

City of Madison Landmarks Commission
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (1)

I. Name of Building or Site

(1) Common

Holy Redeemer Catholic Church

(2) Historic (if applicable)

same

II. Location

(1) Street Address

132 W. Johnson Street

(2) Ward (available @ City Clerk)

4th

III. Classification

(1) Type of Property (building, monument, park, etc.)

Building

(2) Zoning District

C2

(3) Present Use

Church

IV. Current Owner of Property (available at City Assessor's office)

(1) Name(s)

Holy Redeemer Congregation

(2) Street Address

120 W. Johnson Street

(3) Telephone Number

parish house: 255-1658

V. Legal Description (available at City Assessor's office)

(1) Parcel Number

0709-144-2206-2

(2) Legal Description Lots 3, 4, 5,
13, 14, 15, 16, Block 63, Original Plat.

VI. Condition of Property

(1) Physical Condition (excellent, good, fair, deteriorated, ruins)

good

(2) Altered or Unaltered?

altered

(3) Moved or Original Site?

original

(4) Wall Construction

covered stone foundation , superstructure of Random Ashlar Sandstone

(5) On a separate sheet of paper, describe the present and original physical construction and appearance (limit 500 words).

City of Madison Landmarks Commission
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (2)

VI.(5) Describe Present and Original Physical Construction and

Appearance: NOTE: Holy Redeemer church is located within the Mansion Hill Historical District.

Holy Redeemer Catholic Church is the second oldest Catholic Church in Madison and the first German Catholic church built in the city. The existing church is the second one built by the congregation. Historical records state: "at the date of construction, economy was the word, as the expense was paid by the contributions of the congregation, which....had no great wealth at command...In consequence, a saving was effected whenever it was thought possible...the walls were not built to the height desirable, and the timber was unreasonably light... so that....the structure soon gave evidence of weakness...John Nader was directed to draw up plans and specifications(for construction of roof and spire)...In the early part of April, 1880(sic), the work was commenced, and is now successfully completed; the Roman style was carried out as far as possible. The work is first class, and is a credit to the congregation...To John Nader, architect, is due much praise for the architectural beauty of the edifice, both inside and outside. The church is 115x52; spire, 140 feet."

James Livesey, a veteran contractor, stone-cutter and builder constructed the church. It is constructed of random ashlar sandstone. The walls are 30 feet high with the narthex tower spire rising to 140 feet. The church is built in Romanesque style following a T-plan with intersecting gable roof. A cupola rises from the roof area over the approximate point where the main altar stands. The facade around the narthex is symmetrical with arched stained glass windows installed in November 1900 at the cost of \$1800. The beautiful but simple stained glass windows in the sides are built into plain pilasters which define the bays. The spire is a dominant focal point in the area. The frame bell chamber above the narthex tower contains three bells, the gift the church members. The bells were installed in 1894 and are three different sizes. The spire is octagonal in shape and is topped by a cross. Clock faces are set into the spire(arch pediment) just above the bell chamber. There are four(4) faces pointing in every direction. The clock was the gift of the only Irish member of the congregation at the time, Mr. Farrell O'Brien and were installed in 1881 at the cost of \$425.00. Paired brackets support the spire base. The first hot air furnace was installed in 1881 at the cost of \$432.00 and gas illumination in 1883 at the cost of \$190.00.

In 1892, owing to the increased demand put on it by the growing congregation it became necessary to increase the seating capacity of the church so a new sanctuary, twenty-five feet in length was added to the main structure at the cost of \$4000. An additional expense of \$1100 was also incurred in the elaborate and tasteful frescoing of the entire interior of the structure edifice. The structure as it now stands occupies an area of 135x50 feet. It is constructed of sandstone quarry stone faced at its foundation with concrete to prevent deterioration.

