

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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APR 1 1978

DATA SHEET

DATE ENTERED

MAY 24 1978

**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. John's Cathedral

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

8th and Hays Sts

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Boise

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Second

STATE

Idaho

VICINITY OF

CODE

16

COUNTY

Ada

CODE

001

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

 DISTRICT PUBLIC AGRICULTURE MUSEUM BUILDING(S) PRIVATE COMMERCIAL PARK STRUCTURE BOTH EDUCATIONAL PRIVATE RESIDENCE SITE**PUBLIC ACQUISITION** UNOCCUPIED ENTERTAINMENT RELIGIOUS OBJECT IN PROCESS WORK IN PROGRESS GOVERNMENT SCIENTIFIC BEING CONSIDERED ACCESSIBLE INDUSTRIAL TRANSPORTATION YES: RESTRICTED MILITARY OTHER NO**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Roman Catholic Church

STREET & NUMBER

420 West Idaho

CITY, TOWN

Boise

VICINITY OF

STATE

Idaho

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Ada County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Boise

STATE

Idaho

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Idaho State Historic Sites Inventory

DATE

1972

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Idaho State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Boise

STATE

Idaho

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

St. John's Cathedral is a two-story, Romanesque style, rusticated sandstone church which sits on a raised foundation. It has a cruciform plan with a fleche at the intersection of the transepts and the nave. A circular apse is at the rear. This large church measures 170' from front to rear, 95' through the transepts and 65' across the nave.

The facade has two abbreviated corner towers, and a central bay with a triumphal entry and a large "wheel" window. Each tower has two large second-story windows which contain a pair of narrower corbelled round arched windows. The triumphal entry is also corbelled and is surmounted by angular dripstones with stone spouts. The transoms are stained glass.

The "wheel" window sits within a round arch and is supported by eight engaged columns. Six similar columns form the "spokes" of the wheel. With the exception of this window and the transepts' rose windows all the building's openings are round arched. All first story windows are stained glass.

A denticulated band with a circle design runs the length of the facade and unites the entry bay and towers. A centered gable with a ventilator rises above this and a statue of St. John surmounts the gable's peak.

Between the vestibule and the transepts are four windows with round arches supported by pilasters. The shallow transepts have large windows at the ends and outset side entries facing front. Rose windows are in the gables. Both the transept and rear gables are flanked by piers with a quatrefoil design.

The circular apse is six bays in circumference, with a window in each bay. A blind arcade cornice caps the nave, transepts and apse.

The fleche is embellished with crockets and has louvered openings.

Latin crosses appear on the steeple, the center entry's dripstone, and all gable peaks, except the front.

The interior remains intact and borrows freely from the classical and baroque traditions. The plaster walls and the painted acoustical canvas and plaster ceiling, contain fine paintings, and cast plaster ornamentation further enhances the interior beauty.

There are no alterations or additions.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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 checked="" 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 1905-12

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

St. John's Cathedral is architecturally significant as the largest Romanesque Revival church in Idaho. It is one of the better examples of this style in Boise, and the city's largest ecclesiastical structure when constructed. Its stonework, with its attention to detail, exhibits quality craftsmanship, as does the interior decoration. As such it is a local landmark, dominating the corner of 8th and Hays Streets.

The building is historically significant for its association with Bishop Alphonse J. Glorieux, under whose direction it was built, and the rise of the Catholic Church in Idaho. Following the completion of the Oregon Short Line across Idaho in 1884 Father Glorieux, the president of St. Michael's College in Portland, was appointed bishop of the newly created Vicar Apostolic of Idaho, for which Boise City was the seat. At this time only two priests, Father Hartleid of Boise and Father Nattini of Hailey, resided in the Vicariate, which encompassed the entire Idaho territory with its 1500 parishioners. No secular priests served in all of north Idaho, although Reverend Diomedi presided over St. Stanislaus in Lewiston and Jesuits from De Smet and Spokane Falls, Washington, serviced the Fort Sherman chapel. Under the guidance of Bishop Glorieux the Vicariate grew and by 1893 ten secular priests served a population of 7,000 Catholics in 27 churches. Also four schools, an academy and two hospitals had been created. Due to the growth, Idaho's statehood and an anticipated "boom" in agriculture the Vicariate was elevated to the Diocese of Boise in 1893 with Bishop Glorieux at its head.

By 1902, with the population increasing, Bishop Glorieux realized the original frame St. John's Cathedral's third addition would soon be obsolete. Thus he purchased the block bounded by Fort, Hays, Eighth and Ninth Streets. Plans for the new cathedral were completed in the end of 1904 and in 1906 the ground was broken, and the cornerstone laid. The Bishop refused to allow the parish to go in debt to erect the Cathedral; thus it was built in stages. By 1912 services were held in the basement and by 1916 the superstructure was completed, except for the front steeples. The Bishop hoped to complete the structure before his death, but the coming of World War I frustrated this hope. On August 17, 1917, the golden jubilee of his ordination to the priesthood, Bishop Glorieux died. Bishop Daniel Mary Gorman had the interior finished and in 1921 the church was finally dedicated. The towers remain uncompleted and the building stands as

a fitting tribute to the man whose mind conceived and whose genius molded a plan into an actuality. It was a memorial to him who, as an outstanding organizer and administrator, had set deep and solid foundations of Catholicism in Boise and in the State.¹

St. John's Cathedral
Boise, Idaho

Form No. 10-300a
(Rev. 10-74)

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Significance

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

Tourtellotte & Co. was the foremost architectural firm of the period in Boise. This church is one of their more monumental structures and one of many Boise buildings designed by this firm.

¹ Bradley, Rt. Rev. Cyprian, and Kelly, Most Rev. Edward, History of the Diocese of Boise, vol. 1, Boise, Idaho, 1953, p. 292.