

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 446 HIGHWAY 137  not for publication

city or town PURCELL  vicinity

state KANSAS code KS county DONIPHAN code 043 zip code 66109

### 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.)

Richard D. Parbortz D-SHPO 3-13-01  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

KANSAS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

State of 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 commenting official/Title Date

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:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH  
Name of Property

DONIPHAN COUNTY, KANSAS  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: RELIGIOUS FACILITY

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: RELIGIOUS FACILITY

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS:  
LATE GOTHIC REVIVAL

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: LIMESTONE  
walls BRICK

roof ASPHALT; OTHER: SLATE

other

**Narrative Description**

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

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- 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**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

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.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographical 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1896

**Significant Dates**

1896

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

BENNET, J.H. - ARCHITECT

SCHNELL, MATHIAS - BUILDER

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH  
Name of Property

DONIPHAN COUNTY, KANSAS  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreege of Property** THREE ACRES

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

1	5
---	---

3	0	0	1	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	4	9	4	8	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

  
Zone Easting Northing

3 

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

  
Zone Easting Northing

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 PAUL BECKER AND SISTER MARIE LOUISE KRENNER

organization ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH date JULY 1999

street & number 1181 WILLOW ROAD telephone 785-847-6427

city or town HURON state KS zip code 66041

**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.)

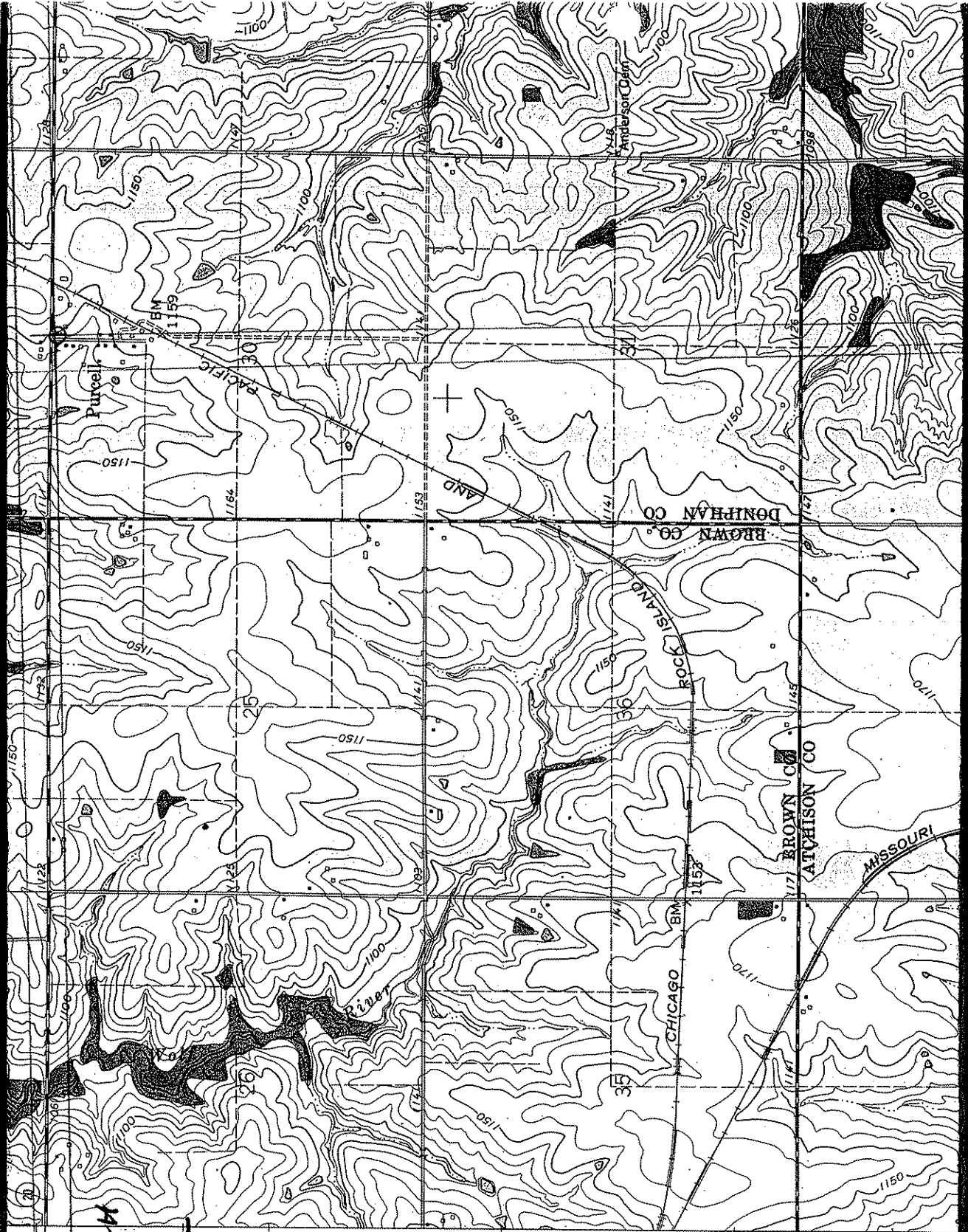
name ARCHDIOCESE OF KANSAS CITY IN KANSAS