1. History of Dane County, Wisconsin. Chicago: Western Historical Society, MCCCCLXXX, page 785-6; 1010

City of Madison Landmarks Commission
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (3)

VII. Significance

(1) Original Owner

Holy Redeemer Congregation

(2) Original Use

Church

(3) Architect or Builder

John Nader, Architect
James Livesey, stonecutter/builder

(4) Architectural Style

chinese
mostly Romanesque style

(5) Date of Construction

Foundation laid 1865 (present church)
Completed 1869 *with additions 1880 +*

(6) Indigenous Materials Used

quarry sandstone

(7) On a separate sheet of paper, describe the significance of the nominated property and its conformance to the designation criteria of the Landmarks Commission Ordinance (33.01), limit of 500 words.

VIII. List of Bibliographical References Used

1. Meine Dreissig Jahre als Priester in Madison, Wisconsin, Zitterl, 1907
2. The Catholic Church in Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI, 1895-1898
3. "Holy Redeemer Diamond Jubilee - 1857 - 1932" Madison, Wisconsin, October 9, 1932
4. History of Dane County, Wisconsin. Chicago: Western Historical Society, 1880.
~~MDCCLXXX~~, page 785-6, 1010.
5. Wisconsin State Journal, October 10, 1932
6. Madison Past and Present (1902)
7. The Catholic Herald Review Edition of 1928
8. Address by John R. Newman, M.D. to Knights of Columbus, Council 531 on February 10, 1976

IX. Form Prepared By:

(1) Name and Title

Fr. John H. Hebl, pastor

(2) Organization Represented (if any)

Parish

(3) Address

120 W. Johnson St

(4) Telephone Number

255-1658

(5) Date Nomination Form Was Prepared

April 18, 1983

City of Madison Landmarks Commission
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (4)

VII.(7) Significance of Nominated Property and Conformance to Designation Criteria:

Holy Redeemer Church is the work of two Masters, John Nader, architect, and James Livesey, stonecutter, contractor and builder. As such it meets the requirement of Landmark Designation #3: it embodies the "distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen" and is valuable for the study of the Roman style which was carried out as far as possible.

The History of Dane County, Wisconsin (1880) writes of the architect in these terms: "To John Nader, architect, is due much praise for the architectural beauty of the edifice, both inside and outside. The church is 115x52 feet; spire 140 feet. The auditorium is provided with 450 sittings; the gallery contains 150 sittings; the cost of the entire church as it stands now is \$28,000".(pg 786)

In the same volume is written the following about the builder: "James Livesey, stone-cutter, contractor and builder, was born in England in 1819....he erected the center building of the State University (Bascom Hall), the Episcopal Church (Grace), the Methodist Church, the German Catholic Church (Holy Redeemer)... He is....the veteran contractor of Madison." (page 1010)

Holy Redeemer Church is unique to and representative of the architectural style of the 1800's. The first church built by the congregation was of brick, 58x25 feet by Rev. Michael Haider. It was used for the first time on July 12, 1857. In 1860 the church was enlarged by an addition of 16x16 feet. In 1863, Rev. Michael Obermuller became pastor and two years later it was decided at a meeting of parishioners to erect a new stone church, 110x50 feet, in place of the existing one. The church was completed and dedicated in 1869 by the Right Reverend Bishop Henni. Later a handsome steeple was added to the church, the cupola of which was damaged greatly by a heavy storm in 1873. This necessitated the taking down of the upper tower frame structure, and for about seven years following the church was without this useful and necessary ornament. About 1864 a bell was purchased for the church by the congregation. In 1881 a clock costing \$425 was placed in the steeple. The date was April 16, 1881. The clock was the gift of Mr. Farrell O'Brien, who made a further donation of \$330 toward the erection of the new pastoral residence.

Holy Redeemer Parish had its beginning in September 8, 1856 when Bishop Henni journeyed to Madison to apportion to the German community some monies so they could have their own church with sermons in the German language. Three lots were purchased on Johnson Street, where the present Holy Redeemer Church now stands. The first resident pastor was Rev. Michael Haider who arrived in Madison in July 1857. By 1865 the church numbered about fifty families. The Parish has been served by about 16 pastors to the present and has numbered three Madison Mayors among its membership. They were M.J. Hoven who operated a meat market at State and Gorham Streets. His son-in-law was John Hartmeyer. John B. Heim was also a member and for many years was Superintendent of the Madison Water Works. And finally, Adolph H. Kayser, whose lumberyard was located on East Washington Avenue near the square. Of special historical significance was Rev. Alois Zitterl who was pastor from 1877-1911 and did much historical research on the parish which is printed in the History of the Catholic Church in Wisconsin and published in his own book entitled "My Thirty Years as Priest in Madison, Wisconsin".

