

**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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Saint Mary of Redford Catholic Church

Other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

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## 2. Location

Street & number: 16098 Grand River Avenue

City or town: Detroit State: MI County: Wayne

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

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## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

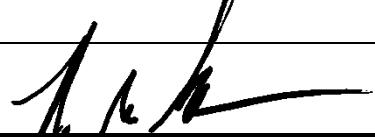
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination    request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

   national         statewide      X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A         B      X C         D

	SHPO	February 26, 2025
Signature of certifying official/Title: <u>Michigan State Historic Preservation Office</u>		
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government		

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In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

**Signature of commenting official:**

**Date**

**Title:**

**State or Federal agency/bureau  
or Tribal Government**

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register  
 determined eligible for the National Register  
 determined not eligible for the National Register  
 removed from the National Register  
 other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

*James Gabbert*  
Signature of the Keeper

4/7/2025

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

Public – Local

Public – State

Public – Federal

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### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x
District	<input type="checkbox"/>
Site	<input type="checkbox"/>
Structure	<input type="checkbox"/>
Object	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGIOUS/religious structure

RELIGIOUS/church school

RELIGIOUS/church-related residence

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### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGIOUS/religious structure

RELIGIOUS/church-related residence

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

French Renaissance

Romanesque

Renaissance

Modern Movement

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Granite, Brick, Limestone, Slate, Clay Tile

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### **Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### **Summary Paragraph**

Saint Mary of Redford Catholic Church is located at 16098 Grand River Avenue, Detroit, Wayne County Michigan. The property is an intact, three-building complex situated on the north side of Grand River Avenue between Mansfield and Saint Marys Streets on the east and west and to Chalfonte Street to the north in northwest Detroit. The irregularly shaped lot has a large, flat, grassy lawn between the street and the south façade of the church. The French Romanesque style church is the primary resource of the property and dominates the southern building that is composed of the interconnected church, rectory, and former convent. The center building of the complex is composed of the Renaissance style former school building. It has a two-story elementary school facing west toward Saint Marys Street and a three-story high school facing east Mansfield Street which are connected in the center by a two-story tall connecting wing. An asphalt paved parking area and garden separate the church and center school building. An asphalt parking lot separates the center school from the northern building; the Modern style two-story tall high school building (now owned by Detroit Public Schools Community District). The building is comprised of two connected sections stretching between Mansfield and St. Mary and north to Chalfonte. Grand River Avenue (also known as US Highway 16) is a major road that runs all the way from downtown Detroit to the west side of Michigan, where it terminates at the city of Muskegon. This section of the road is primarily commercial interspersed with institutional and religious buildings. Residential neighborhoods extend to the north and south. The complex possesses historic integrity and conveys its architectural and historic significance. The location, setting, and feeling of a large church complex in a residential neighborhood remains intact. The design, materials, and workmanship of the individual buildings is evident. The association of the church complex with its historic themes remains intact.

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### **Narrative Description**

#### **Setting**

The Saint Mary of Redford Catholic Church is located at 16098 Grand River Avenue, Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan. Grand River Avenue is a five-lane street that runs at an angle in a northwesterly direction from downtown Detroit toward Lansing and beyond to the west side of Michigan, roughly following the Grand River west of Lansing. The church is located on the north side of the street in the mile stretch between the major north-south running Greenfield and Southfield Roads. This area of Detroit was originally part of Redford Township but was

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annexed to the city in 1925 as the city's burgeoning population grew outward from the city center. The residential neighborhoods surrounding the church have houses dating from the 1920s through the 1950s. The houses have grassy lawns and mature deciduous trees. The commercial and institutional buildings facing Grand River have the same range of construction dates, although urban decline has left some vacant lots interspersed with newer buildings.

The Saint Mary of Redford complex is on an approximately 7.84-acre site, it is an entire block wide and a full block deep. Concrete public sidewalks parallel the streets on three sides of the property. The church, convent, rectory building is set far back from Grand River Avenue with a flat grassy lawn and asphalt parking lot accessed from the side streets in front. The setback is due to the previous church and rectory being located at the corner of Grand River Avenue and Saint Marys (then Rosewood) Street. A concrete walkway in the center of the lawn leads from the public sidewalk to the parking lot. There are flat grassy lawns with mature trees between the buildings and the two side streets; concrete walkways lead from the public sidewalks to the building's entrances. An asphalt paved parking lot accessed by the side streets separates the church, rectory, convent building from the center school building. There is a small lawn and garden in the courtyard behind the rectory. A larger asphalt paved parking lot separates the center school building from the high school building to the north. The two-story high school building fronts on Mansfield Street and has an L-shaped footprint with an asphalt paved parking lot behind. It is connected to the gymnasium addition by a narrow connector at the north end. The gymnasium fronts Street and extends northward. There is a deep grassy lawn with mature trees between the north end of the gymnasium and Chalfonte Street. Concrete walkways extend to all sides of the building from the sounding public sidewalks.

Aerial photographs of the property taken in 1937, 1940, 1949, 1952, and 1961 show vacant land in the location of the 1962 high school and 1968 gymnasium addition. It is difficult to discern details of whether the area is dirt or football and baseball fields, but photographs from the Saint Mary of Redford High School yearbook, *Rustic*, in 1960 and 1962 show football and baseball games taking place on what appears to be the school property.

### **Church, Rectory and Convent – 1927, 1949 – Ralph Adams Cram, 1 Contributing Building**

The church and rectory were completed in 1927, the convent was constructed between 1947 and 1949 according to Ralph Adam Cram's original plans.<sup>1</sup> The entire building is clad in rough faced multi-toned light gray and light brown granite blocks from Massachusetts. Trim and decorative details are in smooth limestone. The roofs are clad in slate. The windows are metal casement windows, with stained glass windows in the church.

The church faces south towards Grand River Avenue and has a central nave with side aisles and a rounded apse at the north end. Buttresses are set at the east and west corners of the nave volume. The gable front nave is roughly four-stories tall and has a central entrance reached by a fan-shaped set of stone steps. The solid wood double doors with iron hinges and hardware are

<sup>1</sup> Although he had designed the convent at the same time as the church and rectory, Ralph Adams Cram had passed away in 1942.

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framed by a limestone archivolt supported by Corinthian pilasters. A limestone blind arch is above the doors. Flanking the entrance are two limestone framed openings with a Corinthian column in the center of the opening and stained glass behind. The limestone frames connect to a limestone band that runs through the buttresses and the exterior walls of the side aisles of the nave. Above the entrance is a multi-story arched stained-glass window framed in limestone. The frame of this arch, too, connects to a limestone band that spans the length of the façade. The large arched window was created by Wilbur Herbert Burnham of Boston under the supervision of Ralph Adams Cram. The theme of the window is the Litany of Loreto.<sup>2</sup> The arch above the window is supported by Corinthian pilasters. Flanking the window on both sides at the spring line of the arch are paired blind arches framed in limestone with a Corinthian column in the center. A limestone cornice supported by carved brackets runs across the bottom of the gable pediment. A limestone three-arch blind arcade is in the center, Corinthian columns support the arches. A copper cross extends from the center of the gable. The exterior walls of the side aisles of the nave are set back from the volume of the nave. In front of each side aisle is a limestone framed arched opening containing two small arched stained-glass windows with a Corinthian column in the center.

Toward the rear of the east side is a projecting entrance vestibule that extends up as a four-sided buttressed bell tower. At the top of the tower there are limestone framed arched openings with smaller arches supported by Corinthian columns and pilasters. A stone cornice supported by carved brackets is at the bottom of the parapet wall. The tower is capped by a pyramid shaped roof clad in standing seam metal. A copper cross extends from the peak of the roof. Although the bell tower was designed to have space for a full carillon, the congregation was not able to raise the funds until 2002, when a fifty-one-bell carillon created by the Paccard Fonderie du Cloches of Annecy, France, was installed. It is one of fourteen known carillons in Michigan.

Further back and to the east extends the south wall of the rectory. Clad in matching stone with a slate-clad hip roof, the first floor has large arched windows, and then arched openings with smaller square windows. There are small square openings at the second floor.

To the west the south wall of the convent extends from the west wall of the church near the front. Clad in matching stone, the south wall has regularly spaced buttresses. The first floor has arched topped windows, and two entrance doors in arched openings. The second floor has rectangular windows. There is a slate-clad hip roof. The gable front at the west end of the wall has a stone cross extending from the peak of the gable.

