NPS Form 10-900 (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in <u>Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms</u> (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 10-900-a). Type all entries.

•	,	
1. Name of Property		
Historic name Franciscan Mon	astery and Memorial	Church of the Holy Land
Other names/site number Fran	ciscan Monastery Co	mplex
O Tanakian		
2. Location		
Street & Number 1400 Quincy S	treet, N.E.	[ ]Not for Publication N/
City, town Washington		[ ]Vicinity N/A
State District of Columbia Cod	de DC County Code	001 Zip Code 20017
	ory of Property  x] Building(s)  ] District  ] Site  ] Structure  ] Object	No. Resources w/in Prop. Contr. Noncontrib.  11 2 Buildings 1 0 Sites 6 0 Structure 2 2 Objects
Name of related multiple proper N/A	•	20 4 Total Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification		——————————————————————————————————————
As the designated authority under the N	National Historic Pre	eservation Act of
1966, as amended, I hereby certify that		
for determination of eligibility meets		
registering properties in the National		
meets the procedural and professional r		
60. In my opinion the property [ ] me		meet the National
Register criteria. [ ] See continuat	ion sheet.	
10000		9.2
		9-30-91
Signature of certifying official		Date
State or Federal agency and bureau		
In my opinion, the property [ ] meets Register criteria. [ ] See continuati		the National
Signature of commenting or other offici	al	Date
	A	
State or Federal agency or bureau		
5. National Park Service Certification	^	
I, hereby, certify that this property i	s: Patrick W. Andre	
$[\sqrt{\ }]$ entered in the National Register.	Patrick W. Mall	y 1/17/92
( ) see continuation sheet		<del></del>
[ ] determined eligible for the		
National Register. (see		
continuation sheet).		
[ ] determined not eligible for the		
National Register.		
[ ] removed from the National Register		
[ ] other, (explain:)	/	
<del>6</del>	Signature of the K	eeper Date of Action
6. Function or Use		
Historic Functions (enter categories	Current Function	s (enter
from instructions)	categories from	
RELIGION/religious structure	RELIGION/religio	
RELIGION/church-related residence	RELIGION/church-	
estigion/chutch-related residence		
	<u>residen</u>	ce

/ + +
(enter categories
uctions)
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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

# **OVERVIEW**

The Franciscan Monastery Complex (the "Complex") is located on a hill named Mount Saint Sepulcher in the primarily residential neighborhood of Brookland in northeast Washington. The Monastery complex rests on Square 3999 (Old Square 3998), Parcel 146, Lot 72. The Byzantine-style buff-colored brick church, designed by Italian architect Aristides Leonori, is the centerpiece of the complex--a cloistered area of ground which also contains small chapels, outdoor shrines, statuary, a cemetery, and landscaped gardens. The front portion of the site is defined by an exposed aggregate concrete ambulatory known as the Rosary Portico.

The contributing and non-contributing sites, buildings, structures, and objects are listed below by category. These include:

# CONTRIBUTING ELEMENTS

#### Sites

The entire Monastery site, including its courtyard, gardens with shrines, former agriculture land, cemetery, and the Valley of Shrines with the Stations of the Cross (site begun in 1898).

# Buildings (in chronological order)

- 1. A remaining portion of a barn (1898)
- 2. The Monastery, both Church and Cloister (1899, with additions in 1941 and 1949)
- 3. The greenhouse and its attached barnhouse (1915 and unknown)
- 4. Tomb of the Blessed Virgin (1916)
- 5. Chapel of St. Anne (1916)
- 6. St. Paschal's Chapel (1917)
- 7. The Chapel of the Ascension (1925)
- 8. The Chapel of the Portiuncula (1926)
- 9. The Maintenance Plant (1928)
- 10. The Franciscan Center (1931)
- 11. The Alverna Chapel (date unknown)

8. Statement of Significance		
Certifying official has considered relation to other properties:	the significance of this pro	operty in
	[ ] statewide [ ] lo	ocally
Applicable National Register Criter	ia [ x]A [ ]B [ x ]C	C [ ]D
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions	) [ x]A [ ]B [ ]C [ ]	]D [ ]E
Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)		Significant Dates
Architecture Religion	1899-1941	1899
	Cultural Affiliation N/A	
	Architect/Builder LEONORI, Aristides	
Significant Person	MURPHY, Frederick & OLMSTE	D, Walter

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

# OVERVIEW STATEMENT AND NATIONAL REGISTER QUALIFICATION

The significance of the Franciscan Monastery is twofold and matches Criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places: 1) the Monastery is the headquarters of the Commissariat of the Holy Land for the United States. As such, it reflects an essential part of the history of the Order of Friars Minor: its responsibility for the actual preservation of the Shrines of the Holy Land (by their recreation, in facsimile, on the Monastery grounds) and for the education of Americans for the work of the Holy Land (Criterion A); 2) the Monastery is an important example of ecclesiastical design and is evidence of the skill and craftsmanship of three architects (one Italian and two Americans) and one pioneering architectural sculptor: original architect, the Servant of God Aristides Leonori; subsequent architects Vernon Murphy and Walter Olmsted; and architectural sculptor, John Joseph Earley (Criterion C).

The Monastery Complex is an exception to the National Register guidelines discouraging ecclesiastical structures from being listed on the National Register. It qualifies for listing because the Monastery matches both of the stated criteria for such an exception. It derives its primary significance: 1) as an outstanding architectural complex, and 2) for its historical association.

