

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

1. Name of Property

historic name St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon

other names/site number Motherhouse for the Congregation of the Sisters of the Adoration of the Most Precious Blood

2. Location

street & number 204 North Main Street [N/A] not for publication

city or town O'Fallon [N/A] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county St. Charles code 183 zip code 63366

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [].)

Mark A. Miles

Sept 16, 2007

Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO

Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [].)

Signature of certifying official/Title

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet [].
 determined eligible for the
National Register
See continuation sheet [].
 determined not eligible for the
National Register.
 removed from the
National Register
 other, explain
See continuation sheet [].

Signature of the Keeper

Date

5. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	11	2 buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	1	0 sites
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		
			structures
			objects
		12	2 Total

Name of related multiple property listing.

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

- RELIGION/convent
- EDUCATION/school/college
- DOMESTIC/institutional housing
- FUNERARY/cemetery
- CULTURE/art studio
- HEALTH CARE/skilled nursing center
- OTHER/garage

Current Functions

- RELIGION/convent
- GOVERNMENT/city hall
- DOMESTIC/institutional housing
- FUNERARY/cemetery
- AGRICULTURE/animal facility
- HEALTH CARE/skilled nursing center
- OTHER/garage

7. Description

Architectural Classification

- LATE VICTORIAN/Gothic
- 20th CENTURY REVIVAL/Colonial Revival
- OTHER/one-story maintenance and two-story residence

Materials

- foundation LIMESTONE
- walls BRICK
- roof SLATE
- other METAL

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history

B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

Property is:

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

SOCIAL HISTORY

EDUCATION

ART

Periods of Significance

1874 – 1964

Significant Dates

1874

Significant Person(s)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Kister, Henry, architect

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other:

Name of repository: _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 42.595 acres

UTM References

A. Zone	Easting	Northing	B. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	700145	4298600	15	700170	4298145
C. Zone	Easting	Northing	D. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	699750	4298145	15	699750	4298650

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ruth Keenoy, Karen Bode Baxter & Timothy Maloney
 organization Karen Bode Baxter, Preservation Specialist date June 28, 2007
 street & number 5811 Delor Street telephone (314) 353-0593
 city or town St. Louis state MO zip code 63109

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name _____
 street & number _____ telephone _____
 city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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Narrative Description

SUMMARY

St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon (the common use name for the Motherhouse for the Congregation of the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood) is a forty-two acre complex located in the City of O'Fallon (St. Charles County) Missouri that is dominated by the massive motherhouse, a complex, three-story, irregular plan Gothic style building that faces west onto the main artery through the City of O'Fallon. This building, initially constructed as separate buildings, has been modified, adjoined, and enlarged since 1874 when the first section (initially a single building) was designed by architect Henry Kister. The motherhouse consists of a series of interconnected wings (as noted) dating from 1874 through 1997. Its primary features are generally hipped slate and metal seamed roofs, exterior red brick walls, and continuous limestone and concrete foundations. It reflects a late Victorian-era Gothic style with deeply arched windows, heavy limestone sills, brick corbelling, and spires. The southern end of the building now houses O'Fallon's City Hall, whereas the remainder of the building is associated with the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood and St. Mary's Institute. The property is situated along the east side of North Main Street (Highway M), just east of Assumption Parish Church and School, immediately north of the Norfolk and Western Railroad, and less than one mile north of Interstate 70. The motherhouse complex includes 11 contributing buildings, a cemetery (also contributing), and two non-contributing buildings. Although much of the surrounding landscape has changed in recent decades in relation to a burgeoning commercial corridor along North Main Street, the motherhouse grounds are intact with mature trees, meticulously landscaped grounds (formerly used for farming), and a cemetery that dates to the nineteenth century. Several support buildings are present on the property, including a residence, a residential/maintenance building, two maintenance buildings, an art studio (the former chicken house), and a small shed. These six buildings date to the early-to-mid twentieth century. At the far southeast corner of the original property, now on land owned by the city, there is a late twentieth century building that serves as a senior center. Overall, the property is an excellent example of a late nineteenth-century convent complex.

EXTERIOR – MOTHERHOUSE

The Motherhouse for the Congregation of the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood (St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon) is a large, irregular plan building that encompasses many wings representing various stages of development both to the property and the order for which the building was constructed. The architectural description is coded to the letters on the site map that follows this narrative. This system of building/section identification corresponds to the historic blueprints on file at the convent, which has been the standard used by the convent on mapping their complex for as long as anyone remembers. The following table, in order by construction date for the entire district's resources, explains the original and current uses of the different

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Year Built	On Map	Original Use	Current Use	Att. / Det.	Year Remodeled	C/NC	Resource Count
1874	D	Convent	Offices / Housing	Attached		C	1
1876	C	Chapel	Auditorium/ Commons	Attached	1928	C	1
c. 1880	--	Cemetery	Cemetery	Detached	1890-1953	C	2
1890	A	Administration/ Housing	Administration	Attached		C	1
c. 1900	O	Chicken House / Studio	Art Studio	Detached	1962	NC	3
c. 1900	R	Barn / shed	Maintenance	Detached		C	4
c. 1900	V	Garage / shed	Garage	Detached		C	5
1904	E	Administration/ Housing	Art Dept. / Housing	Attached	remodeled	C	1
1925	G	Chapel	Chapel	Attached	1962	C	6
1930	F	Infirmery	Guest Rooms / Offices	Attached	1950s	C	7
1930	L	Academy	City Hall	Attached	1990s	C	8
1930	N	Chaplain's Residence	Visitation House	Detached	1937	C	9
1933	B	Novitiate	Offices	Attached	1962	C	7
1935	P	Maintenance	Housing / Garage	Detached	1960s/1980s	C	10
1945	M	Garage / Maintenance	Garage / Maintenance	Detached	1950	C	11
1950	H	Dining Room	Dining Room	Attached	1950s	C	12
1950	I	Kitchen	Archives / Library	Attached	1950s	C	12
1954	J	Gym	City Hall	Attached	1990s	C	13
1962	K	College	Police Department	Attached	1990s	C	8
1976	S	Skilled Nursing	Skilled Nursing	Attached		C	12
1997	Q	Boiler Room	Boiler Room	Attached		C	12
1990s	--	Senior Center	City Government	Detached		NC	14

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buildings/sections as well as identifies their construction date and any known dates of remodeling. It also numbers the resources to clarify the resource count (13 buildings, 1 site).

The motherhouse itself is comprised of six distinct buildings/sections that initially comprised six separate buildings, some of which were initially connected by a cloister walk, but by 1950 they were all joined together with the construction of small connecting sections (primarily hallways) added along with the new dining room wing. These six sections are numbered in the resource count on the preceding table and consist of the following:

- (1) Sections A, C, D and E comprise the original convent constructed as connecting wings in 1874 – 1904.
- (2) Section G is the chapel, constructed in 1925.
- (3) Section F was the infirmary, constructed in 1930. Section B was the novitiate, constructed in 1933 as an addition south of the infirmary.
- (4) Section L was the academy, constructed in 1930. Section K was the college, constructed in 1962 directly behind the academy.
- (5) Sections H (dining room) and I (former kitchen) were constructed in 1950 with Section S (skilled nursing) added on the east side of H in 1976 and Section Q (boiler room) attached to the south side of S in 1997.
- (6) Section J was the gym, constructed in 1954 southeast of Section L (academy).

As sections of the motherhouse were completed, they were not all originally joined together. Each original “separate” wing is therefore counted as an individual building within the district. The letter coding, accompanying map (page 7.11) and table (page 7.2) are provided to more fully illustrate the property’s layout. With the exception of the chapel, most windows in the motherhouse were replaced in 1993 and are currently two-light hopper design. All six sections/buildings associated with the motherhouse are considered contributing to the district. Although the skilled nursing care center, St. Joseph’s Hall (section S) is quite large, it was completed in 1976 as an addition located on the back of the motherhouse and not visible from the public streets. It was also completed after all other sections of the motherhouse had been interconnected into one massive building compound, minimizing the visual impact of this wing even further and as such St. Joseph’s Hall is still identified as contributing to the district as an addition to a pre-existing, contributing, historic building.

The façade or west elevation of the motherhouse fronts on North Main Street. This elevation encompasses building sections C (original chapel, constructed 1876), D (convent, constructed 1874), E (west wing, constructed 1903), G (chapel, constructed in 1925/renovated in 1962), and L (former academy, currently City Hall, constructed in 1930). Exterior walls at the primary elevation (and all remaining elevations) are brick and the primary façade sections are generally

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three stories in height with hipped roofs (with gabled dormers) except for the one story cloister walk.

Sections C and D of the motherhouse comprise the north end of the west elevation. These wings are the building's oldest sections and include the original chapel (section C) and convent (section D). Both wings are three stories in height and have Gothic arched window bays. Section C, situated at the northwest corner of the motherhouse, extends in a semi-octagonal fashion at the west elevation. Engaged pilasters with limestone caps separate the octagonal bays (at the west) and remaining bays at the north elevation.

The west wing is currently used for offices, residential space, and the Ecclesiastical Art Department. This wing's west elevation has a central peaked gable roof. The wing is three-stories in height and has sawtooth brick corbelling, spires, and dormers. Windows have arched surrounds. A one story porte-cochere extends west at the primary (west) façade. The porte-cochere has brick dropped pendants near the fascia and features tile designed by Sister Mary Hiltrudis Powers on the interior wall.

One of the most prominent features of the west elevation is the chapel near the south end, which was connected to the rest of the convent by a one story, enclosed cloister walk, probably built with the chapel in 1925. An open courtyard flanks the chapel's north elevation in front of this cloister walk. The arched walkway has engaged pilasters with limestone bases, which separate the enclosed brick arches and each of these enclosures features a window.

The chapel wing has a projecting one-story rounded wing on the west end that features continuous stained-glass lights designed by Sister Mary Hiltrudis Powers set within Gothic limestone arches. This end of the chapel was added in 1962 but is still a significant feature under Criterion Consideration G because of her art glass windows. A vestibule entry faces west and is centrally located at the chapel's west elevation. Rising above the first-story level projection is an original second-story wing capped by a conical roof that is flanked by turrets capped with slate tiles. At the south end of the chapel wing is another brick cloister walk (probably constructed in 1930) that joins the wing to Section L (academy) to create a courtyard between the chapel and academy.

The three-story brick wing constructed in 1930 as an academy, Section L (now City Hall), is also three-stories in height with the original, wooden, six-over-six, sashed windows. Engaged brick pilasters divide window bays and sawtooth brick corbelling is noted near the roofline. A series of hipped dormers are visible at the roofline as is a cupola near the west end of the wing at the south elevation. The façade features a central, three story projecting bay with a parapeted gabled roof that projects above the top of the main walls. Within this bay are three vertical sections articulated with limestone, Gothic arched openings and stone tracery leading to the main

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doorway. A modern entrance was created to City Hall in the 1990s and is situated at the southeast (rear) corner of the wing. This two story rounded bay has a dome at the roofline crest but is not readily visible from the public street view of the motherhouse or the original entry to St. Mary's Academy; instead it is at the east rear corner facing a parking lot southeast of the motherhouse. Behind this rounded entry bay is the hipped roof brick section (Section J, constructed in 1954) that houses a gymnasium. The wing was originally used by the school but is now part of the city's facilities and still serves as a gymnasium. North of the gymnasium and behind St. Mary's Academy (now City Hall) is Section K, which is a two story, flat roofed, brick addition with minimal fenestration and a rear entry on the east end that originally housed the college but is now used for the police department.

Sections A (northeast wing) and C (auditorium/original chapel) comprise the north elevation of the motherhouse, facing an adjacent parking area and cemetery. Section C has a hipped slate tile roof. Section A has a metal seam gabled roof. The wings are each three-stories in height with windows set within arched openings with limestone sills. An inner courtyard/parking lot is situated south of section A. Within this open area, building wing elevations to the south and west partially surround the open area in an irregular pattern. A one story entry wing (built in 1950) is situated at the southwest corner of the courtyard and provides access to the west wing.

