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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

St. Francis de Sales Church

AND/OR COMMON

St. Francis de Sales Church

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

2653 Ohio Street

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

St. Louis

— VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

#3 - Hon. Richard A. Gephardt

STATE

Missouri

CODE

29

COUNTY

St. Louis City

CODE

510

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

The Archdiocese of St. Louis

STREET & NUMBER

4140 Lindell

CITY, TOWN

St. Louis

— VICINITY OF

STATE

Missouri 63108

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the Recorder of Deeds, St. Louis City Hall

STREET & NUMBER

12th and Market Streets

CITY, TOWN

St. Louis

STATE

Missouri 63103

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

1. Public Art in St. Louis, Mary Powell

DATE

1925

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

St. Louis Public Library

CITY, TOWN

St. Louis

STATE

Missouri

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

ST. FRANCIS de SALES CHURCH

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 6 PAGE 1

-
- | | | |
|----|---|-------|
| 2. | <u>Historic Churches in St. Louis: A Self-Guided Tour</u>
1976
Published: St. Louis: Archdiocesan Council of the Laity | local |
| 3. | <u>The Building Art in St. Louis: Two Centuries</u>
1967
Published: St. Louis: American Institute of Architects,
St. Louis Chapter | local |
| 4. | Missouri State Historical Survey
1977
Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101 | state |

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" 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 _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

While the ultimate architectural sources of the church of St. Francis de Sales are German medieval hall churches, a closer parallel can be drawn between the forms of St. Francis and those of German Gothic Revival churches: St. Johannis Kirche--Stuttgart, 1876, the Neue Evang. Lutherische Kirche--Frankfurt A.M., 19th century, St. Johannis Kirche--Alton, 1873. (There appears to have been no attempt to place St. Francis de Sales in the evolutionary lineage of American Gothic revival architecture, a phenomenon largely English in origin.) In that the original plan was drawn up in Germany by a German architect, St. Francis de Sales was originally conceived as a German Gothic revival church; church documents give reference to a direct derivation from the Cathedral of Frankfurt and St. Paul's in Berlin. This documentation is, however, questionable.

The only reference to a St. Paul's in Berlin which appears in Baedeker's 1908 guidebook indicated that the Apostel-Paulus Kirche (St. Paul's) is actually located in the town of Schoneberg. (Connected to Berlin by road, Schoneberg is, however, politically independent of Berlin.) St. Paul's is described as a brick church built by Schwechten; its style is not mentioned. However, to the east of St. Paul's is St. Matthias Kirche, designed by Seibertz in the Gothic style.¹ The 1964 Baedeker's guidebook dates St. Matthews at 1893-5, just prior to the conception of St. Francis de Sales.² Both the Diamond Jubilee and the centennial booklets attest to the fact that in 1894, Father Peter Lotz of St. Francis de Sales traveled to Berlin to consult with German architect E. Seiberts. (Since this version was not built, the details known of this plan have been included in Section 8, "Significance".) Given the similarities in the name of the architect, the common link with Berlin, the overlap of dates and the stylistic analogies, it is highly probable that the derivation of St. Francis de Sales has been wrongly attributed to St. Paul's. St. Matthew's appears to be a more likely model.

The question of origin of the revised and built St. Francis de Sales remains somewhat problematic. Klutho and Ranft, St. Louis architects called in to modify the Seiberts(z) design after the death of Father Lotz, deleted and altered major elements of the composition. As mentioned in Section 8, two flanking facade towers and the two transept arm towers were deleted along with much of the exterior ornamentation. Tan brick, dressed with granite and limestone, was substituted for the more expensive cut stone. The result is an edifice which might appear to be a Gothic revival church in Germany. Although St. Francis de Sales was modified, the revised product is nevertheless a manifestation of the union of Catholicism, Gothic symbolism and German-American nationalism.

The exterior of St. Francis de Sales appears to be a combination of mid-thirteenth century Gothic forms and nineteenth century adaptations of these same forms. (See Photo #1) Although there is but one tower at St. Francis de Sales, it is very similar to those of St. Elizabeth at Marburg, Germany. Characteristic to each is buttressing which rises to four small octagonal turrets at the tower roof level. Between these turrets are four small attic windows from behind which rises the conical, octagonal tower roof. The nature of the elements which pierce

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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DATE ENTERED

ST. FRANCIS de SALES CHURCH

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

and decorate the enframed tower wall space is, however, different in both towers. At Marburg these elements are three windows--arranged from top to bottom as smallest, largest, and intermediate--between which are two decorative bands. At St. Francis de Sales, however, the elements are more numerous leaving almost no wall space without decoration. In addition the elements--which are top to bottom a blind arcade, a window enframing a clock in the uppermost portion, a mosaic portrait of St. Francis, another blind arcade, and lastly, a rose window--are relatively the same in size and importance.