Continuation sheet 4/2
Significance

Holy Redeemer church is a most visual landmark in the downtown area of Madison. Many use its steeple as a locating point for State Street while others keep their time schedules by the accuracy of its clock and the chiming of its bell.

Holy Redeemer parish continues to serve not only its parishioners but is also a haven for travelers who lodge at the many motels and hotels in the downtown area. A significant number of those who attend the church are students attending the University of Wisconsin and Madison Area Technical College.

Since its construction, Holy Redeemer Church continues to be a social center in the downtown area. It accomodates the meetings of many varied groups, especially the elderly. The social and religious functions of the church has been a significant part of the lives of many people in the central downtown area of Madison.

Of great historical significance is the fact the Holy Redeemer church is the first Catholic Church for the German speaking people in the City of Madison and the second oldest Catholic Church in Madison.

City of Madison Landmarks Commission
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (2)

Describe Present and Original Physical Construction and Appearance.

ADDENDUM TO HOLY REDEEMER CITY LANDMARK NOMINATION:

The former Holy Redeemer School, now the Religious Education Center of the Diocese of Madison, located at 142 West Johnson Street, is a large, three story, cream colored brick building. It has a rusticated, raised basement and a hipped roof with dormers. The main facade, facing Johnson Street, is Romanesque Revival in style. A central tower, projecting from the plane of the facade and rising above the roof line, gives the building prominence.

The main entrance is at the base of the central tower. A short flight of steps rising from the sidewalk leads to the front doors, located in an arched recess. (The double doors are newer replacements.) The cut stone arch springs from an impost defined in masonry. The impost is part of a stringcourse running from the springing of the arch to the outer wall of the tower. At the top of the arch is an exaggerated keystone decorated with a raised diamond pattern. The name of the school is inscribed in a frieze above the entry.

Above the frieze and beltcourse the tower rises three stories. The lowest set of windows, corresponding to the second floor, contains three double hung sash windows each with a transom above. Above these windows, corresponding to the interior third floor, are three additional windows of the same type with halfcircle scalloped motifs above. The window heads are decorated by protruding headers, set like voussoirs, and an exaggerated keystone. The third set of tower windows is above the roof line of the main building. Here are five narrow openings with arched heads. These openings are divided into three units: two double hung panes at the bottom, a wood panel in the center, and louvers in the arched portion. A decorative swag motif frieze completes the tower elevation.

The front facade is symmetrical. The first floor sits on a rusticated raised basement. A single, boarded-up basement window is located beneath the first floor fenestration. To either side of the front entry, on the main plane of the building, is a centrally placed window. The windows were originally double hung sash, but are now boarded up. Above the square window head is a half circle scalloped motif, creating an arched opening with projecting brick headers and an oversize keystone above. Continuing from the central tower elevation is the frieze and beltcourse, marking the division between the first and second stories.

To either side of the tower above the beltcourse is a large decorative window. The windows have four lights on either side of a central mullion; the bottom two are double hung sash, the upper two are square single panes. Above the entire unit is a semicircular light. Stone voussoirs with a large elongated keystone complete the arched opening. Above the large windows on the main plane of the facade the building terminates with a frieze and cornice. The frieze consists of brickwork laid in a diamond pattern.

The side elevations are less elaborate. The secondary facade faces the church to the northeast. The rustication of the base continues around the building. At the approximate center of the side elevation is a street level entry, leading to the stairwell. Again, the door is a replacement and there is a metal awning. Above the door is a bank of three windows; the two side windows have been boarded up. The window and door are given prominence by a projecting pilaster strip on either side of the entry. The pilasters rise to the level of the beltcourse between the first and second stories. Originally an urn sat on the pilaster's capital.