# 9. Major Bibliographic References

Previous documentation on file (NPS):  [NA] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)  [NA] previously listed in the NR  [NA] previously determined eligible by the National Register  [NA] designated a National Historic Landmark  [NA] recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #  [NA] recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #	<pre>[ X] See continuation sheet Primary location of add. data: [ ] State SHPO office [ ] Other State agency [ ] Federal agency [ ] Local government [ ] University [X ] Other Specify repository:     Franciscan Monastery Archives</pre>
10. Geographical Data	
Acreage of property <u>44 acres</u>	
UTM References	
	1 / 1/6 /3 /0 /
Zone Easting Nor	thing
B /1 /8 / /3 /2 /8 /4 /0/0 / /4 /3 /1	/1 /6 /3 /0 /
Zone Easting Nor C /1/8 /3/2/7/7/0/ /4/3/1/1/ Zone Easting Northing	2/3/0/
Zone Easting Northing	2, 3, 3,
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Zone Easting Northing	
	<pre>[ ] See continuation sheet</pre>
	2000
Tranka I Barra	
Verbal Boundary Description The property is located primarily on Lots 7 3999 (Old Square 3998). This area is bound division between the Monastery and the U.S. on the east by the rear lot line of the hom and to the south by the alley behind Otis S site extends from the southern border of the Street, but extends to the west at Quincy S Franciscan Center (located within Square 396 St. to meet the northern border.	ed on the north by the lot Catholic Conference residence; es on the west side of 17th St.; t. The western border of the e site northwards up 14th treet to include the 1931
	[ ] See continuation sheet
Boundary Justification	
The property contains all but a small portice the property since 1898.	on of the land associated with
ene property since 1050.	[ ] See continuation sheet
<b>11. Form Prepared By</b> Name/title <u>Elizabeth Jo Lampl, Judith Helm I</u>	Pohinson
Name/title_ <u>Elizabeth Jo Lampi, Judith Helm i</u> Organization <u>Robinson &amp; Associates</u>	Date_September 1991
Street & Number 1710 Connecticut Ave., N.W.	
City or Town Washington	State <u>District of Columbia</u>

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#### Structures

- 1. The Grotto of Lourdes (1913)
- 2. The Grotto of Gethsemane (c. 1915)
- 3. The Jewish Tomb (c. 1915)
- 4. The Coptic Chapel of the Holy Family in Egypt (c. 1915)
- 5. The Grotto of the Agony (c. 1915)
- 6. The Rosary Portico (1925)

# Objects

- 1. Statue of St. Francis and the Turtle Doves (1899 ?)
- 2. The Statue of St. Christopher and the Christ Child (c. 1924)

#### NON-CONTRIBUTING ELEMENTS

- 1. The paint shop (1943)
- 2. Statue of Father Godfrey Schilling (1955)
- 3. The Statue of St. Bernadette (1958)
- 4. The two-car garage (unknown date, non-contributing due to utilitarian nature)

# THE SITE AND MONASTERY COMPLEX

The Monastery Complex occupies approximately 44 acres<sup>1</sup> that include Lots 71 and 72 of Parcel 142, Square 3999 and a portion of Square 3968. This area

The Order of the Friars Minor puts the acreage of the Monastery at 44 acres. The 1968 Baist Atlas, the last available Atlas for which acreage is given, provides the following information: The Commissariat for the Holy Land of the United States owns two Lots on Parcel 146. Lot 72, the Lot which contains the Monastery, is comprised of 10.9674 acres. Lot 71, which includes the land behind and surrounding the Monastery, is comprised of 21.0054 acres. (Baist Atlas, 1968, Volume 4, Plate 9.)

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is bounded on the north by the lot division between the Monastery and its northern neighbor, the United States Catholic Conference residence; on the east by the rear lot line of the homes on the west side of 17th Street; and to the south by the alley behind Otis Street. The western border of the site extends from the southern border of the site northwards up 14th Street, but extends to the west at Quincy Street to include the 1931 Franciscan Center (located at the southeast corner of Square 3968) before continuing up 14th Street to meet the northern border<sup>2</sup>.

The Monastery Complex is one of several ecclesiastical structures in this northeastern section of the city, the largest being the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Other institutions of religious affiliation include the Catholic University Campus, the Trinity College campus, and the Howard University Divinity School (the former Holy Name College, built in 1930 by the Friars of the Province of the Most Holy Name<sup>3</sup>).

Approaching the Monastery on Quincy Street from the west, one passes the Franciscan Center, a California Mission-style building designed in 1931 by Murphy and Olmsted to function as a reception hall for church visitors and part of the Monastery Complex being nominated. The Monastery Complex proper begins on the east side of 14th Street with a sloping front lawn, landscaped with trees and shrubs. Set slightly back from the street behind this front lawn is the arcaded walk known as the Rosary Portico. The walk

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Originally, the eastern boundary extended to Queens Chapel Road (18th Street, NE). Between 1907 and 1937, the eastern border was changed to the alley behind Otis Street. The land was presumably either sold of taken by the city in order to construct 17th Street.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The College sits on Squares 4157, 4161, 4158, and 3997 and is Parcel 146, Lot 70. The striking, polycromatic Art Deco structure was designed by Philadelphia architect Chester Oakley in 1930 as a religious college. It was founded by the Friars of the Province of the Most Holy Name, a New York province whose jurisdiction extends along the east coast. Although the college and the Monastery were formerly joined by a road, they were distinct organizations.

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provides a cloister-like enclosure for the Monastery Church. The Monastery is partially concealed by large trees to the west and by a thick covering of trees to its north. To the far south, below the rim of trees, is a large open field (once farmed by the friars). Just south of the Monastery are tennis and basketball courts.

The entrance drive leads under the double-arched opening of the Rosary Portico into the Monastery grounds. The drive, originally made of the same exposed aggregate concrete as the Portico, forms an oval and exits once again through the Portico entrance. Within the walls of the Rosary Portico are a formal, landscaped courtyard and the Monastery. The Monastery is in the form of a five-fold Cross of Jerusalem with a large square cloister joined to the north/south transept. The style of the church is primarily Byzantine, and therefore very simple in exterior treatment. An Italian Gothic and Early Renaissance influence can be felt as well--primarily in the treatment of the central pediment.

There are several smaller structures and sites located within the Monastery complex. To the north of the Monastery is the small, stone Chapel of the Portiuncula. Behind it further to the east in the woods is the small Alverna Chapel, made from the same red brick as was used to design the interior walls of the cloister.

To the south of the Monastery, a walk leads to the Ascension Chapel and to a valley containing outdoor shrines. The Commissariat for the Holy Land provides a place where those who are unable to visit the Holy Land may view holy shrines in facsimile. The path of this landscaped area is marked by the Stations of the Cross, buff-colored brick shrines with inset cast-metal relief panels. There are other pedimented brick and mosaic panel shrines in the Valley. Within the valley are exact replicas of the various shrines of the Holy Land.

Behind the Monastery at the foot of the hill to the east is the small Chapel of St. Paschal, constructed from the foundation stones of the former McCeeney farmhouse, which originally stood on the site. Also to the east is the cemetery, laid out in 1901 and still in use today. Father Godfrey Schilling, O.F.M., founder of the Monastery, is buried on this site.