To St. Elizabeth at Marburg is attributed the beginnings of the medieval hall church style, (St. Elizabeth was begun in 1235 and construction continued until about 1270.)³ The nave of St. Francis de Sales is that of a German medieval hall church. The height of the vaults of the side aisles is that of the vaults of the main aisle. The four-bay nave is crossed by a transept (which is relatively unpronounced) terminating at the west end in the choir and two diagonally placed chapels. The ratio of the width of the side aisle bay to the main aisle bay is about two to one. This fact together with the de-emphasis of the transept attribute to the basic spatial integrity of the interior. The nave piers, placed diagonally to create oblique vistas, are cruciform in shape with applied pilasters. Quadripartite vaults rise from the crocket capitals which surmount the piers.

The eclecticism of the interior of St. Francis de Sales is a separate system from that of the exterior. The styles of the interior elements span a period of three centuries--the twelfth, the thirteenth, and fourteenth. The pier bases, which date from about 1270 to 1300, are French in origin.⁴ Rising from the pier bases are cruciform columns with applied pilasters. In that a pilaster has replaced a half column, the piers are poor reproductions of Gothic pier forms, such as those at Marburg. The finale of this stylistic hodgepodge is a good reproduction of a fourteenth century crocket capital.

The interior of St. Francis de Sales was redecorated for the centennial by the firm of Paul G. Schanbacher and Company from Springfield, Illinois.

The artists first concentrated on saving and cleaning and refurbishing the highly decorated ceilings of the church structure. After this was done then the plan called for new and gothic-like (sic.) decoration work on the tall pillars and the large sanctuary areas. . . . The altars of the church were cleaned during 1966 when the church interior was decorated but the actual re-decoration and painting of our majestic main altar and the four other side altars, those of the Blessed Mother and St. Joseph, Our Sorrowful Mother (the Pieta) and that of Our Mother of Perpetual Help, plus the two shrines of Our Lord in Agony in the Garden and the other of the Holy Family, all were completed during our centennial year of 1967.⁵

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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ST. FRANCIS de SALES CHURCH

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

Although black and white photographs taken before and after the extensive redecoration do not adequately convey the overall effect of the changes, a careful comparison between Photo #2 and Photo #3 (with additional information as to past and present color schemes) should prove helpful. The first photo documents the only original decoration applied to the structural elements: a small-scale, restrained pattern covering only the curved sections of the shafts. The bulk of the shafts, as well as the vaulting, was left unadorned. Photo #3 gives strong hints as to the spirit of the transformation; the heavy, repeated stencil pattern applied to the engaged columns is obvious. The more recent photo, however, cannot portray the effect of the gold stencil on dusty rose paint, the tones of tan paint now covering the base of the column, or the marbleized buff paint which obliterates the masonry construction. The vaulting has also been painted with dusty rose and blue. The original ceiling, restored rather than redecorated, features tendrils of red and green. Now overpowered and at odds with the colors applied to the base, shaft, and vaulting, the colors in the ceiling were probably those of the original pattern on the shafts. The only clue as to the inspiration for the arresting new color scheme is the patterned composition tile which covers the main and side aisles.

Meanwhile, the handsome glass windows from Bavaria⁶ sparkle in a cluttered stage. While the impact of the stained glass is that of primary colors, the windows are actually composed of a tremendous palette of pieces. Beginning at Mary's Altar to the left of the sanctuary are windows depicting St. Agnes, St. Rose, Our Lady of Lourdes and St. John the Baptizer. The main window in the transepts portrays the Twelve Apostles each holding a symbol of their office. The all-seeing eye of God is placed at the top of the main section. The lower windows in the left transept are of St. Mary Magdalen and St. John Nepomuk. Most of the lower windows in St. Francis have names of other, neighboring south St. Louis Catholic Churches - St. Agatha, St. Margaret etc. Windows associated with a specific German tradition include: St. Henry, St. Henry II, German Emperors; St. Boniface, missionary to Germany; Blessed Herman Joseph Steinfeld, and St. Irmingarde, the granddaughter of Charlemagne.