The east elevation of the motherhouse (the back side of the property) is comprised of three modern wings constructed in 1950 (sections H and I) and 1976 (section S). Section H consists of the dining and kitchen area. Section I houses the archives (formerly the kitchen). Both sections are three-story brick rectangular shaped wings. Section S, St. Joseph's Hall, is a skilled nursing wing that is also three-stories in height. All of the newer wings (1950-1976) have exterior brick walls and concrete foundations as well as flat roofs. Unlike the older sections of the convent, these wings do not have architectural embellishments. The east wings are set back from primary views of the motherhouse and do not detract from the building's historic architectural appearance. Attached to the south end of section S is a modern boiler room – a small brick wing constructed in 1997 (section Q).

INTERIOR – MOTHERHOUSE

Primary access for visitors is via the small one story entry wing constructed in 1950 that is set within the inner courtyard/parking area at the north end of the motherhouse. The wing's entry hall has a Gothic arched entry with paired five-light doors and a five-light transom. Hallways and floors within all of the 1950s wings are covered with terrazzo, linoleum, or (with upper floors, especially) wood. Some of the motherhouse floors have been covered with carpet. Older sections of the convent have wood floors, and most are uncovered. The hallways and entrances to larger areas in the motherhouse retain Gothic arches. Most ceilings are dropped with overhead fluorescent lighting, and most original doors were replaced in the 1950s. A main floor staircase

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was removed from the west wing in 1982 (to comply with building/fire codes). Primary areas of the interior include the chapel (section G), main dining/kitchen wing (section H), library and archives (section I), original chapel (section C), and St. Joseph's Hall (section S). The second and third floors are used primarily for residential purposes with the exception of section E which also houses the Ecclesiastical Art Department.

The primary hallway of the west wing (section E) is carpeted. Walls support glass and wood display cases. The hallway leads to meeting rooms, offices, and visitors' parlors. At the west end of the hall is an entrance with paired multi-light doors and a multi-light transom. Adjoining the west wing to the north is section D, the original convent wing. This wing, like that of section E leads to offices. Many of the doors are set within original openings that have recessed wood paneled framing and two-light transoms. North of section D is the original chapel that is now used as a meeting room. This area was originally open in plan. The upper area was altered to create a second-floor dormitory in 1928. The first-floor ceiling is wood with exposed beams. Original floors and woodwork remain intact, as does a paneled area at the east end of the room. Windows are set within octagonal wall bays at the north and west ends of the room.

The 1925 cloister walk that connects the new chapel (section G) to the west wing (section E) has terrazzo floors and brick arches with ashlar keystones. The arches are supported by limestone columns with capitals. The ceiling is wood with exposed beams. Near the south end of the walk are four stained glass windows designed by Emil Frei, Jr., an internationally recognized stained-glass artist, in the early 1940s. The walk ends at the south end in front of a mural. This space formerly held windows. The southern area originally held the main altar but was renovated when the main altar was moved to the other end of the chapel (following Vatican II). During the chapel renovations, the ceiling over the original altar in the rear (east) area was lowered. Additionally, the rounded area at the west end of the chapel that holds large stained glass windows (behind the altar) was added in 1962.

The chapel is significant under Criterion Consideration G in relation to the contributions of Sister Mary Hiltrudis Powers. Sister's work includes the painted ceiling and murals, some of which are restored original designs of Gottfried Schiller, a German immigrant artist who in 1928 painted the original chapel murals. Sister also created the stained glass windows in the chapel, including the entire series surrounding the 1962 addition (noted above) at the west end of the chapel behind the altar. She also designed all of the metalwork, including a bronze partition in front of the altar at the east end and a large bronze chandelier depicting individual saints in each of the panels near the west end of the sanctuary. The chapel floors are covered with linoleum and terrazzo. Ceramic tiles accent the side aisles. Walls and columns are painted to resemble limestone and line the edges of the sanctuary. Columns support Gothic arches along each side of the chapel and frame the edge of the altar at the west end. The columns near the altar rest on chocolate marble bases. Steps leading to the altar are marble as well. Wooden pews are situated to create a central aisle toward the altar. The sisters' original altar from Gurtweil is in a separate chapel situated at the

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southeast (rear) corner of the chapel and surrounded by murals and decorative tile floors and walls. A shrine is also located in the small chapel at the southeast (rear) corner of the chapel.

The main dining/kitchen area situated in section H is located centrally within the motherhouse. This area includes a large commons/dining area with terrazzo floors and continuous windows along the north wall facing the courtyard. The ceiling has acoustical panels and fluorescent lighting. The kitchen (remodeled in 1975) is situated at the east end of the wing. A hallway adjoins this wing to section S which houses St. Joseph's Hall – the skilled nursing wing constructed in 1976. This wing has a public entry foyer with glass paneled doors and windows along the north elevation. A small gift shop is situated just south of the entry. The archival wing located in section I, which adjoins section H at the south, holds space for a conference room, library, and reading room. This wing which originally held kitchen facilities, including walk-in refrigerator units, has been converted to house the order's archival collections without greatly altering the original floor plan from 1950.

As noted, second and third floors are used primarily for residential purposes and retain their dormitory-like appearance as these areas were used by the former college. Wood floors remain intact. The northwest end of the second floor holds the renovated old chapel wing that is now used as a community area for the residents. Section E, second floor, holds the Ecclesiastical Art Department. This area has hardwood floors, an acoustical tiled ceiling, and fluorescent lighting. Large windows line the walls at the north and south outer walls. An enclosed second-story porch is situated at the north end of section A (second floor). This area retains the original beaded ceiling and concrete floor. The only alteration to the porch was the addition of upper window panels along the north side facing the cemetery/parking area.

To the south of the chapel are the wings used by St. Mary's Academy (sections J, K, and L). The three floors of the old novitiate have linear central halls flanked by classrooms. These three sections are currently utilized as city offices by the City of O'Fallon. The wings retain original stained wood trim and doors. The gymnasium (originally used by the school) is intact. The only major renovation to the former academy space is the addition of a rounded, domed wing at the southwest corner of the building, constructed by the city during the 1990s. This addition serves as the city's public reception area, opening into the full three-story original interior features that (as noted) have been retained.

SECONDARY BUILDINGS

The motherhouse property holds (in addition to the main convent) six supporting buildings and a cemetery. The support buildings and the cemetery are contributing features of the property which is being nominated under Criterion A (social and educational associations, 1874-1957) and (in relation to the chapel wing) Criterion Consideration G (artistic contributions of Sister Hiltrudis

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Powers, 1962-1964). Once again, the following descriptions are coded to the site map that follows.

Building N (Contributing) - Situated northwest of the motherhouse is building N, constructed in 1930 as a chaplain's residence. Today the property remains in use for housing purposes. The property is a two story brick residence with a hipped slate roof and clay tile ridges, gabled dormers, and a continuous limestone foundation. The south elevation holds a one story screened entry porch (added in 1937). The second story level has brick sawtooth corbelling near the fascia. Windows are replacement ca. 1990 two-light hopper design with aluminum sashes. Window bays are arched with limestone sills. Central hallways extend the length of the building on both first and second floor levels. From the primary entry vestibule on the north end, rooms are accessible on either side. A door at the end of the vestibule leads into the hallway that extends to additional rooms along either side. Yet another door is at the end of this hallway, providing an area that leads to the staircase at the north end of the building. Within the front (north) portion of the house, woodwork, trim, and window casings appear original. The rear (south) portion of the house has more modern window and door surrounds. This section of the house was added in 1937. A living room area is situated at the southwest corner of the first floor. Replacement paired louvered doors lead to the dining room at the southeast corner of the first floor. A galley style kitchen is situated near the bathroom at the northeast corner of this section. Stairs leading to the second floor are centered in the building near the north end of the newer section and lead into a vestibule. A hallway with rooms along either side is entered from the vestibule. The stairs are covered with linoleum, and the upper hallway has carpet. Trim is metered and doors are four-panel design. Radiators remain in place. The northwest corner of the upper floor holds a sleeping porch.

Building M (Contributing) - Building M is a maintenance facility (which it has always been used for) situated northeast of building N. The building, which is one story in height, was constructed in 1945 and enlarged in 1950. The property has a hipped asphalt-shingled roof and a poured concrete foundation. At the fascia is sawtooth brick detailing. The building retains hipped dormers and a corbelled chimney with a concrete cap. Most windows have brick sills and are replacement two-light hopper design. The south elevation has a one story porte-cochere brick wing with large glass block windows surrounded by limestone. The primary entrance is recessed at the east elevation. There is an attached garage wing at the north end of the building with overhead track four-light/paneled doors. Windows in the garage wing are two-light replacement design. The building's interior retains wood and concrete floors. Walls are exposed brick.

Building P (Contributing) - Northwest of building M is another maintenance facility, building P, constructed in 1935 and remodeled in the 1960s and mid-1980s. This property is a two story building with exterior brick veneer and asbestos siding (second floor), a gabled asphalt-shingled roof, and a concrete foundation. The south elevation has a two story porch. The upper portion of the porch has an aluminum pole balcony. The entry below the balcony has sidelights and a

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replacement metal and glass door that leads to a staircase. Also at the north elevation, at the east end, are two overhead track replacement garage doors. East of the porch are paired doors with horizontal lights. Windows are double-hung metal sash and two-light hopper design.

Building O (Non-Contributing) - North of building P is an art studio that was originally a chicken house. The building is one story in height, of frame construction with exterior vinyl siding, and has a corrugated metal shed roof. The foundation is poured concrete. Constructed in the early 1900s, the property was remodeled to its present appearance in 1962. Windows are wood nine-light awning style. Since the alterations upgrading the exterior as well as converting it from a simple chicken house were made after 1957, the end of the Criterion A period of significance. Because this facility is not associated with the significant artistic contributions of Sister Mary Hiltrudis Powers, it is considered non-contributing to the district.

Building R (Contributing) – East of the former art studio is building R, a maintenance building. Constructed in the early 1900s, the building has exterior wood beaded siding (vertical board) and a metal seamed gable roof. The foundation is poured concrete. Windows are six-light wood sash design. At the north elevation is a frame shed addition used for storage.

Building V (Contributing)– Situated northeast of building M is a small frame garage/shed with exterior board and batten siding, an asphalt shingled gable roof, and a poured concrete foundation. The south elevation holds paired swinging wooden doors. The building was constructed in the early 1900s.

Cemetery (Contributing) – The cemetery is situated near the north elevation of the motherhouse and is another historic feature of the property. Established prior to 1883, the cemetery was first enlarged in 1890, at which time wooden crosses marked the graves. It was enlarged again in 1909 and in 1919, the latter year in which wooden crosses were replaced with concrete and a stone wall was added. The most recent alterations occurred in 1953 when the cemetery was again enlarged. The site holds approximately 472 graves.

Senior Center (Non-Contributing) – This one story, side-gabled, brick, building has a neo-classical portico at the entry. Since it was built in the late 1990s, it is non-contributing to the district. It is positioned on the far southeast rear corner of the property and not visible from Main Street. The building is only accessible through the parking lot on the south side of City Hall and is owned by the City of O'Fallon.

ALTERATIONS AND INTEGRITY ISSUES

The motherhouse has many wings and additions that date from the late nineteenth through the late twentieth century. All of the wings/additions fall within the fifty-year rule of eligibility with the exception of St. Joseph's Hall (section S), constructed in 1976; and a small boiler room wing

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attached to section S that was completed in the 1990s. The newer wings are located at the rear (east) end of the convent and are not in full public view since they face the large grounds of the property formerly used for farming and are not easily visible from any public street. They do not diminish the visual importance of the older sections of the convent that face Main Street. The original novitiate wing (section L) that now houses O'Fallon's City Hall was modified recently by the addition of a primary entry foyer at the southeast corner of the wing. Although this entrance is visible to City Hall visitors, it is not clearly seen from Main Street since it is setback to the rear of what was St. Mary's Academy, which provides the main route for entrance to the property. The interior of the City Hall wing has been recently modified to reflect its current use. This does not extend to more private areas used for offices, which retain the original classroom layout. All of the motherhouse windows and doors were replaced in the 1950s but City Hall retains the original wood sashed windows. In 1982, a main floor staircase situated in the west wing (section E) was removed. These alterations fail to detract from the overall integrity of the property as it is being nominated not for its architectural significance, but for its historical associations. Other interior updates that fail to diminish the building's significance related to Criterion A are dropped ceilings and the addition of overhead lighting (1990s).