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# THE ROSARY PORTICO AND GROUNDS

The first structure one sees on arriving at the site is the Rosary Portico, built in 1926 by John J. Earley, architectural sculptor, with the architectural firm of Murphy and Olmsted. This structure is based on the arcaded cloister walls of Romanesque monastic architecture. The Portico commemorates the 15 mysteries of the Rosary. The structure consists of a gateway and 15 small chapels, all connected by a colonnaded ambulatory of 1,100 feet. The wall is capped by a low-pitched tile roof. Within the chapels are glass mosaics from the late 1950s which replaced Earley's original relief carvings, by then significantly deteriorated from weather. These chapels contain the tablets of the Lord's Prayer and the Ave Maria in ancient and modern languages.

The walls of the Portico are made of exposed aggregate concrete and stucco. In Earley's signature technique, colored aggregate particles were blended so that the overall color and texture of the concrete are the same as that of the aggregate (see discussion of John J. Earley in Significance statement). The ambulatory's columns are in muted red, brown, and green and of differing patterns—spiral, braided, or diapered. The cornice of the Portico is articulated by a brick drip molding course at the gateway (with Latin inscriptions below it) and by dentils on the ambulatory. Like Brunelleschi's Hospitale degli Innocenti in Florence, the spandrels of the ambulatory are accented by roundels. The roundels contain ancient Christian symbols.

Within a niche on the outer wall of the Portico stands the near-lifesize statue of St. Bernadine of Siena. At the same point on the inside wall is St. Michael. These sculptures are made of cast, exposed-aggregate concrete and also are the work of John J. Earley.

The formal landscaped area between the Portico and the Church contains a rose garden--with 600 rose bushes planted along the perimeter--and freestanding sculptures. There are three sculptures within the courtyard in front of the church: 1) St. Francis and the Turtledoves, an 1899(?) bronze piece designed by sculptor Professor V. Rosignoli of Florence; 2)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The statue was dedicated in 1916.

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the Very Reverend Father Godfrey Schilling, O.F.M., the founder of the Monastery, a 1955 bronze work designed by sculptor F.C. Shrady of Ridgefield, Connecticut; and 3) St. Christopher and the Christ Child, a c. 1924 cast-stone work designed by John J. Earley. To the north of the Monastery and behind the Chapel of the Portiuncula is an oriental garden.

### THE MONASTERY

Almost every aspect of the church is symbolic of the Christian doctrine. The plan of the two-story buff-colored brick church is the five-fold cross, the coat-of-arms of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, the symbol of the five wounds of Christ. The main cross serves as the sanctuary and the smaller, one-story crosses<sup>5</sup> function as corner chapels. Originally, the floor of the church also contained a cross executed in Venetian glass mosaic. The surrounding flooring was Venetian tile. All but a small portion of this original flooring was removed during 1949 renovations and replaced with marble.

# Exterior

The church is an imposing, yet simple structure of tightly massed elements. Two circular apses protrude slightly from the north/south axis of the cross. These apses provided the only variation from an otherwise cubic edifice.

The foundation of the building is concrete and the walls brick. There is a wide concrete water table of elaborate profile. A low dome, of wooden peg construction, sits directly upon the juncture of the wooden-framed, pitched roofs of the cross. The entire roof and dome are clad in slate. Above the dome is a Byzantine-style lantern with windows.

While the Monastery is an expansive structure, its tall proportions and narrow, three-bay facade contribute to an overall vertical feeling. The virtually unadorned exterior befits Franciscan simplicity. Pairs and groupings of arched windows (sometimes set within arched niches), and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The "crosses" are not really cross-like in shape, but more cube-like in form.

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niches within the walls of the side chapels provide a subtle contrast to the continuous brick surfaces. The arched window openings are supported by pairs of colonnettes. All wooden trim is painted a mustard yellow color.

The facade consists of a central pediment, divided vertically into three bays and horizontally by two corbelled brick-and-concrete-block cornices and by a brick belt course at the middle of the ground story. On the ground story, elaborate Corinthian columns of acanthus leaves and a central sunflower motif are placed at regular intervals across the facade and around the corners to the side elevations of the central pediment. The second-story capitals are simpler, with a rose replacing the sunflower.

The central bay on the ground story contains the main entrance to the sanctuary. The entrance is surmounted by a brick, pedimented door hood, supported by two slender round columns. The hinged bronze double doors have five recessed panels each. Above the doors are five, round-headed stained glass windows framed in bronze which form a transom. Above this transom is a semicircular blue glass mosaic containing an image of the head of Christ, the Tau cross of St. Francis, and the arms of Godfrey de Bouillon, who redeemed the Holy Sepulcher from Paynim. To either side of the door are niches containing freestanding polychromatic ceramic figures.

A Palladian window in the center bay on the second story is a prominent indicator of Renaissance influence. To either side of this window on the second story are blank niches. Finally, the pediment, or gable end, contains the omnipresent five-fold cross.

#### Interior

The interior of the church, unlike the exterior, is highly elaborate. Most of this elaboration, however, is introduced by means of gilded features

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Leonori's intent was for the niches to be empty, as empty niches symbolize the Divine Presence. The polychromed ceramic glazed figures of St. Louis and St. Helena, currently located in the niches, are from the Art Deco period and are slated to be removed in the near future.

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(first introduced in the church in 1949), and ornamental sculpture, mosaics, and altarpieces from the 20th century.

Originally, the interior was far less elaborate. As in a Renaissance church interior, the architectural treatment consists of the breaking up of vast wall space into compartmentalized units and the coffering of the ceiling and the dome--the coffers being further embellished by bosses. Originally, the church walls were painted a greyish tint and the coffers accented in white for contrast. In 1949, however, the church was repainted, with many of the features--panels, columns, rosettes--gilded and the background color of the panels changed to a wine hue. Much of the coffered ceiling was painted a deep turquoise blue. Recently, the 1949 paint scheme was retained for the church's renovation.

The division between the nave and side aisles and chapels is by means of grouped arched openings. Seventy-five stained glass windows, designed by Professor F.X. Zettler of the Royal Bavarian Art Institute in Munich, were installed in 1911 and provide light and color to the interior. The figures in the windows represent the Saints of the Three Orders of St. Francis.

