

NPS Form 10-900
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OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Form (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries on a letter quality printer in 12 pitch, using an 85 space line and a 10 space left margin. Use only 25% or greater cotton content bond paper.

1. Name of Property

historic name Saints Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Church Complex
other name/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number	2474, 2490 N. Cramer St. 2479, 2491 N. Murray Ave.	n/a not for publication n/a vicinity
city, town	Milwaukee	
state	Wisconsin	code 079 zip code 53211

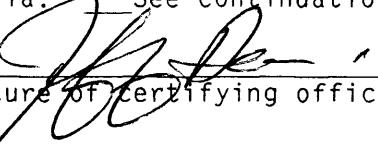
3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources contributing	No. of Resources noncontributing
X private	building(s)		
public-Local	X district	4	1 buildings
public-State	site		sites
public-Federal	structure		structures
	object		objects
		4	1 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this Xnomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property Xmeets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.


Signature of certifying official

7/26/91
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

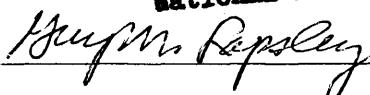
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain: _____)

entered in the
National Register



9/13/91

for Signature of the Keeper

Date

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

Religion/religious structure

Religion/church school

Religion/church-related residence

Religion/church-related residence

Current Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

Religion/religious structure

Religion/church school

Religion/church-related residence

Religion/church-related residence

7. Description

Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (enter categories from instructions)
Romanesque	foundation limestone
	walls brick
Classical Revival	roof asphalt
	other limestone
	metal

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

General Character

The Saints Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Church complex is located in a late nineteenth century, middle-class neighborhood on the city's east side about two and one-half miles north of the central business district. The complex occupies almost all of one city block bounded by North Cramer Street and East Bradford, East Greenwich, and North Murray Avenues. The four buildings of historical significance in the complex were constructed between 1890 and 1912, the same period in which the surrounding neighborhood was developed.

The focal point of the complex is the church building constructed in 1890-1892. Adjoining it on the south and east are a convent built in 1889, a rectory built in 1890, and two separate freestanding school buildings -- one constructed in 1912 and the other in 1956. The latter structure is a non-contributing, modern style building.

The Church

The church, located on the southeast corner of North Cramer Street and East Bradford Avenue is a gabled, rectangular, cream brick structure of eclectic Romanesque Revival design with a large square central tower topped with a four-sided spire. The church, which is sited close to the sidewalk, measures about 57 feet by 125 feet in plan. It rests on rusticated limestone foundations and is trimmed with extensive ornamental brickwork and sheet metal. Henry Messmer, a Milwaukeean, was the architect. The cornerstone was laid in 1890, and the church was formally dedicated and consecrated in 1892.

The principal elevation facing North Cramer Street is composed of a gabled facade with a massive, square central tower. A projecting, one-story, gable-roofed, brick narthex addition completed in 1939, stretches across the front elevation. The facade is fenestrated with large, regularly-spaced, round-arched stained glass windows. A large rose window is centered in the tower just below the louvered belfry. The gable is trimmed with extensive ornamental brick corbelling. The belfry is clad entirely with ornamental sheet metal molded in ornamental forms including Baroque-style capitals, and Classical-style dentils beneath a rolled sheet metal cornice. It is topped with a four-sided, slate-roofed spire surmounted by a sheet metal Roman cross.

X See continuations sheets

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The north and south elevations are similar in character, and each is composed of seven bays of evenly spaced, round-arched stained glass windows separated by projecting brick pilasters. The windows have brick hood molds with sandstone label stops. The eaves are trimmed with heavy brick corbelling. A small, flat-roofed, brick vestibule with rusticated limestone veneer to the height of the basement walls was added to the second bay of the north elevation in 1939 to provide direct access to the basement of the church. It is abutted by a 1950s-style random rubble stone landscape wall and planters that serve as a backdrop for a life-size statue of the Virgin Mary near the northwest corner of the church.

The principal feature of the rear or east elevation is a semi-octagonal apse. A covered brick walkway connecting the apse with the rectory was built in 1939.

The exterior appears to be in nearly original condition with the exception of the sensitively-designed 1939 narthex addition.

The church is entered through the large 1939 narthex which is connected to the original, narrow narthex by a short flight of stairs. The original narthex contains the two staircases to the gallery -- one each at the north and south ends. The oak pews in the nave are original to the building and arranged on either side of a wide central aisle with two narrower side aisles along the outside walls. The nave is in nearly original condition and features a plaster barrel vault ceiling intercepted with small, pointed groin vaults over each of the glass windows on the side walls. The molded plaster barrel vault ribbing terminates in rectangular plaster corbels. The apse is also barrel vaulted and contains its original Baroque-style wooden reredos featuring statuary and a wealth of carved wooden detail. Flanking the apse facing the nave are two smaller side altars of similar design, one dedicated to the Virgin Mary and the other to St. Joseph, set within shallow, arched niches.

The stained glass windows are the most prominent decorative features of the north and south sidewall elevations. The five easternmost windows on each elevation depict the mysteries of the rosary and were installed during the 1920s. The two westernmost windows on each side of the church retain their original floral-design Victorian-style stained glass. A large pipe organ fills the central portion of the choir loft, which stretches across the rear of the nave and is faced with a paneled wood railing.

The interior is remarkably well-preserved, retaining its original altars, pews, and plaster mouldings on the walls and ceilings. A few changes have

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been made over the years. The original Victorian paint scheme and stenciling have been replaced with a simpler paint and stencilling scheme. To conform with liturgical changes mandated by Vatican II, several rows of pews, the pulpit, and the altar rail were removed from the front of the nave to make way for an extension of the raised, apse floor upon which rests a new altar table, a lectern, and other liturgical furniture. The original combination gas and electric chandeliers were replaced with electric lanterns many years ago, and the floor is now carpeted.