The east wall of the church has a wood double-door entrance near the south end that is framed by a limestone archivolt supported by Corinthian pilasters. There is a limestone blind arch above the doors. Above the entrance is a limestone blind arcade supported by Corinthian columns. The center arch has a small stained-glass window behind. The limestone fascia just below the slate-clad roof has a carved design. The wall of the side aisle has five tall arched stained-glass

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<sup>2</sup> (Detroit Free Press 1927). The Litany of Loreto, or the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, was originally approved by Pope Sixtus V in 1587 and has been modified at various times since then. The Loreto name stems from the sanctuary (Loreto, Italy) where the litany was first used.

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windows with limestone frames. Below the bell tower an entrance vestibule with a limestone framed entrance door. A circular stained-glass window is located above the door. The east side of the vestibule has a limestone framed arched opening with two smaller arched windows separated by a Corinthian column. The bell tower has two limestone framed rectangular stained-glass windows at the two floors above the roof. Above that there is a pair of arches framed in limestone with metal louvers in the openings. At the bell level there are two limestone framed arched openings containing smaller arched openings separated by a Corinthian column. A limestone cornice supported by carved brackets wraps around the walls above the bell level. The tower is capped by a pyramid roof clad in standing seam metal. A copper cross extends from the peak of the roof.

The rectory faces east toward Mansfield Street. It is clad in matching granite with a limestone foundation and limestone belt course at the top of the first floor. The façade has three sections. Working from the south the wall has no openings except for a small casement window in the upper floor. A wide stone chimney projects above the roof. The next section projects and has a gable front. There are no openings at the lower floor, in the gable there is a limestone framed arched opening with a narrow window below a blind arch. The north two-thirds of the façade is ten bays wide, the entrance is off-center toward the south. The doors are recessed behind a limestone arch, the limestone clad wall extends above the second-floor sill line, a small window is centered above the limestone. The other bays have window openings and the first and second floors. There are three shed roof dormers in the slate-clad hip roof.

The north wall of the rectory has two sections, the end of the rectory building and an attached three-car garage. The east section has a one-story tall projecting gable roof porch with a stone front and sides. To the west there is a door and window opening at the first floor and windows at the second floor. The west section of the south elevation is a three-car garage. The garage sits forward of the rectory and has matching stone at the first floor and a stucco wall above. The three garage doors are within limestone framed segmental arched openings. There are three window openings at the second floor above the doors.

The west wall of the garage and rectory and the north wall of the connector between the rectory and church are clad in textured stucco. There are regularly spaced window openings at the first and second floors. The north wall of the connector has a double-arched opening with a column in the center and iron railings behind at the second floor, creating a porch area.

The north wall of the church is clad in granite with a smooth limestone foundation and limestone trim around the windows. The connector has a door and two windows at the first floor and three windows at the second floor. The rounded walls of the apse and altar have large stained-glass windows spaced regularly around the wall.

The convent faces west toward Saint Marys Street and is clad in matching granite with a smooth limestone foundation and trim. The west façade has five sections. Starting from the south the first section is four bays wide and has three arched windows at the first floor and four casement windows at the second floor. The next section projects and is one bay wide. It has a central casement window at both the basement and second floor, the first floor has a limestone framed

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arched top window. Moving north, the next section is seven bays wide, the second-floor wall is clad in smooth limestone. The first floor has seven limestone framed arched window openings. The second floor has seven casement windows. There are three hip roof dormers spaced regularly in the roof above this section.

The next section projects slightly, but not as far as the second section. The entire wall is clad in matching stone. There are three limestone framed pairs of single casement windows at both the first and second floors. The most northern section has two sections separated by a downspout. The south portion is clad in matching stone and has a slightly projecting hip roof entrance vestibule. The entrance door is recessed behind a limestone framed arch. A single limestone framed casement window is adjacent to the arch. There are two small limestone framed casement windows at the second floor above the entrance roof. The second floor of the north portion is clad in smooth limestone. At the first floor there is a limestone framed entrance door with a blind arch above and a pair of casement windows framed in limestone. There are two sets of casement windows at the second floor. A patio with a stone wall along the street edge extends in front of the north section of the building.

The first-floor stone and second floor smooth limestone clad wall treatment carries around to the north elevation and east facing end of this section of the convent. The north elevation has eight limestone framed window openings at the first floor and eight window openings at the second floor. Each opening contains a pair of casement windows. The east facing end has a one-story gable front projecting entrance vestibule, the wood door is recessed behind a limestone framed arch supported by pilasters. There are three window openings at the second floor each containing a pair of casement windows.

The center leg of the convent contains a chapel, there is a rectangular bell tower with a hipped roof at the south intersection of the chapel and north-south running portion of the convent. A one-story entrance vestibule to the main church projects in front of a portion of the south chapel wall. The vestibule wall has a pair of single casement windows framed in limestone. Two limestone framed arched windows are visible in the upper wall of the chapel. The courtyard between the north convent wing and chapel is not visible.

*Church Interior* (Note: Rectory and Convent interiors were inaccessible at the time of nomination)

The church does not have an obvious cruciform plan as is often found in Catholic churches. Rather, there is a narthex, a nave with side aisles, and side aisles ending in apses. There are no transepts. The narthex has a ceramic tile floor composed of individual tiles set in an interlocking octagonal pattern, plaster walls with a decoratively painted band, and a wood beamed ceiling with carved brackets and decorative painting. Arched passageways at the east and west ends of the narthex lead to smaller narthex areas that connect to the side aisles. The ceramic tile floor continues through a rectangular doorway with double wooden doors and down the center aisle, into the east and west side narthex spaces and down the side aisles of the nave; the flooring under the pews is terrazzo. The nave has a pointed arch ceiling with wood paneling and wood beam ribs and cross beams. The ribs and cross beams have been decoratively painted.

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The nave and side aisles are separated by tall limestone Corinthian columns supporting an arcade and plaster walled clerestory above. The arches of the arcade are decoratively painted, as is the wood ceiling over the side aisles. There is an arched stained-glass window in each bay and on both sides of the clerestory, all with the same basic design, a border of stylized foliage and three medallions with an elaborate symbol in the center medallion.<sup>3</sup>

Below the clerestory, in the outer walls of the east side aisle, there are corresponding taller arched stained-glass windows in five bays. The east aisle has a series of five windows depicting Mysteries of the Holy Rosary, designed by Charles J. Connick of Boston. Rectangular alcoves containing radiators are located under each of the first-story stained-glass windows on the east side of the nave. The west side aisle has four stained-glass roundels designed by Wright Goodhue in the first floor depicting the Virgin Mary.

The central altar is comprised of the low and high altar. Originally located in the high altar, the focal point of the low altar is a carved marble altar located in the center of a raised black and white marble checkerboard floor accessed by three marble-clad steps. Moved to its current location in the early 2000s the front of the altar has a blind arcade comprised of seven arches separated by decorative Corinthian columns. Each of the spandrels is a different colored stone, and the center spandrel has a white marble medallion with a carved lamb laying on top of a book with seven seals.

Between the low and high altar there is a wood lectern and side seating. The high altar is raised another two steps and features a white marble table with recessed square colored stone panels on the front. The high altar is located under the rounded apse with a half-domed ceiling that has gold painted crosses on a blue background. An arcade supported by four limestone Corinthian columns sits at the base of the dome. A wood cross beam extends across the front of the apse and holds a statue of the crucifix flanked by statues of Mary and Saint John. Originally the dome ceiling and walls around the low altar were decoratively painted, the beam and sculptures across the front of the apse did not exist. There was an arched railing around the front of the low altar.

A smaller, secondary apse or apsidiole extends from the rear wall in the center of the main apse and contains a seven-foot-tall marble statue of the Blessed Virgin by A. Sterling Calder of New York set atop a tri-level pedestal. The statue is flanked to the east and west by two, large round-arch stained-glass windows on each side set in recessed arched openings. The apsidiole and the window openings feature decorative paint. The wrought iron around the rear of the apse is Spanish wrought iron.