The elaborate decorative aspect of the church is revealed in the numerous shrines placed throughout the sanctuary. The church contains reproductions of the Grotto of Bethlehem, the Home of the Holy Family at Nazareth, the Holy Sepulcher, and other altars and shrines. Leonori visited Bethlehem, Nazareth, and other shrines in the Holy Land, measuring the dimensions of these Holy Places and noting the character of the materials in order to reproduce them faithfully at the Monastery.

The Great Center Altar was constructed in 1901, but demolished with the 1949 renovation. A new bronze Baldacchino was constructed c. 1949-50. The four columns of the Baldacchino represent the Four Evangelists and the statues represent the Twelve Apostles.

The four Marys of the Gospels also were painted in the pendentives of the dome during the renovation. The Mount Cavalry Shrine is a replica of the original shrine in Jerusalem. The lifesize sculptural depiction of the Crucifixion was designed and executed by John J. Earley and is recognized

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as one of his greatest accomplishments as a sculptor<sup>7</sup>. Other interior altars and chapels include the Sacred Heart Altar, the Holy Spirit Altar, and the four corner chapels which are dedicated to the Madonna, St. Joseph, St. Francis, and St. Anthony of the Penance.

Two sets of marble stairs in the transept lead below ground to facsimiles of the Roman catacombs of the second and third centuries. With the catacombs are underground chapels, including the Bethlehem Grotto, the Annunciation Grotto, the Crypt Altar of St. Benignus, the Purgatory Chapel and the Chapels of St. Cecilia and Sebastian, Roman Martyrs.

# The Cloister (or Friary)

The cloister building was originally in the plan of a large cube with four, slightly projecting corner blocks and a central cloister. Today, the northern wall of the cloister remains intact, while the southern wall has been altered by the above-mentioned addition made to the Monastery in 1941-42 by architect A. Hamilton Wilson.

The three-story cloister (two stories plus a raised basement) is very simple architecturally, resembling utilitarian industrial structures from the early 19th century (textile mills, for example) with its large, regularly spaced window openings. These flat- and round-arched windows have 2/2 and 4/4 sash. From an internal window overlooking the cloister, one can see the arcaded brick walls, an unusual clay red color. The landscaping of the inner courtyard is simple, yet formal, with a central circle and four radiating paths leading to the cloister ambulatory. In the center is a vast cistern.

The cloister--not open to the public--contains living quarters and work spaces. The lower floor is comprised of workshops--a tailor shop, barber

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Frederick Cron, <u>The Man Who Made Concrete Beautiful</u>, Fort Collins, Colorado, 1977, p. 28.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> The Friars believe that the cistern was probably the well-water supply for the MCeeney farmhouse and estate, as it was mentioned in an 1899 guide to the Monastery.

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shop, electrician's shop, multigraph room, kitchen, classrooms, and storage rooms. The number of workshops has declined since the founding of the Monastery, due to the decline in friars trained in the various trades. The upper floors contain the sparsely furnished cells of the friars. The cloister also contains a refectory (renovated since the original), a library, infirmary, recreation room, the Commissariat Offices, a post office, and choir chapel for the friars.

# Additions to the Monastery

A temporary structure that divided the public area from the cloisters was constructed between 1931 and 1937. In 1941-42, this was demolished to make way for a permanent addition. Designed by architect A. Hamilton Wilson, the one- and two-story permanent addition was located at the juncture of the church and the cloister, and extended eastwards along the south wall, terminating in an office wing. The new addition provided for a more prominently located and larger gift shop, parlors, an infirmary, and offices. Constructed of brick, concrete, and steel, the flat-roofed addition cost \$150,000 (Permit #247204). Its appearance is similar to that of the original church, with buff brick, relatively unadorned walls and regular fenestration. While sympathetic in architectural character, it nonetheless partially obscures the original geometric artfulness of the curved southern apse and squared cloister.

In 1949, two one-story brick vestibules were added to the church facade, to either side of the main entrance. (Permit #314697). These shallow vestibules are accented with a slight gable, to echo the central portico. The vestibules contain narrow mosaic-filled niches flanking the arched, double-paneled door.

# ATTENDANT BUILDINGS, STRUCTURES, AND OUTDOOR SHRINES

The principle, attendant (contributing) structures and sites of the Monastery Complex include:

<sup>9</sup> Baist Atlases, 1931 and 1937, Vol. 4, Plate 9.

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- 1) The Ascension Chapel, built in 1925 to resemble the chapel of the same name erected by the Crusaders on Mount Olivet. This octagonal concrete chapel with dome and two stories of arcaded walls was designed by John J. Earley. It contains his signature exposed aggregate work in its multicolored mosaic ceiling.
- 2) The Chapel of St. Paschal is a small, fieldstone chapel built in 1917 of the foundation stone from the McCeeney farmhouse. The Chapel was built by one of the early friars and consists of two arhced openings set within rubbled walls. It is covered by a slate-clad gable roof.
- 3) The Chapel of the Portiuncula (St. Mary of the Angels Chapel) was constructed in 1925-26 by Murphy and Olmsted (Permit #1877). This small, stone chapel is a copy of the Portiuncula in Assisi where St. Francis rejected his wealth and founded the Franciscan Order in 1209. The western elevation is a planar facade of narrow-coursed ashlar. There are no windows on this facade, only a single arched entrance containing panelled wooden doors. There is a bell-gable at the western end of the Chapel. The eastern elevation of the chapel is ivy-covered and the door is surmounted by a projecting, red tile hood.
- 4) The Chapel of Alverna is a small, red brick structure located behind the Church in the more private grounds of the Monastery.
- 5) The Franciscan Center was designed by Murphy and Olmsted in 1931. (Permit #140859). The building is a buff-colored brick building in the style of the early Californian Franciscan missions. It is a long, basilica-like building, with gable end to the street, a two-story central nave, and flanking one-story side aisles. It has a tile, pitched roof. The building serves as a reception/dining area for the Monastery's visiting pilgrims.
- 6) The buff-colored brick maintenance plant was constructed in 1928 and is joined to the Monastery by means of an underground tunnel. This structure is designed to complement the Monastery; it is a restrained structure judged contributing for its architectural form. The structure is one story on the facade, but is set on the edge of a steeply dropping slope, so that a full, two-story height, with long

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green-glass windows, is evident on the side elevations. Behind the rear elevation, to the north of the building, is a very tall brick stack. Adjacent to the maintenance building is a plainer structure, the 1943 paint shop/boiler room. To the east of the plant is a more recent two-car garage. These latter two structures are non-contributing elements of the Monastery complex.