As mentioned earlier, the centennial refurbishing included cleaning and redecorating the main and side altars; they now feature white and gold with clear bright colors applied to the figures. (The stations of the cross are similarly treated.) Lower niches of the high altar contain wood carvings of the Nativity and the Resurrection. At the bottom of the altar are eight icons of angels depicting Psalm 150 where all instruments give praise to the Lord. The view from the high altar to the choir, Photo #4, includes new chandeliers and the pipes of a Kilgen organ; a new Wick console was installed for the centennial. Stone corbels in the Gothic figure tradition, fortunately left unpainted, appear to support the choir. Each figure holds in his hands the tools of his trade: the mallet and chisel of the brick layer, the T-square of the carpenter etc.

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ST. FRANCIS de SALES CHURCH

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

A mosaic baptistry from the 1950's replaced the shrine to Our Lady of Perpetual Help near the rear of the church. (The shrine was moved to the front of the church in the right transept.) The baptistry sparkles with gold and lapis-lazuli scroll-work and is considered a highlight of the interior. This writer, however, found the windows and remaining natural wood the finest elements. Carved oak confessionals and pews are very well done while the fine carving of the canopied pulpit and altar rail is outstanding.

While one might long to turn back the clock some fifteen years, the aesthetic problems for the purist are achievements greatly valued by most of the parishioners. Indeed, some of the same drive which built the church in the beginning of the century has unintentionally blurred the creation and taste of that earlier generation. If the parish perseveres perhaps the next committee for redecoration will return to the church archives for inspiration.

FOOTNOTES

1. Karl Baedeker, Berlin and its Environs (Freiberg: Baedeker, 1908), p. 174.
2. Karl Baedeker, Berlin (Freiberg: Baedeker, 1964), p. 187.
3. Paul Frankl, Gothic Architecture (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1962), p. 128.
4. Webster's New International Dictionary (Springfield, MA: G. & C. Merriam Co., 1941), p. 1877.
5. St. Francis de Sales Parish, 1867-1967, St. Louis, Missouri (Quincy, IL: P A M Printers, 1967), p. 54.
6. Archdiocesan Council of the Laity, Historic Churches in St. Louis, A Self-Guided Tour (St. Louis: Archdiocesan Council of the Laity, 1976), p. 17.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1908 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Klutho and Ranft

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Subordinate commercial buildings line Jefferson Avenue and Gravois Road (the major avenues of approach to St. Francis de Sales) which converge virtually at the doorstep of the imposing "Cathedral of the Southside". St. Francis is Gulliver in the Land of the Liliputians--the element which dominates the countless brick, two- and three-story vernacular residences in the surrounding neighborhood. The hill site further arrests the cadence while the massiveness and stylistic uniqueness of the structure draw and retain the attention of the viewer. A single steeple, visible long before the body of the church, serves as a point of reference for most of the city. (See Photograph #5.)

Located at the corner of Lynch and Ohio Streets just west of Jefferson and north of Gravois, the significance of St. Francis de Sales as a fine example of German-American Gothic Revival architecture is intertwined with the Catholic heritage and values of the German immigrant community which founded the church and helped determine the development of the city of St. Louis.

The Germans who traveled from port-of-entries to St. Louis between 1830 and 1848 included professionals, craftsmen, peasants, Roman Catholics, conservative Lutherans, Evangelicals, and Freethinkers. They spoke dialects based on region and class and were further separated by a rigid social structure headed by a secular and church landed aristocrats, aggravated by a long tradition of religious and civil wars. . . . The heterogeneous Germans of the 1830's quickly dispersed to almost all sections of St. Louis, Concentrations, rather than enclaves, of Germans developed and are documented by the 1850 census, the first U.S. census which differentiates between country of origin.¹

St. Louis in 1840 contained a population of 16,469 and ranked twentieth in the United States; of that number, between four and five thousand were German Catholics without the leadership of any "efficient" German clergymen.² Until the construction (1844) of St. Mary Victories at Third and Gratiot Streets, German-speaking Catholics from the southside attended Mass at special services at the Cathedral or in make-shift buildings on the Cathedral grounds. In May of 1845, Bishop Kenrick announced the division of the city into four parishes. The two German-speaking congregations, St. Joseph's on the near-north (Eleventh and Biddle Streets) and St. Mary of Victories, were not considered true parishes but subsidiary, where only German-speaking people could fulfill their religious obligations.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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ST. FRANCIS de SALES CHURCH

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

By 1850, St. Louis ranked sixth in the country with a population of nearly 80,000. The largest group of foreign-born was German: 22,340 compared to the second largest group, the Irish, with 9,719.³ Ward 1, Chouteau south to the city limits at Arsenal, contained the heaviest concentration of Germans. Ward 2, which included St. Mary of Victories, had become a Ward of first residency for Germans.⁴ The mid-century establishment and rapid growth of Saints Peter and Paul, soon to become the mother church to St. Francis de Sales, reflected the southwesternly movement of Germans into the Soulard subdivisions in Ward 1. (See Figure #1).