The motherhouse chapel was significantly altered during the early 1960s reversing the location of the altar, when Vatican II changed the way that Catholics participate in mass. Additionally, the convent required additional space to support all of its activities. During the renovation (1962-64), Sister Mary Hiltrudis Powers completed the artistic work for the chapel, and her projects are noteworthy. Sister is an accomplished artist who is well-known both to the religious and art communities. She worked with Emil Frei, Jr., himself a noted stained glass artist and he personally suggested her for the renovations. Sister Hiltrudis designed most of the artistic embellishments herself, including all of the chapel's large stained glass windows. The alterations to the chapel are eligible under Criterion Consideration G in relation to Sister Hiltrudis' artistic associations.

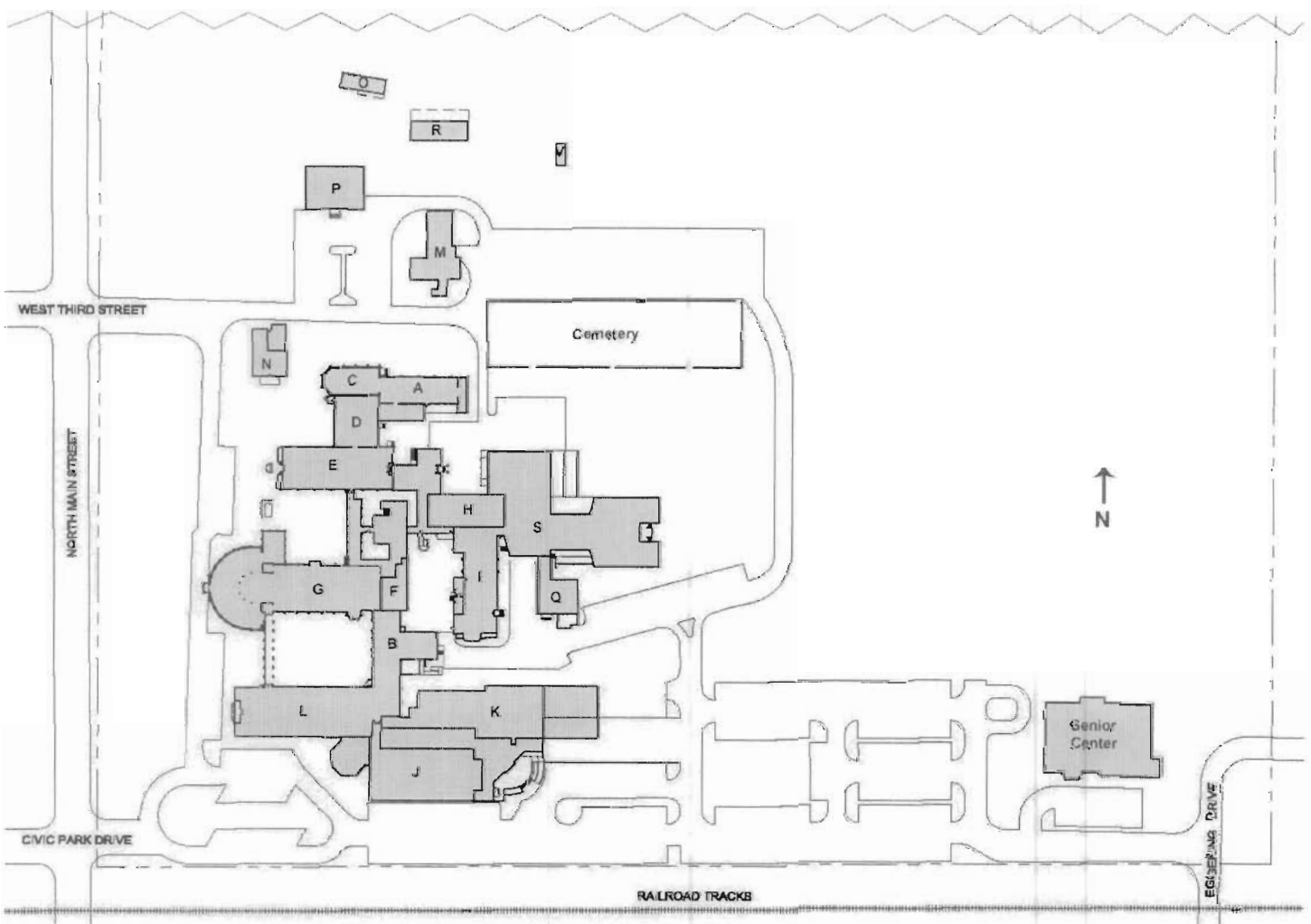
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Key Plan View of Motherhouse Identifying Sections of Building Complex
Courtesy of Trivers Associates



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View of Campus, Facing St. Mary's Academy, Facing Northeast
Post Card View
From the Archives at the Motherhouse

ca. 1925 to 1930



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St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
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View of Campus, Facing St. Mary's Academy, Facing West
Post Card View
From the Archives at the Motherhouse

c. 1925 to 1931



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View of Campus, Facing St. Mary's Academy
Post Card View
From the Archives at the Motherhouse

ca. 1931 to 1954



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Cloister Corridor, Built 1925
Post Card View
From the Archives at the Motherhouse

ca. 1925



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Chapel with Original Altar, Facing East
Post Card View
From the Archives at the Motherhouse

ca. 1934



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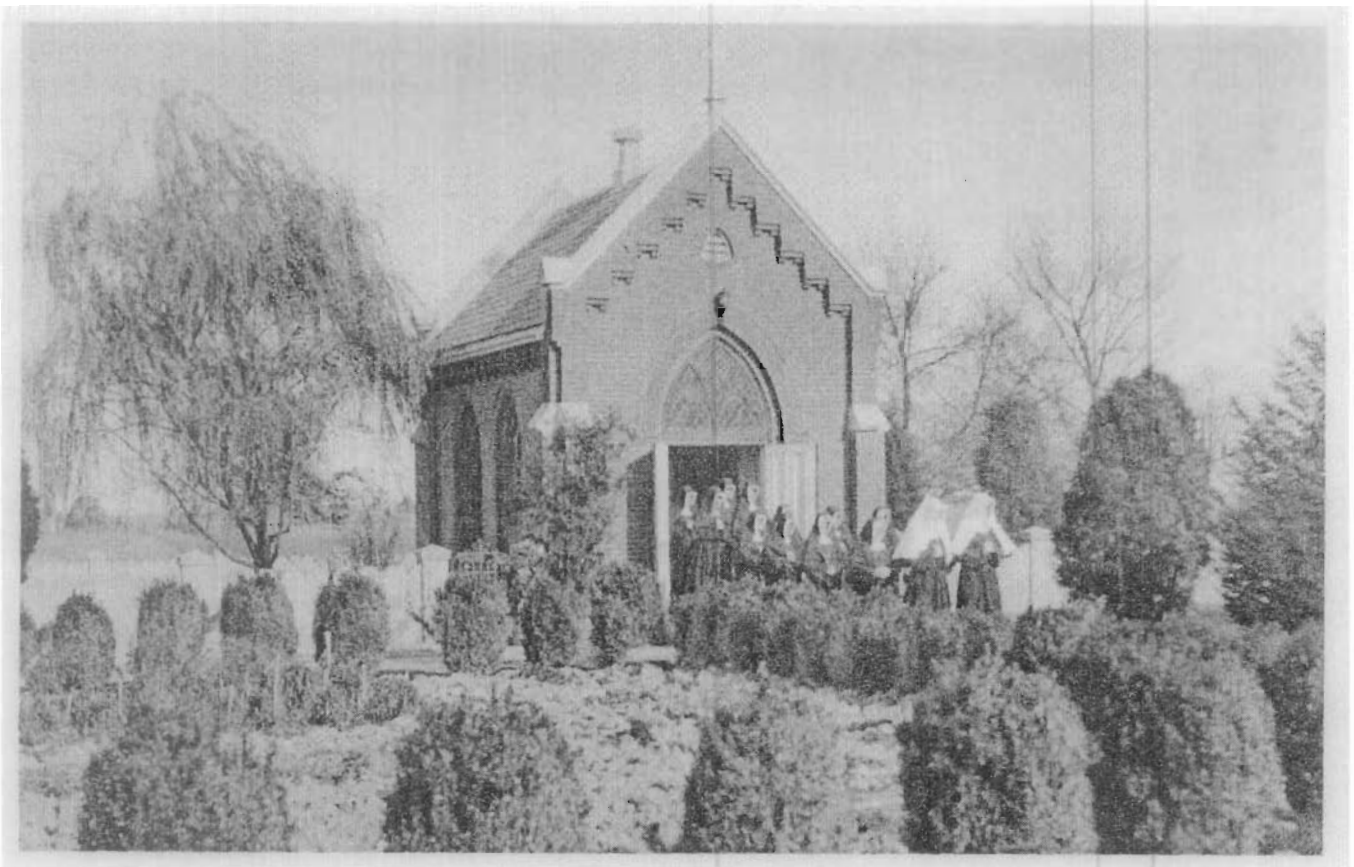
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Cemetery and Chapel at O'Fallon Motherhouse, Constructed 1909
From the Archives at the Motherhouse

Postcard View



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Aerial Photo

ca. 1930



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St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
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Aerial Photo

ca. 1962 to 1966



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Narrative Statement of Significance

SUMMARY

The original convent known as St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon (Motherhouse for the Congregation of the Sisters of the Adoration of the Most Precious Blood), St. Charles County, Missouri, was constructed in 1874. The property associated with the motherhouse has been utilized since its construction (1874) as a convent. Until very recently, the site also supported a high school, St. Mary's Academy (closed in 1990) and St. Mary's College (closed in 1988). The sisters associated with the motherhouse share a rich history that includes their teaching and artistic talents. The convent and its residents provided a constant source of support in the development and growth of O'Fallon. In addition to serving as an educational facility that extended its efforts far beyond the city's limits, the motherhouse provided O'Fallon's water supply for some years, beginning in 1923 via a well on the convent grounds. Additionally, in 1940, the sisters donated a large sum of money to assist in funding the city's waterworks. Over the years, several additions were made to the original motherhouse, the latest of which was completed in the 1990s. During the early 1960s, the motherhouse chapel was renovated. These alterations are significant in that many are attributed to the talents of one of the convent's members, Sister Mary Hiltrudis Powers, an accomplished artist who designed the chapel's stained glass windows and worked closely with noted stained-glass artists, Emil Frei, Jr. and Robert Frei, throughout the course of the project. The O'Fallon Motherhouse for the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood is eligible under Criterion A for its local significance in the areas of Social History and Education. The period of significance under Criterion A is from the construction date of the motherhouse, 1874 through 1957, which corresponds with the 50-year rule that is generally applied to properties with non-exceptional significance. The Sisters of the Most Precious Blood Motherhouse is also eligible under Criterion Consideration G for the unique artistic contributions made by Sister Hiltrudis during the chapel's renovation, which are less than 50 years of age. The period of significance associated with Criterion G extends from 1962, when chapel renovations began, through 1964 when the chapel was dedicated.