- 7) The greenhouse and its attached barn house rest on the southern slope of the site. Early photographs show that the large greenhouse which stands today has been in existence since c. 1915. Building permit #403, July 25, 1915, describes the construction of one wood and concrete greenhouse, 20 feet by 125 feet, at a cost of \$3,000. The barn house architecture suggests a building of the mid-to-late Victorian era, but the specific original use of the building is unknown.
- 8) The remaining portion of a c.  $1898^{10}$  barn, the silo and stable of which burned in a fire, date unknown). This barn is located directly to the east of the greenhouse.

Within the site, significant features include:

1) The Valley of the Shrines is reached by descending a winding path marked by the Stations of the Cross. These stations are in the form of narrow, buff-colored brick gabled posts containing cast-metal relief carvings. Also in the vicinity are shrines of similar narrow brick post form, containing mosaic Christian images.

This valley, to the south of the church, was cleared for construction in c. 1903. The outdoor shrines were designed and constructed by John J. Earley. The first shrine to be constructed was the Grotto of Lourdes (1913). Within the next three years the following shrines were built: the Tomb of the Blessed Virgin, the Chapel of St. Anne, the Grotto of Gethsemane, the Jewish Tomb, the Coptic Chapel of the Holy Family in Egypt, and the Grotto of the Agony. There are also two

 $<sup>^{10}</sup>$  The date of this barn, according to the Monastery Archivist . . .

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statues in the valley: the Madonna statue and the 1958 statue of St. Bernadette, designed of marble by an unknown sculptor.

The Grottos of Lourdes and Gethsemane are reproductions of grottos found in France and Jerusalem, respectively. The Tomb of the Blessed Virgin and the Chapel of St. Anne are small chapel structures, the first of stone and the second of buff-colored brick.

2) The historic cemetery, the site of the remains of former friars of the Monastery, located to the east of the church and marked by white crosses. The cemetery's earliest graves date from the turn of the century. It is still used today.

# Conclusion

The Monastery Complex is comprised of an architecturally imposing church and cloister, surrounded by smaller-scale architectural and sculptural elements set within a significant site. Given that the purpose of the site is to educate the public about the Holy Land through facsimiles, the form and materials of these sculptural elements vary, as they are often reproductions. The entire tapestry of large- and small-scale chapels, statues, and shrines is woven together therefore not so much by architectural style, but by Christian theme. On a more secular level, however, the rather eclectic composition is integrated by gardens and paths, and by a muted color pallette of buff, gold, bronze, and clay. Finally, the site is introduced and partially embraced by the softly colored and textural Rosary Portico.

The Monastery Church and Cloister received one large-scale addition in 1941 and two, small vestibule additions in 1949. Neither of these changes has compromised the overall integrity of the structure. The church still proclaims its Byzantine and Italian Gothic/Renaissance heritage and is representative of the work of an Italian architect well-schooled in ecclesiastical tradition.

On the local level, three prominent architects are well represented at the Complex. The Rosary Portico, Ascension Chapel, and shrines display the fine craftsmanship of local architect and sculptor, John J. Earley. The rustic Chapel of the Portiuncula, the Rosary Portico, and the missionary

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Franciscan Center are evidence of the diverse talent of the firm of Murphy and Olmsted.

The building retains its integrity of workmanship and satisfies Criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places. The condition of the property is excellent, being well cared for by the Order of the Friars Minor, still in residence on the site.

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# HISTORY OF THE ORDER OF THE FRIARS MINOR OF THE COMMISSARIAT OF THE HOLY LAND

The Franciscan influence in the history of the world has been pervasive. The Franciscans aided Columbus in the discovery of America, established the first printing press in North America, discovered possibly the first reserve of petroleum oil in the world, chartered the Great Lakes, and established numerous California missions.

The Order of St. Francis has overseen the preservation and maintenance of the Holy Land Shrines for over 770 years. The Order is composed of three branches—the Friars Minor, the Friars Minor Conventionals, and the Friars Minor Capuchins (and numerous Brotherhoods and Sisterhoods of the Secular Franciscan Order, or the Third Order). The Friars Minor of the Custody of the Holy Land preserve shrines and churches and operate schools and missions in Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Cyprus and Rhodes. Followers of St. Francis resided in the Holy Land as early as 1219.

The American Commissariat for the Holy Land was founded in 1880 in New York City to interest the American public in the preservation and maintenance of the shrines of the Holy Land. It was later chartered as a college where American friars could be educated for work in the Holy Land. The Franciscan Monastery in Washington, D.C. was built so that those friars could study the religious culture of the Holy Land in their immediate surroundings, and so the greater public could be imbued with the spirit of the Holy Land as well, by visiting the Monastery's facsimiles.

# HISTORY OF THE SITE AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE MONASTERY

In 1632, a 44-acre tract was granted by King Charles I to George Calvert, the first Lord Baltimore. The land was known as "Cuckold's Delight" and passed through several hands until it finally came into the possession of the McCeeney family just prior to the Civil War. The McCeeney Farm stood on the property through the late 19th century. In 1897, Father Godfrey Schilling visited the deserted estate and envisioned a future monastery on its grounds. Construction of the church began in 1898, paid for by the sale of "building stones" sold at ten cents each, or a dollar a row. The old McCeeney farm served as the first residence of the Friars. The church

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and monastery were dedicated on September 17, 1899 and, as reported in <u>The Washington Post</u>, approximately 10,000 people passed through the church on that day.

# Archeological Statement 11

Beginning in 1898 with the construction of the Monastery and continuing through the early 20th century with the creation of the outdoor shrines, the land upon which the Monastery complex stands was excavated and greatly altered. The soil to the south and east of the Monastery consists of landfill at least 20" deep. An archeological investigation was undertaken in 1987 as part of a Brookland Community Historic Resources Survey, resulting in the recovery of artifacts from the post-World War II, and probably post-1970 era. The site is unlikely to yield further archeological remains.

# THE ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MONASTERY

The Monastery is an important example of European-inspired ecclesiastical design in the United States. Aristides Leonori, the architect of the Monastery was obviously well-schooled in his knowledge of ecclesiastical architecture, for he successfully combined several European influences into a simple, yet imposing edifice.