The Rectory

The rectory is located directly behind the church at 2491 North Murray Avenue on the southwest corner of North Murray and East Bradford Avenues atop a bermed grass lawn. It is a two-story, cream brick veneered, rectangular, hip-roofed, Neo-Classical-influenced structure built in 1890 according to the designs of architect Henry Messmer. The building rests on a high, rusticated limestone foundation and is trimmed with ornamental brickwork and dressed sandstone. The austere design of the exterior is partially explained by the fact that the building was originally constructed as the first parish elementary school and was remodeled in 1912 into a rectory after a new school was built.

The symmetrically composed main elevation faces North Murray Avenue, and its principal architectural feature is a central, gabled entrance bay with a large, projecting, flat-roofed, one-story brick porch. The porch has a wood and sheet metal box cornice and is topped with a brick parapet wall capped with a dressed sandstone coping. All of the rectory windows have six-over-one, wooden, double-hung sash. Flanking the porch on either side are two bays of windows set in segmentally-arched openings trimmed with projecting brick lintels. The facade is divided horizontally above the first story with a sandstone string course. The second story is fenestrated with a central double window over the porch, which is flanked on either side by two bays of single windows. A large lunette is centered in the brick gable. The eaves are trimmed with brick corbelling and small, closely-spaced wooden brackets. The facade is framed with brick pilasters at the corners. The other elevations facing north, south, and west are detailed like the main elevation and feature regularly spaced double-hung windows, brick corbelling, corner pilasters, and bracketed eaves. A one-story, flat-roofed, cream brick solarium was added to the south elevation at some point in the early twentieth century. Otherwise the exterior appears to be as it was remodeled in 1912.

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The interior is entered through a small, square vestibule which opens into a central staircase hall. The present interior dates entirely from 1912 when it was converted from a school to a rectory. It features simple, craftsman-style oak woodwork and plain plastered walls and ceilings. Flanking the staircase hall with its oak staircase with picket balustrade and square paneled newel posts are the first floor rooms, a front parlor, dining room, and kitchen on the north, and what are now three connecting offices on the south. The dining room is the most ornamental room in the house and features a high wood wainscot and built-in china cabinets. On the second floor, four bedrooms are arranged off a central hall at the top of the U-shaped staircase. The interior has been little-changed since the 1912 remodeling, other than some minor cosmetic alterations and the addition of modern cabinets in the kitchen.

The Convent

The convent is located directly south of the rectory at 2479 North Murray Avenue. It is a two-and-one-half story, cream brick, deck-on-hip-roofed structure built in a simplified Romanesque Revival style. Constructed in 1889 according to the designs of Milwaukee architect Herman Paul Schnetzky, the building rests on a raised rusticated limestone foundation and is trimmed modestly with dressed and carved sandstone.

The main elevation facing North Murray Avenue has three bays. The principal architectural feature is the central, projecting, gabled bay with its round-arched entry portal and deeply recessed porch leading to a pair of doubleleaf entry doors. The entry portal is trimmed with a thin sandstone hood mold that terminates in carved, foliated, stone label stops. Flanking the entry on the first story are a group of paired, round-arched, double-hung windows. The second story is fenestrated with a central pair of double-hung, round-arched windows over the entry flanked on either side by single, double-hung, round-arched windows. The arched tops of the central group of second-story windows are outlined with thin brick hood molds. An oculus is centered in the small front gable, which is trimmed with a narrow paneled bargeboard supported by two Queen Anne-style wooden brackets. All of the windows on the building have been fitted with rectangular aluminum storm windows with the arched tops filled with plywood panels.

The side and rear elevations facing south, west, and north are composed of the original two-story, hip-roofed building and a rear, two-story, brick addition built at the turn of the century that matches the original building in style. Like those on the main elevation, all of the windows on these

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elevations are round-arched, fitted with dressed sandstone sills and regularly spaced. An exit door is located on the rear elevation facing west. The original portion of the south elevation features a gable similar in detail to the one on the main elevation already described.

The interior is entered through a recessed porch, which opens to a long, narrow central staircase hall around which are arranged the major rooms of the first floor: a dining room, a kitchen, and a parlor in the front half and dormitory rooms in the rear half. The original character of the simply finished interior is basically intact. Still extant is most of the original woodwork, including six panel doors, wide pine baseboards, and plain, plastered walls and ceilings. The staircase, which is the most elaborate original interior feature of the convent, has an oak balustrade with turned spindles and a square chamfered and carved oak newel post with a ball finial.

The second story is divided into a series of rooms off a central hall. The largest room on the second floor is the chapel located in the southeast corner. Unlike the other rooms, it has undergone a modern-style remodeling and retains none of its historic character. The other rooms on the second floor are plainly finished study or dormitory rooms. The building is still used as a convent, although the six Sisters living there in 1989 are no longer associated with the Saints Peter and Paul Parish.

Elementary School

The local architectural firm of Erhard Brielmaier and Sons designed the elementary school at 2474 N. Cramer Street. It is a large, T-plan, cream brick, combination gable and hip-roofed Romanesque Revival-style structure built in 1912. The building, which faces North Cramer Street behind a small asphalt-surfaced parking lot, rests on a raised, brick basement and is trimmed with carved and dressed limestone.

The symmetrical main elevation is composed of a two-and-one-half-story hip-roofed block with two large, projecting, gabled pavilions. The focal point of the main elevation is a large, central, round-arched entry portal trimmed with a limestone hood molding. Grouped under the entry portal is a traceried, arched transom and two sets of double entry doors flanked by limestone columns with carved foliated stone capitals.