CONGREGATION OF THE SISTERS OF THE ST. MARY'S INSTITUTE OF O'FALLON, EARLY HISTORY - 1845-1872

In 1845, the Congregation of the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood of O'Fallon (St. Mary's Institute) was established under the guidance of Reverend Karl Rolfus in Steinerberg, Switzerland.¹ Magdalene (Mother Theresa) Weber was selected as the order's first Mother General. Only 23 years old, Mother Theresa directed the group of 12 young German-born women whose "primary purpose" was "devotion to the Precious Blood in the Perpetual

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Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.”² Theirs was a life intended to center on meditation and prayer. During the congregation’s early years of organization, Father Rolfus established the women as a teaching order as a means to financially support the sisters.³ The order opened its first school in Steinerberg in August 1846. A second school opened approximately one month afterward in Seelisberg -- both schools were successful endeavors.⁴ Within two years, the congregation supported 68 women. It was at about this time that the sisters were forced to leave Switzerland because of religious persecution that began in 1846 when the anti-clerical party gained political control.⁵

From Switzerland, the sisters relocated to Ottmarsheim in the French Alsace. Seven women remained in Steinerberg due to poor health, including Mother Theresa who died en route to Alsace in 1848. Her body was returned and buried in Steinerberg in a chapel at St. Anne’s Church. Under the guidance of the order’s second superior, Sister Celestine Meyer, the women remained for only a short time in Alsace. Increasingly, the order was faced with the dilemma of how to provide financial support; therefore in 1857, six of the sisters left Alsace to open an orphanage in Gurtweil, Baden (Germany).⁶ In 1859, the sisters established an Ecclesiastical Art Department that produced embroidered religious articles for the Catholic Church and provided additional income for the sisters.⁷ Revisions in the order’s directional leadership continued to evolve throughout the 1850s. This resulted in some of the sisters establishing themselves as a “separate community” in 1860, so that they could continue to teach; whereas remaining members pursued a purely contemplative life. Accordingly in 1860, the “house of Gurtweil” was founded for the teaching order, and Mother Casparine Meise was appointed as Mother General.⁸

Once again, uncertain circumstances surrounded the political state when the German government seized control of the assets of all Catholic organizations during the late 1860s. Plagued by unceasing political unrest and religious persecution, in 1870, nine sisters left Gurtweil to teach in America in response to an invitation extended by the Bishop of Alton, Illinois.⁹ The women arrived in New York early that year where they immediately began their journey to the Midwest. In February 1870, the sisters arrived at their new home in Belle Prairie (currently Piopolis), Illinois.¹⁰ Reverend Mother Augusta, Superior at Gurtweil, escorted the second group of sisters in 1871 and served as first Mother General in America.¹¹

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February 16, 1870 marks the beginning of the Congregation's foundation in America. A group of nine Sisters from Gurtweil had embarked the French steamer, the *Harmonika*, [sic]* on February 2, 1870; twelve days later they entered their land of promise with high hopes and generous purpose. After a long and arduous journey from New York to Belle Prairie, Illinois, they at last found themselves in the home the parishioners had erected for them. It was a two-story frame house, scantily furnished, with little to soften the hard simplicity of the bare walls. Nevertheless, it was home, and here amid private surroundings, the Sisters began their work in the educational apostolate on the sure foundations of poverty, hardship, and suffering.¹²

* According to archivist Sister Virginia Volkerding, the ship list correctly identifies the steamer's name as "Hammonia," not "Harmonika."

The sisters' home in Belle Prairie was yet another transition. In 1871, demands imposed by the Bishop of Alton threatened to restrict travel to and from Gurtweil, where the sisters' motherhouse remained.¹³ This situation was not acceptable to the sisters as they wished to remain connected to their German community. Therefore in 1872, Mother Augusta declined the Bishop's offer that the sisters remain in Belle Prairie under his restrictions. A temporary teaching assignment was secured at St. Agatha's parish in St. Louis while Father Henry Muehlsiepen, Vicar General of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, searched for a suitable location to construct a motherhouse for the congregation.¹⁴ Such a site was secured in O'Fallon, Missouri, approximately 30 miles west of St. Louis that provided "the desired seclusion and yet was close enough to the city [of St. Louis] to transact business."¹⁵

Mother Augusta saw the beginnings of the motherhouse in O'Fallon before leaving for an intended brief visit to Gurtweil in the early 1880s. Although she fully expected to soon return with postulants to O'Fallon, she was indefinitely "detained" by ecclesiastical superiors who felt her influence was too strong.¹⁶ As a result, her role as Mother General in America was reassigned, and Mother Augusta died in Gurtweil in 1893. In 1928, at the request of Mother Wilhelmine (Mother General, 1920-1938) and the O'Fallon community, Mother Augusta's "remains were transferred to the small chapel on the convent grounds . . . [and her] request for a remembrance in the cemetery at O'Fallon was granted."¹⁷

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SISTERS OF MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD AND THE O'FALLON COMMUNITY, 1872-1940

The history of the motherhouse in O'Fallon is closely associated with that of the O'Fallon community and the Assumption Church Parish. In 1873, Assumption Parish offered the sisters a permanent teaching assignment at their school, established in 1869.¹⁸ In relation to the sisters' assignment at Assumption parish, they were given a small plot of land adjacent to the church and school. Although this parcel proved insufficient to fully support the intentions of the motherhouse, another property also near the church and school was indeed suitable. The sisters sold their land donated by Assumption parish and used the proceeds to purchase the larger parcel from Theodore Kulage for \$2,800. An additional (adjacent) tract was secured for \$1,900 from Mrs. Gehrs of O'Fallon that included a log cabin where some of the sisters resided until completion of the motherhouse.¹⁹

The original 1874 motherhouse, which remains a central part of the existing structure today, was designed by architect/builder Henry Kister. Born in Alsace in 1835, Kister apprenticed as a "house carpenter and stair builder" before moving to America in the 1850s.²⁰ At the age of 19, Kister was hired to work on John Roebling's railway suspension bridge that spanned the Niagara River near Niagara Falls.²¹ Afterward, he was employed in Buffalo and Milwaukee prior to moving to St. Louis during the Civil War where he worked as a ship carpenter. Kister settled in St. Charles, Missouri, where he and his wife, Regina, raised eight children (six sons; two daughters). In addition to his work on the motherhouse at O'Fallon, Kister designed the steeple for St. Peters Church, the Public Schoolhouse, the Oberkoetter Building, the original Assumption Church dating to 1870, as well as several homes in and around O'Fallon. Additionally, Kister's commissions included St. Charles Borromeo Church and the Martin Becker House (NR listed 1979) in St. Charles; St. Joseph's Church in Cottleville, Missouri (no longer standing); and a building at St. Stanislaus Seminary in Florissant, Missouri.²²

The presence of the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood in O'Fallon was of mutual benefit to the area's residents and the sisters themselves. As noted in the city's centennial booklet, "To write a sketch of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Adoration of the Most Precious Blood of O'Fallon (St. Mary's Institute) is to enter the golden page in the history of O'Fallon . . . Certain facts are easily stated, but the intangible effects of their influence can only be told by those who have been entrusted to their care."²³ O'Fallon was established approximately twenty years prior to the sisters' arrival. The town grew out of an early settlement, Fort Zumwalt, consisting of several log structures constructed by Jacob Zumwalt during the mid-to-late 1780s.²⁴ Zumwalt was of Dutch descent; he and his siblings migrated to Missouri after having received land grants for services in the Revolutionary War. Jacob's land grant was in the Cuivre Township where he constructed a log home for his family, believed to be the "first hewn log house north of the

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Missouri River.”²⁵ This home was also used as a church and later converted to a fort during the War of 1812, at which time nearly a dozen families resided at the shelter.²⁶

By the early 1800s, many French and German families had settled in the St. Charles District.²⁷ Jesuit missionaries arrived in the early 1820s and established the Catholic parishes of St. Charles Borromeo and St. Peter's of Dardenne.²⁸ Although the Jesuits remained a strong influence in the area for many generations, the German population soon outweighed that of the French due in large part to Gottfried Duden's writings. In 1824, Duden, a Prussian lawyer and author, settled west of St. Charles County in what is today Warren County. He returned to Germany in 1827 where he published a small travel guide about his travels, praising “the virtues of settling in Missouri” – particularly within the St. Charles' District.²⁹ So glowing were Duden's descriptions of the region that many Germans moved into the area during the 1830s. The regional German population again exploded during the 1840s due to political upheaval in Europe.³⁰ It is estimated that more than 38,000 German immigrants moved into the lower Missouri valley region during the 1830s-50s.³¹ In O'Fallon, the population was “solidly German” by the 1830s.³²

Prior to receiving its nomenclature as “O'Fallon,” the community was known as Krekel's Addition, named for Judge Arnold Krekel, who donated land and platted the town in 1855.³³ O'Fallon was located along the first railroad line that extended west of the Mississippi River. In 1851, construction began on the route intended to stretch west from St. Louis to the Iowa state line. The line was completed to St. Charles by 1855. A second extension, completed in 1859, passed through O'Fallon from St. Charles to Macon, Missouri. The railroad served as the only reliable means of transportation in and out of O'Fallon during the mid-nineteenth century. Public roads were scarcely more than dirt paths and seldom useable outside of summer months.³⁴ O'Fallon's growth was dependent upon the train – therefore when Krekel selected an official name for the town, he chose that of his good friend, John O'Fallon, president of the North Missouri Railroad Company and the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad Company.³⁵ O'Fallon was a “soldier, business man, real estate owner, philanthropist, and public-minded citizen.”³⁶ In addition to his connection to the railroad, he donated liberally to construction projects in St. Louis and funded construction of the medical college at Washington University. O'Fallon also served as member of the first State Legislature of Missouri. His friend, Judge Krekel, was no less liberal in his philosophies. An elected member of state and local politics, Krekel in conjunction with R.E. Foster founded Lincoln Institute, an African-American college established in 1866 in Jefferson City.³⁷

The rapid German influx in St. Charles County during the mid-nineteenth century led to expansion of the area's churches and schools. One such example was Assumption Church, where the sisters secured their first teaching assignment in O'Fallon.³⁸ Prior to the establishment of Assumption parish, the nearest Catholic church and school were located at St. Peters, approximately seven miles east of O'Fallon. In 1869, members of St. Peters' and St. Paul's

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Parishes met to discuss opening a parochial school in O'Fallon. The meeting resulted in establishment of not only the school, but also Assumption Church, intended to serve the 24 German-Catholic families living in O'Fallon. By 1871, the parish had constructed a brick church and a log school. In 1876, the parish was supported by 130 families -- almost all of German descent.³⁹

The sisters began their roles teaching at Assumption School, but they soon embraced the entire O'Fallon community. In 1885 a history of St. Charles noted that the convent "is a very flourishing one, containing upon an average about one hundred sisters of the society of the 'Precious Blood,' many of whom are continually engaged in teaching throughout the country districts of O'Fallon."⁴⁰ The years 1885-1920 were ones of immense growth -- both at the motherhouse and in O'Fallon. At the motherhouse, a laundry building with guest rooms was constructed in 1885. During the 1890s, construction projects included those for an ice house, barns, and a stable. In 1903, a west wing was added to the motherhouse. These improvements were in addition to earlier changes that included a northwest wing added to the convent in 1876 and opening of both a boarding school for girls and a normal school for teachers in 1878. The motherhouse was building a reputation not only in O'Fallon by the late nineteenth century, but throughout the Midwest.

The sisters provided the City of O'Fallon with its water supply beginning in 1923 when a well was dug on the convent grounds. By 1920, the water supply to the convent and the city had become so depleted, that the situation was deemed "critical" and threatened to relocate the convent. A team of engineers hired by the motherhouse in 1922 soon discovered a water source at 832 feet below ground that flowed directly from the Great Lakes. As a result, the site's first artesian well was dug, which supplied the motherhouse and the City of O'Fallon with water for "some years."⁴¹ A water tank provided storage of up to 30,000 gallons of water and remained on the grounds until 1999.⁴² A second well was dug in 1936; and in 1938, the city sought to establish its own waterworks when federal funding became available through the Works Progress Administration. In 1940, the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood donated \$5,000 to O'Fallon to help fund the city's costs for the project, an estimated \$40,000.⁴³

The Sisters of the Most Precious Blood continued to build on their educational and artistic foundations throughout the twentieth century. The associations of the convent with teaching facilities in O'Fallon and throughout the Midwest soon grew to include numerous locations across the United States and, by the mid-twentieth century, were expanded internationally.

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SISTERS OF MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD - ST. MARY'S INSTITUTE, ACADEMY, & COLLEGE, AND INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH, 1874 - 1990

As noted earlier within this document, the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood began teaching soon after their origin in 1845 in Steinerberg, Switzerland. This was further expanded in 1857 when the sisters opened an orphanage in Gurtweil. These early educational affiliations resulted in an amicable separation between early members of the congregation. Many sisters felt their obligations should remain strictly contemplative and as such, should not involve additional activities such as teaching. Those sisters who felt that teaching was an extension of their life of faith were the sisters who led their congregation to settle in O'Fallon.