Saints Peter and Paul, which eventually would cover an entire city block, began with two small frame structures at Seventh and Allen. Schools, sodalities, altar societies, death benefit plans, charities for orphans, dramatic clubs, and a reputation for musical excellence were well established before the decision in 1873 to build a magnificent new church. J.T. Scharf, in his well-known History of St. Louis City and County published in 1883, made the following observations about the new building: "This church seats 3,000 persons, and the cost in 1875 was \$200,000. This debt was paid off without resorting to any raffle, bazaar, or fair."⁵

In 1867, at the outset of a post-Civil War boom, a small group of parishioners from Saints Peter and Paul who lived and worked in the small dairy farms and orchards near Jefferson and Gravois become vocal in their desires for a new parish. That same year, in spite of apprehensions from the Soulard-based members of Saints Peter and Paul, a site was purchased for \$4,000.00 and the cornerstone of the first church of St. Francis de Sales was laid by the Vicar General, Joseph Melchor. The description of the first Mass, celebrated on Christmas Day in 1867, would seem to support the concerns of the Soulardians.

It was a dismal day, dark and wet, and the roads knee deep with mud. The church was on the very outskirts of the city, without transportation and, consequently, the attendance at the Mass was very poor.⁶

Undaunted, the new congregation built a rectory to the west of the church. Unexplained difficulties between the first pastor, Father Ludwig Lay, and the congregation led to his resignation in 1869. By 1870, the second pastor, himself a new immigrant from Germany, reported an astonishing membership of 800 worshippers.⁷

Public transportation was the key factor in the transformation of the land around Jefferson/Gravois. Omnibus, then streetcars, created a new neighborhood around St. Francis de Sales. Parallel expansion occurred on the church grounds: 1872-classroom, hall and residence for the Sisters, 1883-new sanctuary and bell tower, 1888-Girls School under construction and the existing Boy's School remodeled.⁸

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

The population of the city of St. Louis reached 451,770 in the 1890 Census. At St. Francis, plans were underway for the construction of a new church to reflect the success of life in America yet recall the Germany of the 13th century. In 1894, land at the corner of Iowa and Lynch Streets was acquired and the old rectory razed. That same year Father Peter Lotz, pastor at St. Francis from 1878-1903, traveled to Berlin to consult with architect E. Seiberts.⁹ The Building Committee for the new church had estimated a cost construction of \$135,000; the estimate for the proposal brought back from the homeland was well over a half million dollars. (As designed by Seiberts, the new St. Francis de Sales was to be of cut stone, 330 feet high, one main and two flanking towers, a tower at each of the two transept arms and ornamental finials.) Notwithstanding opposition raised by parishioners hesitant to undertake a project of such proportions, construction commenced with the cornerstone laid on August 11, 1895, by the Right Rev. Vicar General, Henry Muehlsiepen.¹⁰ The funds necessary for the completion of the church could not be raised. A roof was erected over the unfinished basement, pending a further decision.

The desire to erect a symbol--drafted in Germany by a German architect--modeled after Medieval German prototypes is highly significant in a decade which produced the Wainwright Building, a system of Boulevards, Union Station, the first automobiles on city streets, and the consolidation of most of the transit lines into one, city-wide company. To much of the German community of St. Louis, the home and the parish remained the center of their lives. To some, technology and assimilation were perceived as threats to the faith and the future of their children.

The cyclone that struck St. Louis on May 27, 1896, destroyed the first church of St. Francis de Sales and laid waste to many homes in the parish. Repairs to neighborhood residences and businesses took precedence over and precluded fund raising for the new church. Instead, Mass was held in the unfinished basement. (Hurriedly appointed, the basement served as the church until 1908.)