A group of three, round-arched, double-hung sash windows is located on the second story above the entry portal surmounted by a large parapet-gabled dormer glazed with a Diocletian window.

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Flanking the central entry bay on either side are symmetrical, projecting pavilions, which are identically fenestrated with multiple bays of regularly-spaced, grouped and single, double-hung windows with transoms. The corners of the pavilions feature stepped brick buttresses with dressed limestone dripstones. A large oculus trimmed with limestone voissoirs is centered in the gable of each of the pavilions. The gables are capped with dressed limestone copings. The apex of each gable is surmounted by a Gothic-style, sheet metal finial.

Located on either end of the main elevation are slightly recessed single bays, each of which contains a double entry door with a round-arched transom surmounted by a single, round-arched, double-hung window on the second story.

The rear and side elevations facing east, north, and south are less detailed than the main elevation and are basically composed of plain brick walls with regularly spaced sash windows with transoms. Each side elevation features a parapet dormer centered on the roof slope that is similar in detail to the one on the main elevation. The most prominent feature of the rear, or east elevation, is a central, projecting bay fenestrated with large, round-arched windows, which denotes the location of the auditorium. The exterior appears to be in nearly original condition. Only a few minor alterations have been made such as the replacement of the original wooden entry doors with modern glass and aluminum doors.

The main entrance of the building opens into a central staircase hall off of which radiates a long, narrow, transverse hall around which the four large classrooms on each floor are arranged. Each classroom is typically finished with original hardwood floors, wide painted baseboards and casings, and plain plastered walls. Most of the plaster ceilings, however, have been covered with modern acoustical ceiling tile.

A large, two-story auditorium is located in the center of the rear half of the building. The auditorium features a large balcony, a deep-coved plaster ceiling and ornamental wall pilasters with Baroque-style capitals.

The sidewalls are fenestrated with large, round-arched, divided light, clear glass windows. The focal point of the auditorium is the large, segmental proscenium arch at the stage, which is ornamented with a Baroque-style cartouche at its apex. The room appears to be in nearly original condition, except that the skylight, still visible, has been covered over on the exterior. The building is presently used as a day care center, and the auditorium is still used extensively for parish social activities.

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The New Elementary School

The new Saints Peter and Paul Elementary School is a three-story, rectangular, brick, flat-roofed structure of modern design erected in 1956 on the northwest corner of North Murray and East Greenwich Avenues. The building, designed by the architectural firm of Grellinger and Rose, is completely freestanding and is not connected to any of the historic buildings in the complex. The school was built to accommodate an increase in the parish's population of school-age children during the post-World War II baby boom period and is still in operation. Because the building has no known architectural or historical significance, it is classified as a non-contributing structure.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G
Areas of Significance
(enter categories from instructions) Period of Significance Significant Dates

Architecture	<u>1889-1912</u>	<u>1889,¹ 1890,² 1912³</u>
Cultural Affiliation		
N/A		
Significant Person	Architect/Builder	
N/A	Messmer, Henry, ⁴ Schnetzky, Herman Paul, ⁵	
	Brielmaier, Erhard ⁶	

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and period of significance noted above.

Significance

The Saints Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Church complex is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for its local architectural significance. It is being nominated as an exception to criteria consideration A as a religious complex deriving its primary significance from its outstanding architectural qualities. It is a fine example of a late nineteenth and early twentieth century Roman Catholic church complex which is composed of an eclectically-designed Romanesque Revival-influenced church, school, and convent, and a Neoclassically-influenced rectory. The complex is interesting as an example of the work of three separate architects working independently at different times using a similar palette of materials and design features to produce a remarkably unified grouping of buildings. Saints Peter and Paul also illustrates the rapid growth of a German-speaking Roman Catholic community in a newly developing residential section of the city's upper east side in the late nineteenth century. It serves as a reminder that, as the Wisconsin Cultural Resource Management Plan (WCRMP) states, historically the character of Catholic life in Wisconsin has been overwhelmingly German.⁷ The WCRMP has cited a need to identify significant Roman Catholic resources in Wisconsin, and we believe that the SS. Peter and Paul Church complex is one such resource.⁸ The WCRMP notes that the study of Roman Catholic convents, rectories, and schools is worthy of special attention because so many of these buildings are threatened with demolition as a result of the decline in the number of Catholic clergy and changing living arrangements within the ecclesiastical community.⁹

SS. Peter and Paul is significant as one of the more complete Roman Catholic church complexes in Milwaukee. Although there are a number of other

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church groupings of this type in the city, relatively few have survived with their four essential original elements intact: church, parochial school, convent, and rectory. Most of the other church complexes have either lost their schools or convents entirely, or else had them remodeled beyond recognition of their original appearance. Perhaps the most comparable grouping to survive on the east side, the context within which SS. Peter and Paul is being evaluated is the St. Hedwig's complex within the Brady Street Historic District (NRHP 3/9/90). Unlike the latter, which was built over a longer period of time using a variety of materials and architectural styles, SS. Peter and Paul is remarkable in its unity of conception as the product of a brief, but intense, period of building between 1889 and 1892, with the new school deliberately designed in a somewhat old-fashioned style in 1912 to blend with the older buildings. Viewed as individual buildings, the SS. Peter and Paul convent, rectory, school, and church are fine examples of their respective building types and possess a high degree of historic architectural integrity.

History

The late nineteenth century saw the construction of numerous churches in Milwaukee in response to the successive waves of German immigrants flooding into the city. SS. Peter and Paul represents one of the later German Roman Catholic parishes founded during this period, having been established in 1889 by the Right Reverend Leonard Batz.¹⁰

The east side of Milwaukee was expanding quickly in the 1880s and 1890s, due in large part to the tremendous population increase the city experienced during these two decades. The city's population grew from 115,587 people in 1880 to 204,468 people by 1890, and reached 285,315 people in 1900. The residential development of the previously vacant upper east side was aided by the expansion of the streetcar network, including an Oakland Avenue line established in the early 1890s by the Milwaukee Electric Railway and Light Company.