By 1877, the sisters staffed no fewer than 12 schools in Missouri, including locations in St. Louis, Hermann, Perryville, O'Fallon, Germantown, Glasgow, Gildehaus, Kansas City, Josephville, Zell, Tipton, and Florissant.⁴⁴ In 1878, the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood were incorporated under the State of Missouri as a teaching institution known as St. Mary's Institute.⁴⁵ The first student enrolled in the program was Wilhelmine Vogelpohl who, in 1920, was elected as the congregation's seventh Mother Superior General.⁴⁶ The school moved to St. Louis in 1882 and was named as St. Elizabeth Institute (later renamed as St. Elizabeth Academy). Today this institution continues to educate young women as a Catholic high school. In 1931, the sisters opened an orphanage – St. Domenico's – for Italian children in St. Louis and built a novitiate building in O'Fallon at the motherhouse. In St. Charles County, the sisters worked in almost every parochial school, including Immaculate Conception Church of Dardenne (beginning in 1890) St. Paul's parish (beginning in the 1920s), and Assumption parish grade and high schools, which grew out of the original school established in 1869.⁴⁷

These early schools are but a few spearheaded by the sisters. They were important not only to the community of O'Fallon but to communities around the world as the order eventually opened schools in other states (including Illinois, Colorado, and Nebraska) and countries (including Finland, Peru, and Bolivia).⁴⁸ By the early 1950s, the sisters were teaching no fewer than 12,915 children in 62 grade schools, nine dioceses, seven states, and one foreign country (Finland).⁴⁹ In relation to the motherhouse in O'Fallon, it was here that St. Mary's Academy and College were established and continued to operate for many years. In 1921, St. Mary's Junior College was accredited by the State of Missouri, and in 1927, St. Mary's was affiliated with Saint Louis University (SLU). At that time, students spent the last two years of their educational training at SLU. Under the new bridge program, in addition to receiving teaching certification from St. Mary's, graduates also received an associate's degree from SLU.⁵⁰

The years 1945 - 1964 marked a period of vast changes in the school systems of Missouri and the O'Fallon community. During these years, German culture as it initially existed in St. Charles County virtually disappeared; particularly in terms of the prevalence of the German language.

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Also diminishing over the years were conflicts between Protestants and Catholics, as both groups realized the benefits of working together.⁵¹ These social changes eventually led to the sisters leaving their work in public schools when during the late 1950s, the state passed laws prohibiting the employment of teachers “under a vow of poverty” – essentially all individuals who gave up their personal property rights to live as full members of religious communities.⁵² Despite the legislation, the sisters’ participation in the field of education was by no means weakened. Enrollment in parochial schools reached new heights after World War II, and many of the sisters left the motherhouse to teach at private schools such as St. Elizabeth’s and Bishop Du Bourg High School in St. Louis. In addition, the novitiate program at St. Mary’s continued at full strength.⁵³ Outside of Missouri, the sisters continued teaching in Illinois, Nebraska, Colorado, Tennessee, New Mexico, Iowa, and Connecticut.⁵⁴

In 1957, the sisters extended their teaching assignments to Latin America when three women left to teach at a school in Lima, Peru. In 1959, two sisters left to teach in Bolivia. These early outreach programs spurred an increase in novitiate enrollment and led to establishment of a novitiate in Lima.⁵⁵ The emphasis on providing teaching assignments around the world led the sisters not only to Peru and Bolivia, but also to Italy, Estonia, and (as noted earlier) Finland.⁵⁶ The sisters began a Juniorate Program in 1958 that allowed novices to stay at the motherhouse while completing their college education which continued until 1968.⁵⁷ In 1964, the sisters opened St. Mary’s Academy, an educational program for high school girls. St. Mary’s College continued as a well-attended institution that in 1968 also began accepting male students. The college held its final commencement in 1988. This was shortly followed by the closure of St. Mary’s Academy in 1990. These events signify changing missions and community needs that could no longer be served strictly through the O’Fallon Motherhouse.⁵⁸

ECCLESIASTICAL ART, FROM GURTWEIL TO ST. JOSEPH’S CHAPEL, 1858 – 1964

The Sisters of the Most Precious Blood remain highly recognized today for their contributions to the field of ecclesiastical art. As a profession, the women began pursuing their artistic interests in 1858 while stationed in Gurtweil when the order created two entities – those who wished to pursue lives of contemplation (at Ottmarsheim); and those who wished to become educators (at Gurtweil). The sisters who remained in Gurtweil opened an embroidery and art studio when Father Kessler, the pastor at Gurtweil, started the Ecclesiastical Art Department as a means to provide income for the congregation. In 1859, Father Kessler hired an art instructor from Lyons, France, to teach the sisters skills in design creation, painting, and embroidery. Two sisters from Ottmarsheim were also invited to attend the classes and within a short time, the sisters began to design vestments for the Catholic Church.⁵⁹ The sisters continued their craft after they settled in O’Fallon. The congregation exhibited a sample of their work in 1904 at the World’s Fair in St. Louis for which they received a gold medal.⁶⁰

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The Ecclesiastical Art Department of O'Fallon has always operated as a guild. Experienced women teach younger, inexperienced women their crafts. Seamstresses cut and press the material that is sent to designers who hand-stamp or silk-screen the fabric. At that point, embroiderers decorate the fabric using machines or by hand using oak embroidery frames that the sisters brought with them from Gurtweil. Once the embroidery work is finished, the item is returned to the seamstresses who finish the project.⁶¹ This tradition has been perpetuated since the sisters began working as artists in Germany during the 1840s.

In 1904, three sisters traveled from O'Fallon to Germany. Although the journey's purpose was to rejuvenate two of the sisters who were ill, it was also intended to bring back candidates to the United States and to provide artistic training for Sister Anselma Lange. Accordingly in 1906, Sister Anselma was appointed as head of the Ecclesiastical Art Department at O'Fallon, a position that she retained until her death in 1945.⁶² Under Sister's direction, "the work of the Department was expanded to include all aspects of anything that would be used in the Divine Services. So the range of what the Sisters in the Department did included just about everything that a Church may use."⁶³

In 1934, a 14-year old aspirant from Quincy, Illinois, gained the attention of her spiritual directress at O'Fallon. The day after the young aspirant, Sister Mary Hiltrudis Powers, arrived she wrote to her mother and included a sketch of the convent. At that time, all mail entering/leaving the convent was inspected. So impressive was Sister's sketch that the following day, Sister Hiltrudis received an assignment to design liturgical posters for the motherhouse.⁶⁴ As a novice, she received artistic training from a German immigrant artist, Gottfried Schiller, who in 1928 painted the chapel's murals.⁶⁵ Sister took her vows and joined the Congregation in 1940. She was immediately sent to receive a bachelor's degree from Rosary College in River Forest, Illinois, where she studied art. Upon her return to the convent in 1942, Sister Hiltrudis began working in the Ecclesiastical Art Department where she trained under Sister Anselma to serve as the Department's future directress.⁶⁶ In 1956, Sister Hiltrudis completed a Master's in Fine Arts at Catholic University in Washington, D.C. Afterward, she completed courses at the University of Notre Dame for blueprint production, silk screening, and welding.⁶⁷

The 1960s brought tremendous changes not only to the motherhouse in O'Fallon, but to all Catholics when Vatican II changed how Mass was celebrated. Although by the 1920s the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood were active participants in the liturgy, this practice was virtually unheard of at the time.⁶⁸ For the women working in the art department at the motherhouse, post-Vatican II resulted in interactions with new clients outside of the Catholic Church. Prior to the 1960s, the sisters produced items only for Catholic establishments. Following Vatican II, it was unclear whether or not priests would continue to wear vestments; therefore the Ecclesiastical Art

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Department at O'Fallon began to produce religious items for all denominations. The response was overwhelming as new orders began to pour in, and the women became busier than ever under Sister Hiltrudis' guidance.⁶⁹

In response to the requests from these denominations Sister Hiltrudis created hundreds of new designs for the embroidery department. Sister Hiltrudis made stencils using a needle to prick tiny holes around the outline of the design. The current Embroidery Department Chair, Sister Mary Cecile Gunelson, says that Sister Hiltrudis originally used blueprint paper for making stencils. When the transparent plastic films became available she was able to make more permanent stencils which did not become brittle and fall apart over time. When the old transferring compound was no longer available, Sister Hiltrudis used her ingenuity to develop a new means of transferring the designs to fabric. She mixed blue or white poster paint into melted wax. Then she dissolved this solidified mixture with an organic solvent and spread it on top of the stencil. The solvent evaporated leaving the wax-coated paint embedded in the fabric. Because the new stencils were slick and durable, the residue could be cleaned easily from the pattern with solvent and used many times over. The Department continues to use the same designs and stencils today that Sister Hiltrudis created.⁷⁰

Because Vatican II changed the manner in which Mass was presented to the congregation, the motherhouse chapel required renovations to reverse the order of the seating. These modifications coincided with a period of great progress in which the chapel was no longer large enough, particularly during periods of special celebrations and retreats.⁷¹ Sister Hiltrudis was assigned the task of designing the artistic renovations, as well as restoring Schiller's 1928 murals and the stations of the cross. Additionally, Emil Frei Jr., whose St. Louis studio was engaged to create new windows for the chapel, recommended that Sister Hiltrudis design the windows. Sister designed 14 large windows and clerestory windows before beginning her work at Mr. Frei's studio where she painted the design on the glass before it was fired. She completed one large chapel window per week.⁷² Sister Hiltrudis also designed a grillwork metal partition "with insets of brass, bronze and silver" echoing patterns of "rain and sheaves of wheat and fishes," as well as the metal canopy above the altar.⁷³ As noted in a newspaper article depicting the completed project, "Sister Hiltrudis has left her mark everywhere you look in the chapel."⁷⁴

The Emil Frei Studio in St. Louis opened in 1900, shortly after the arrival of Emil Frei and his wife, Emma Mueller, to the city in 1898. Emil Frei immigrated to New York from Munich during the 1890s. The Freis were married in New York and shortly afterward moved to San Francisco where Frei received a commission to paint murals. Two stories have been published concerning the Freis' arrival in St. Louis. One source states that the couple, dissatisfied with their experience in San Francisco, stopped to visit friends on their way back to Germany. In St. Louis, they found strong German influences that reminded them of their native country and decided to stay.⁷⁵ Another resource indicates that Emil Frei was commissioned to work on the stained glass

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windows for St. Francis Xavier Church at Saint Louis University.⁷⁶ Nonetheless, upon moving to St. Louis, Frei worked initially for the A.H. Wallis Company as an artist. In 1900, he and Emma opened their own art glass studio at 19 South Broadway. They opened a second studio in Munich in 1910.⁷⁷ The St. Louis studio was exceptionally successful, gaining recognition for designs displayed at the 1904 Centennial Exposition and landing a commission to design the mosaic murals for the St. Louis Basilica during the 1920s.⁷⁸ In the early 1940s, Frei's son, Emil Jr., worked with the motherhouse when the company designed the four cloister hall windows/panels under the direction of Sister Anselma and Reverend Charles P. Schmitt.⁷⁹ The younger Frei's "influence in the company's designs centered on religious art" which firmly established his relationship with Sister Hiltrudis by the time that the two worked together during the 1960s.⁸⁰

Emil Frei, Jr. was born in San Francisco in 1896 and attended Washington University. He began working in his parents' studio in 1917. Shortly before his father's death in 1942, Emil Jr. gained control of the company. It was the younger Frei -- not Emil Sr. -- who designed the windows for St. Francis Xavier Church. This project in particular illustrates the younger Frei's interest in "the vivid colors and medallion designs of 13th century European church windows."⁸¹ As noted previously, Emil Frei, Jr. suggested that Sister Hiltrudis design the windows for the motherhouse chapel. Sister was one of the last artists to work with Frei, who retired from the company in 1963 when his son, Robert, took over the enterprise.