street & number 12615 PARALLEL PARKWAY telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town KANSAS CITY state KS zip code 66109

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.



95  
 ST. MARY'S  
 CATHOLIC CHURCH  
 DENTON QUAD  
 UTM Coordinates  
 15 300120  
 4494840 94

HORTON 8.9 MI.  
 3.1 MI. U.S. 73

T. 4 S.  
 T. 5 S.  
 490 000  
 FEET

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

---

### Description

St. Mary's Catholic Church (c. 1896) is located in the extreme southwestern corner of Doniphan county in Union Township. This area was also known at various times by the names of St. Thomas or St. Mary's Colony. Today the area is known as Purcell. St. Mary's Catholic Church remains as the core of a religious complex that once included a rectory, a combination school and residence for teachers, and a combination parish hall and gymnasium. The rectory and the combination school and residence for teachers has been torn down. The combination parish hall and gymnasium is not included in this nomination.

Standing at the junction of Highways 20 and 137, St. Mary's Catholic Church is also located on the Pony Express trail that leads from St. Joseph, Missouri to Sacramento, California. On May 16, 1996, the Olympic torch was carried past this church by Pony Express Riders, the relay station was at the church parking lot.

The architecture of St. Mary's Church is Late Gothic Revival. Built with red bricks, it has a central tower with one bell crowned by a steeple. The steeple reaches to a height of 112 feet. On the front the brick forms an ornamented facade. Concrete steps leading into the church are on two levels. Concrete steps also lead into a sacristy on the back south side.

The tower is buttressed and consists of three sections. The first or lowest section contains a gabled entrance with two lancet windows on the sides, one above the other. The middle section contains three lancets while the top section is octagonal with pinnacles topped by the six-sided spire. The arched area above the double wooden door as well as the two side arched windows feature a quatrifoil design. Delicate cast-iron tracery adorns the front of the church above the two small side gables. The cornerstone is at the front southwest corner.

The interior of the church has a sanctuary and a nave flanked by side aisles. Two sacristies, one on the north and one on the south, open from the sanctuary.

The vaulting in the sanctuary ends in ornamented corbels. Four stained glass windows are simple in design and depict the four evangelists: John, Matthew, Luke, and Mark in medallions. There are also two painted medallions on these walls. The altar and its statuary is elaborate.

The groined vaulting in the nave ends in pilasters above columns each of which is formed by four pillars. These are surmounted by foliated capitals. The impost blocks of the capitals are ornamented with a disconnected round bead

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

---

pattern. Ceiling fans with lights hang unobtrusively in the arches between the nave and the side aisles. The wooden pews have simple carved ends.

The two side aisles each contain a matching elaborate altar, also with statuary. The vaulting, here as in the sanctuary, ends in floriated corbels. There are eight stained glass windows with a simple design featuring medallions depicting various apostles and saints. Ornate wooden crosses are prominently behind and above the fourteen stations of the cross which hang on these walls. Two other smaller windows are toward the back of the church.