An article in the <u>Evening Star</u> described the planned construction of the Monastery (called "the church and chapel" in the article), as follows:

the structures will be plain and unpretentious, but the church and chapel will be interesting as a reproduction of a

<sup>11</sup> The archeological information contained in this nomination is taken from "Brookland Community/Catholic University Historic Resources Survey, Northeast Washington, D.C." The survey was undertaken by Robert Verrey, Ph.D and Laura Henley, archeologist, and the architectural discussion of the report written by Judith Capen, AIA. The survey was published in November 1987.

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style of ecclesiastical architecture which is not common in this country, although it is found in Europe. The ground plan of the church is that of a Latin cross, the altar being at the end of the long arm. There will be practically no aisles, as the space will be occupied by small chapels.

In the center of the church there will be a dome, supported on arches springing from four piers. The altar will be in what might be called the mezzanine story, some fifteen feet above the main floor of the church, and will be approached by steps. The nave will be 25 feet wide and about 110 feet long. The contractor is Mr. John S. Larcombe. 12

# Earlier Ecclesiastical Influences

Several sources are mentioned as inspirations for the design of the church, including Early Christian basilicas, Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, San Marco in Venice, Santa Croce in Florence, and La Certosa of Pavia. While the connection to Hagia Sophia and San Marco is apparent from a look at floor plans, the link to Santa Croce and La Certosa is less apparent in that both churches are far more elaborate in their exterior embellishment. The connection undoubtedly lies in Leonori's simplified treatment of the Monastery's three-part, pedimented Renaissance facade.

<sup>12</sup> Evening Star , "Real Estate Gossip," (probably 1898 or 99
but exact date uncertain).

The Franciscan Monastery, Diamond Jubilee, 1899-1974 publication states the following: "Architecturally, the monastery is a blending of San Marco and Santa Croce at Florence. It is simple, in accordance with the nature of the Order which founded it. The church is in the form of a five-fold cross, based on the general outlines of the Byzantine style, with a slight transition to the Italian renaissance (sic). The great Hagia Sofia and the beautiful Certosa of Pavia have adapted themselves to the purity of the Franciscan style."

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Early Christian architecture emerged in the fourth century with Constantine's declaration of Christianity as the state religion of the Roman Empire. The Early Christian basilica was a narrow, longitudinal building, entered at the western end, and defined by a long nave and side aisles. The basilica was lit by clerestory windows and capped by a flat, wooden roof. At the eastern end of the nave was the apse, a semicircular projection, and in front of it, the altar, often contained in a transept (or bema) placed at a right angle to the nave. These basilicas were extremely plain structures on the exterior, but lavish on the interior (a design echoed in the Franciscan Monastery church).

Concurrent with the preference for the longitudinal basilica, however, was the development of polygonal, domed structures, designed as baptisteries and funerary chapels during the Early Christian period.

Byzantine architecture emerged at the beginning of the fifth century A.D. with the division of the Roman Empire into two camps, the east, based in Constantinople, and the west, in Rome. The architectural style did not flourish, however, until the sixth century, under the unprecedented patronage of the Emperor Justinian. A landmark Byzantine Church, San Vitale, was constructed in Ravenna, Italy, between 526 and 547. In design it is similar to the polygonal baptisteries of the Early Christian era. San Vitale is octagonal in plan, with a domed central core, but unlike the earlier baptisteries, the structure is more imposing and the nave and side aisles are linked by the placement of semicircular chapels between the two. These latter two developments were inspired by transformations occuring in eastern Roman ecclesiastical architecture.

The greatest triumph of Byzantine architecture, Hagia Sophia, was built in 532-537 in Istanbul. Hagia Sophia represents the marrying of the Early Christian basilica plan with the eastern central domed church plan. The plan of Hagia Sophia shows its basilica-derived longitudinal axis, but the square central domed section is derived from the eastern (and Ravenna-type) model. It is at Hagia Sophia that pendentives first appear, the spherical triangles which mark the transition from the top of the arched walls to the rim of the dome. (Pendentives figure prominently in the design of the Monastery as well.)

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The churches of the "Second Golden Age" or later Byzantine period (between the late ninth to the eleventh century), were modest in comparison with Hagia Sophia. It is the plan of these church types, however, that is most similar to that of the Monastery. These churches were organized in the form of a Greek Cross (the arms of the cross being of equal length) contained within a square. On one side was a a narthex (an entrance hall, or porch) and on the other, an apse. In some instances, the apse was flanked by chapels. These churches usually had taller proportions and thus, a more vertical feel, but the dome on a square base remained the central feature. The most ornate church of this late Byzantine period was San Marco in Venice, begun in 1063. By comparing the floor plans of San Marco and the Monastery one can see a clear connection between the two.

The link to Santa Croce in Florence and La Certosa in Pavia is less apparent. Santa Croce is a Gothic basilica-plan church with a flat, wooden roof while Certosa is an Early Renaissance church of the same general floor plan. Both churches have facades comprised of a central pediment divided into two full stories and a three-bay organization. These marble facades are far more elaborate, however, than the Monastery facade. Whether intended or not, the Monastery facade treatment is actually more closely allied to simpler Early Renaissance churches such as that of Santa Maria delle Carceri in Prato.

# Aristides Leonori

Aristides Leonori, the architect of the Monastery, studied these structures and was intimately familiar with the history of ecclesiastical planning and design. He was a greatly respected ecclesiastical architect in Rome during the late 19th century. Leonori was assisted on the Monastery project by his brother Pio, who acted as construction supervisor.

Aristides Leonori was born in Rome on July 28, 1856 and was schooled as a youngster in Jesuit institutions. In 1875 he received his licentiate and graduated in 1880 as an Architectural Engineer. Between 1884 and 88, he

The <u>Franciscan Monastery</u>, <u>Diamond Jubilee 1899-1974</u> publication, produced by the Monastery, refers to Leonori as the "foremost ecclesiastical architect of Rome."

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studied architecture and practiced under Professor Vespignani of Rome. During this period, he was commissioned by the Vatican to carry out prestigious works on important church structures, principally the restoration of St. John Laterans, the Papal Cathedral of Rome.