By the end of Emil Jr.'s leadership of the company, Emil Frei, Inc. was recognized as a particularly innovative studio. According to one scholar at the time, 'some of the most advanced and experimental work being done in the country can be found at the St. Louis studios of Emil Frei. There, nothing seems impossible in either the field of design or the use of materials.'⁸²

Sister Hiltrudis' artwork is a perfect complement to the "experimental" designs produced by the Frei studio during the early 1960s. Many observers find strong parallels between Sister's designs and the Arts and Crafts movement; however Sister Hiltrudis does not see such a connection. According to Sister herself, "I am influenced by the scriptures and the liturgy . . . if I have been inspired by anything, it would be by the art from the Maria Laach and Beuron regions of Germany."⁸³ Today, Sister's artistic embellishments are no less striking or impressive than when first created. Her signature work in the chapel, particularly in relation to the stained glass windows and metal craftsmanship, dominates the aesthetic quality of the space. Despite her legacy at the motherhouse, as well as throughout the art community, Sister Hiltrudis takes her accomplishments in stride. She states simply that she came to the motherhouse not to be an artist, but because she always wanted to be a nun.⁸⁴ The O'Fallon Motherhouse chapel is an artistic masterpiece that fully displays the wide range of Sister's many talents.

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CONCLUSION

In recent years, the sisters have continued their educational and community support, despite the diminishing number of novices. The sisters continue to produce religious garments, both hand-stitched and machine-stitched, that are supplied to organizations and individuals around the world. They also train sisters from around the world, encouraging them to carry on their artistic traditions. The sisters tutor students of all ages; provide pastoral services; employ many lay persons; provide spiritual direction, guidance, and enrichment programs; and fully participate in community activities.⁸⁵ Because the congregation has become one with many older participants, and due to the fact that fewer young women than ever are joining the community, the amount of space necessary to house the motherhouse's activities has decreased in recent decades. In 1997, the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood sold three of the convent's buildings (buildings J, K, and L) and adjoining acreage to the City of O'Fallon. This property was redeveloped as a complex for O'Fallon's City Hall, police department, various government offices, and a senior center.⁸⁶ These changes further illustrate the close relationship that the sisters share with O'Fallon, and their continued role in the community. In 2002, the City presented the sisters with an award for their economic contributions.⁸⁷ The motherhouse at O'Fallon was constructed for (and remains in use by) the Sisters of the Adoration of the Most Precious Blood. This property is significant for its historical associations related to educational and social contributions made by the sisters since 1874. Additionally, the motherhouse exhibits exceptional significance for its in-house artist, Sister Hiltrudis, and her work at the motherhouse chapel in 1962-64.

ENDNOTES

¹ Sister Jean Thomas Lake, *A Time to Sow: A History of the St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon of O'Fallon, Missouri* (O'Fallon, MO: Sisters of the Most Precious Blood, 1975), 93.

² [Congregation of the Sisters of the St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon], *Commemorating a Hundred Years of Service to the Eternal High Priest, 1845-1945* (O'Fallon, MO: Self-published, [1945]), n.p.

³ Ibid.

⁴ *O'Fallon Centennial – O'Fallon Missouri: Celebrating 100 Years of Progress, 1856-1956* (Warrenton, MO: Billmac Press, 1956), 36.

⁵ [Congregation of the Sisters . . .], n.p.

⁶ Ibid.

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⁷ "Autumn Banners Brighten Main Street," *O'Fallon News Time*, 15 Oct. 1995, photocopy (O'Fallon, MO: Congregation of the Sisters of the St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon).

⁸ [Congregation of the Sisters . . .], n.p.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Lake, 82-83.

¹¹ Lake, 86.

¹² [Congregation of the Sisters . . .], n.p.

¹³ Lake, 4.

¹⁴ [Congregation of the Sisters . . .], n.p.; Lake, 84.

¹⁵ Lake, 93.

¹⁶ Ibid, 106-110.

¹⁷ Ibid, 110.

¹⁸ *O'Fallon Centennial*, 24; Lake, 94.

¹⁹ "American Bicentennial O'Fallon Missouri, 1776-1976," 24.

²⁰ Sister Virginia Volkerding and Sister Mary Joan Dyer, "From the Archives: Build a Motherhouse – They Will Come" (O'Fallon, MO: Congregational News Bulletin, April 2003), 6.

²¹ Ibid and "Bridges Over Niagara Falls," [website on-line]; accessed 20 Oct. 2006; available from <http://www.niagarafrontier.com/bridges.html#b2>.

²² Volkerding and Dyer, 6.

²³ *O'Fallon Centennial*, 36.

²⁴ Lake, 93 and Workers of the Writers' Program of the Works Projects Administration in the State of Missouri, *Missouri the WPA Guide to the "Show Me" State* (1941; reprint, St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 1998), 345.

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²⁵ Edna McElhiney Olson, *Historical Series: St. Charles Journal*, 4 vols. (St. Charles, MO: St. Charles Genealogical Society, 1990), 4:640.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ *O'Fallon Centennial*, 5.

²⁸ Ibid, 24.

²⁹ Ibid, 49 and "Gottfried Duden," *Wikipedia*, [encyclopedia on-line]; accessed 25 Oct. 2006; available from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gottfried_Duden.

³⁰ *O'Fallon Centennial*, 49.

³¹ "Gottfried Duden," *Wikipedia*.

³² Steve Ehlmann, *Crossroads: A History of St. Charles County, Missouri* (Marceline, MO: Walsworth Publishing Company, 2004), 139.

³³ *O'Fallon Centennial*, 49.

³⁴ Ibid, 47.

³⁵ Ibid, 49; Lake, 94.

³⁶ *O'Fallon Centennial*, 2.

³⁷ Ibid, 349.

³⁸ Ibid, 24.

³⁹ Ehlmann, 143-144.

⁴⁰ *History of St. Charles County, Missouri (1765 – 1885) Written and Compiled from the Most Authentic Official and Private Sources, Including a History of Townships, Towns and Villages . . .* ([1885], reprint, [no City], MO: Patria, 1997), 461.

⁴¹ Lake, 118.

⁴² Olson, 2:324.

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⁴³ *O'Fallon Centennial*, 55.

⁴⁴ Lake, 104.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 105.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 116-117.

⁴⁷ *O'Fallon Centennial*, 41.

⁴⁸ [Congregation of the Sisters . . .], n.p.; *O'Fallon Centennial*, 38 and Lake, 139.

⁴⁹ *O'Fallon Centennial*, 41.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*.

⁵¹ Ehlmann, 274-275.

⁵² Lake, 136.

⁵³ *Ibid*, 136-137.

⁵⁴ Olson, 2:324.

⁵⁵ Lake, 138-139.

⁵⁶ "O'Fallon Missouri Sesquicentennial, 1856 – 2006, 150 Years" Exhibit located at City Hall, O'Fallon, MO, 2006.

⁵⁷ Lake, 141.

⁵⁸ Timeline provided by the Archives, Congregation of the Sisters of the St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon, O'Fallon, Missouri.

⁵⁹ [Congregation of Sisters Adorers of the Most Precious Blood, Ruma], *Congregation of Sisters Adorers of the Most Precious Blood Province of Ruma* (Techny, IL: The Mission Press [1938]), 23-34; and Ann Hipp, "The Ecclesiastical Art Department O'Fallon, Missouri" (O'Fallon, MO: Congregation of the Sisters of the St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon, n.d.), 2.

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⁶⁰ Sister Hiltrudis Powers, "Like the Guilds of the Middle Ages," in *O'Fallon in Focus*, Winter 1966, Vol. 3, No. 2: 23.

⁶¹ Christy Bertelson, "Chief Artisan in Medieval Guild," *St. Louis Post Dispatch*. Photocopy (23 April 1972), n.p.

⁶² Hipp, 3-4.

⁶³ Ibid, 4.

⁶⁴ Esther Talbot Fenning, "Artistic Tradition of Order Allows Life of Service, Creativity," *St. Charles Post*. Photocopy (2 June 1995), n.p.

⁶⁵ Sister Mary Cecile Gunelson, "O'Fallon Sisters Honor Sr. Hiltrudis Powers," In-house news release (1 June 1995), 1.

⁶⁶ Martha Baker, "Sister Mary Hiltrudis: At the Helm of Ecclesiastical Arts," *Piecework* (May/June, 1995), 60.

⁶⁷ Sister Mary Joan Dyer, "Sister Hiltrudis Powers, C.P.P.S." Photocopy (unpublished, no date) and Teresa Coyle, "Ecclesiastical Work Shows Talent for Art," *St. Louis Review*. Photocopy (9 June 1995), 7.

⁶⁸ Lake, 122.

⁶⁹ Fenning.

⁷⁰ Sister Hiltrudis Powers, Personal interview for face-to-face information with Ruth Keenoy, 15 November 2006; and Sister Mary Cecile Gunelson, Personal interview for face-to-face information with Ruth Keenoy, 15 November 2006.

⁷¹ "Gem of Grandeur," *O'Fallon in Focus*. Photocopy (1964), 5.

⁷² Ibid, 3; Baker, 60; Interview with Sister Mary Joan Dyer, 15 November, 2006.

⁷³ Bertelson.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

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⁷⁵ Ken Luebbering and Robyn Burnett, *Gospels in Glass: Stained Glass Windows in Missouri Churches* (Rocheport, MO: Pebble Publishing, Inc., 2000), 100.

⁷⁶ Martha Ramsey Clevenger, "Emil Frei Collection Register" (Missouri Historical Society, June 1986), 4.

⁷⁷ Luebbering and Burnett, 100 and Clevenger, 4.

⁷⁸ Luebbering and Burnett, 100.

⁷⁹ Emil Frei Collection, Missouri Historical Society. Box 26: Folders 11-12 (Correspondence, 1943-1951).

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Luebbering and Burnett, 100.

⁸² Ibid, 103.

⁸³ Baker, 61.

⁸⁴ Powers, Interview, 15 November 2006.

⁸⁵ "Sisters Have Been Part of O'Fallon since 1870s," *Suburban Journals: The O'Fallon Journal, 35th Anniversary, 1963 to 1998*. Photocopy.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Timeline, Archives.

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First Motherhouse, Steinerberg, Switzerland
From the Archives at the Motherhouse

ca. 1990s



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Motherhouse Gurtweil, Baden, Germany
From *Congregation of Sisters of the Most Precious Blood*
Facing page 25



MOTHERHOUSE AT GURTWEIL, BADEN, GERMANY

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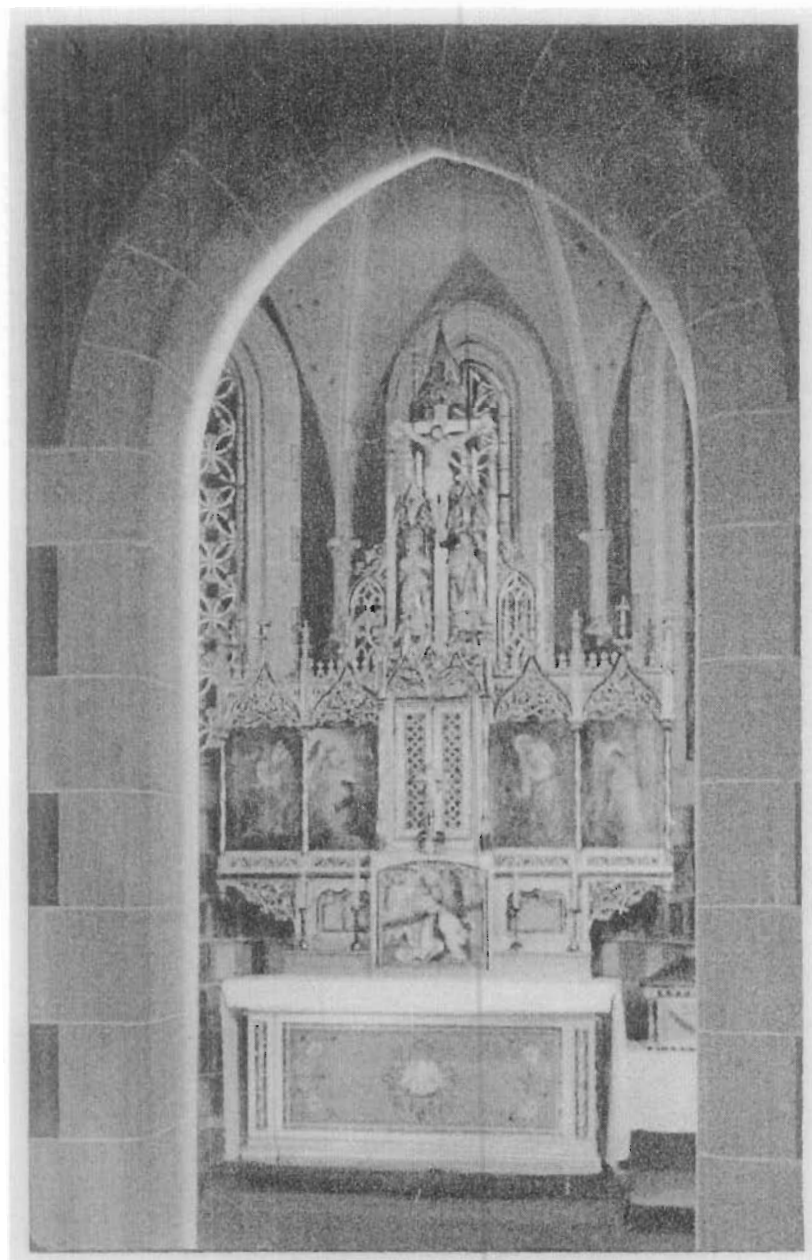
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Original Altar from Germany Installed in New Chapel in 1925
Post Card View
From the Archives at the Motherhouse