The area between Oakland and Downer Avenues was settled by middle-income families, many of whom were of German descent. Interestingly enough, many of them were Roman Catholic rather than Protestant in faith. For them, the nearest German-speaking Catholic church was St. Mary's Church (now Old St. Mary's), located about two miles south at 844 North Broadway. Rev. Batz, who had been the pastor of St. Mary's until 1880, recognized the need for a new parish on the rapidly developing upper east side.¹¹

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Rev. Batz had risen in the church hierarchy to become a very influential figure in the Milwaukee Archdiocese by 1889. He had come to Milwaukee in 1858 from his native Bavaria. After two years of teaching in a seminary, Batz became the pastor of St. Mary's Church in 1860. He served St. Mary's for almost twenty years, providing the strong leadership necessary to overcome the financial difficulties encountered by the parish.

By appointment of Archbishop Henni,¹² Rev. Batz became vicar general of the Milwaukee Archdiocese in 1876. It was as vicar-general that he undertook a personal campaign to preserve and renovate the old St. Peter's Cathedral, the first Catholic Church in the city, which had been built in 1839. The original small, clapboard-sided church had been replaced in 1853 by the present Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist (812 North Jackson Street). Rev. Batz had purchased old St. Peter's in 1875 and converted it into a dwelling. He lived in the structure during the 1880s, and in order to prevent its demolition, he moved the old church to the SS. Peter and Paul property in the 1890s. Eventually, the old church was restored to its original appearance and moved to its present location on the grounds of the outdoor museum village¹³ of Old World Wisconsin in Eagle, Wisconsin, where it still serves as a museum.

At its founding in 1889, SS. Peter and Paul parish consisted of forty-three families. A temporary, brick veneered chapel was used by the parish while the construction of the larger church and related facilities was underway. The temporary chapel was located about 75 feet from the church's construction site on the corner of East Bradford and North Cramer Streets. When the present church opened on April 24, 1892, it was free of debt due in large part to the substantial donations by Rev. Batz. By this time, the congregation had grown to include one hundred and twenty families.

The first SS. Peter and Paul elementary school opened in September, 1889, under the direction of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. It consisted of two classrooms and ninety students, but enrollment doubled by 1892, and a third classroom was opened. The two-story, Neoclassical-influenced, cream brick building designed by Milwaukee architect Henry Messmer still stands at 2491 North Murray Street, but is now used as a rectory and church office. The School Sisters were housed in a cream brick, Victorian Romanesque-influenced convent, also built in 1889, at 2779 North Murray Avenue. The convent was designed by noted Milwaukee architect Herman Paul Schnetzky.

A new elementary school was constructed in 1912 on the site formerly occupied by the temporary chapel at 2474 North Murray Avenue. It was designed by Erhard Brielmaier and Sons in an eclectic, late Victorian Romanesque style, and is presently used as a daycare facility. The old school on North Murray

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Avenue was converted into a rectory at the same time and remains in use as such today.

The present elementary school, known as Catholic East Elementary School, was built in 1956 and is a three-story, modern style building at 2463 North Murray Avenue. Its construction and some subsequent alterations to the church, such as the addition of the new narthex, are an indication of the continued growth and vitality of the SS. Peter and Paul parish in the mid-twentieth century.¹⁴

The Architects

Three Milwaukee architectural firms contributed to the design of the historic structures in the SS. Peter and Paul Church complex.

Henry Messmer

Henry Messmer, who designed the SS. Peter and Paul Church and the first school, which is now the rectory, was born in Switzerland on August 25, 1839, and studied with architects in Europe before coming to Milwaukee in 1866. He was employed as a draftsman for several years before starting his own architectural office. Messmer developed a thriving practice. Some fine examples of his work include: St. Hyacinth Roman Catholic Church (1882) located at 1414 West Becher Street; St. Casimir's Roman Catholic Church rectory (1894) located at 2618 North Bremen Street; and St. Hedwig's Roman Catholic Church (1886) located at 1704 North Humboldt Avenue.¹⁵

Just before the turn of the century, Messmer took his son as a partner and changed the name of the firm to Henry Messmer and Son. Together they designed many commercial buildings and middle-class homes on Milwaukee's near north and east sides. Messmer's own modest, brick, Italianate-style house still stands at 2302 North Booth Street about one and one-half miles west of the SS. Peter and Paul Church complex. Messmer died on February 20, 1899. His sons, Robert and Henry, continued the architectural firm for many years after their father's death and retained the name Henry Messmer and Son until about 1910.

Erhard Brielmaier

Erhard Brielmaier, whose architectural firm, E. Brielmaier and Sons, designed the SS. Peter and Paul School in 1912, was one of the most prolific

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designers of Catholic churches, schools and hospitals in America during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Brielmaier is believed to have designed more than 800 churches nationwide, reputedly more than any other American architect of his time. He offered a turn-key service to his clients as a combination architect, sculptor, and builder.