Leonori's entire architectural career was devoted to the designing and restoring of ecclesiastical structures, including many works in Rome, as well as works in Washington, St. Louis, Chicago, and Buffalo<sup>15</sup>. The Franciscan Monastery was not his only work for the Commissariat, as he also designed the Church of St. Joseph in Cairo, completed in 1909. In all, Leonori completed 41 ecclesiastical projects (churches, bell towers, orphanages, chapels, etc.) around the world.

Leonori was a highly devout individual, a member of the Tertiary Order of the Friars Minor (the lay Order). He spent his later years operating shelters for poor children.

# Murphy and Olmsted

Carrying on the tradition of employing ecclesiastical architects, the Commissariat hired the Washington, D.C. firm of Murphy and Olmsted, beginning in 1913, to further improve the Monastery and its grounds.

The firm of Murphy and Olmsted was formed in 1911 and was comprised of Frederick Vernon Murphy and Walter B. Olmsted. Murphy and Olmsted designed the entrance gates and ambulatory of the Monastery in 1926 (with John J. Earley), in addition to designing the Franciscan Center, the Chapel of the Portiuncula, a greenhouse, the underground crypts, and at least one of the grottos.

In 1899 (the year the Franciscan Monastery was built), Frederick Murphy was working as a draftsman for the Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury. In 1905 he traveled to Paris to attend the Ecole des Beaux Arts

<sup>15</sup> Leonori completed work on the Cathedral of St. Louis c. 1908 and on the Gothic-style Cathedral of St. Joseph in Buffalo, New York in 1911-13. He also designed the Bishops Mausoleum in Chicago (date unknown).

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on a scholarship, and returned, having been accorded honors. Between 1907 and 1908 he worked for Carrere and Hastings, and then returned to the Treasury Department. In addition to starting a firm with Olmsted in 1911, Murphy was appointed Dean of the School of Architecture at Catholic University the same year. His tenure at Catholic lasted 39 years, until 1950. Murphy was the associate architect to Maginnis and Walsh for the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception at Catholic University. In addition to his work at Catholic, Murphy held several influential positions on architectural commissions, including the design committee for the House of Representatives Office Building, the Fine Arts Commission, and the Board of Registrars for Architects of the District of Columbia. In 1937 he served as President of the Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

Murphy's partner, Walter Olmsted, also had worked for the Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury. (Very little else is known to date about Walter B. Olmsted.) The firm of Murphy and Olmsted had offices at 1213 H Street, NW and lasted through 1937, the year in which Olmsted died.

The firm designed many ecclesiastical works, both within Washington and across the country. Many of the firm's ecclesiastical works were done in conjunction with John J. Earley, the architectural sculptor. The firm's Washington ecclesiastical works include:

- 1) The Shrine of the Sacred Heart (16th Street and Park Road, NW), 1922.
- 2) The John W. Mullen of Denver Memorial Library in Washington, DC, 1929.
- 3) Georgetown Lutheran Church (1556 Wisconsin Avenue), 1914.
- 4) St. Francis de Salles Church and Rectory (1221 Rhode Island Avenue), 1920.
- 5) St. Francis Xavier Church (2800 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE), 1937.
- 6) St. Thomas College (for the Paulist Fathers) at 3015 4th Street, NE, in Brookland, DC.
- 7) St. Anselm's Abbey (14th and D Streets, NE), 1930.

The firm also laid out the campus plan and designed numerous structures for Catholic University, and designed many private residences in the Brookland neighborhood.

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Between 1937 and 40, Murphy worked on his own for two years. In 1940, he formed a partnership with his former student and employee, Thomas Locraft, which lasted until 1958.

# John Joseph Earley

John Joseph Earley was an architectural sculptor and a pioneer in the use of exposed aggregate concrete. His work at the Monastery included the design of the Rosary Portico (with Murphy and Olmsted), the Ascension Chapel, the statue of St. Christopher and the Christ Child, the Crucifixion altar, the altar and carved reredos panels of the Chapel of Saint Anthony, and other sculpted altars including the Madonna, St. Joseph, St. Francis, Holy Spirit, Sacred heart, Transfiguration of the Holy Sepulcher, and panels in the church.

He began to learn the trade of architectural sculpture at the Earley Studio, an architectural art firm founded by his father in 1889. The Earley Studio was a national pioneer in the development of exposed aggregate architectural precast concrete. Exposed aggregate architectural concrete (also known as mosaic concrete) was introduced in the United States in 1915 at Meridian Hill Park in Washington by the Earley Studio. The Commission of Fine Arts had refused to approve the use of plain reinforced concrete retaining walls for the park, and hired John J. Earley and his associate Basil G. Taylor to find a suitable alternative. Following the suggestion of Cass Gilbert, a member of the Commission of Fine Arts, the two sought to create a concrete surface that would resemble the pebble mosaics of Italy. Earley achieved this look by stripping the forms before the concrete set, then exposing the yellow-brown Potomac River pebbles by brushing away the surface sand and cement. The result was a concrete, the color of which was true to the color of the aggregate.

John J. Earley used this new product in his specialization, ecclesiastical sculpture. In this capacity, he completed multiple projects with the firm of Murphy and Olmsted. He was also a prolific author on the subject of architectural concrete and served as President of the American Concrete Institute.

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The Earley Studio, under the direction of John J. Earley, also was responsible for the Parthenon at Nashville (1925); the interior of the Shrine of the Sacred Heart in Washington, DC (1928); the dome ornamentation for the Baha'i Temple in Illinois (1932); the Polychromed Houses in Silver Spring, Maryland (1934); mosaics in the Department of Justice Building (1935); and the mosaic ceiling of the portico of Washington National Airport (1941). John J. Earley died in 1946, but the firm remained in business in Manassas, Virginia until 1973.

# CONCLUSION

The Franciscan Monastery is a unique place in America, and certainly in Washington, D.C. It is the headquarters of the Commissariat for the Holy Land and a place of pilgrimage. It is the only place in the country where the shrines of the Holy Land have been recreated in facsimile. In addition, the site serves as a place where the Order of the Friars Minor of the Custody of the Holy Land (with headquarters in Jerusalem) can educate its students to fulfill its mission, the preservation of the shrines of the Holy Land.

The Monastery is also an important architectural work, designed by an Italian architect, Aristides Leonori, who studied the great ecclesiastical works of the Byzantine, Gothic, and Renaissance ages in order to design an edifice true to the teachings of Christianity and to the mission of the Franciscans. The Monastery Complex is a significant ecclesiastical work of the local firm of Murphy and Olmsted. The concrete work of John J. Earley is especially well represented.