Both side aisles each end in a smaller apse with marble altar, decoratively painted dome ceiling, and arched stained-glass windows. The floor at the main and side altars is raised two steps and features black and white rectangular marble floor tiles arranged in a checkerboard pattern. The altar at the end of the right aisle is dedicated to Saint Joseph and features a statue of Saint Joseph in front of a gold altarpiece. The Mary altar is at the end of the left aisle and has a central

<sup>3</sup> (Scott 2019)

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sculpture of Mary surrounded by painted panels depicting her life. There are six stained glass windows depicting the seven sorrows of Mary flanking the altar.

The organ loft at the south end of the nave extends above the narthex to the south wall of the church. The Wilbur Burnham designed Coronation of Mary/Litany of Loreto themed stained-glass window on the south facade is centered between two carved and decoratively painted screens for the organ pipes. The organ sits below the center window. The original organ was constructed by the Estey-Welte company of New York in 1927.<sup>4</sup> It was completely rebuilt in 1962 and additions made in 1993 and 2004 for total of fifty-seven ranks of pipes. A carved wood balcony supported by wood brackets extends slightly into the nave.

The baptistry is located near the rear of the church. It has a terra cotta tile floor and vaulted ceiling. The wrought iron baptismal font is on a raised octagonal shaped platform.

### **Elementary and High School – 1920, 1925, 1939, 1952 – 1 Contributing Building**

The red brick school building was the first building of the complex to be constructed. It has an I-shaped footprint comprised of the north-south running two-story tall elementary school wing that faces Saint Marys Street and was constructed in 1920, with additions constructed in 1952 and in the 1960s. The north-south running three-story tall high school wing that faces Mansfield that was constructed in 1939 and has a large auditorium at the north end, and the two-story tall east-west running wing that connects the two sections was constructed in 1925. The entire building has a limestone foundation, trim and decorative details throughout. The portions constructed before 1952 all have similar decorative details. All but the 1952 section and the boiler room have red clay-tile hipped roofs with a central flat roof. The boiler room, 1952, and 1960s addition have flat roofs.

The window types and materials vary throughout the building, the windows that have been replaced in the elementary and connector wings are newer windows that have aluminum frames with a tall, fixed sash at the top and a shorter awning window at the bottom. Steel frame windows with a variety of muntin configurations and sash operations remain in the high school wing window openings.

#### *Elementary Wing – 1920, 1952, 1960s additions*

The west façade of the original building is five bays wide, the bays are separated by brick piers. The first-floor windowsills are within the limestone foundation, just above ground level. A soldier brick course runs across the tops of the openings, framing the entire span of windows in

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<sup>4</sup> The Welte-Mignon Company began as the M. Welte & Sons company. M. Welte & Soehne was established by Michael Welte in Voehrenbach in southwest Germany in 1832. The firm then moved to Freiburg im Breisgau in 1872 and attained international acclaim. Emil Welte, son of Michael Welte, established M. Welte & Sons, Inc., a branch of the company, in New York in 1865 and a factory was in Poughkeepsie, New York, c. 1912. The M. Welte & Sons company was succeeded by the Welte-Mignon Company, and later by the Estey-Welte Corporation.

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each bay. The second-floor windows have brick sills, and each opening has a blind arch above that is infilled with stucco with four square tiles in the center creating a diamond shape. A brick sailor course runs across the top of the wall and creates the bottom edge of a rectangular frame located just below the eave. The panels are infilled with stucco and have two diamonds created by four square tiles in each panel.

The wider center bay contains a central entrance section flanked by three window openings on both sides at the first and second floors. The entrance is framed in limestone, the non-original, metal double-doors are slightly recessed. The limestone frame has rope molding on the edges and a pedimented cornice at the top. There are two brick framed windows above the entrance. The opening is a tall arch with a limestone and soldier course brick frame. A brick circle with a cross in the center is within the spandrel above the two second floor window openings. The entrance bay wall is capped by a pediment, the top of the pediment is clad in stucco with inset bricks creating a blind arcade. The limestone coping extends into a limestone cross at the top of the pediment. At the peak of the roof, centered on the entrance, is an octagonal cupola. It appears to be clad in metal, has arched top openings with a railing at the bottom of the openings. The corners of the cupola are Doric pilasters.

The two outside bays on both sides of the center entrance bay are identical, each contains five window openings at the first and second floors. The first addition at the north end is slightly shorter and slightly set back from the original building. It is one bay wide and contains five window openings at the first and second floor. The first-floor windows have similar brick framing as the original building. The second-floor windows have a single limestone sill across all five openings, and a soldier brick course across the top of all five openings. The second-floor windows do not have the blind arches like the original building, however there are the stucco panels at the top of the wall just below the eave.

The north, 1952, and 1960s additions, have a flat roof with limestone coping covered in metal at the top of the parapet wall. There are two sections, the southern section has two windows at the first and second floors with limestone sills and a soldier course across the top. The sills are higher than any other place in the building and the brick wall below the openings is in a rowlock header pattern. There is a second lower limestone sill below the second-floor windows.

The second section has five window openings at the first and second floors, the center opening at the first floor has been converted to a door. Like the rest of the building the first-floor sills are at ground level, into the stone clad foundation. The windows at both floors have a row of soldier course bricks across the top, the second-floor windows have one long limestone sill.

The south elevation of the elementary wing has either blind or infilled openings at the first floor. The outside openings have stacked recesses with stucco filled arches and circle above the top windows. The center pair of recesses have a soldier brick course at the top.

The north elevation of the elementary wing has a central projecting section that has recessed entrance doors at the first floor and a pair of window openings at the second floor. The two outside sections have no openings.

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The west elevation of the elementary wing continues the stucco panels with diamond shaped insets across the wall just below the roof eaves. The original part of the school has the stucco filled arches on top of the second-floor windows. There is a tall brick chimney at the south end of the west elevation where the one-story tall boiler room is connected.

### *High School Wing – 1939*

The three-story tall high school faces east toward Mansfield Street. Like the elementary wing, the foundation is clad in limestone, and there is limestone trim and details. The high school wing retains most of its original steel windows. Each window has four rows with three panes each, the bottom row tilts inward. Shorter or smaller windows have less panes. The second and third floor window openings have limestone sills. Below the third-floor windows there is a band of stucco panels with each panel having a diamond shape comprised of four square tiles. At the top of the wall there is a limestone belt course just below the eaves.

The east façade is five bays wide, plus the auditorium at the north end. Starting at the south end the first two bays are identical with four window openings at the first, second, and third floors. The center bay contains the entrance which is within a two-story tall projection. The first floor is clad in smooth limestone. The pair of wood entrance doors are slightly recessed and have nine windowpanes in the top half. The entrance opening is framed with an engaged column and pilasters, supporting an blind arch with a carved archivolt. The second floor is clad in brick with limestone quoins at the corners, and around the pair of diamond paned casement windows. A thin Corinthian column extends through the center of the opening. A limestone band runs around the top of the second floor, “St. Mary High School” is carved into the front. The entrance projection has a pediment at the top of the wall with a limestone cross extending from the peak. The top of the entrance door and the entire second floor of the entrance bay is covered with thick ivy growth. On the third floor there are two window openings above the entrance bay. On the roof, centered above the entrance bay, is an octagonal cupola clad in metal with a coper cross extending from the top. The sides have lopers and a decorative metal design at the top.

The two bays between the entrance projection and the auditorium each have four window openings at the first, second and third floors. The first-floor windows in the bay closest to the auditorium are shorter and narrower than the rest of the windows in the façade.

The east façade of the auditorium projects forward from the rest of the façade. It has a three-bay wide gable front, the central bay with pediment is taller and wider than the outside bays which have an angled roof line. A limestone water table runs across the entire wall. Thick piers that project from the wall plane frame the wide central bay. The first floor of the center bay has a tall arch framed with alternating brick and limestone creating an archivolt. A pair of flush metal doors are slightly recessed, a limestone band with the carved word “AUDITORIUM” spans across the top of the doors. A brick herringbone pattern infills the top of the arched opening. A narrow opening with a limestone sill and blind arch top flanks both sides of the door. The window opening has been infilled with glass block. A limestone band runs across the center bay above the arch, creating a sill for a limestone clad, blind double arch with a Corinthian pilaster in

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the center. A second limestone band runs across the center bay above the double arch. A round limestone medallion creating a look of tracery is in the center of the gable. The top of the gable has a blind arcade created in brick with limestone blocks at the spring point of each arch follows the angle of the gable parapet. Stone coping caps the parapet wall and a limestone cross extends from the peak. The two outside bays are identical and have an arched recess containing two window openings with blind arch tops executed in brick. The spandrel panel above has a marble medallion in the center. The two openings have been infilled with glass block and are separated by a limestone Corinthian pilaster. An arched recess with a limestone sill supported by dentils is centered above the first-floor opening. A decorative tile band is above the recess. The top of the wall has a blind arcade created in brick with limestone blocks at the spring point of each arch. The line of the arcade follows the slope of the top of the wall. The wall is capped with clay coping tiles.