On May 14, 1903, Father Lotz died. With his death came the final realization that the church, as planned, could not be built. As the foremost proponet of the Seiberts design, Father Lotz had hoped to construct "the largest and most beautiful church in St. Louis".¹¹ In September of 1906, it was decided to complete the church. Seiberts' plans were modified by St. Louis architects Klutho and Ranft and St. Francis de Sales became German-American, not German, Gothic Revival. The two flanking facade towers and the two transept arm towers were deleted along with much of the exterior ornamentation. Brick was substituted for the more expensive cut stone. On April 3, 1907, Father John Peters, assistant to the

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

successor of Father Lotz, Father Holwick, laid the first brick. The roof was raised in January of 1908 and the cross was attached to the steeple on May 27 as a gesture of recognition of the anniversary of the cyclone. St. Francis de Sales was dedicated by the Bishop of Belleville, the Rev. John Janssen. "Once again," stated the author of the Diamond Jubilee booklet, "they had a church which would fittingly express their love and gratitude for their priceless heritage--the true Faith."

By the occasion of the Golden Jubilee in 1917, the frescos and paintings in the transepts were completed. Fridolin Fuchs, a visiting German trapped in this country with the outbreak of World War I, undertook the work while a determined committee of 100 members of the Young Ladies Sodality visited each family in the parish once a month for a year seeking donations toward his fee of \$8,800.00.¹² Celebration of the 50th anniversary, however, was saddened by the large number of young men from the parish away in the War.

A bulletin of Public Art in St. Louis was first prepared in 1920 by the Reference and Art Departments of the St. Louis Public Library; the second edition, revised and expanded, was published in 1925. The section describing St. Francis de Sales is reproduced in full in order to illustrate contemporary evaluation of the building.

CHURCH OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES. This church on Gravois Road and Ohio Street is described by Mr. W.B. Papin as 'excellent in mass, but poor in detail and material. The interior is very impressive especially in late afternoon or after sundown--just at dusk. The painting of the walls, piers, and vaultings is good in design but not so good--though not bad--in color. There are elaborate, canopied Gothic altars.' The interior of the entrance vestibule should be noted.¹³

The mother church, SS. Peter and Paul in Soulard, fares better.

ST. PETER'S AND PAUL'S CHURCH. This Roman Catholic Church, at Eighth St. and Allen Avenue, is a notable example of German Gothic. Mr. W.B. Papin says of it: 'The exterior and interior are both very good, especially the triple apse (both on the exterior and interior). The buttresses and pinnacles are very well designed. Particularly noteworthy are the Stations of the Cross painted on the walls of the side aisles, beneath the windows. The pulpit and elaborate canopied wooden altars should be noted. The glass in the apse is excellent in design and color.'¹⁴

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DATE ENTERED

ST. FRANCIS de SALES CHURCH

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 4

The fifty some years since those words were written have brought very different fates to Saints Peter and Paul and St. Francis de Sales. Highway clearance, high-rise public housing projects and urban renewal scattered the population of Souldard and demolished many valuable 19th century structures. Saints Peter and Paul, though situated in the middle of the neighborhood now a National Register as well as a City Historic District, has been severely altered inside and presently ministers to only a handful of worshippers. Many in Souldard feel that the church has not actively participated in the ten year fight to save what is left of the neighborhood. St. Francis, on the other hand, was spared the devastation and social disorder. Until the late 60's only the widening of Gravois requiring a heavy assessment for the church marred the stability of the comfortable, "Scrubby Dutch" community.

But St. Francis is part of a city experiencing massive out-migration, poverty and racial disturbances. The 1970 Census merely confirmed the obvious: the northside was becoming increasingly young, black and poor while the southside population was getting older and not attracting young families. Signs of deterioration appeared in the neighborhood around St. Francis. The De Sales Community Services Office was created in 1975. Funded by the parish, the office assists all residents of the neighborhood and has formed a for-profit corporation for the purchase, rehabilitation and resale of homes in addition to creating a new neighborhood organization. A professional planner originally from the parish was hired to administer the programs and help sell the neighborhood. Active participation in the life of the parish is sought and enhanced by a regular dialogue between members of the Parish Council, the priests and the people. In addition to the Parish Council, the following groups and activities are offered by the church: Christian Mother's Society and Auxiliary, Holy Name Society, Benevolent Society, the Benton Dramatic Club, the Chi-Rho Club (high school age), the Legion of Mary, St. Vincent de Paul Society, De Sales "Belles & Beaus" (elderly), St. Francis de Sales Athletic Association, Western Catholic Union-Branch #60, St. Francis de Sales Roman Catholic School Association, Parish Credit Union, and the previously mentioned De Sales Community Service Office.¹⁵ Several organizations date their beginnings from the earliest days of the church.