The Monastery Complex is a rare property, still in the hands of its original owners, and functioning as it did in 1899. All modifications to the property and grounds have been in keeping with the original character of the site. The Complex has thus maintained a high degree of integrity.

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# 8. SIGNIFICANCE

Architect/Builder EARLEY, John Joseph

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#### **PHOTOGRAPHS**

The following information is the same for all photographs:

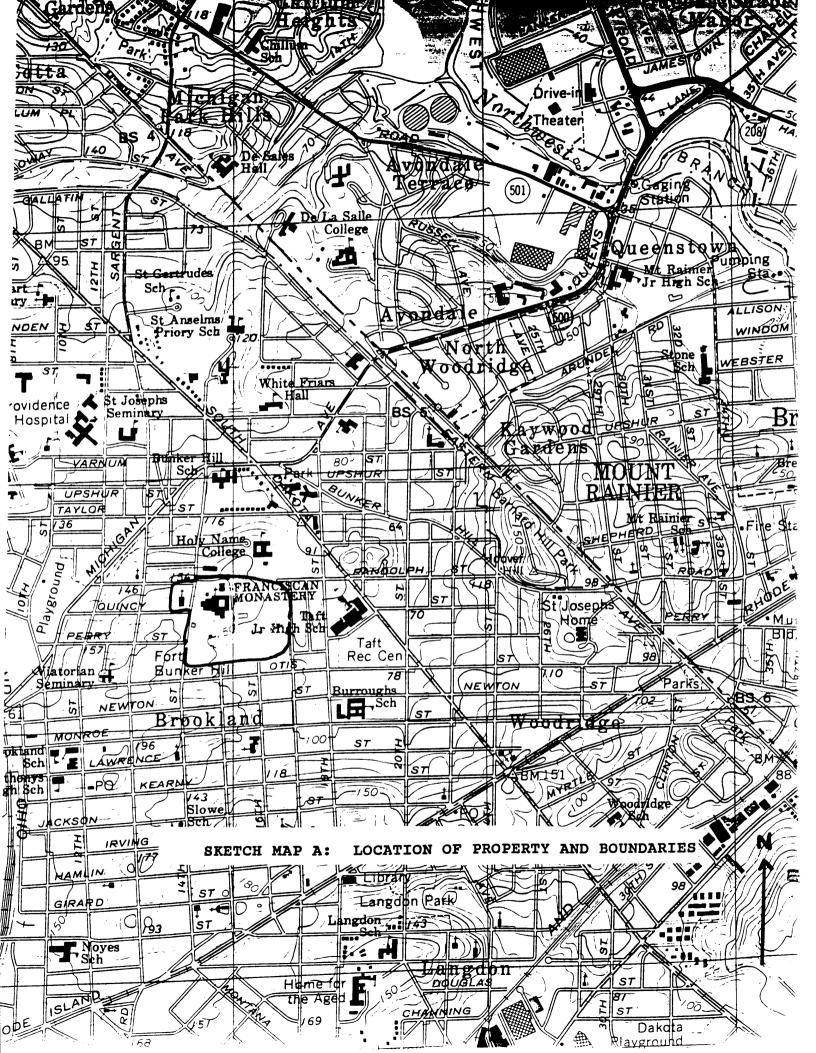
- 1. Franciscan Monastery Complex
- 1400 Quincy Street, Washington, DC 2.
- Elizabeth Lampl, photographer 3.
- November 1989, date of photograph 4.
- Robinson & Associates, location of original negatives

Particular information for photographs follows:

- View of Rosary Portico and Monastery Church facing east 1.
- 2. View of Monastery Church facing north
- 3.
- View of Monastery facing northeast View of Statue of Father Godfrey Schilling facing north 4.
- View of Rosary Portico facing west 5.
- View of cloister facing southeast 6.
- View of Chapel of the Portiuncula facing east 7.
- View of Franciscan Center facing northwest 8.
- View of Ascension Chapel facing south

Historic photographs are also included with the nomination. (These were donated by the Monastery Archives and are not on acid-free based paper.) Historic photographs depict the following:

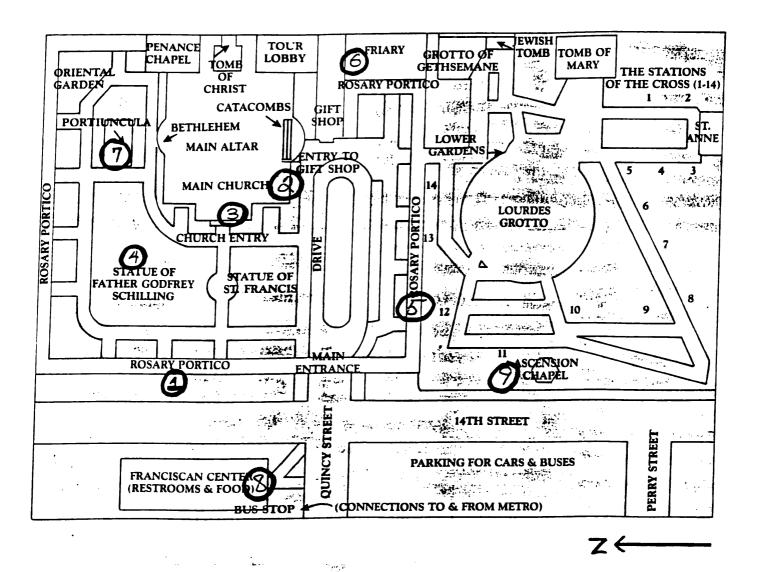
- An aerial view of the Monastery Site c. 1915, prior to the 1941 1. addition and the construction of attendant buildings.
- An aerial view of the site c. 1950, after the addition and with 2. the construction of the Franciscan Center, the Rosary Portico, and the Chapel of the Ascension.
- 3. View of the facade, early 1900s.
- View of the exterior of the Church and Closter, c. 1900 4.
- An interior view of the Main Sanctuary in 1899 5.
- An interior view of the Chapel of St. Cecilia in Catacombs, c. 6. mid-1900s.



# THE FRANCISCAN MONASTERY

The Holy Land of America





SKETCH MAP B: LAYOUT OF SITE WITH PHOTOGRAPH LOCATIONS KEYED TO PLAN