The north elevation of the auditorium has identical gable-front end bays and five bays in between. Each end bay has two tall arched top windows within a larger single arched recess. The recess has a limestone sill and a marble medallion in the top spandrel. Above the arch is a decorative tile band. A blind arcade executed in brick follows the angled line of the gable. The five bays in the middle which are separated by brick piers, have tall arched top openings with limestone sills. The top of the arch has alternating limestone and brick sections. The top of the wall in each bay has a blind arcade executed in brick. The side gable of the red tile clad roof is visible above. There is a one-story tall, 1960s locker room addition at the west end of the auditorium.

The south elevation of the high school wing has a door at each floor in the center with a metal fire escape. The west side has two window openings at the second floor. A limestone band runs across the wall at the third floor, there are stucco panels with tiles creating a diamond shape below the stone band. The west or rear elevation of the high school wing has groups of windows spaced across the wall at each floor.

#### *Connecting Wing - 1925*

The south elevation of the connecting wing has three groups of five aluminum replacement windows at the second floor. At the first floor there is only one group of windows due to the attached one-story tall boiler room, and three car garage. The garage door openings have arched tops and have been infilled with windows and a door.

#### *School Interior*

The corridors on all floors of the school building follow the I-shaped footprint and are double-loaded with classrooms, offices, and lavatories. The auditorium is located at the north end of the high school wing. The high school wing has a third floor. The elementary wing is longer than the high school wing due to the 1952 and 1960s additions. In general, the finishes throughout the building are simple, vinyl tile floors, painted flat plaster walls and ceilings.

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The elementary wing is entered through the original 1920 entrance on the west side of the building. The entrance vestibule has plaster walls and ceiling and carpet on the floor. The vestibule leads to a wood stair that goes down to the first floor or up to the second floor. The north-south running corridor in the original building has newer vinyl tile floors and plaster walls and ceiling. There are lockers attached to the walls that project into the corridors. The classrooms in the original part of the building have newer tile floors and plaster walls and ceilings. The wood chalk and corkboard frames remain in this section. Some rooms have one built-in cabinet. In the 1952 addition the corridors and classrooms have newer vinyl tile floors, painted concrete block walls, and plaster ceilings. These rooms have metal chalkboard frames and no built-in cabinets.

Similar finishes carry over to the 1925 connecting wing, which has vinyl tile floors, and plaster walls and ceilings in the corridor and classrooms. The corridor has built in lockers. There is an entrance vestibule and stair on the north side toward the east end. The vestibule has tan brick walls, a plaster ceiling, and terrazzo floors. The entrance leads to a terrazzo stairway with plaster walls that leads down to the first floor or up to the second floor.

#### *High School Interior*

The 1939 high school wing has a separate entrance from Mansfield. The double-door entrance leads to a small vestibule with full height glazed block walls, a terrazzo floor, and a second set of wood double-doors with windows in the upper half. The vestibule leads directly into the staircase that has metal frames and railings with terrazzo treads. The landings have vinyl tile infill between terrazzo edges. Beyond the stairs the north-south running corridors have vinyl tile floors with terrazzo edges, the walls have a glazed block wainscoting with plaster above, and plaster ceilings. There are built-in lockers along both sides of the corridors. The classrooms have vinyl tile floors and plaster walls and ceilings. The wood frame chalk and corkboards remain. There are some built-in cabinets. On the second floor there is a committee room with wood panel wainscoating and wood beam ceiling. A non-original partition divides the room. The combination gymnasium and auditorium has a wood floor, glazed block on the walls to the top of the doorways, and painted concrete above. It has a plaster ceiling. The stage at the front has a wood base and floor. The proscenium is decorative plaster with pilasters at the edges and a decorative cornice with carved theater masks alternating with different floral decorations. The balcony at the rear has a wood railing.

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**High School and Gymnasium, - 1962, 1968 – Giffels and Rossetti (school) –1 Contributing Building**

*Exterior – interior not accessible at time of nomination*

The original section of the two-story tall school building has an L-shaped footprint with the longer leg running east-west, and the other running north-south facing Mansfield Street. The building is Modern in style, with a flat roof. The gymnasium is connected with a narrow, one-story tall building running from the north end of the L to the west where it connects with the addition that has a north-south running rectangular footprint.

The south end of the east façade of the L has a two-story tall aluminum and glass curtain wall with metal panels at the top, bottom, and between the floors. A brick bay anchors the south corner. The entrance is marked by a flat metal canopy supported by metal posts. There is a pair of aluminum and glass entrance doors flanked by windows. The north half of the east façade has a brick base and six two-story tall aluminum and glass bays with metal panels at the top and between the floors. Each bay has one or two fixed sash with a third sash that is fixed at the top two-thirds and has an awning window at the bottom. The bays are separated by brick wall.

The south elevation is anchored at both ends by wide brick bays, the west end has an aluminum window at the first and second floor. The east end has four aluminum windows and an entrance door at the first floor. There are eleven two-story tall aluminum and glass bays over a brick base and separated by brick wall sections. Each bay has aluminum framed windows at the first and second floor, there are painted metal panels between the floors and at the top of the wall. Each bay has one or two fixed sash with a third sash that is fixed at the top two-thirds and has an awning window at the bottom. The north elevation of this section is nearly identical but has eight sections of curtain wall and not openings in the brick ends.

The west end of the L has an off-center two-story tall wide aluminum and glass curtain wall anchored by brick walls at both sides. Two pairs of aluminum and glass entrance doors separated by a metal panel are under a flat metal canopy supported by metal posts. Above the canopy there are six fixed aluminum windows with metal panels above and below. The west elevation of the north-south running leg has a brick base, and six bays of aluminum and glass curtain wall with painted metal panels at the top of the wall and between the floors. Each bay has one or two fixed sash with a third sash that is fixed at the top two-thirds and has an awning window at the bottom.

The west elevation of the gymnasium addition has a shorter south section that is primarily a brick wall without any openings. There is a projecting entrance with five aluminum and glass entrance doors with narrow sidelights and transoms above. Brick piers mark the edges of the entrance bay with a flat roof above. In the main wall above the projecting there are five wide, and two narrow aluminum framed fixed windows with metal panels at the top of the wall. The taller gymnasium section is six bays wide, each bay separated by a brick pier. The top of each bay has four fixed aluminum frame windows with metal panels above. At the north end of the gymnasium there is

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a one-story tall entrance with five aluminum framed doors flanked by narrow sidelights and transoms above.

The one-story section continues across the north end of the gymnasium. It is seven bays wide; the bays are separated by projecting brick piers. The two end bays are void of openings. Four bays have aluminum framed windows with a metal panel at the top of the wall. One bay has a pair of aluminum entrance doors with a transom.

The east elevation of the gymnasium and north elevation of the school are not visible due to the surrounding private properties.

### **Integrity**

The complex has good integrity in all seven aspects, it still reads as a large 1920s church and school complex that expanded as the congregation grew and needs changed. Even though the 1962 high school building has a different owner it still reads as part of the overall complex.

All of the buildings are in their original locations and retain their original designs. Minor modifications have been made to the interior of the church, moving the altar in response to Vatican II and changing of the original decorative painting, but the overall form and design remain intact, including its artisan designed stained glass windows. Except for the replacement of windows in portions of the school building, and the update of some finishes, the schools retain their original design, including the floor plan. All of the buildings retain their significant materials, stone and brick exteriors; the wood, stone, and plaster interior of the church; the terrazzo, plaster, and wood trim of the school interior. Similarly, the workmanship, especially in the church interior is very intact. The carved stone, intricate stained-glass windows depicting religious themes, and the decoratively painted wood truss ceiling are all original to Cram's design for the building. The elementary and original high school exteriors retain their decorative brick and stone trim. The 1962 high school and gymnasium retain the modern materials, design, and workmanship including the sections of aluminum and glass curtain wall and flat metal entrance canopies supported by metal posts, typical of school design during that period.