Brielmaier was born in Rothwiel, Wurtemburg, Germany in 1841. At the age of nine he came to America with his parents. The family settled in Cincinnati, Ohio and there Brielmaier worked with his father, a building contractor, in planning and building churches, business blocks, and private homes. Brielmaier attended Cincinnati schools, but his architectural and sculpting skills were apparently developed through practical experience and self study. While living in Cincinnati he married Theresa Haag in 1860.¹⁹

At the age of 24, Brielmaier moved to Piqua, Ohio where he opened an architectural office. After an illness in 1874, he moved to Milwaukee, reportedly in search of a better climate for his health. Brielmaier's career flourished in Milwaukee, and he developed a thriving local and national practice, primarily as an architect of churches and institutional buildings. Locally, Brielmaier was best known for his design of Milwaukee's St. Josaphat's Basilica (1896-1901), an imposing Renaissance Revival structure located at 601 West Lincoln Avenue, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Built with stone salvaged from the 1896 demolition of the Chicago Federal Building, St. Josaphat's was, when it opened, one of the five largest domed spaces in the world.

Some other fine examples of Brielmaier's Milwaukee work includes: Calvary Cemetery Chapel (1899) located at 5503 West Bluemound Road; St. Casimir Roman Catholic Church (1899) located at 2604 North Bremen Street; and St. Lawrence Roman Catholic Church (1905) located at 1434 South Layton Boulevard.²⁰ Out-of-town design work included numerous Roman Catholic churches including examples in Chicago, Detroit, and Pittsburgh, as well as Brooklyn, New York; Adams, Massachusetts;²¹ Lincoln, Nebraska; Wilmington, Delaware; and Grand Rapids, Michigan.²² The SS. Peter and Paul School was designed towards the end of Brielmaier's career. He died on Wednesday, August 29, 1917 at his Milwaukee home located at 2464 North Second Street (razed).²³ His descendants carried on the firm for several years after his death.²⁴

Herman Paul Schnetzky

The architect of the convent building, Herman Paul Schnetzky, was born in 1850 in Wriezen, Germany and came to Milwaukee in 1868.²⁵ The extent of his

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education in Germany is not known. The 1869 Milwaukee city directory listed him as a draftsman for Mygatt and Koch, architects. Mygatt was one of Milwaukee's first architects, but his direct influence on Schnetzky was probably minimal because the firm dissolved in 1870, and Mygatt and Koch each opened their own individual offices. Koch, who had been an apprentice to Mygatt before becoming a partner, entered into a partnership with Julius Hess in 1870 and probably hired Schnetzky as a draftsman.

Schnetzky's name disappeared from city directories for a three-year period between 1871 and 1873. He might have left the city for architectural training or work elsewhere, but in 1874 he again appeared in the city directories with a promotion in job title, as an assistant architect for H. C. Koch. Julius Hess had severed his partnership with Koch during Schnetzky's absence. H. C. Koch subsequently became the proprietor of one of the city's most prestigious architectural offices which ranked as one of the three largest Milwaukee architectural firms in the late nineteenth century. The firm designed many of the city's public schools during the 1870s and early 1880s, and Schnetzky was undoubtedly involved in their design.

In 1884 Koch and Co. hired Eugene R. Liebert, an 18-year-old immigrant draftsman, who had arrived in Milwaukee a year earlier from Germany. Liebert worked and trained in the Koch and Co. office until 1887 when Schnetzky started his own architectural firm and hired Liebert as his draftsman and foreman.²⁴ It was during this period that the SS. Peter and Paul convent was designed and built. Some of Schnetzky's other work during the late 1880s includes the National Register listed St. Martini Lutheran Church (1887), 1520 South Sixteenth Street; St. John's Lutheran Church (1889), 804 West Vliet Street; St. John's Parsonage (1890), 816 West Vliet Street; and the Blatz Brewing Company office building (1890), 1120 North Broadway.²⁵

Schnetzky formed a partnership with Liebert in 1892. Some of their collaborative design work includes: St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church (1892), 1453 North Twenty-fourth Street; the Arthur Vogel Residence (1892), 939 North Fourteenth Street; St. Stephen's School (1892), 1136²⁶ South Fifth Street; and the Germania Building (1896), 135 West Wells Street.

The partnership dissolved in 1897, and Schnetzky and Liebert each continued their own separate practices. Schnetzky later formed another partnership with his son, and together they designed several commercial buildings in the city's central business district including the large Manufacturer's Home Building (1909) at 104 East Mason Street. Schnetzky died in 1916.²⁷

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Sect. No. 8 Page 6 Saints Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Church Complex
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Architecture

The Saints Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Church complex is architecturally significant as a well-preserved late Victorian church complex with a variety of building types illustrating the wide range of functions housed in a large Roman Catholic parish complex of the period.

The most architecturally notable building in the complex, the church, was built in 1890-1892. The church with its large tower is an imposing East Side landmark that symbolizes the central role that religion played in nineteenth century immigrant neighborhoods. The eclectically-designed exterior is strongly influenced by the Victorian Romanesque style, which was very popular for church architecture in Milwaukee at that time. Some of the architectural influence is decidedly German in character, which is not surprising considering that the building was constructed for a German parish. The massive, somewhat squat central tower is a typical feature of medieval churches in Germany as is the heavy brickwork detailing and the attenuated round-arched windows with their curvilinear tracery.

The focal point of the interior is the elaborate high altar flanked by smaller matching side altars. Crafted entirely in wood, the three altars represent a significant example of late nineteenth century ecclesiastical woodworking.

The other buildings in the complex were designed with the typical Victorian bias that they be architecturally appropriate to their function. For example, the convent, the oldest building in the complex, is a solid and dignified but deliberately unornamented building that in its austerity conveys a sense of the selfless dedication of the nuns as church workers and teachers, while the exterior of the rectory, built in 1890 as the first parish elementary school, is a sober, somewhat imposing structure designed to convey a sense of order and balance, architectural attributes considered at the time to be appropriate to its original role as the educational facility for the parish youth. The new elementary school constructed in 1912, was built as the German immigrant parish was reaching its peak. The large fortress-like building, which accommodated the growing parish's elementary school space needs for more than fifty years before a new school was built, sought to embody in its massive design a physical manifestation of the importance of parochial schooling in the life of the parish and the permanence of the church's commitment to educating its youth within the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Architecturally, the school is noteworthy as a very late manifestation of the Victorian Romanesque style, evidently reflecting a conscious attempt by the parish's building committee, or the architects, to

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Sect. No. 8 Page 7 Saints Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Church Complex
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design a structure that would blend harmoniously with the neighboring church, even if it meant resorting to the use of materials and architectural devices that were already somewhat out of fashion. The architectural firm that designed the school, E. Brielmaier and Sons, was national known for its ecclesiastical design work, particularly in the Gothic and Romanesque Revival styles. While employing such passe features as local cream brick and Romanesque Revival window detailing, they nevertheless attempted in the building's massing, fenestration and interior layout -- particularly in the use of a first floor auditorium rather than the more common third floor gymnasium tucked under a high hipped roof -- to incorporate more progressive concepts in schoolhouse design.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Milwaukee, Wisconsin

FOOTNOTES

¹City Building Permit, Convent, 2469 N. Murray Ave.

²City Building Permit, Church, 2490 N. Cramer St.;
City Building Permit, School (Rectory), 2491 N. Murray Ave.

³City Building Permit, School, 2474 N. Cramer St.

⁴City Building Permits, 2490 N. Cramer St., 2491 N. Murray Ave.

⁵City Building Permit, 2469 N. Murray Ave.

⁶City Building Permit, 2474 N. Cramer St.

⁷Cultural Resource Management (CRM) in Wisconsin, Vol. 3, Religion 3-3.
Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin; 1986.

⁸CRM in Wisconsin, Vol. 3, Religion 3-20.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰History of the Catholic Church in Wisconsin. (Milwaukee: Catholic
Historical Publishing Co., 1899), pp. 293-294.

¹¹History of Milwaukee (Chicago: Western Historical Publishing Co.,
1881), p. 888; SS. Peter and Paul 1889-1964. History booklet published
by the SS. Peter and Paul congregation.

¹²History of Milwaukee, p. 888.

¹³Rummel, Rev. Leo. History of the Catholic Church in Wisconsin
(Madison: Knights of Columbus, 1976), p. 74.

¹⁴SS. Peter and Paul 1889-1964.

¹⁵History of Milwaukee, p. 1501.

¹⁶Building Permits, City of Milwaukee. Filed at Department of Building
Inspection under respective building addresses.

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Milwaukee, Wisconsin

¹⁷ Milwaukee City Directory, 1899.

¹⁸ Wisconsin Necrology, Vol. 16, pp. 75-77.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Building Permits, City of Milwaukee. Filed at Department of Building
Inspection under respective building addresses.

²¹ Wisconsin Necrology, Vol. 16, pp. 75-77.

²² Ibid.

²³ Milwaukee Free Press, Feb. 22, 1916.

²⁴ Milwaukee City Directory, 1887 and 1888.

²⁵ City Building permits.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

9. Major Bibliographical Reference

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

Previous documentation on file (NPS):
 preliminary determination of
individual listing (36 CFR 67)
has been requested
 previously listed in the National
Register
 previously determined eligible by
the National Register
 designated a National Historic
Landmark
 recorded by Historic American
Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American
Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:
 State Historic preservation office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Specific repository:
Historic Preservation Commission
809 North Broadway
Milwaukee, WI 53202

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 2 1/2

UTM References

A	<u>1/6</u>	<u>4/2/7/8/4/0</u>	<u>4/7/6/8/0/0/0</u>
Zone	Easting	Northing	
C	/	/ / / / /	/ / / / /

B	/	/ / / / /	/ / / / /
Zone	Easting	Northing	
D	/	/ / / / /	/ / / / /

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

MURRAY'S ADD'N IN SW 1/4 SEC 15-7-22
BLOCK 202 LOTS 1 TO 9 INCL & LOTS 13 TO 18 INCL.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes only the land
occupied by the church complex.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Les Vollmert/Paul Jakubovich

organization Dept. of City Development

Date July 25, 1989

street & number 809 North Broadway

telephone (414) 223-5705

city or town Milwaukee

state WI zip code 53202

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Sect. No. 9 Page 1 Saints Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Church Complex
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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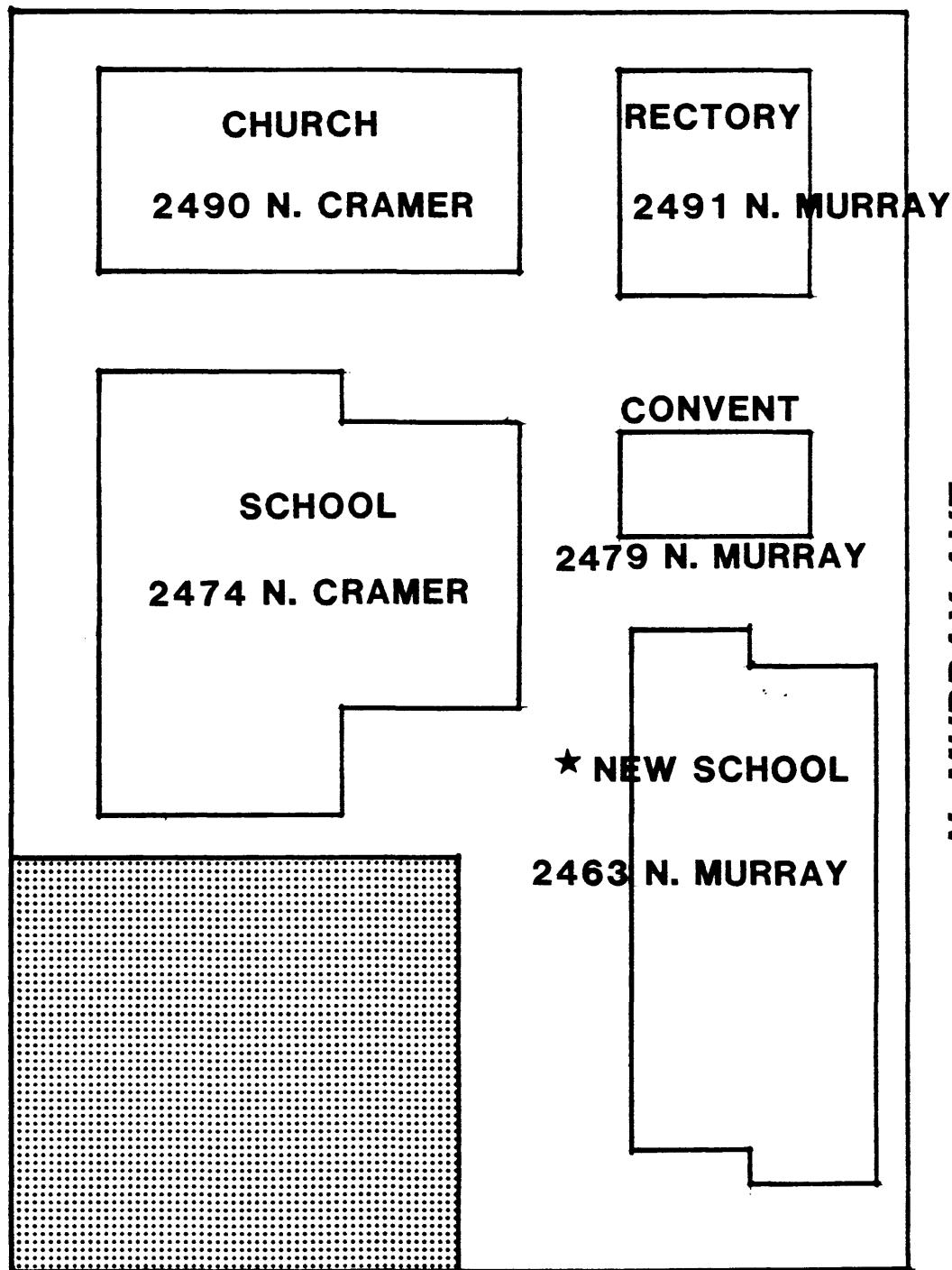
SS. Peter and Paul 1889-1964. History booklet published by the SS. Peter and Paul Congregation.

Watrous, Jerome A., ed. Memoirs of Milwaukee County, Vol. 1, Madison: Western Historical Association, 1909, pp. 330-340.

Wisconsin Necrology, Vol. 16, Milwaukee Public Library Collection.

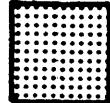
E. BRADFORD AVE.

N. CRAMER ST.



E. GREENWICH AVE.

NOT TO SCALE



**NOT PART
OF COMPLEX**

*** NON-CONTRIBUTING**

**SS. PETER & PAUL
ROM. CATH. CHURCH COMPLEX
MILWAUKEE, WISC.**

**SAINTS PETER AND PAUL
ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
COMPLEX**

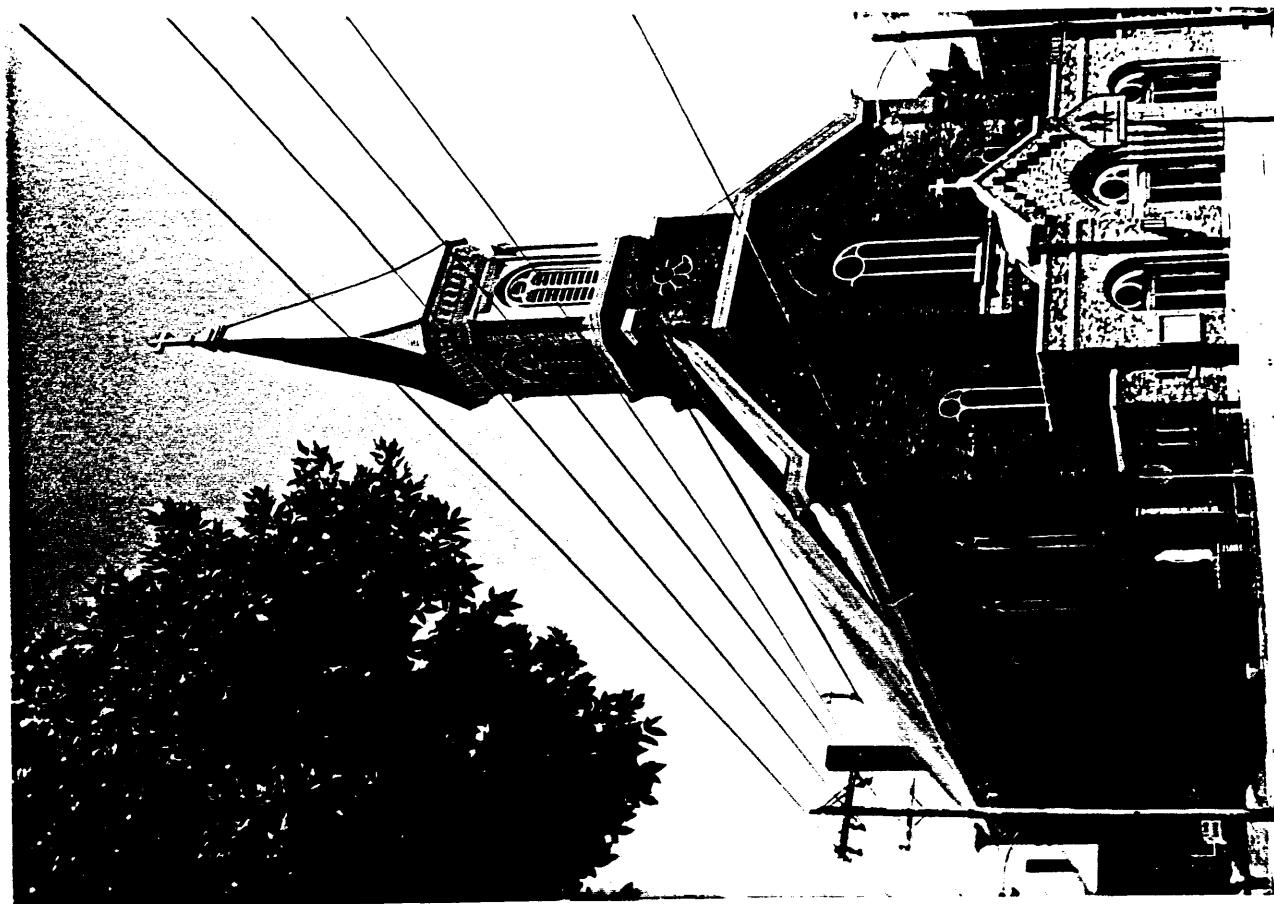
MILWAUKEE, MILWAUKEE
COUNTY, WI

ITEM REFERENCE:

16 / 427840 / 4768000

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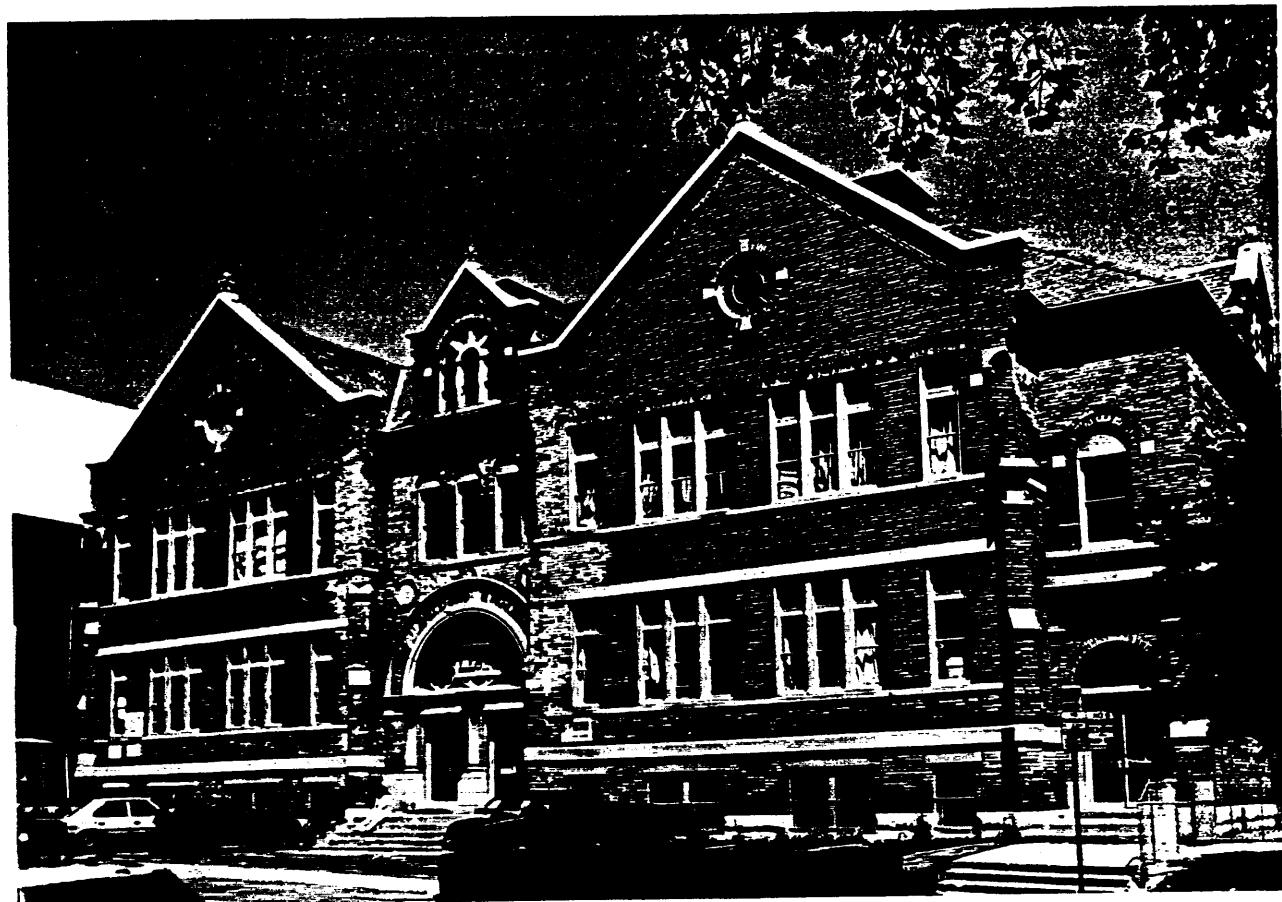


CHURCH INTERIOR LOOKING EAST



STS. PETER & PAUL COMPLEX MILWAUKEE, MILWAUKEE COUNTY, WI

SCHOOL, LOOKING NORTHEAST



RECTORY, LOOKING NORTHWEST



STS. PETER & PAUL COMPLEX, MILWAUKEE, MILWAUKEE COUNTY, WI

CONVENT, LOOKING NORTHWEST



SCHOOL, LOOKING NORTHEAST