Date of Photo Unknown



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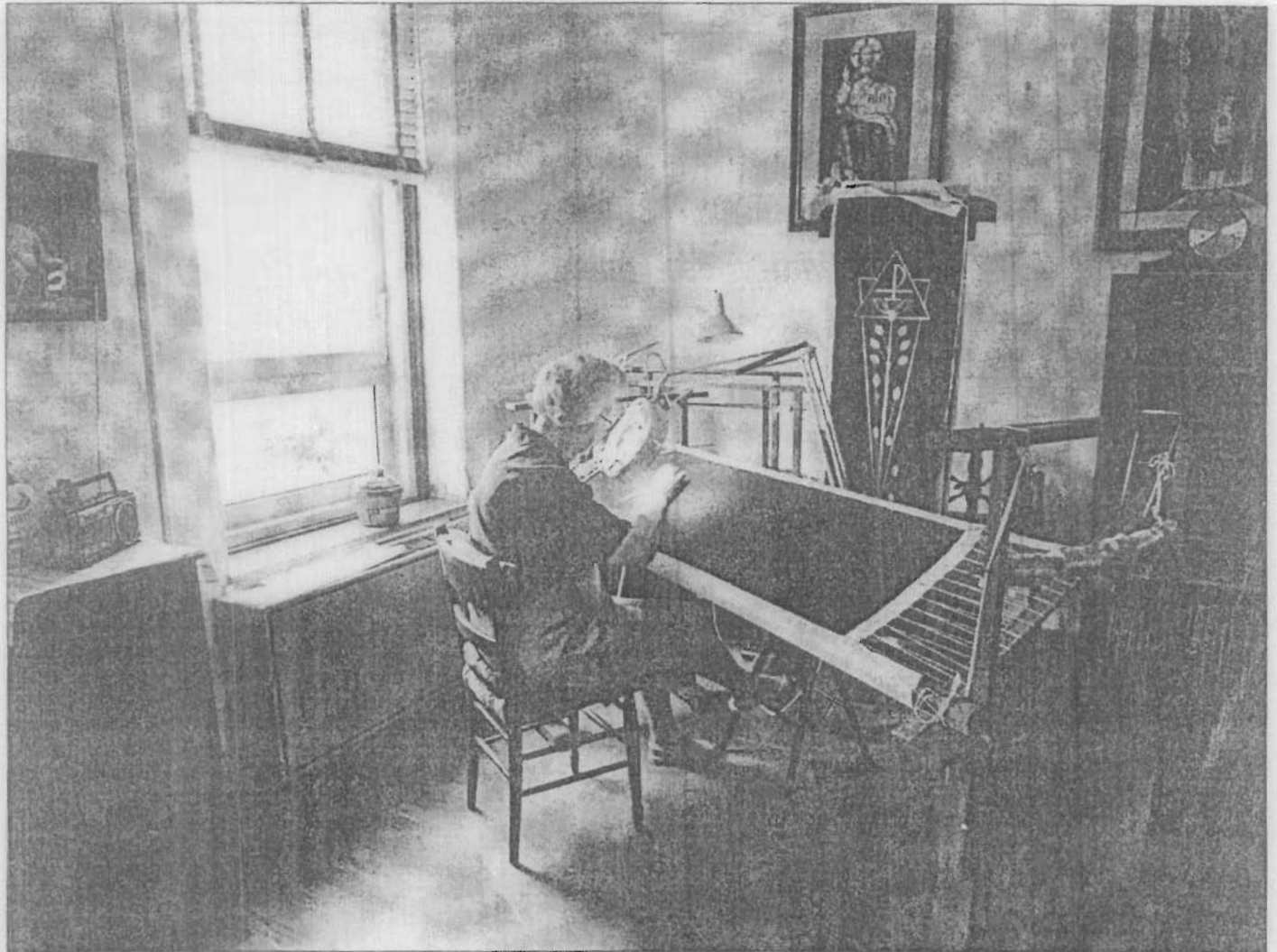
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From the Archives at the Motherhouse

Published in *St. Charles Post*
Photo by Jerry Naunheim Jr.



Jerry Naunheim Jr./St. Charles Post

A Stitch In Time

Sister Antonilla Korte embroiders a priest's vestment at the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood convent in O'Fallon. See story on page 2.

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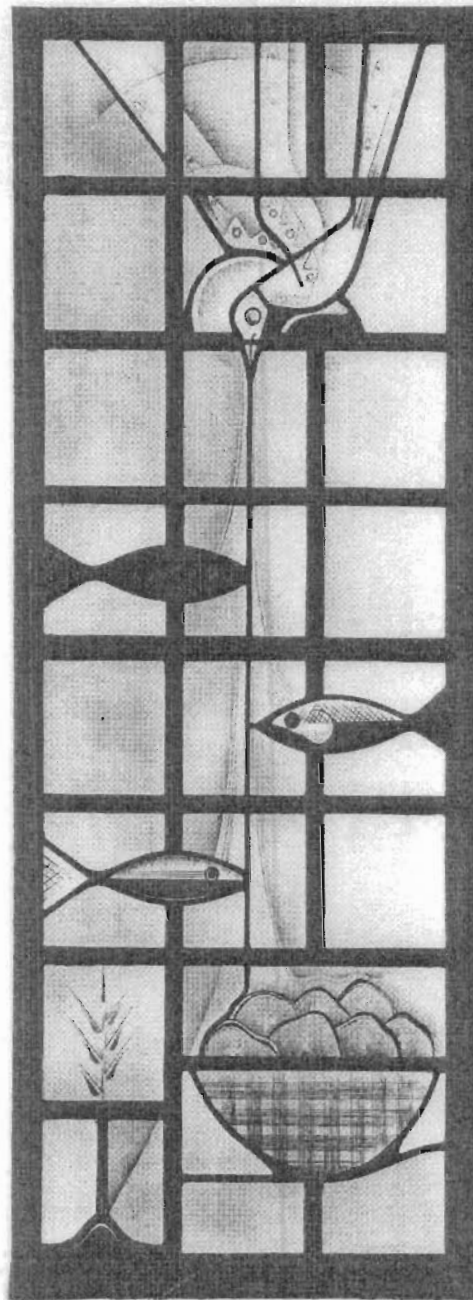
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Design by Emil Frei for Cloisture Corridor Window
From the Archives at the Motherhouse

1940s



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St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
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Photograph of Sister Mary Hiltrudis Powers at Work
From the Archives at the Motherhouse

Date unknown



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National Park Service

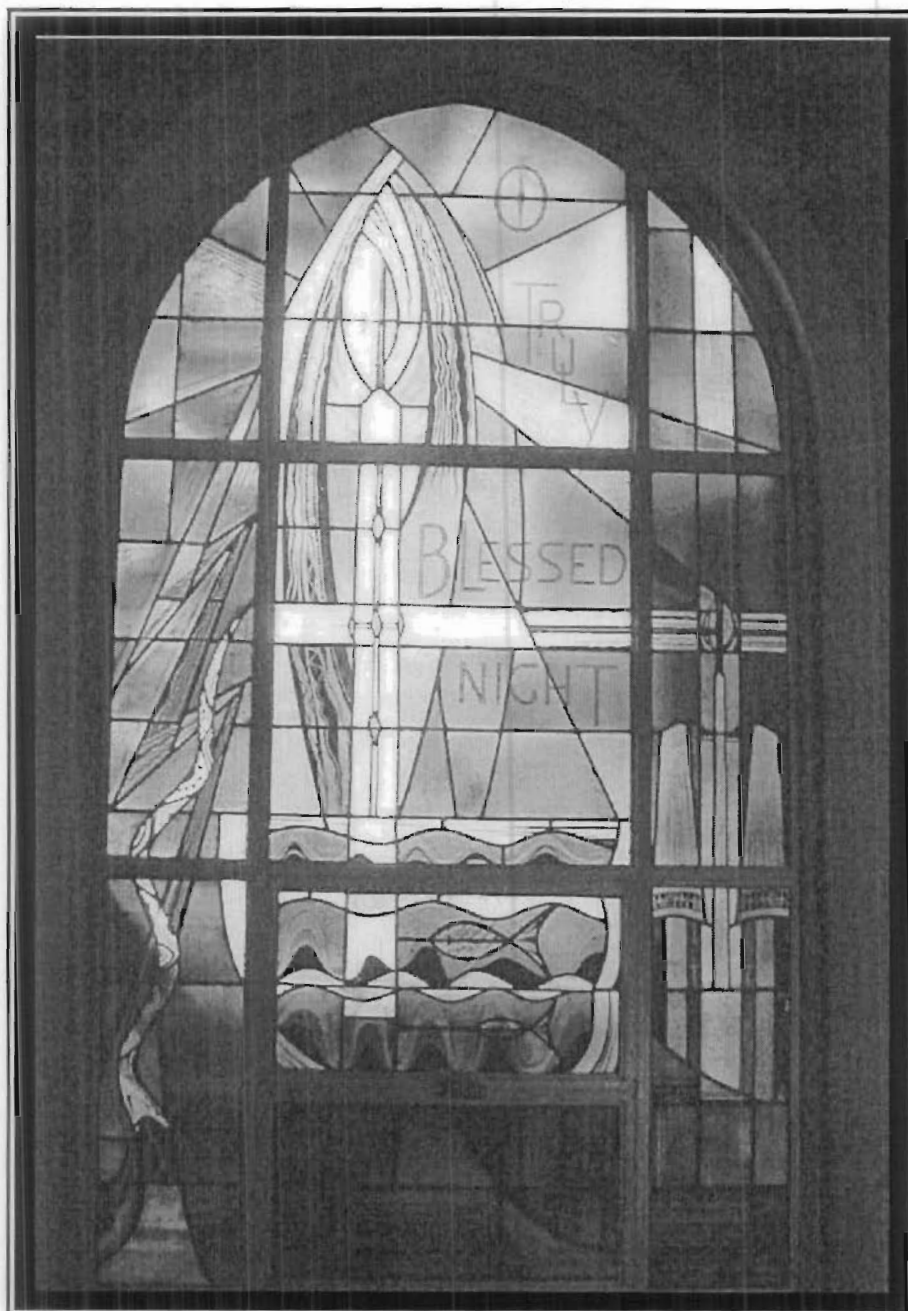
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Representative Chapel Window Designed by Sister Mary Hiltrudis Powers
Courtesy of St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon

1962



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Timeline – undated and unpublished; 1872-1995. Provided by the Archives, Congregation of the Sisters of the Adoration of the Most Precious Blood, O'Fallon, MO.