Despite some house and commercial demolitions in the area, the setting of the church and school retains its original setting of a surrounding residential neighborhood on the north-south streets and a commercial corridor along Grand River Avenue. The large lawn in front of the church and surrounding mature trees create a campus feel. The likely change from what was likely athletic fields to parking lots west of the new high school does not diminish this campus setting. The church retains its association with an active Catholic congregation. While the elementary and original high school building is vacant, the 1962 high school is in use as a school by the Detroit Public Schools Community District.

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## 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.)

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Social History

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**Period of Significance**

1920-1968

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**Significant Dates**

1920

1927

1939

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**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

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**Architect/Builder**

Cram, Ralph A.

McGrath & Dohmen

Talbot-Meier, contractor

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Saint Mary of Redford Catholic Church Complex is significant under National Register Criteria A and C at the local level of significance. Under Criterion A the church complex is significant for its role in the Social History of Detroit. The parish complex embodies and illustrates important historical trends in the city of Detroit in the first half of the twentieth century. While the congregation began in what was then a rural township with French settlers, it emerged in 1953 as the largest congregation in the Archdiocese of Detroit and the State of Michigan with two satellite or mission congregations. The growth of the city – both in population and in geographical size through annexation of adjacent townships – corresponds with significant growth of the Catholic Church in the city. The social, educational, and political importance of the Catholic Church in Detroit grew in proportion to its physical growth, primarily through the many European Catholic immigrants that came to Detroit between 1900 and 1930. The construction of the current church building and the development of the Saint Mary of Redford Church complex occurred at a time of tremendous growth in Redford Township and northwest Detroit, especially along Grand River Avenue. Under Criterion C, the church complex is significant in the area of Architecture. According to a July 4, 1925, *Detroit News* article, the church served as “a symbolic monument to the pioneer priests and parishioners.” The church, rectory, and convent building is the most important building in the complex under this theme, and is significant as the work of nationally prominent architect Ralph Adams Cram. The building is an important representation of his later works and came at a time when he limited his role to just a few projects in his firm. Saint Mary of Redford is also an important derivation from the earlier Neo-Gothic style designs that Cram and his firm were known for up until 1913, when Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue left the firm. For the design of Saint Mary, Cram used the French heritage of the founding parishioners for his French Romanesque style design. The period of significance is from 1920, when the first extant school was constructed, until 1968, the year the parish constructed the addition to the 1962 high school on the property. The Saint Mary of Redford Catholic Church also meets National Register Criteria Consideration A as it derives its primary significance from its architectural and historical importance.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

### **History of Saint Mary of Redford**

Saint Mary of Redford began in 1845 when a one-and-a-half-acre triangular shaped piece of land was sold to the diocese for a church and cemetery in what was then Redford Township.<sup>5</sup> Named

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<sup>5</sup> The Diocese of Detroit was established in 1833. At that time the diocese included the Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota and the Dakotas to the Missouri

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the Greenfield and Redford parish, the church served the French and Irish settlers in Redford Township and the German settlers in Greenfield Township. The first recorded burial was in 1849, and the first marriage in 1850. In 1857 the first resident pastor was appointed, and the first church building was completed on the site of the present-day church. The four-acre parcel on the north side of Grand River was a gift from a parishioner. In 1859 the church and newly completed rectory were both destroyed by fires set by members of the "Know-Nothing" party, who were opposed to the Catholic Church, among other groups.<sup>6</sup>

A new brick church was soon constructed on the foundation of the destroyed church, as well as a house for the priest. Despite membership of one hundred and six families (sixty-five percent French, forty percent Irish) in 1866 the bishop closed the church due to lack of progress in completing housing for the priest. In 1868 the parish was reopened with a series of pastors until December 1898 when Father Andrew Dooly was appointed. Father Dooley undertook a program of physical improvements to the property, including cement walkways, stained glass windows, steam heating, new pews, a new roof, and electric lighting. Father Dooley died in the flu epidemic in 1919.

Monsignor John Gimary Cook was appointed to replace Father Dooley that same year. At that time the membership was one hundred and fifty families. Father Cook initiated a grade school in the fall of 1919 and recruited the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM) based in Monroe, Michigan, to come and teach. The school started in temporary quarters as the elementary school that Father Cook designed was not yet completed. The school building finally opened in April 1920 with six classrooms, offices, and an auditorium. There were 117 students enrolled.

In 1920 a convent was constructed to house the sisters, up until that point they traveled from another convent in Detroit every day. By 1922 the school taught first through twelfth grades. The second wing of the school opened in 1925, the same year of the first graduating class of fourteen students. In 1927 17 percent of the pupils were from outside of the parish, and the school introduced business and home economic classes for those not going to college. In 1928 the University of Michigan accredited the high school, as was the practice at that time for public and private schools. In 1930 there were 1,100 students in total, with fifty students in the graduating class. In 1939 the high school wing was started, it was dedicated in October 1940 and contained fourteen classrooms, three laboratories, a library, community room, offices, and a large kitchen. By 1949 there were 1,860 total students with 147 in the graduating class. There was a waiting list of 148 in 1950. In 1952 a six-room addition was attached to the north end of the elementary wing.

In 1947 construction began on the convent attached to the church, following Cram's original plans. It opened in 1950 and housed the nuns teaching at the school.

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River. In 1843, the territory of the Diocese of Detroit was reduced to the state of Michigan.

<sup>6</sup> The Know-Nothing Party began as the Order of the Star Spangled Banner and evolved into the Know-Nothings c. 1854.

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In 1951, Monsignor Cook died, and Monsignor Edward J. Hickey was appointed as his successor. By 1953 some 4,100 families were members of Saint Mary of Redford, and the parish was the largest in both the Archdiocese of Detroit and in the state of Michigan.<sup>7</sup>

Father Hickey sought to reach parishioners near the edges of the parish boundaries. In 1953 a satellite chapel and school building was constructed at northeast corner of Greenfield Road and Tyler Avenue (13220 Greenfield Road), about one mile to the southeast of Saint Mary of Redford. Called Mother of Our Savior Church, the building was constructed by Clarence Gleeson, Inc., of Detroit, and contained a chapel and a four-room elementary school. In 1958 its status was raised to be a separate parish. In 1955 Father Hickey commissioned a second satellite chapel and school building, called Our Lady, Queen of Hope Church, at the southeast corner of Southfield Road and Glendale Street (17701 Glendale Street), a little more than one mile to the southwest of Saint Mary of Redford. It too had a chapel and four room elementary school. By 1959 the school had four hundred students. It became a separate parish in 1965. Called "missions" in the *1961-62 Directory of Churches and other Religious Organizations of the Detroit Metropolitan Area*, St. Mary of Redford was one of only five Detroit Catholic churches with missions.<sup>8</sup>

In response to the continued growth of the parish and school students, the parish constructed a new high school building at the north end of the campus that was completed in October 1962. Designed by Detroit architectural firm Giffels and Rossetti, the L-shaped footprint fronted on Mansfield, and was possibly designed to allow continued use for some of the property for athletic fields. The school was further expanded in 1968 with the addition of a gym and all-purpose room.

Partially in response to changes in state law that prevented public funds being distributed to parochial schools as well as the beginning of population shift from the City of Detroit to outer suburbs, enrollment declined in the 1970s. The high school closed in 1992 and was sold before 2000 to the Detroit Public School system when it became the district's Community and Media Arts High School. The K-8 grade school remained open through early 2009 when it too closed. The IHM sisters who staffed the schools left shortly thereafter.

The parish also experienced a decline in members in the 1970s, partly due to the reduced size of the parish boundaries because Mother of our Savior Church and Our Lady Queen of Hope becoming separate parishes, and due to the shifting of Detroit's Catholic population to Detroit's suburbs. After 1989 St. Mary of Redford was administratively combined with the St. Brigid and Our Lady Gate of Heaven parishes and remains an active Catholic parish.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, the

<sup>7</sup> Adrian Fuller, "St. Mary of Redford: Largest of Michigan's Catholic Parishes," *Detroit Free Press*, February 9, 1953.

<sup>8</sup> According to entries in the *Detroit Free Press*, the building on Greenfield Road was home to Our Savior Church by 1961, and the building on Glendale Street was home to Queen of Hope Chapel by 1960.