There is a choir loft with a wooden balcony decorated by fancy arches. The carved base of the balcony uses a disconnected round bead pattern and rests on two pillared columns. A parishioner has painted a picture of the Madonna and Child above the door which opens in the center of the back wall of the choir loft.

The tapering foundation is of native limestone with a base six feet in width. The church has a full basement housing a furnace and is also used for storage. A chimney rises from the rear of the church.

In 1899, a two story, nine room frame rectory was built. A tornado damaged the church in 1903, breaking windows and cracking the tower. In 1906 the church was redecorated. A new altar, and organ, stations of the cross, and statues were purchased. Cement walks and steps in front of the church were built.

The interior of the church has been lightened by painting, the Gothic altars with their statues refurbished and the sacristies remodeled. The door of the north sacristy has been bricked in. Wall to wall carpeting in the sanctuary continues down the nave aisle. In 1982 a new organ was purchased.

On August 7, 1991, a tornado struck the church steeple, causing severe structural damage to it. All activities had to be held in the parish hall. Now, besides steeple repair, the church has undergone repainting, recarpeting, restroom installation, and a thorough remodeling. Many materials were generously donated by members of the parish and surrounding communities. The 1874 bell from the first church still hangs in the belfry of the present church.

St. Mary's Catholic Church has been in continuous use since its construction in 1896. The north side of the roof has the original slate shingles. The south part of the roof was replaced with asbestos shingles. The stencilling of 1896 was painted over in 1956. In all other aspects the church maintains a very high degree of integrity.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   1  

---

### Statement of Significance

St. Mary's Catholic Church (c. 1896) is being nominated to the National Register under criterion C for its architectural significance as a Late Gothic Revival Church.

The Late Gothic Revival was frequently employed by the Catholic Church during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century church building era. The style is noted for its universal feature, the pointed arch, along with other characteristic features including pinnacles, battlements, vaulting patterns, buttresses, crockets, finials, tapered spires, window tracery and lancet windows. The St. Mary's Catholic church incorporates many of these elements into its structure, making it a good example of the Late Gothic Revival style.

The Gothic Revival style was first introduced to this country in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and is a key component of the Picturesque movement. The Picturesque movement was a reaction against classical architecture that also included the Italianate styles. Late Gothic Revival churches such as St. Mary's Catholic church were typically built of masonry while churches built in the earlier part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were typically board and batten.

As an example of the Late Gothic Revival style, St. Mary's Church is built with red bricks and has a central tower with one bell crowned by a steeple. The steeple reaches to a height of 112 feet. On the front the brick forms an ornamented facade. Concrete steps leading into the church are on two levels. Concrete steps also lead into a sacristy on the back south side. The center tower rises above the church, its spire is visible from miles around. The arched area above the double wooden door as well as the two side arched windows feature a quatrifoil design. Delicate cast-iron tracery adorns the front of the church above the two small side gables. The cornerstone is at the front southwest corner.

The interior of the church has a sanctuary and a nave flanked by aisles. Two sacristies, one on the north and one on the south, open from the sanctuary. The vaulting in the sanctuary ends in ornamented corbels. Four stained glass windows are simple in design and depict the four evangelists: John, Matthew, Luke, and Mark in medallions. There are also two painted medallions on these walls. The altar with its statuary is elaborate.

St. Mary's is the second oldest existing Catholic parish in Doniphan County and was founded in 1858. The parish has the oldest Catholic church building in continual use. St. John the Baptist' parish of the town of Doniphan was founded in 1856. It no longer functions as a parish although its church, built in 1886, still exists and occasionally, though rarely, is used for services. The parish of St. Benedict, near Bendena, was founded in 1857. Its present church was built in 1903.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

---

By 1889 the parish had grown to 56 families. The original little frame church was now too small and agitation was started to build a new church. The congregation was badly divided regarding the location of the new church. Some wanted Purcell, one-half mile south and one-half mile west of the old site; another group wanted to build on the old site; and still another group wished to enlarge the old church in opposition to Bishop Louis Mary Fink's directives. Since the parish was so divided on a location, the bishop directed that the matter be dropped until the parish was more united. At this time, the parish numbered 160 members.

