UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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NAME HISTORIC	Sacred Heart (Roman Ca Most Sacred Heart of J				
AND/OR COMMON	Sacred Heart (Roman Ca	tholic) Church, S	School	and Rectory	
LOCATIO	N 2544 Madison Avenu				
STREET & NUMBER	2540 Madison Avenu 910 West 26th Str			NOT FOR PUBLICATION	
CITY, TOWN	Kansas City	_ VICINITY OF	#5 F	congressional distri Ion. Richard L.	cr Bolling
STATE	Missouri	CODE 64108		county Jackson	CODE
CLASSIFI	CATION			<del></del>	
CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS		PRESI	ENT USE
DISTRICT	PUBLIC	_XOCCUPIED		AGRICULTURE	MUSEUM
_XBUILDING(S)	X_PRIVATE	_UNOCCUPIED		COMMERCIAL	PARK
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SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE		ENTERTAINMENT	X.RELIGIOUS
OBJECT	_IN PROCESS	_XYES: RESTRICTED		GOVERNMENT	SCIENTIFIC
	8EING CONSIDERED	YES: UNRESTRICTED		INDUSTRIAL MILITARY	TRANSPORTATION
NAME STREET & NUMBER	OF PROPERTY  Roman Catholic Diocese  300 East 36th Street	of Kansas City-S	St. Jos	seph, Missouri	
CITY, TOWN	Kansas City	_ VICINITY OF		state Missouri	64111
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REPRESE	ENTATION IN EXIST	ING SURVEYS	•		
TITLE 1.	Kansas City: A Place I	n Time			
DATE	1977	FEDERAL	STATI	E _COUNTY XLOCAL	
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS	Landmarks Commission o City Hall-26th Floor E	f Kansas City, M ., 414 East 12th	issour Stree	t	
CITY, TOWN	Kansas City			state Missouri	64106

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

SACRED HEART (ROMAN CATHOLIC) CHURCH, SCHOOL AND RECTORY

**CONTINUATION SHEET** 

ITEM NUMBER 6

PAGE

2. Landmarks Commission of Kansas City, Missouri, Survey local Landmarks Commission of Kansas City, Missouri City Hall - 26th Floor E. 414 East 12th Street Kansas City, Missouri 64106

1 -

EXCELLENT

XGOOD

\_\_FAIR

#### CONDITION

\_\_DETERIORATED
\_\_RUINS
\_\_UNEXPOSED

#### **CHECK ONE**

\_\_UNALTERED

#### CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE

#### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The three buildings of the Sacred Heart Parish, its church, rectory, and school, are located in the West Side district of Kansas City, Missouri. The church stands at 2544 Madison Avenue, the school at 910 West 26th Street with the rectory just north of the church, at 2540 Madison Street. The church and school are at grade along 26th Street, from which the property slopes downward to the north. A low retaining wall begins near the center entranceway of the church's east facade and is continued along the north side of the building. The ground around both school and rectory has been graded to level, leaving both buildings sitting on moderate rises. A paved playing area surrounds the school, while a modestly landscaped yard encircles the rectory. A modern one-car garage is located west of the rectory.

#### SACRED HEART CHURCH

The church, which serves the Roman Catholic parish of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus (site A), was erected in 1896-97, and was the last of the trio of buildings to be constructed. The church was designed in a revival style sometimes called Celtic-Norman, or Hiberno-Romanesque, a simplified Irish version of English Romanesque (Norman).

#### Overall Dimensions

Essentially rectangular, Sacred Heart Church is approximately 70' wide along its front and rear (east and west) facades and 144' along its sides to the north and south. Unlike most early and medieval Christian churches, its entrance is in its east facade and its chancel is located at the western end of the building. Engaged towers flank the gable end on the east (front) of the building, occupying the corners and fulfilling the rectangular configuration of the building. The maximum height from the base to the apex of the southeast corner tower totals almost 90'.

#### Construction Materials and Colors

Sacred Heart Church is constructed of locally quarried buff-colored ashlars of Missouri limestone. The sides and towers of the building are formed of coursed ashlar, while the gable ends of the front and rear facades are laid in random course.