<sup>9</sup> Dan Austin, 2023. "St. Mary of Redford Parish," Historic Detroit. Accessed October 9, 2024. <https://historicdetroit.org/buildings/st-mary-of-redford-parish>.

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two parishes that had begun as missions of Saint Mary of Redford, Mother of Our Savior Church and Our Lady, Queen of Hope Church, were closed by the Archdiocese during its first major consolidation and closure program.

## The Archdiocese of Detroit

The history of the Archdiocese of Detroit is tied to the history of the city of Detroit. The first Catholics arrived with the city's founder, Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac in 1701, and the original priests were missionaries who not only served the local Catholic settlers but sought to convert the Native American population to Christianity.

The Diocese of Detroit was created in 1833 by Pope Gregory XVI, it included the entire Michigan Territory which at that time included what is now Wisconsin and a portion of Minnesota. Father Peter Paul Lefevere, a native of Belgium, was appointed as bishop in 1841. It was under Bishop Lefevere that in 1845 the Saint Mary of Redford parish was founded to serve French and Irish settlers in what was then Redford Township. German native Casper Henry Borgess became the diocese's third bishop in 1869 and is credited with organizing the parochial school system in the diocese. Bishop Borgess required every parish to establish a primary school and recruiting Sisters from eight different orders to teach the students.

The growth of the number and size of Catholic parishes in the diocese between the last two decades of the nineteenth century and 1930 in many ways paralleled that of Detroit. As foreign immigrants and people from rural areas in both the North and South migrated to Detroit and southern Michigan's other cities arrived, drawn by the industrial boom spearheaded by the rapidly growing auto industry new parishes were constructed in new neighborhoods and older ones were more intensively built up. The 1920s especially marked a high point of growth for the Catholic Church in the Detroit area, southern Michigan, and the nation in general. Numbered among Detroit's incredible population growth in the 1920s were many Catholics, and by 1929 as many as 40 percent of Detroit's inhabitants were "at least nominal members of the church."<sup>10</sup> Interestingly, this high percentage of Catholics in Detroit "exceeded by far the average figures for the Midwest or the country at large," both of which were closer to seventeen percent.<sup>11</sup> This extraordinary growth and high percentage of Catholics "necessitated an extensive building program during the 1920s. ... Between 1919 and 1929, 222 parish buildings were constructed in the Diocese of Detroit, including eighty-six churches and seventy-seven schools."<sup>12</sup>

As the number of Catholics in Detroit increased, so did enrollment in parish schools, "In general, Catholic parish schools saw increased enrollment between 1918 and 1958. During this time a

<sup>10</sup> Leslie Woodcock Tentler, *Seasons of Grace: A History of the Catholic Archdiocese of Detroit* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990), 298.

<sup>11</sup> Olivier Zunz, *The Changing Face of Inequality: Urbanization, Industrial Development, and Immigrants in Detroit, 1880-1920* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

<sup>12</sup> Kristine Kidorf and Todd Walsh, "Transfiguration Roman Catholic Church Parish Complex," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2019), Section 8.

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larger proportion of Catholic children than ever before were enrolled in parochial schools.”<sup>13</sup> This is in part due to reforms implemented by the Diocese. Tentler noted that “by the mid-1930s, the Diocese of Detroit had begun to implement a uniform curriculum in its schools, and to monitor the quality of instruction in its classrooms in a systematic way.”<sup>14</sup> The reforms reflected both general pressure from both parishioners and those outside the church to improve the education of the school system and reflected public school trends in Michigan.<sup>15</sup> By 1940, Tentler wrote, the reforms “appear to have accomplished a genuine improvement in the quality of Catholic education locally,” which led to substantial support for the school system among the laity.<sup>16</sup>

In 1937 the Diocese of Detroit was elevated to an Archdiocese. The growth of the Catholic Church in the Detroit area, and throughout Michigan, continued after World War II. Between 1945 and 1960 the number of Catholics in the archdiocese increased from 800,000 to 1.3 million. At the same time Catholics became a stronger force within Detroit’s political establishment. The first Catholic mayor had been elected in 1924, and, from that time through the 1960s Catholic politicians were an important force in the city’s political life.”<sup>17</sup>

The general population of Detroit that peaked in the mid-1950s, and entered a period of steady decline that first began in 1957 in a great, post-war suburban movement.<sup>18</sup> In the latter twentieth century, the city’s Catholic population, too, moved to suburban communities and parishes, which put a strain on the numerous parishes in the city. Unlike the inner-city parishes, Saint Mary of Redford parish may have been protected from the initial phase of depopulation due to its location near the west boundary of Detroit. By the late 1970s, however, the parish could not escape the general decline in the number of Catholics in the city as well as the decreasing number of priests and nuns to serve them that was happening throughout the archdiocese.

### **Redford Township – City of Detroit**

When the Saint Mary of Redford congregation was founded in 1845 it was part of the newly formed Redford Township. The township was established in 1833, and its name was derived from “Rouge Ford” – a Native American crossing place on the Rouge River. Grand River Road was opened through the township that same year.<sup>19</sup> The route northwest from Detroit gained additional importance when Michigan’s capital was moved from Detroit to Lansing in 1847, which led to the formation of the Detroit and Howell Plank Road Company to improve the

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<sup>13</sup> Tentler, *Seasons of Grace*.

<sup>14</sup> Tentler, *Seasons of Grace*, 443.

<sup>15</sup> Tentler, *Seasons of Grace*, 443.

<sup>16</sup> Tentler, *Seasons of Grace*, 443.

<sup>17</sup> Tentler, *Seasons of Grace*.

<sup>18</sup> Mayor’s Office, City of Detroit, “Detroit Grows in Population for The First Time in Decades,” Press Release, May 16, 2024.

<https://detroitmi.gov/news/detroit-grows-population-first-time-decades>.

<sup>19</sup> Deborah Goldstein, “Public Schools of Detroit,” National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2009).

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roadway.<sup>20</sup> Access to Redford Township from Detroit further improved with a franchise awarded to the Grand River Electric Railroad in 1895 to provide electric interurban train service alongside Grand River Road from Detroit's city limits to Farmington, passing directly through Redford Township. The route was double-tracked not long after.<sup>21</sup> As Detroit's population expanded rapidly between 1910 and 1920 – to nearly one million people – there was a shortage of affordable housing and land to build it on. This led to an expansion outside of the city's boundaries in all directions into the surrounding townships like Redford which is on Detroit's west border. Developers and development companies, like the Rosedale Park Land Company that platted Rosedale Park in 1916 and BE Taylor who platted Brightmoor in 1922, took advantage of the vacant farmland in the township and the easy access via Grand River Road (later Avenue) and the interurban to build single family houses for the many Detroiters looking to purchase their own homes. This increase in the population of the area meant an increase businesses along the Grand River Avenue corridor. Detroit began annexing adjacent townships in 1915 and in 1923 made its first attempt to annex the east portion of Redford and Greenfield Townships. Redford Township voters approved of the annexation, but Greenfield Township residents did not, so it did not go forward. In 1924 a committee was appointed to recommend boundaries for annexation. At the same time residents of the Rosedale Park subdivision complained that Redford Township was not providing adequate maintenance and improvements. By 1925 Redford Township contained 244 subdivisions. In 1925 two separate votes approved annexation of two separate areas of Redford Township. This reduced the township size to 11.2 square miles from its original thirty-six square miles. The annexation went into effect in 1926, the same year that Detroit stopped annexing land to the city boundaries.<sup>22</sup>

## Architecture

*Ralph Adams Cram, Cram & Ferguson, Architects*

Father Cook (parish priest between 1919 and 1951) had the idea of having a connected church, rectory, and convent complex constructed. According to parish histories he initially approached prominent Detroit architect Albert Kahn who recommended Boston architect Ralph Adams Cram.<sup>23</sup> It is unknown why Kahn recommended Cram for the project, rather than take it on himself, but church history suggests that the reason for referring Father Cook to Cram was that Kahn did not design ecclesiastical buildings.<sup>24</sup> It is also the case that by 1927 Cram was

<sup>20</sup> "Radial Avenues Part V: Grand River," Detroit Urbanism. Accessed January 27, 2025. <https://detroiturbanism.blogspot.com/2016/12/radial-avenues-part-v-grand-river.html>

<sup>21</sup> Jack E. Schramm, William H. Henning and Richard R. Andrews, *When Eastern Michigan Rode the Rails*, book one, rev. ed. (Glendale, CA: Interurban Press, 1989) 65-85.