The church's decision to take an activist role in the future of the neighborhood has re-awakened the interest of many residents, policy makers and bankers beyond the shadow of the steeple. Although the personal vision of Father Lotz did not materialize in stone and mortar, almost one hundred years since he assumed the leadership of the parish, the parish appears to have assumed a new and challenging model incorporating kinder, kuche, and kirche with community affairs.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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ST. FRANCIS de SALES CHURCH

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 5

The survey of Missouri's historic sites is based on the selection of sites as they relate to theme studies in Missouri history as outlined in "Missouri's State Historic Preservation Plan." The St. Francis de Sales Church is, therefore, being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as an example of the themes of "Architecture" and "Society."

FOOTNOTES

1. Carolyn Hewes Toft et al., Soulard: The Ethnic Heritage of an Urban Neighborhood (St. Louis: Social Science Institute, Washington University, 1975), p. 5.
2. William Barnaby Faherty, S.J., Dream by the River (St. Louis: Piraeus, 1973), p. 65.
3. Sister Audrey Olson, "St. Louis Germans 1850-1920: the Nature of an Immigrant Community and its Relation to the Assimilation Process" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kansas, 1970), p. 43.
4. Ibid.
5. J.T. Scharf, History of St. Louis City and County (Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts Co., 1883), p. 1959.
6. St. Francis de Sales, Diamond Jubilee Booklet, 1942.
7. St. Francis de Sales Parish, 1867-1967, St. Louis, Missouri (Quincy, IL: P A M Printers, 1967), p. 9.
8. Ibid., pp. 12 and 13.
9. Jill Johnson, "St. Francis de Sales" (Paper, Washington University 1976), p. 6.
10. Ibid., p. 7.
11. St. Francis de Sales, 1867-1967, St. Louis, Missouri, p. 14.
12. Ibid., p. 20.
13. Mary Powell, Public Art in St. Louis: Sculpture, Architecture, Mural Decoration, Stained Glass (St. Louis: St. Louis Public Library, Monthly Bulletin, July-August, 1925), p. 194.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED

ST. FRANCIS de SALES CHURCH

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 6

14. Ibid., p. 197.

15. "Welcome to St. Francis de Sales Parish," n. d.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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2. Archdiocesan Council of the Laity. Historic Churches in St. Louis, A Self-Guided Tour. St. Louis: Archdiocesan Council of the Laity, 1976.
3. Baedeker, Karl. Berlin. Freiberg: Baedeker, 1964.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .85

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	5
ZONE	EASTING

7	4	1	5	8	0
NORTHING					

4	2	7	6	3	0	0
NORTHING						

B

ZONE	EASTING

NORTHING					

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

St. Francis de Sales Church is located on City Block 2074 and covers an area that is roughly 262.50 feet by 137.50 feet.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Carolyn Hewes Toft, Preservation Planner

ORGANIZATION

Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc.

DATE

July 5, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

611 Olive Street, Suite 2187

TELEPHONE

314-421-6474

CITY OR TOWN

St. Louis

STATE

Missouri 63101

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

Robert L. Townsend

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer and Director, Department of Natural Resources

DATE February 8, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER.

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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ST. FRANCIS de SALES CHURCH

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

4. Baedeker, Karl. Berlin and its Environs. Freiberg: Baedeker, 1908.
5. Branner, Robert. Gothic Architecture. New York: George Braziller, 1961.
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7. Frankl, Paul. Gothic Architecture. Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1962.
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12. Olson, Sister Audrey. "St. Louis Germans 1850-1920: the Nature of an Immigrant Community and its Relation to the Assimilation Process. Ph D. dissertation, The University of Kansas, 1970.
13. Powell, Mary. Public Art in St. Louis: Sculpture, Architecture, Mural Decoration, Stained Glass. St. Louis: St. Louis Public Library, 1925.
14. Rothan, Rev. Emmer H. The German Catholic Immigrant in the United States (1830-1860). Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University Press, 1946.
15. St. Francis de Sales Parish, 1867-1967, St. Louis, Missouri. Quincy, IL: P A M Printers, 1967.
16. Scharf, J.T. History of St. Louis City and County. Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts Co., 1883.
17. Toft, Carolyn Hewes, ed. Soulard: The Ethnic Heritage of an Urban Neighborhood. St. Louis: Social Science Institute, Washington University, 1975.
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19. "Welcome to St. Francis de Sales Parish." n. d.