#### Decorative Details

Engaged towers, one at the northeast and one at the southeast corner of the church have semicircular arched openings at the lowest level of their east faces; the north tower is terminated with a small conical stone projection at each corner providing the finishing feature.

The south tower, rising into an unengaged belfry, becomes the sole asymmetrical element in the total composition of the church and the most arresting feature of the building. The fourth section of this tower, in which the bellcage and bell are located, is pierced by a large horseshoe arch in each of its four faces.

(Rev. 10-74)

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# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SACRED HEART (ROMAN CATHOLIC) CHURCH, SCHOOL AND RECTORY

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

1

DATE ENTERED

7

At the salient fourth corner, a corbeled niche holds a bronze sculpture of a standing Christ with heart exposed, known as the Sacred Heart. Additional emphasis is given to this corner by the turret which crowns it. Six narrow blind arches encircle the turret and crenelations top it. The turret serves as a pedestal for a stone Celtic cross. A similar cross decorates the peak of the east gable end wall.

#### Roof

A saddle roof covers Sacred Heart Church, sloping down to the north and south between the cross gables, each of which is separately roofed. Asphalt shingles sheathe the roof.

#### Alterations

Originally the west facade of Sacred Heart Church was a double gable end; the second gable, which was the sacristy, is almost as high and almost as wide as that covering the nave. Judging by the similarity of the stonework, a cross gable at the southwest corner of the building was added in ca. 1900, providing a rear entrance. At an unknown later date a one-story addition, 14' by 71' was attached on the west and, at the same time, the northwest corner was filled with a cross gable, projecting to the north. Entrance here is obtained through a smaller cross gable of wood, also projecting north. None of the alterations has compromised the integrity of the original building.

#### SACRED HEART RECTORY

Sacred Heart Rectory, 2540 Madison Avenue (Site C), was designed as and still functions as the residence of the officiating clergy of its parish. Built in 1887, it is located on the same site as the parish's school and church, just north of the church. This spacious home is an important local example of the eclectic Queen Anne style.

#### Overall Dimensions

The Sacred Heart Rectory is essentially asymmetrical in design because of its projecting bays and uneven roof line. It is generally rectangular in overall dimensions, measuring approximately 45' east-west, and 50' deep. The building contains three stories above a basement foundation of rubble limestone.

#### Construction Materials and Colors

Local clays were used to make the dark red-brown bricks which are laid in common bond. Minimal limestone trim provides the only contrast below the cornice, which is wood, except for the encircling front veranda, also articulated with a wooden entablature. Fish scale shingles face most of the gable ends and dormers of the attic floor. In a later addition, unpainted shakes have been used to enclose a second story above the open first level porch.

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DATE ENTERED	

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SACRED HEART (ROMAN CATHOLIC) CHURCH, SCHOOL AND RECTORY

**CONTINUATION SHEET** 

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE 2

A corner turret contains convex windows, on the north end of the front (east) facade; the upper fourth of the turret is decorated with a textured brickwork bond (now covered except on the north). An open first story veranda encircles the turret and joins a projecting bay. Beyond the bay the southeast corner of the facade is canted, although the bracketed soffit above it is cantilevered to make an overhanging square corner. Three-sided windowed bays project on both the north and south facades. Two cut stone stringcourses encircle the house, incorporating the window sills at both the first and second story levels. A denticulated wooden cornice and pellet molding complete the ornamentation.

#### Roof

Asphalt shingles cover the complex roof of Sacred Heart Rectory. A saddle roof covers the central portion of the residence. It has, however, smaller saddleback extensions over the attic gables to the east, north, and west. Multi-hips cover the projecting bays on north and south. A convex bulge overlays the eybrow dormer above the front facade, while a pinnacle roof crowns the turret at the northeast corner.

#### Alterations

A second story addition, constructed in approximately 1920, included the brick columns used for supports.1

#### SACRED HEART SCHOOL

Sacred Heart School, at the northeast corner of W. 26th Street and Belleview Avenue, (Site B) was erected in 1887-1888. The building was originally designed in the Second Empire style; its mansarded third story, ornamenting front cupola, and wooden porches were later removed.