<sup>22</sup> Stefanie Caloia, "Annexation: A Promise of Paved Streets and Inside Toilets (Part I and II)," Redford Historical Society. Accessed October 16, 2024. <https://redfordhistorical.com/2016/06/21/annexation-a-promise-of-paved-streets-and-inside-toilets-part-i/>.

<sup>23</sup> Thomas J. Collins, 1949. *St. Mary of Redford, 1843-1949, A Modern Parish with a Pioneer Spirit* (Detroit, Mich.: St. Mary of Redford Parish, 1949), 65.

<sup>24</sup> Collins, Saint Mary of Redford Parish, 65.

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established as one of the foremost church architects of the time and his firm had earned a place of national prominence for their ecclesiastical work, the firm had already designed three churches in Detroit and one in nearby Walkerville, Ontario, Canada, and he had lectured several times in the city and was often mentioned in local and national newspapers.

The architectural firm of Cram & Ferguson was established in 1888 when Ralph Adams Cram, FAIA (1863-1942), partnered with Charles Francis Wentworth (1861-1897) in the firm of Cram & Wentworth.<sup>25</sup> Among the early associates in the firm were Frank W. Ferguson, FAIA (1861-1926), who had graduated from Dartmouth College in 1887 and joined firm in 1889 as a construction engineer, and Bertram G. Goodhue, FAIA (1869-1924), who joined the firm as a draftsman in 1890.<sup>26</sup> Goodhue had won a design competition for a cathedral in Dallas, Texas, and needed a firm to associate with to carry out the project (the project was never constructed).<sup>27</sup> Both Ferguson and Goodhue were made partners in the firm eventually.

In the first years of their firm, Cram & Wentworth entered architectural competitions for various projects and some of their early completed work included residential designs that may have foreshadowed their later ecclesiastical work. One of these early works was a house for Eugene Feller in Aspinwall Hill, Brookline, Massachusetts, which Cram and Wentworth designed in "the English style of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries."<sup>28</sup> The home was reported to have featured a square brick tower.<sup>29</sup> The firm also designed an apartment building designed to "resemble an old English country house," and an apartment house in Brookline, Massachusetts, that was modeled on "old Surrey manor houses."<sup>30</sup>

Their first major public work was their design for All Saints Church at Ashmont, Dorchester (Boston), Massachusetts, which they completed in October 1891.<sup>31</sup> When the firm's design was revealed, the *Boston Globe* described the church as "the imposing and substantial style of architecture seen in English churches erected in the late 15th century," and which the *Boston Evening Transcript* described as strongly suggestive of "Stratford-on-Avon," but yet was "no

<sup>25</sup> The dates differ in various historical sources. Some give the date at 1888 others as 1889. Similarly, the dates of the early partners in the firm vary among the available secondary sources. Dates used here are identified in contemporaneous newspaper articles and architectural publications.

<sup>26</sup> Frank William Ferguson was admitted to the AIA in 1901 and elevated to Fellow in 1910. Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue was admitted to the AIA in 1901 and elevated to Fellow in 1906. Goodhue was also awarded an AIA Gold Medal in 1925.

<sup>27</sup> "Frank W. Ferguson," *Pencil Points*, November 1926.

<sup>28</sup> "Real Estate Matters," *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston, Mass.), January 10, 1891.

<sup>29</sup> "Real Estate Matters," *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston, Mass.), January 10, 1891.

<sup>30</sup> "An Old Surrey Apartment Home," *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston, Mass.), August 18, 1891; "The Gables," *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston, Mass.), September 12, 1891.

<sup>31</sup> "Plans Completed for a New Church at Ashmont," *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston, Mass.), October 16, 1891.

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slavish copy.”<sup>32</sup> The firm had completed the design for the church in 1891 and the church was completed in 1894. In his 1936 autobiography, Cram credited All Saints Church as the foundation of their ecclesiastical work. He wrote in his 1936 autobiography, “into it I put all I knew or suspected of Gothic – which, to tell the truth, was not much. Somehow it came out pretty well, and in a way struck a new note in the cacophony of a disintegrating Romanesque and an arid Victorianism, with the result that we soon found ourselves involved in a considerable amount of similar work.”<sup>33</sup>

In 1892, Goodhue was made a partner in the firm, and the name of the firm was changed to Cram, Wentworth & Goodhue.<sup>34</sup> Cram and Goodhue shared the design work for each project, with Cram providing the historical form and spirit of the building, and Goodhue the exterior and interior details.<sup>35</sup> At that time, the firm was reportedly engaged in two churches in Dallas, Texas, and a hacienda in Cuba that drew from Spanish and Arabic design. Charles Wentworth became ill in late 1896 and traveled to Cornado Beach, California, for recuperation.<sup>36</sup> Wentworth passed away in 1897 while still in California. His death was reported as both “unexpected” and a “great shock” to his family, friends, and business associates.<sup>37</sup>

In addition to All Saints Episcopal Church, Ashmont, the firm completed designs for many other projects between 1892 and 1896, including: a cottage on Brattle Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts, in the “English country cottage” style (1892); a Swedenborgian church in Newtonville, Massachusetts (1893); Saint Andrews Memorial Church, Detroit, Michigan (1894); Ashville Library in Ashville, North Carolina (1894), a Colonial style building; a residence for Frank Twining in Lansingburg, New York (1894); and Saint Stephen Church, Fall River, Massachusetts (1896).<sup>38</sup>

After Wentworth’s death, Frank Ferguson was made a partner in the firm and the name of the firm was changed to Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson. In the many obituaries and remembrances of Ferguson, he was portrayed as the solid, steady voice in the firm; the practical architect and constructing engineer that helped Cram and Goodhue bring to life their vision for each project.

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<sup>32</sup> “The Listener,” *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston, Mass.), November 4, 1891; “All Saints Episcopal Church, Ashmont,” *Boston Globe*, January 9, 1892.

<sup>33</sup> Ralph Adams Cram, *My Life in Architecture*.

<sup>34</sup> “Notes Here and There,” *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston, Mass.), January 2, 1892.

<sup>35</sup> Erval Fern Orchard, “Ralph Adams Cram: The Modern Medievalist,” Mast. Thesis (Boston University, 1937).

<sup>36</sup> “Charles Francis Wentworth,” *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston, Mass.), February 9, 1897.

<sup>37</sup> “Charles Francis Wentworth,” *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston, Mass.), February 9, 1897.

<sup>38</sup> “On Brattle Street, Cambridge,” *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston, Mass.), April 4, 1892; “New Church Building in Newtonville,” *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston, Mass.), February 7, 1893; “Notes Here and There,” *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston, Mass.), March 2, 1894; “The Harris Memorial,” *Detroit Free Press* (Detroit, Mich.), June 3, 1894; “Local Lines,” *Fall River Globe* (Fall River, Mass.), December 7, 1896.

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Between 1896, when Ferguson was made a partner, and 1914, when Goodhue left the firm to establish his own practice, the firm became established as the preeminent Gothic Revival firms in the country. The project that established the firm's reputation was its design for the United States Military Academy, commonly known as West Point (NHL, NRHP 1966). According to news reports, the firm had been one of ten invited to submit designs for the academy.<sup>39</sup> Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson partnered with the prominent landscape architectural firm of Olmsted Brothers, established by John Charles Olmsted and Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. Cram identified the chapel as West Point as an important point in the development of Gothic Revival architecture in the United States. He wrote of the chapel in his autobiography that the chapel "was the beginning of the ascension of the American neo-Gothic Revival style as the dominant architectural fashion for churches. This style featured a return to finely crafted woodwork, complex stained-glass iconography, and top-quality furnishings."<sup>40</sup>

Prior to their work at West Point, however, the firm completed designs for several other buildings. In 1902 the Deborah Cook Sayles Library in Pawtucket, Rhode Island (NRHP 1975), was completed. The library diverges from the Gothic Revival style for which the firm was becoming known and was instead designed in the Greek Revival style. It is not clear why Greek Revival was chosen for the library, but Cram may have viewed it as the more appropriate solution. The firm also designed Emmanuel Church, Newport, Rhode Island (1902, NRHP 1996). The *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* for Emmanuel Church describes it as "an architectural and decorative-arts ensemble that exemplifies the best turn-of-the-century Gothic Revival."<sup>41</sup> The design for Emmanuel Church also marked the last collaboration between Cram and Goodhue from the Boston office. The following year, the firm opened an office in New York to carry out the United States Military Academy project, and Bertram Goodhue left the Boston office to direct the New York office.