By 1896, \$8,000 had been raised by the congregation. Plans were drawn and approved and it was necessary to decide where to locate the church. On March 1 of that year, there was a meeting of the entire congregation and the parish voted 52 to 25 for Purcell.

The church stands on three acres were donated by John and Catherine Purcell. On April 13, 1896, a contract was let for \$10,500 to Matthias Schnell of Rochford, Illinois. The architect was J. H. Bennet of St. Joseph, Missouri. Work on the church went on to completion without further interruption and was solemnly blessed on Wednesday, October 28 of that year. The site of the former church was converted into the parish cemetery.

In 1858, the first Mass in the settlement was celebrated in the home of John Murray. Other families in the congregation were those of John Normile, John Purcell, Lawrence Doyle, and Nicholas Delzeit. The original parish church was built on ten acres of land donated by John Murray. In 1862, a frame building, 16 X 30 feet was erected. About 1870, St. Thomas Church, as it was then called, was enlarged to 30 X 60 feet. The former length of the church was used as the width. This addition was constructed by Hauling and Kennedy. This work was begun in the spring of 1870 but was not completed until 1872. It was at this time that the title of the church was changed to that of St. Mary's.

The parish contracted for a school in 1906. The contract for a school was let for \$5,310 in 1906. School opened in September of 1908 with 60 pupils. Grades 1 to 9 were taught. A high school opened in 1916 with nine pupils. By 1915 there were 109 pupils enrolled which included thirteen students in the second-year course of high school. The high school grew to 23 students in 1926-27, after which it gradually declined until it was discontinued in 1934. The grade school also declined having in that school year 1935-36 only 30 pupils. This grade school remained open until 1960.

In 1926, a combination parish hall and gymnasium was built. This structure cost slightly more than \$10,000. It was remodeled in 1982. This building is still in use but is not part of the nomination.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   3  

---

The increasing size of individual farms and the consequent decline in the number of farmers reduced the number of members in country parishes. The 1955 report for parishes served by the monks of St. Benedict's Abbey states that there were only 44 families in the Purcell Catholic parish with 23 children attending the school. At present, in 1999, the parish consists of 54 families with 160 members.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   9   Page   1  

---

### Major Bibliographical References

#### Archives at St. Benedict's Abbey, Atchison, Kansas

Photos  
Historical Records Survey - 1936  
Historical Sketch of Parish by Rev. Maurus Kennedy  
Historical Outline of Important Events

#### Parish Records of St. Mary's Catholic Church

Minutes of Meetings  
Historical Summary

Sturgis, Russell. A Dictionary of Architecture and Building. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1901.

Eastern Kansas Register 18 December 1942, 25 December 1942,

Atchison Daily Globe 5 October 195-, 11 September 1983, 8 June 1984

Illustrated Doniphan County c.a. 1937

The Abbey Student. (Atchison) Abbey Student Press, Vol VI, No. 1, October, 1896 (p. 25).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

---

### Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property stands on a tract described as follows: Beginning at the North West Corner of the North East Quarter (NE1/4) of Section Number Thirty (30) Township Number four (4) of Range Number Nineteen (19) running thence East four (4) chains thence South seven and one half (7 ½) chains thence West four (4) chains thence North Seven and one half (7 ½) chains to place of beginning Containing three (3) Acres more or less. The property is bounded to the north by Kansas State Highway 20, to the west by Highway 137, and to the east and south by adjacent property lines.

### Boundary Justification

The nominated property, St. Mary's Catholic Church, is located in Purcell, Kansas as the core of a religious complex that once included a rectory, a combination school and residence for teachers, and a combination parish hall and gymnasium. The rectory and the combination school and residence for teachers has been torn down. The combination parish hall and gymnasium is not included in this nomination.