#### Overall Dimensions

Except for a 5 foot projecting center bay, Sacred Heart School is nearly a square, measuring 65' east-west, and 60' deep. It presently contains two stories above a raised basement.

#### Construction Materials and Colors

Above a foundation of coursed quarry-faced limestone ashlar, Sacred Heart School is built of brick, probably laid in common bond. In the course of a later remodeling, the original walls were surfaced with stucco, now painted grey; however, there is little doubt that the bricks were originally the same dark red-brown as those of the adjacent rectory.

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DATE ENTERED

SACRED HEART (ROMAN CATHOLIC) CHURCH, SCHOOL AND RECTORY

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE 3

#### Decorative Details

This is a severely plain building, the only ornamentation being segmentally arched hoodmolds and cut stone lugsills above and below the windows. A large Latin cross stands at roof level above the east facade.

#### Roof

The roof is flat, covered with built-up tar and gravel.

#### <u>Alterations</u>

When originally constructed Sacred Heart School had a mansarded third floor from which five dormer windows protruded on each facade. A graceful cupola, topped with a cross, covered the projecting bay on the front (west) facade. The third floor served as a convent, housing the sisters who comprised the teaching staff. There was also a balustraded two-story wooden porch on the rear (east) facade. In a 1948 remodeling, the third floor was removed and the southern half of the second floor, formerly classrooms, became a convent area containing bedrooms, parlor, dining room, kitchen and bath. The classrooms, assembly room, and recreational facilities of the first floor and basement were also rearranged and modernized, and a new porch was erected on the east. Further alterations in 1961 by the J.E. Dunn Construction Company seem to have been necessary to bring the building up to modern safety standards. 4

#### <u>Site</u>

The buildings of Sacred Heart Parish are located in approximately the center of the area served. However, a large part of its northern and eastern area has become commercial and much of its eastern portion has been dedicated to public park facilities. At the eastern edge of the park, and just a block west of the parish buildings now lies a high speed throughway and overpass. Many homes were demolished to accommodate the highway. Present parishoners are drawn from the only remaining residential area within the parish. This small district, composed primarily of modest houses and bungalows, is relatively unstable and transitional. Light manufacturing and warehousing are carried on in commercial structures directly north and east of the church property.

#### Present Condition and Status

The buildings of Sacred Heart Parish are owned by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, Missouri. Each of the buildings is still fulfilling its original function and is still in regular use. Maintenance is good. There is no known threat of demolition, nor any plans for redevelopment.

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DATE ENTERED

SACRED HEART (ROMAN CATHOLIC) CHURCH, SCHOOL AND RECTORY

**CONTINUATION SHEET** 

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE 4

7

#### Interior

The interior of the church is in moderately good condition. Although it has undergone some modernization, the most notable features are the ornate altar and stained glass windows.

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# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

DATE ENTERED

SACRED HEART (ROMAN CATHOLIC) CHURCH, SCHOOL AND RECTORY

**CONTINUATION SHEET** 

**ITEM NUMBER** 

PAGE 5

7

#### **FOOTNOTES**

- 1. Interview with Reverend Thomas Oldfield, Pastor, Sacred Heart Church, Kansas City, Missouri, 14 September 1977.
- 2. Montgomery Photo Collection #v-626-19, 1897 (internal dating), Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.
- 3. Alfred Benberg, Architect, <u>Plans for Sacred Heart School</u>, 1948, Architectural Archives, General Library of University of Missouri at Kansas City, Kansas City, Missouri 64110.
- 4. Building Permits #23967A, 18 June 1948, #66800A, 24 July 1961, Building Permit Office, 18th floor, City Hall, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.