The building is nearly symmetrical on either side of the entry. At basement level there are five windows to the left of the door and four to the right; all have been boarded up. The first through third floor fenestration is nearly uniform. On the first floor there are four double hung windows with a transom above per side. There is an additional half size window on the far left, placed immediately below the frieze. The second floor has two sets of four windows. At the center, above the entry, are two narrow double hung windows with the scalloped arch motif. Above the arch are brick headers laid like voussoirs and an elongated keystone. On the third floor there are five windows to the left. On the right, the second opening from the left of the center is a door leading to a metal fire escape. The door appears original and has a transom above. At the attic level there are two dormers on the left and one on the right with a gablet between the pair and the single dormer. Above the roof line, five louvered, arched openings are found on the two side faces of the tower.

The south elevation is similar to the north elevation; however, there is no entry on this side. The facade is arranged with a blank central area, corresponding to the entrance on the opposite side. The basement has four windows to the left and five to the right. All have been boarded up, with the exception of the far right window which contains glass blocks. The first floor has four double hung windows with transoms to the left and four to the right. The fifth far right window is half size and located immediately below the frieze. The second floor has four windows per side. On the third floor, the two far left windows are smaller, without

transoms, but placed at the height of the other windows. The remaining two windows on the left are the standard double hung with transoms above. On the right are five openings, the first is a door leading to a fire escape.

The rear elevation is utilitarian. The hipped roof terminates at a central gable containing a round opening with a square window within. The decorative brickwork frieze terminates at the base of the gables. A large chimney rises to the left of the center and the windows of this elevation are arranged around it. The windows of the basement have arched heads; all have been filled in -- the two on the left boarded up, the two on the right bricked in. At the far right is a basement access. The brickwork above contains the shadow of a former gable roof. On each side of the chimney at the first and second floor are two double hung windows with transoms above. There are no windows on the third floor.

City of Madison Landmarks Commission
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (4)

Significance of Nominated Property and Conformance to Designation Criteria.

ADDENDUM TO HOLY REDEEMER CITY LANDMARK NOMINATION:

Holy Redeemer School is significant as the oldest extant school building in Madison and for its associations with the growth and expansion of the Catholic Church and Catholic education in Madison.

The first Catholic school in Madison was built in 1850 by Saint Raphael's Church. The Saint Raphael congregation was founded in 1848 with Reverend Whitehead as its first pastor. At the start, the church added missions in outlying communities, but within a few years the parish was limited to the city of Madison.(1) With Madison's growing population the original Saint Raphael's parish divided into new churches in the city.

The original Holy Redeemer School began in 1856 when German Catholics left the predominantly Irish congregation of Saint Raphael's to form their own congregation. This was the first new church to split from Saint Raphael's. On 12 July 1857 the new congregation celebrated mass in a small, red brick church on the site of the current Holy Redeemer church. At the time, the school had approximately 90 pupils and classes met in the church.(2) Father Michael Haider was the pastor and teacher for the new congregation. In 1864, the Sisters of Notre Dame took over teaching duties and kept the post until the school closed in 1965.

The new church building was begun in 1864 and dedicated 1869. Classes now moved to the basement of the building. In 1880 the church was remodeled by John Nader due to structural weaknesses. At the time there were 300 students enrolled. It

(1) Leo Belda, History of the Catholic Church in Dane County (Master's Thesis, St. Francis Seminary, 1941), 12.

(2) "Holy Redeemer Diamond Jubilee 1857-1932" (Madison: Blied Printing Company, 1932), 5. A 1957 and a 1965 newspaper article indicate that the first Holy Redeemer School met in a wooden house built in 1838 by Isaac Palmer on the site of the present school; however, this is not mentioned in the jubilee pamphlet prepared by the church.. "Holy Redeemer's 1st Mass Was Said 100 Years Ago," Capital Times, 6 July 1957. And, Frank Custer, "Holy Redeemer School Closes After 108 Years," Capital Times, 14 June 1965, 17.

was evident that a larger and permanent building for the school needed to be erected. According to the church's diamond jubilee pamphlet:

An option was secured on lots on Gorham Street directly behind the church. Residents of that street offered \$500 if the school be not built there. The offer was accepted . . . and the school erected where it now stands.(3)

The new school building was constructed in 1892. The cost of the building was \$28,000, that of the lot \$5900. In addition to contributions from the congregation, substantial funds came from businesses and non-members, including breweries, banks, William Vilas, George Burrows, and B.J. Stevens. Little is known of the school building's subsequent history. The jubilee pamphlet notes that improvements were made to the school ca. 1918-1928.