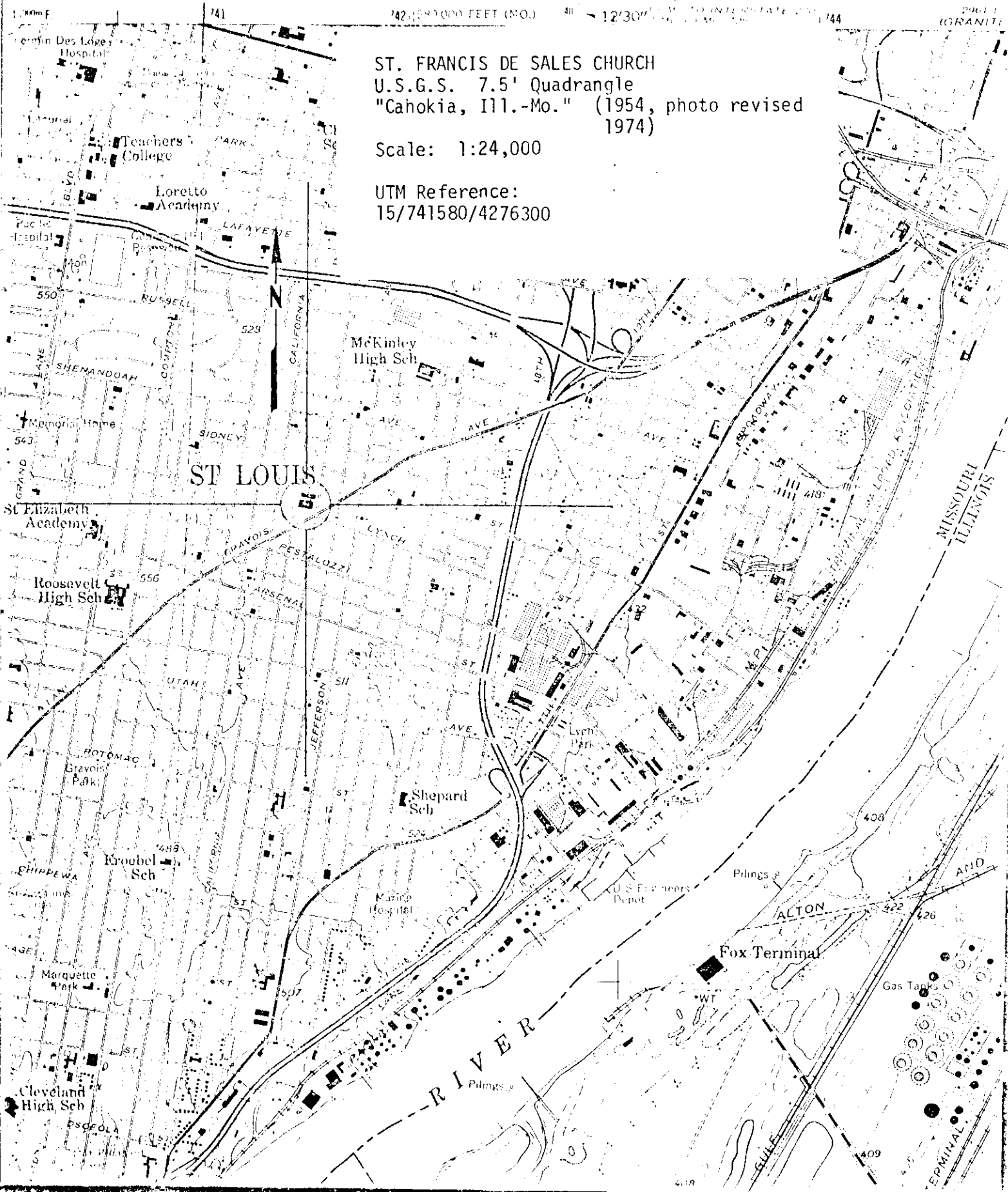
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

STATE OF MISSOURI
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY AND WATER RESOURCES

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES CHURCH
U.S.G.S. 7.5' Quadrangle
"Cahokia, Ill.-Mo." (1954, photo revised
1974)