### 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AF			
—PREHISTORIC —1400-1499 —1500-1599 —1600-1699 —1700-1799 —1800-1899	ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORICARCHEOLOGY-HISTORICAGRICULTUREXARCHITECTUREARTCOMMERCE	REAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CH COMMUNITY PLANNING CONSERVATION ECONOMICS  XEDUCATION ENGINEERING EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE LAW LITERATURE MILITARY MUSIC PHILOSOPHY	X religion  Science Sculpture X social/humanitarian Theater Transportation
1900-	COMMUNICATIONS	INDUSTRYINVENTION	POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	_OTHER (SPECIFY)
SPECIFIC DAT	ES Church: 1896-189	97 BUILDER/ARCI	HITECT	

Rectory and School: 1887-1888
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The church, school, and rectory of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, located in the West District of Kansas City, Missouri, were built between 1887, when the parish was established, and 1897, when the church edifice was completed. They symbolize the rapid expansion of both Kansas City and its Catholic population during the late nineteenth century. At the same time, they represent the dedication and perseverance of a working class parish which, through the cooperative efforts of clergy and laity, provided for its own needs. The buildings of this parish, more commonly known as Sacred Heart, are significant in that a church, school, and clerical residence all occupy the same site and proximity and have been in continuous use from their original period of construction. Sacred Heart School is the oldest parochial school still operating in Kansas City. The most architecturally important of the three Sacred Heart buildings is the parish church. It is an example of native limestone construction, embellished with a notable turret-topped campanile, featuring a large and unusual horseshoe arch in each of its four faces.

#### HISTORICAL DATA

In the 1820s French and French-Canadian fur trappers and traders were the first settlers in the wilderness which was later to become Kansas City, and Roman Catholic clergy entered the region along with these earliest white residents. However, it was not until the last quarter of the nineteenth century that the number of Catholic communicants, primarily German and Irish immigrants, began to increase rapidly. Sacred Heart Parish, founded in 1887, served the largely Irish population of its neighborhood, then situated in the southwest area of the city. Originally, the congregation consisted of approximately fifty families, some of whom were still tending farms and raising stock in the area; others, however, were employed by the railroads and packing houses whose yards and plants were nearby.

Inasmuch as diocesan funds were limited, it was the obligation of parishoners and their pastor to plan for and provide the buildings needed to serve the parish. The first pastor of Sacred Heart was the Reverend Michael J. O'Dwyer, an energetic and enterprising immigrant from County Limerick who had been in the United States only three years. Father O'Dwyer's first services were held in the homes of parishoners. Simultaneously, he began to operate a temporary brickyard just north of the present rectory, utilizing clay uncovered during the downgrading of nearby hills. The brickyard provided an economical source of material with which to construct the parish's buildings. By the winter of 1888, both parsonage and school were completed; church services were moved to the school building. The school was large enough to accommodate four hundred children and was originally staffed by the Sisters of Providence. In 1894, the Sisters of Loretto were assigned to Sacred Heart and they, in conjunction with some Sisters of St. Joseph, still provide the teaching personnel, although they no longer live on the premises.4

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# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SACRED HEART (ROMAN CATHOLIC) CHURCH, SCHOOL AND RECTORY

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

Within a few years the growing parish needed a larger house of worship and a temporary wooden structure was erected at the corner of 26th Street and Madison Avenue. At the same time, plans were being made for the permanent edifice. The product of Father O'Dwyer's brickyard, adequate for rectory and school, was not deemed an appropriate material for their church; a stone church, similar to those the congregation had known in Ireland, was their goal.

By July 12, 1896, the walls of the new church were being laid around the temporary building and the cornerstone dedication was held. John J. Glennon, bishop of the Kansas City diocese, officiated at the ceremony.5 Parish history relates that the parishoners themselves constructed the church building. By the following summer it was completed and the temporary structure within was demolished.<sup>6</sup>

Through the years the neighborhood served by Sacred Heart Parish has changed considerably, as have its inhabitants. The predominantly Irish parishoners of earlier times have given way to a Latino population. Many houses were demolished for highway construction in the area. From a peak of approximately five hundred families, the parish has declined to one-fourth its former size. The consolidated school district of which Sacred Heart is now a part is formally known as Our Lady of the Americas School.