The Holy Redeemer School is significant for the role it played in Madison's Catholic German community. The parish met the community's spiritual and academic needs. Nineteenth century clergy felt a great need for German instruction, writing: "German Catholic schools are the crying need in this country, because German children if Anglicized generally become alienated from Catholic life."(4) In 1902, 430 students attended the school.(5) The parish census of 1932 notes that of the 311 school age (grades 1-8) members of the parish, 300 attended Holy Redeemer School.(6) At its peak at the turn of the century, 430 students were enrolled at the school. With changes in demographics the school population in the area declined, and, in 1965, after educating students for 108 years, Holy Redeemer School was forced to close due to lack of enrollment.(7) After the building was vacated by the school, the exterior brick was sandblasted, and the interior

(3) "Holy Redeemer Diamond Jubilee", 25.

(4) Reverend Anthony Urbanek to Bishop John Martin Henni, 30 January 1852, in "Letters of the Right Reverend John Martin Henni and the Reverend Anthony Urbanek," Wisconsin Magazine of History 10 (September 1926):87.

(5) J.M. Naughtin, "Catholic Education," 81. In Madison, Past and Present (Madison: Wisconsin State Journal, 1902).

(6) "Holy Redeemer Diamond Jubilee," 33.

(7) Only 72 students had been enrolled at Holy Redeemer School during the 1964-1965 school year. Custer, "Holy Redeemer School Closes," 17.

modernized to house the diocesan Religious Education Center.(8)

Holy Redeemer School is also significant as the oldest extant Catholic parochial school in Madison. While the school at Saint Raphael preceded it, the building was demolished. Holy Redeemer School is also the oldest school building in Madison. While the city built three schools between 1866 and 1870, all have been replaced.

The main facade of the building is an example of the Romanesque Revival style. The style, popular from the mid to late nineteenth century, is noted for its monochromatic use of material, beltcourses marking horizontal divisions, and arched window and door openings. The vocabulary of the style is inconsistent here, however. Instead of the corbel tables usually found in buildings of this style, Holy Redeemer School is capped by a decorative frieze. The friezes and the details of the arched entries are more classical in nature. Other extant examples of the Romanesque Revival are found in Madison's Catholic church architecture, including Holy Redeemer Church (1864-1869), Saint Raphael's (1853-1862), and Saint Patrick's (1889).

(8) "Holy Redeemer: A 'Lad' Remembers," Capital Times, 15 December 1972.

Bibliography for Holy Redeemer School (Addendum to Holy Redeemer City Landmark Nomination):

- Belda, Leo. History of the Catholic Church in Dane County. Masters thesis, St. Francis Seminary, 1941.
- Custer, Frank. "Holy Redeemer School Closes After 108 Years." Capital Times, 14 June 1965, 17.
- "Holy Redeemer: A 'Lad' Remembers." Capital Times, 15 December 1972.
- "Holy Redeemer Diamond Jubilee 1857-1932." Madison: Blied Printing Company, 1932.
- "Holy Redeemer Notes 100th Year." Wisconsin State Journal, 26 May 1968.
- "Holy Redeemer's Bells Herald 126th Birthday." Capital Times, 4 June 1984.
- "Holy Redeemer's 1st Mass Was Said 100 Years Ago." Capital Times, 6 July 1957.
- "Letters of the Right Reverend John Martin Henni and the Reverend Anthony Urbanek." Wisconsin Magazine of History 10 (September 1926):66-94.
- Naughtin, J.M. "Catholic Education," 80-81. In Madison, Past and Present. Madison: Wisconsin State Journal, 1902.