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St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
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Verbal Boundary Description

The property is located on the northeast corner of North Main Street and the Norfolk and Western Railroad right-of-way. The site is partially improved with the St. Mary's Institute Sisters of the Most Precious Blood campus, which improvements are located in the southwest approximately one-fourth of the overall tract of land. The St. Charles County Tax Assessor's Office identifies subject appraised property as Parcel ID Number 2-051C-S021-00-17. The site is a slightly irregular, somewhat rectangular shaped parcel. It has a total frontage along the east line of North Main Street of 1,521.84 feet with a small offset of 2.15 feet. The rear width measures a total of 1,340.88 feet, while the south depth along the City of O'Fallon's City Hall measures a total of 1,335.28 feet with an offset of 9.09 feet to the north. The north depth is irregular having a distance from Main Street east 740.14 feet to a point just east of St. Mary's Place Drive, then east 689.35 feet to the northeast corner of the overall tract.

Boundary Justification

These boundaries incorporate all of the property historically associated with St. Mary's Institute.

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St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
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Photo Log

**Photographer: Sheila Findall
2006**

Negatives with photographer: Karen Bode Baxter, 5811 Delor Street, St. Louis, MO 63109

Photo #1: Looking southeast from northwest at historic district

Photo #2: Looking southwest from northeast at historic district

Photo #3: Looking southeast at Auditorium (Section C)

Photo #4: Looking southwest at West Wing (Section E)

Photo #5: Looking northwest at Northeast Wing (Section A)

Photo #6: Looking southeast at West Wing (Section E)

Photo #7: Detail: Ceramic Tile Frieze, By Sister Mary Hiltrudis Powers, inside of Portico in West Wing (Section E)

Photo #8: Looking northeast at West Wing (Section E)

Photo #9: Looking northeast at New Chapel (Section G)

Photo #10: Looking southwest at New Chapel (Section G)

Photo #11: Looking southeast at St. Mary's Academy (City Hall) (Section L)

Photo #12: Looking southwest at St. Mary's Academy (City Hall) (Section L) and Cloister Walk

Photo #13: Looking northeast at St. Mary's Academy (City Hall) (Section L)

Photo #14: Looking northwest at St. Mary's Academy (City Hall) (Sections J and K)

Photo #15: Looking northwest at Building N

Photo #16: Looking northwest at Building M

Photo #17: Looking northwest at Building P

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Photo Log (continued)

Photo #18: looking north/northwest at Building O

Photo #19: looking northeast at Building R

Photo #20: Looking northwest at Senior Center

Photo #21: Looking west at new altar in Chapel

Photo #22: Detail: Looking up at ceiling in Chapel

Photo #23: Detail: Looking up at ceiling above new altar in Chapel

Photo #24: Looking west at west end of Chapel

Photo #25: Looking east at original altar in Chapel

Photo #26: Looking east at bronze gates in Chapel

Photo #27: Looking northeast at original altar area

Photo #28: Looking southeast at shrine and altar brought from Germany located in small chapel

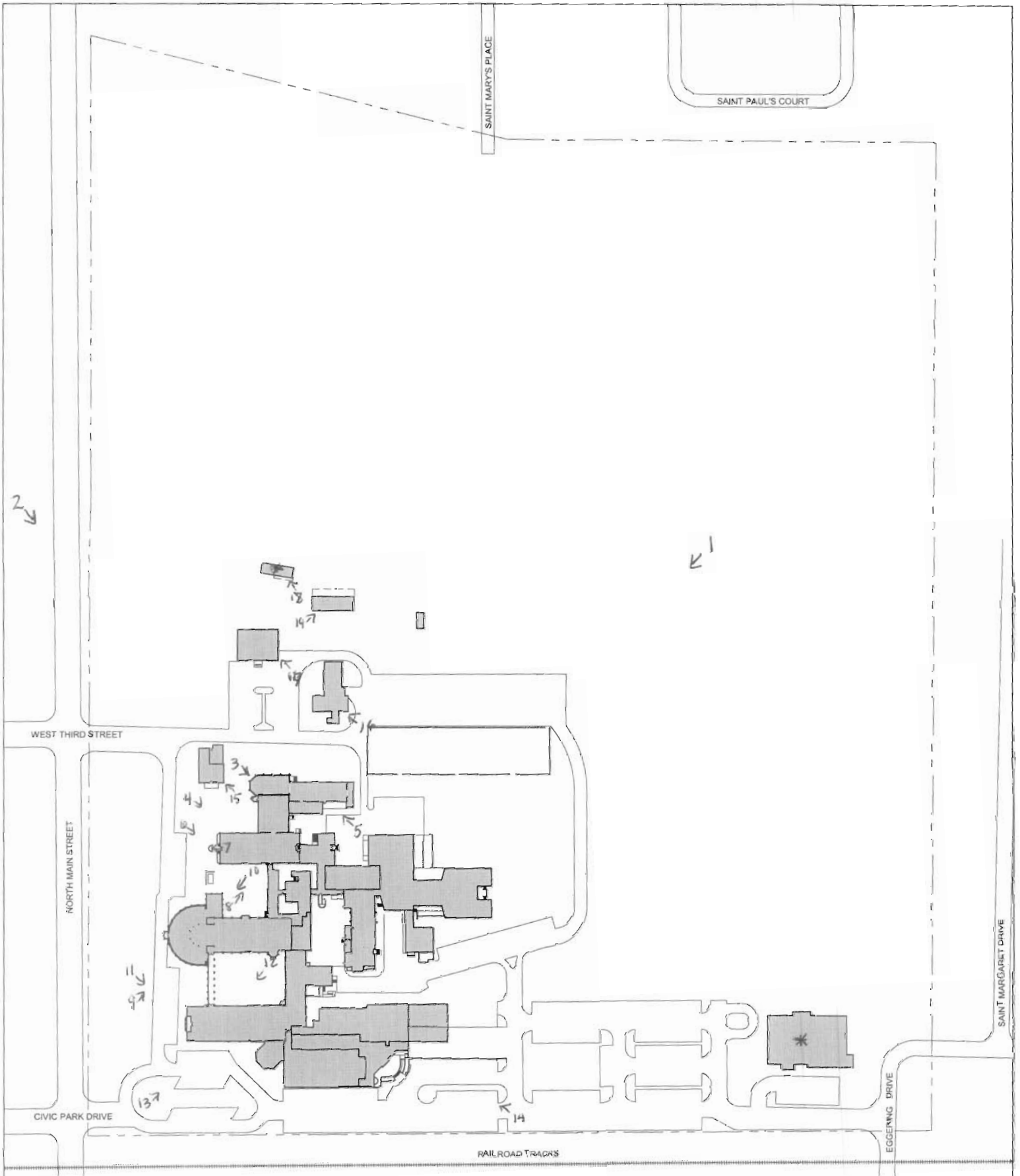
Photo #29: Looking northwest through Cloister Corridor

Photo #30: Looking southeast through Cloister Corridor

Photo #31: Looking southeast at windows in Cloister Corridor

Photo #32: Looking northeast in West Wing (Section E) hall on main floor

Photo #33: Looking southeast in Cafeteria (Section H)



HISTORIC DISTRICT



LEGEND
* NON-CONTRIBUTING

MOTHERHOUSE OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE SISTERS OF THE ADORATION OF THE MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD O'FALLON, SAINT CHARLES COUNTY, MISSOURI

TRIVERS

4.30.2007







St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, Mo
Photo No. 3



St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, Mo
Photo No. 4



St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, MO
Photo No. 5



St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, Mo
Photo No. 6



GOD BE WITH YOU AND KEEP YOU

GLORY
BE
TO
THE
DOOR
OF
JESUS

St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, MD
Photo NO. 7



St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, MD
Photo No. 8



St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, MO
Photo No. 9



St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, MO
Photo No. 10



St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, MD
Photo No. 11



St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, MD
Photo No. 12



St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, MO
Photo No. 13



St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, MO
Photo No. 14



St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, MD
Photo No. 15



St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, MO
Photo No. 16



St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, MD
Photo No. 17



St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, MO
Photo No. 18



St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, MO
Photo No. 19



St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, MO
Photo No. 21



St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, Mo
Photo No. 22



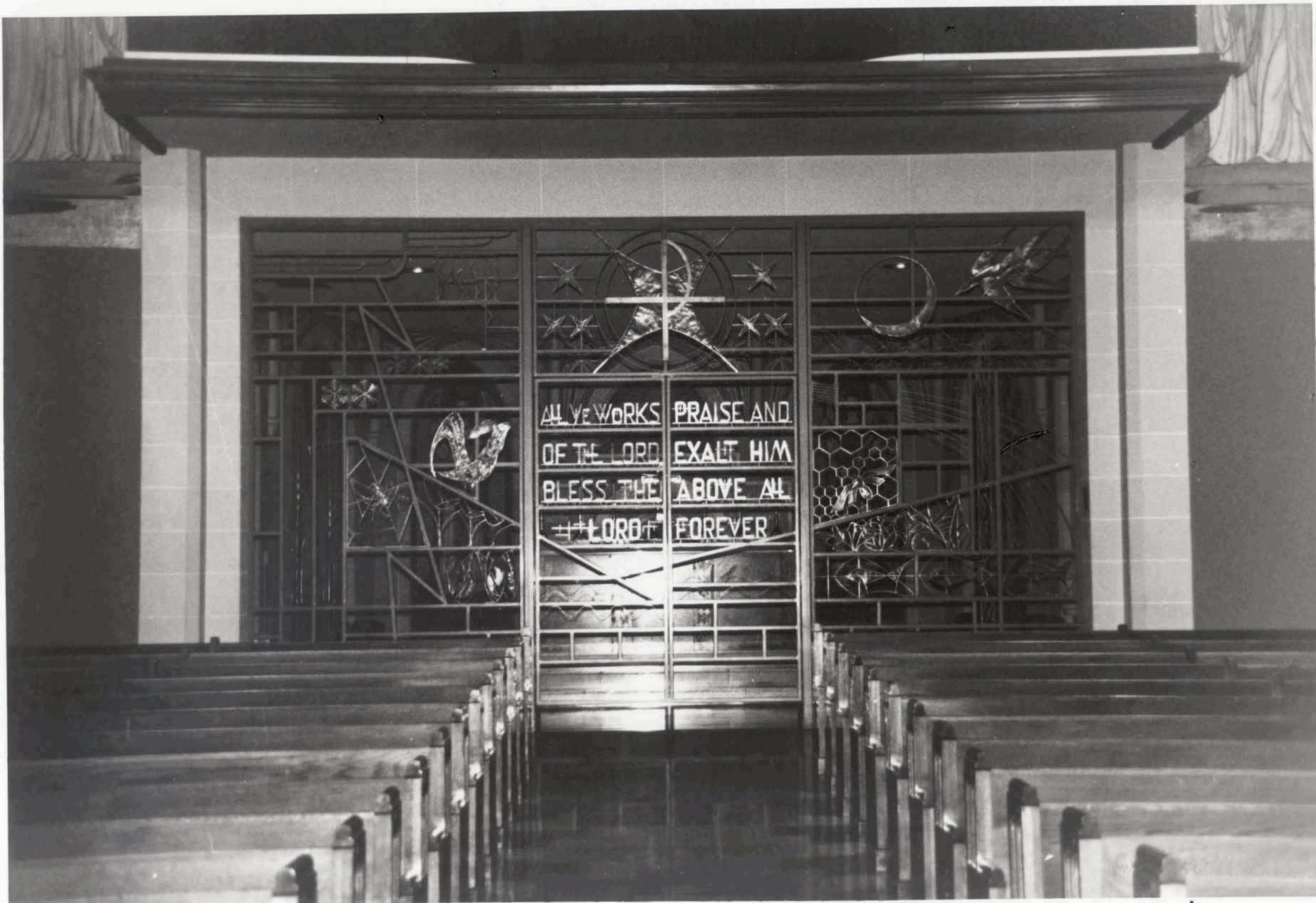
St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, MO
Photo No. 23



St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, MO
Photo No. 24



St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, MO
Photo No. 25



St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, MO
Photo No. 26



St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon
St. Charles County, MO
Photo No. 27