Sacred Heart Church is contained on a list of architectural projects, drawn up by Louis S. Curtiss (1865-1924), one of Kansas City's most noted architects. At the time the church was built Curtiss was the partner of Frederick C. Gunn (1864-1959) in a firm known as Gunn and Curtiss. The partnership lasted from 1892 to 1899. However, no corroborating evidence can be found to substantiate the possibility that Gunn and Curtiss designed the church for Sacred Heart parish.7

The survey of Missouri's historic sites is based on the selection of sites as they relate to theme studies in "Missouri's State Historic Preservation Plan." The Sacred Heart Church, Rectory and School is therefore being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as an example of the themes of "Architecture," "Education," and "Society."

#### **FOOTNOTES**

- 1. "Piano was First Altar for Parish," <u>Kansas City Star</u>, 24 January 1953, p.3; "Church Celebrates 75th Year," Kansas City Star, 12 June 1971, p.3.
- 2. Carrie Westlake Whitney, <u>Kansas City</u>, <u>Missouri: Its History and Its People</u>, 1808-1908, 3 vols. (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1908), 1:409; Water Permit #6668, 22 April 1887, Water Department, 5th floor, City Hall, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.

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DATE ENTERED

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SACRED HEART (ROMAN CATHOLIC) CHURCH, SCHOOL AND RECTORY

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

2

- 3. The Chancellor, "Catholic Churches and Institutions in the Diocese of Kansas City and Leavenworth" (Kansas City: Catholic Press Guild of America, 1923), unpaged [p.21].
- 4. "Church Celebrates 75th Year," <u>Kansas City Star</u>, 21 June 1971, p.3; interview with Sister Agnes Marie, Principal, Our Lady of the Americas School, Kansas City, Missouri, 17 November 1977.
- 5. "A New Place of Worship," <u>Kansas City Journal</u>, 13 July 1896, p.5; "Sacred Heart Dedicated," <u>Kansas City Times</u>, 13 July 1896, p. 8; "Used a Golden Trowel," <u>Kansas City Star</u>, 13 July 1896, p.8.
- 6. William J. Dalton, "Historical sketches of Kansas City: Souvenir of Silver Jubilee of Annunciation Parish" (Kansas City: [n.p.], 1897), unpaged; Church Celebrates 75th . Year," Kansas City Star, 12 June 1971, p.3.
- 7. Louis Curtiss, "Directory [of Projects]," Collection 35, Kansas Collection, University of Kansas Libraries, Lawrence, Kansas, p.G.

### 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

<ul><li>Agnes Marie, Sister.</li><li>Missouri. Interview,</li></ul>			cas School, Kansas City	,
<ol> <li>Benberg, Alfred, arch Archives, General Lib Missouri.</li> </ol>	itect. <u>Plans for Sa</u> rary of University	cred Heart Sch of Missouri at	ool, 1948, Architectura Kansas City, Kansas Ci	l ty, (cntd
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CONTINUATION SHEET ITEM NUMBER PAGE

- 3. The Chancellor. "Catholic Churches and Institutions in the Diocese of Kansas City and Leavenworth." Kansas City: Catholic Press Guild of America, 1923.
- 4. Curtiss, Louis. "Directory [of Projects]," Collection 35, Kansas Collection, University of Kansas Libraries, Lawrence, Kansas.
- 5. Dalton, William J. "Historical Sketches of Kansas City: Souvenir of Silver Jubilee of Annunciation Parish." Kansas City: [n.p.], 1897.
- 6. Kansas City Journal, 13 July 1896, p.5.
- 7. Kansas City Star, 13 July 1896, p.8; 24 January 1953, p.3; 12 June 1971, p.3.
- 8. Kansas City Times, 13 July 1896, p.8.
- 9. Montgomery Photo Collection # V-626-19, 1897 (internal dating). Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.
- 10. Oldfield, Thomas, Reverend. Pastor, Sacred Heart Parish, Kansas City, Missouri. Interview, 14 September 1977.
- 11. Whitney, Carrie Westlake. <u>Kansas City, Missouri: Its History and Its People</u>, 1808-1908. 3 Vols. Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1908.

