

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received MAY 22 1985

date entered 20

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

and/or common N/A

**2. Location**

street & number Cumberland Avenue and Congress Streets not for publication

city, town Portland, vicinity of

state Maine code 23 county Cumberland code 005

**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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<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 Diocese of Maine

street & number 307 Congress Street

city, town Portland, state Maine 04101

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Cumberland County Registry of Deeds

street & number

city, town Portland, state Maine

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Maine Historic Resources Inventory has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1975 federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Maine Historic Preservation Commission

city, town Augusta, state Maine

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## 7. Description

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<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<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		

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### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Dramatically located adjacent to Munjoy Hill in Portland, the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception overlooks Back Cove to the west. The church is bounded on the north, east and west by a mixture of late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial and residential buildings. Franklin Street arterial marks the southern boundary of this religious complex, which in addition to the cathedral includes a chapel, the Bishops Residence and a former school.

The Cathedral is a Gothic Revival design of brick construction with stone trim and slate roofs. This traditional ecclesiastical plan consists of a nave with flanking aisles, a chancel and, on the principal elevation (west), a main and secondary tower flanking a rose window and entrance vestibule, on the narrow gable end of the structure. The light colored stone trim is used for the lancet arched windows and doors, the belt courses and the coping on the buttresses. Both towers have steeples with broached spires.

Attached to the northeast corner of the cathedral is a large chapel, also constructed of brick in the Gothic Revival style. Although the gable roof includes polychrome slate banding and the tower also has a broached spire, the chapel does not have stone trim. The main section consists of a long nave extending perpendicularly from the north end of the cathedral. The tower is positioned at the intersection of the two structures and faces west. A small secondary chapel projects from the east side of this building.

The Bishop's Residence is joined to the rear of the cathedral and faces east. This three story brick building has a mansard roof and a cupola. Its vertical proportions and the use of lancet arched stone lintels repeat the Gothic motifs of the cathedral. A second story oriel window on the south side is constructed of wood with agree-arched windows. Early twentieth century alterations include the replacement of the sash and addition of three brick entrance vestibules on each side.

Next to the Bishop's Residence on the south and attached to the east end of the cathedral is a two story school building. Constructed of brick with cast stone trim, this structure is in the Gothic style, although an early twentieth century interpretation of that mode. The exterior ornamentation includes buttressing, ornate finials and panels containing scholastic motifs, all delineated with the light colored masonry.

## 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 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** 1866, 1869, 1927      **Builder/Architect** P. C. Keeley

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, designed by the famous church architect, P. C. Keeley of Brooklyn, New York, is a strong architectural statement in the Gothic Revival Style which dominates the Portland skyline as viewed from the west. Together with its chapel, the Bishop's residence and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century school (now called the Cathedral Hall) it represents the spiritual headquarters for the Diocese of Maine.

Built on the ashes of an earlier cathedral structure nearing completion but wiped out by the Great Portland Fire of 1866, the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception and associated buildings (the chapel and the Bishop's residence) rose again almost immediately on the same site clearly demonstrating the vitality of the Diocese of Maine.

The chapel, in fact, was dedicated on December 23, 1866 only five months after the fire while the new cathedral and the Bishop's residence were ready for occupancy in July, 1869.

The Cathedral Hall, originally a school, and now a recreational center and meeting place, was built in 1927 and designed in a compatible late Gothic Revival adaptation.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

The Solemn Observance of the Diamond Jubilee of the Diocese of Portland. Portland, 1930.  
Lucey, William Leo, S. J., The Catholic Church in Maine. Frankestown, New Hampshire. 1956.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 2

Quadrangle name Portland West

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A	<u>19</u>	<u>39</u> <u>18</u> <u>8</u> <u>13</u> <u>10</u>	<u>4</u> <u>18</u> <u>3</u> <u>14</u> <u>8</u> <u>12</u> <u>10</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Assessor's Map 21D, Lots 7, 8, 9.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Frank A. Beard, Historian/Roger G. Reed, Architectural Historian/Arthur Feeley, Intern

organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date April, 1985

street & number 55 Capitol Street, Station #65 telephone 207/289-2132

city or town Augusta, state Maine 04333

## 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 *E. S. Feltrewood*

title S. H. P. O.

date 5/10/85

### For NPS use only

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

Entered in the  
National Register

date 6-20-85

*for Allous Byer*  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration