

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

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

For NPS use only

received JUL 2 1986  
date entered

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

**1. Name**

historic St. Francis Xavier Church

and/or common Chippewa Church

**2. Location**

street & number Off U.S. Highway 61 N/A not for publication

city, town Unorganized Territory of Cook County  vicinity of Grand Marais

state Minnesota code 22 county Cook code 031

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" 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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Vacant

**4. Owner of Property**

name St. John the Baptist Catholic Church

street & number N/A

city, town Grand Marais N/A vicinity of state Minnesota 55604

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Cook County Court House

street & number Fifth Avenue West and Second Street

city, town Grand Marais state Minnesota 55604

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Minnesota Statewide Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1981  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Minnesota Historical Society, Ft. Snelling History Center

city, town St. Paul Minnesota 55111  
state

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>      N/A      </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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

St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church is a small, gable-roofed, clapboard-sided, one-story, rectangular structure consisting of a log-framed nave with a wood-framed narthex centered on the south facade and a wood-framed vestry attached to the north facade. A diminutive alter section connects the principal portion of the nave to the vestry. The nave is surmounted on its south end by a square-shaped belfry with peaked roof. The church is roofed with wood shingles and contains six-over-six, double-hung wood sash. The nave features an open interior plan with exposed log framing, hand-hewn pews, a small balcony on the south end, and an alter on the north end. The structure rests on a concrete-block foundation.

There are no plans or illustrations documenting the building's original construction. According to an 1895 newspaper article, the building was originally of "hewed lumber," measuring "25 x 30 feet with a lien-to 8 x 14."<sup>1</sup> In 1903, the lien-to was replaced by the present vestry.<sup>2</sup> At this time, the building may also have been covered with wood siding, which appears in a photograph taken about 1915. The same photograph shows a clapboard-sided narthex, which was subsequently removed. The present narthex, of similar design, was constructed in 1963.<sup>3</sup> The structure was placed on a concrete-block foundation in 1970.<sup>4</sup>

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Cook County Herald, May 11, 1895.

<sup>2</sup>P. J. Lydon, "Notes on the History of the Diocese of Duluth," Acta et Dicta, 5 (July 1918), 281; Willis H. Raff, Research Report on St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, p. 1, unpublished, 1984, St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church File, Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office, Minnesota Historical Society.

<sup>3</sup>Raff, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Ade Toftey, "Grand Marais Plans Bright Future for Old Indian Church," Duluth News-Tribune, May 17, 1970; Olga Soderburg, St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, n.p., unpublished, n.d., Cook County Historical Society.

# 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 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 type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Indian Mission
<b>Specific dates</b>	1895	<b>Builder/Architect</b>	Frank Wishcop (1895)	

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church is historically significant for two major reasons. First, it is one of the state's few surviving, nineteenth-century, Indian missions. Second, it is the only remaining structure of Chippewa City, a nineteenth-century Indian settlement on the upper North Shore of Lake Superior.

About 1855, itinerant Jesuit priests from Fort William, Ontario, initiated missionary work among the Chippewa Indians of the Grand Marais area.<sup>1</sup> The center of Indian population was Chippewa City, located about one mile northeast of Grand Marais. By 1885, the community numbered about 75 families.<sup>2</sup> In 1895, the Jesuits placed their ministry on a more permanent footing by establishing St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church in Chippewa City. The building, which served as both religious and social center for the Catholic community, was constructed by a local carpenter, Frank Wishcop, under the general supervision of Father Joseph Specht, S.J. Like his predecessors, Specht was an itinerant Canadian cleric. During his visits to the Grand Marais area, he frequently made his residence at the new church -- a practice continued by his successors until the establishment of a permanent vicarage in Grand Marais in 1933.<sup>3</sup>

St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church remained a Jesuit mission until 1907, when it became the responsibility of Benedictine priests from St. John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota. Although Chippewa City was largely destroyed by a forest fire in 1907, St. Francis Xavier Church continued to serve the area's Catholic community until 1936, when all of its religious functions were transferred to the recently constructed St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Grand Marais.<sup>4</sup> The building has remained vacant to the present time.

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> P. J. Lydon, "Notes on the History of the Diocese of Duluth," Acta et Dicta, 5 (July 1918), 281.

<sup>2</sup> Willis H. Raff, Pioneers in the Wilderness (Grand Marais, MN: Cook County Historical Society), p. 52; St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, p. 1, unpublished, 1975, Cook County Historical Society.

<sup>3</sup> "Old Indian Worker Dead," Virginia Daily Enterprise, March 3, 1915; Raff, Pioneers, p. 52; St. Francis Xavier Church, pp. 3-6.

<sup>4</sup> Lydon, 281; St. Francis Xavier Church, pp. 5-7.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Approximately 1/2 acre

Quadrangle name Grand Marais, Minnesota

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A 

1	5	7	0	1	4	6	0	5	2	9	2	6	9	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C 

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D 

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G 

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H 

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jeffrey A. Hess

organization Jeffrey A. Hess, Historical Consultant

date July 29, 1985

street & number 305 Grain Exchange Building

telephone 612-338-1987

city or town Minneapolis

state Minnesota 55415

# 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

title Russell W. Fridley  
State Historic Preservation Office

date 6/24/86

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the  
National Register

date 7-31-86

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

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

St. Francis Xavier Church, Unorganized Territory of Cook County,  
Minnesota

Continuation sheet

Resource Count

Item number 8

Page 1

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The St. Francis Xavier Church Nomination contains 1 contributing  
building.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
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St. Francis Xavier Church, Unorganized Territory of Cook County

Minnesota

Continuation sheet Bibliographical References

Item number

9 Bibliography

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Cook County Herald, May 11, 1895.

Lydon, P. J. "Notes on the History of the Diocese of Duluth," Acta et Dicta, 5  
(July 1918), 238-288.

"Old Indian Worker Dead." Virginia Daily Enterprise, March 3, 1915.

Raff, Willis H. Pioneers in the Wilderness. Grand Marais, MN: Cook County Historical  
Society, 1981.

\_\_\_\_\_. Research Report on St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church. Unpublished, 1984.  
St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church File, Minnesota State Historic Preservation  
Office, Minnesota Historical Society.

St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church. Unpublished, 1975. Cook County Historical Society.

Soderburg, Olga. St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church. Unpublished, n.d. Cook County  
Historical Society.

Toftey, Ade. "Grand Marais Plans Bright Future for Old Indian Church." Duluth News-  
Tribune, May 17, 1970.

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Continuation sheet Boundary Desc. & Justification Item number 10. Boundary Description Page 1

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Commencing at the Northwest corner of the property of George Anakwad in Lot No. 3, Section 22, in Township 61 North of Range No. 1 East of the Fourth Principal Meridian in Cook County, then running due South 208 feet, thence West 104 feet, then North 208 feet, thence East 104 feet to the point of beginning, containing one-half acre more or less.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Note: These changes apply to  
St. Francis Xavier Church in  
Cook County, Minnesota.

REFERENCE NUMBER: 86002119

STATE: MINNESOTA

COUNTY: Cook

RESOURCE NAME (HISTORIC): Church of St. Francis Xavier (Catholic)

CITY:

VICINITY OF: Grand Marais

ADDRESS: U. S. Hwy. 61

CERTIFICATION DATE:

REMOVED DATE:

COMMENTS:

*Nina M. Archabal*

Nina M. Archabal  
State Historic Preservation Officer

JUN 17 1988

Date