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SACRED HEART (ROMAN CATHOLIC) CHURCH, SCHOOL AND RECTORY

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 11

PAGE 1

- Edward J. Miszczuk Chief Research Historian Landmarks Commission of Kansas City, Missouri City Hall - 26th Floor E., 414 East 12th Street (816) 274-2555 Kansas City, Missouri 64106
- 3. James M. Denny (State Contact Person)
  Department of Natural Resources
  Office of Historic Preservation
  P.O. Box 176
  Jefferson City
  314/751-4096
  Missouri 65102

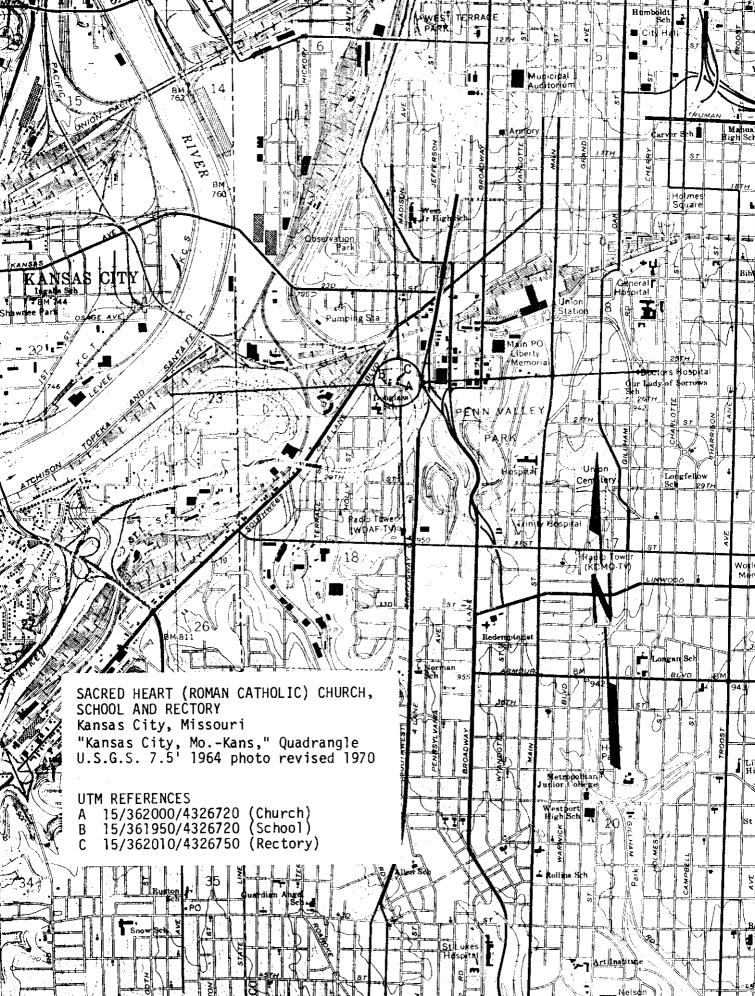
Sacred Heart (Roman Catholic) Church, School & Rectory Kansas City, Missouri

SITE PLAN MAP NOT TO SCALE

26TH STREET WEST

UTM REFERENCES A 15/362000/4326720 (church) B 15/361950/4326720 (school) C 15/362010/4326750 (rectory) MADISON

AVENUE



#### Photo Log:

Name of Property:	Sacred Heart Church, School and Rectory				
City or Vicinity:	Kansas City				
County: <b>Jackson</b>	County	State:	МО		
Photographer:	Sherry Piland				
Date Photographed:	Sept. 1977				

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

- 1 of 8. Primary E façade, with S façade slightly visible on the left, view looking W.
- 2 of 8. View of the SE corner with the front (E) façade on the right and the S façade on the left, view looking NW.
- 3 of 8. View of the NE corner with the N façade on the right and the front (E) façade on the left, view looking SW.
- 4 of 8. Detail of campanile with front (E) façade on the right and S façade on the left, view looking NE.
- 5 of 8. View of S façade, with primary (W) facade on left. View looking NE.
- 6 of 8. View toward SE corner, with the front (E) façade on the right and the S façade on the left, view looking NW.
- 7 of 8. SE corner with the front (E) façade on the right and the S façade on the left, view looking NW.
- 8 of 8. NE corner with the N façade on the right and the front (E) façade on the left, view looking SW.