Scale: 1:24,000

UTM Reference:
15/741580/4276300



CITY OF ST. LOUIS C. 1850

WARD BOUNDARIES AND
SOUTHSIDE GERMAN
CATHOLIC CHURCHES

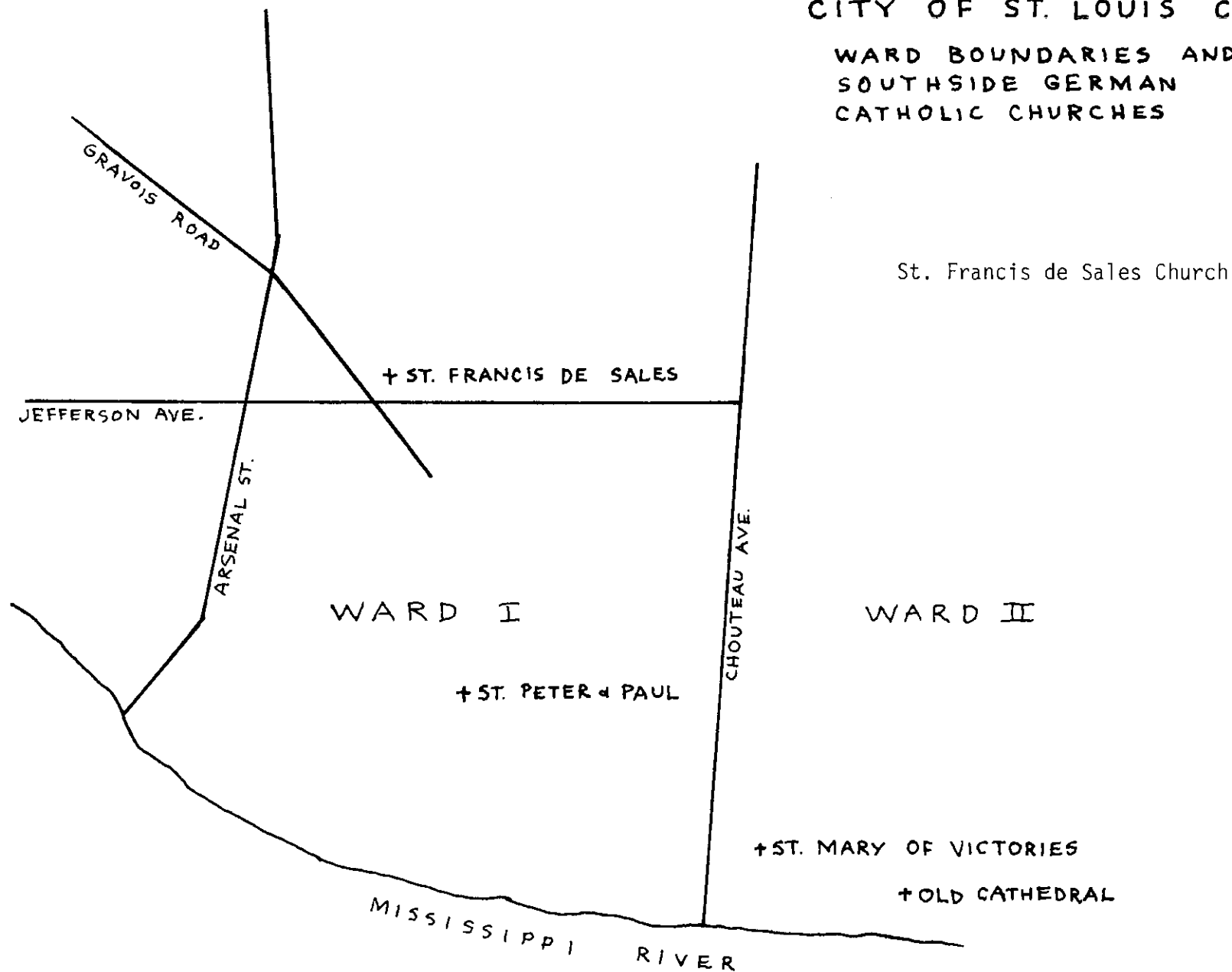


Photo Log:

Name of Property: **St. Francis de Sales Church**

City or Vicinity: **St. Louis [Independent City]**

County: **St. Louis [Independent City]** State: **MO**

Photographer: **Al Guise**

Date

Photographed: **1967**

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 4. Photo reproduction, Silver Image, 1977. View of main (W) façade, looking E.
- 2 of 4. Photo reproduction, Silver Image, 1977. View toward main altar before renovation.
- 3 of 4. Photo reproduction, Silver Image, 1977. View toward choir after renovation.
- 4 of 4. Photo reproduction, Silver Image, 1977. Aerial view, looking SE.









CHURCH

GRADE SCHOOL

GYMNASIUM

CONVENT

RECTORY

634-4,4