nature. McDonell High School, a gift of local lumberman, A.B. McDonell, was built in 1907, followed by a new convent in 1915; a grade school in 1924; and a rectory in 1931.

Survey Comprehensiveness and Results

Based upon the 1978 reconnaissance survey, subsequent field visits and research, all properties eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places which are associated with Notre Dame Parish have been included in this nomination. The small geographical area involved and the extensive literature available further confirm the nomination's completeness.

Within the community of Chippewa Falls there has been renewed interest in the church buildings, particularly the high school structure which is in deteriorating condition and may face demolition. The Chippewa Valley Cultural Association, Inc. is presently raising money to undertake a feasibility study for the rehabilitation and reuse of the building.

9. Major Bibliographical References

see continuation sheet
(Item 9 sheet 2)

1. Anderson, J.A. 1895. A Life and Memoirs of Rev. C.F.X. Goldsmith. Press of the Evening Wisconsin Co. Milwaukee.
2. Chippewa County, Wisconsin. 1913. S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., Chicago. 2 Vols.

10. Geographical Data

see continuation sheet (Item 10)

Acreage of nominated property each property is less than one acre

Quadrangle name Chippewa Falls

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	1	5
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6	2	7
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3	1	1	0
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4	9	7	1	6
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8	1	7	1	0
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B

1	1	5
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6	2	7
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2	1	3	1	0
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4	9	7	1	6
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9	2	1	0
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C

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Verbal boundary description and justification The Diocese of LaCrosse owns blocks 10 and 11 in the original plat. The church and attached chapel are located on Lot 4 Block 10 and occupy a rectangular tract of land described as follows: Beginning at the southwest corner of Prairie and Allen Streets, proceed west 207 feet; south 117 feet; east 207 feet; & north 117 feet to point of beginning. The school property is as follows; (see continuation sheet, Item 10, pg. 11)

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary Taylor/Dorothy Steele, Consultants

organization N/A

date May 27, 1982

street & number 1317 1/2 Jefferson Ct.

telephone (715) 839-0132

city or town Eau Claire

state Wisconsin 54701

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

Richard Henry

title Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

date 2/15/83

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Linda McClelland

date 7/15/83

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

See Continuation sheet for list of properties

Chief of Registration

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

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Thematic Resources of Notre Dame Parish

Continuation sheet

Item number 8, 9, 10

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Footnotes

- ¹ Construction dates for all buildings are located on the individual cornerstones. The church was not completed until 1872.
- ² J.A. Anderson, A Life and Memoirs of Rev. C.F.X. Goldsmith (Milwaukee: Press of the Evening Wisconsin Co., 1895), p. 49.
- ³ Ibid., p. 399.
- ⁴ Daily Independent, February 13, 1907, p. 3.
- ⁵ Harry H. Heming, The Catholic Church in Wisconsin (Milwaukee: Catholic Historical Publishing Co., 1895-1898), p. 792.
- ⁶ Ibid., p. 792.
- ⁷ Ibid., p. 792.
- ⁸ Anderson, p. 102.
- ⁹ Anderson, pp. 110-111.

Major Bibliographical References (cont.)

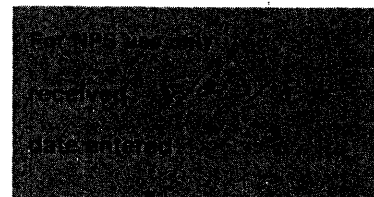
3. Heming, Harry H. 1895-1898. The Catholic Church in Wisconsin. Catholic Historical Publishing Co., Milwaukee.
4. Theriault, Marie. 1931. Diamond Jubilee Souvenir and History of Notre Dame Church.

Geographical Data (cont.)

a part of block 11 of the original plat beginning at the north corner of block eleven; thence southwesterly 264 feet to the east corner; thence southeasterly along the east side of High Street, 113 feet; thence at right angles and parallel to River Street 264 feet to the west side of Prairie Street; then along the west side of Prairie Street 113 feet to the point of beginning (see included plat map).

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Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Notre Dame Parish Thematic Resources
State Wisconsin

*Special nomination
Returned to SHP*

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. McDonell High School

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

Sharon Byers 10/6/82

Attest

2. Notre Dame Church
and Goldsmith Chapel

Substantive Review

Keeper

Linda McClelland 4.7.83

Attest

3. Goldsmith Memorial Chapel

Substantive Review

Keeper

Return

Attest

4.

Keeper

Attest

5.

Keeper

Attest

6.

Keeper

Attest

7.

Keeper

Attest

8.

Keeper

Attest

9.

Keeper

Attest

10.

Keeper

Attest