From the time the New York office was opened until Goodhue left the firm in 1913, the two offices operated somewhat independently, with Cram leading the Boston office and Goodhue leading the New York office.<sup>42</sup> Although Cram and Goodhue worked from separate offices, and each served as the primary designer in their respective offices, the firm as a whole completed a number of commissions between 1903 and 1913, when Goodhue left the firm to establish his own office. After Goodhue's departure, his role in the firm was assumed by Frank E. Cleveland, FAIA (unknown-1950).<sup>43</sup> Cleveland played an important role in the design of Saint Mary of Redford.

<sup>39</sup> "Plans All Completed for Remodeling This Great Military Training School," *Buffalo Sunday News* (Buffalo, NY), July 12, 1903.

<sup>40</sup> Marla O. Collum, Barbara E. Kruger, Dorothy Kostuch. *Detroit's Historic Places of Worship*. (Wayne State University Press, 2012).

<sup>41</sup> Wm McKenzie Woodward, "Emmanuel Church," *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1996), Section 8.

<sup>42</sup> "The Works of Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson, *Architectural Record*, January 1911.

<sup>43</sup> Frank E. Cleveland was admitted to the AIA in 1922 and elevated to Fellow in 1946. He was made a partner of the firm c. 1926. At the time of his passing, Cleveland, too, was noted as a "noted Gothic expert" and "leading authority" (*Boston Globe*, July 31, 1950).

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A notable example of their work during this period is the First Presbyterian Church of Far Rockaway, New York (1910, NRHP 1986). The *National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form*. The nomination form indicates that, like the chapel at West Point, Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson again partnered with the Olmsted Brothers for this commission. The nomination form calls attention to the large memorial window of the church, which was said to be “one of the largest and most beautiful commissions ever executed by Tiffany Studios.”<sup>44</sup>

Another important example of the work of the firm at this time is their design for the nationally significant Euclid Avenue Presbyterian Church (Church of the Covenant) in Cleveland, Ohio (1911, NRHP 1980). According to the *National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form* for the church, Cram sought to “express the nature of the Presbyterian Church in beautiful and historical forms.”<sup>45</sup> Cram’s faithfulness to the Gothic tradition is expressed, in part, in this church in its lack of steel frame and solid stone construction.<sup>46</sup>

Saint Thomas Church in New York City (1914, NRHP 1980) is another prominent example of the work of the firm from the early 1910s. The *National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form* for the church describes it as “an outstanding example of French Gothic Revival style ecclesiastic architecture,” and “a significant example of the work of its architects.”<sup>47</sup> According to the nomination form, among the character-defining features of Saint Thomas Church are its “magnificent rose window of French inspiration, its superb sculptural ornamentation, and the richly detailed chancel and reredos.”

One of the most important commissions the firm received in the early 1900s was to redesign and complete the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in New York City in 1911. The commission for the cathedral was originally given to George L. Heins and Christopher G. LaFarge in 1892. Heins and LaFarge had devised an eclectic design informed by Romanesque, Byzantine, and Gothic styles.<sup>48</sup> By 1911, however, Heins had passed away and Romanesque was falling out of favor. The Cram redesigned the church in the Gothic Revival style, though to the present the church remains incomplete. Although incomplete the church is said to be the largest Anglican cathedral in the world and one of the six largest churches in the world.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Merrill Hesch, “Russell Sage Memorial Church,” National Register of Historic Places Inventory–Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1986), Section 8.

<sup>45</sup> Eric Johannesen, “Euclid Avenue Presbyterian Church,” National Register of Historic Places Inventory–Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1980), Section 8.

<sup>46</sup> Johannesen, Euclid Avenue Presbyterian Church.

<sup>47</sup> Bradley Frandsen, “St. Thomas Church and Parish House,” National Register of Historic Places Inventory–Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1980), Section 8.

<sup>48</sup> LaFarge worked in the office of Henry Hobard Richardson before established Heins & LaFarge, which may explain their choice of Romanesque. Cram, for his part, found Romanesque objectionable in general.

<sup>49</sup> “About,” The Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine. <https://www.stjohndivine.org/about>.

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Among the other work of the firm in the period between 1900 and 1913 includes: a public library in Nashua, New Hampshire (1902); the Mather School, Boston, Massachusetts (1903); "El Fureidis," Santa Barbara, California (1903); Grace Church Chapel, Chicago, Illinois (1904); Mrs. John Nicholas Brown Residence, Newport, Rhode Island (1904); Trinity Church, Havana, Cuba (1905); a mortuary chapel in Norwood, Massachusetts (1906); Christ Church, West Haven, Connecticut (1906); All Saints Cathedral, Halifax, Nova Scotia (1906); Calvary Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (1907); C. W. Baron Residence, Boston, Massachusetts (1907); Saint John's Church, West Hartford, Connecticut (1908); Saint Mark's Church, Mount Kisco, New York (1910); and the Administration Building and the Auditorium of the Rice Institute (now Rice University), Houston, Texas (1909).

It late 1913, Bertram Goodhue left Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson to establish his own firm in New York City. It was reported that Goodhue believed that a building can only express the influence of one person.<sup>50</sup> After Goodhue's departure, the firm was renamed Cram & Ferguson, which it has remained.

Yet another important example of the work of the Cram firm is Trinity Church in Houston, Texas (1917, NRHP 1983), which was overseen by associate William W. Watkin, and which was considered to be one of the few Texas churches based on thirteenth-century English ecclesiastical architecture.<sup>51</sup> Watkin remained in Houston after the church was completed and taught at Rice Institute.<sup>52</sup>

In the 1920s and 1930s, Cram entered the mature phase of his career. While the majority of Cram's ecclesiastical buildings were in the northern half of the United States, and the Midwest and East Coast, more specifically, a number were built further afield. Among the more distant ecclesiastical buildings Cram designed were: First Presbyterian Church in Tacoma, Washington (1925), Central Union Church in Honolulu, Hawaii (1924), and All Saints Episcopal Church in Winter Park, Florida (1941, NRHP 2000). Cram also continued to design educational, institutional, and some commercial buildings.

In Michigan, and after Saint Mary of Redford, Cram designed two other churches: Saint Florian church in Hamtramck (1926) and East Congregational Church in Grand Rapids (1928). Saint Florian Church is listed in the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing resource within the Saint Florian Historic District (NRHP 1984). It appears that Cram did not design any non-religious buildings in Michigan in this latter career period.

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<sup>50</sup> "Wave of Enthusiasm for Cathedrals Sweeping America," *New York Times*, August 24, 1913.

<sup>51</sup> Barrie Scardino, "Trinity Church," National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1983), Section 8.

<sup>52</sup> Scardino, Trinity Church.

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In addition to his architectural work, Cram was a prodigious writer and lecturer.<sup>53</sup> In his many books, Cram provided his architectural philosophy, arguments for artfully designed places of worship, and thoughts on cultural and social matters.<sup>54</sup> His architectural work appeared in books and architectural, artistic, and popular periodicals from the earliest years of his career to the latest. Cram's professional writing includes: *Church Building* (1901); *Impressions of Japanese Architecture and the Allied Arts* (1905); *The Gothic Quest* (1907); *The Great Thousand Years* (1908); *Heart of Europe* (1915); *American Churches* (1915); *The Substance of Gothic* (1917); *The Nemesis of Mediocrity* (1917); *The Significance of Gothic Art* (1918); *Walled Towns* (1919); *Church Building: A Study of the Principles of Architecture in Their Relation to the Church* (1924); *A Way of Peace* (1924); and *My Life in Architecture* (1936). Cram also served as the editor-in-chief of *Christian Art* magazine for some time and as part of a board of editors at *Arts and Decoration*. He was among the founders of the Mediaeval Academy of America and served in leadership roles in the organization, including as its president in the 1930s. Cram also served on the advisory board of the academy's journal, *Speculum*, and was a frequent contributor to the journal.

Among his many lectures were several in Michigan (most in Detroit). Cram's talks in the state included a lecture on Christian art in March 1908, at the Detroit Society of Arts and Crafts; a lecture on architectural education to the Detroit architectural club in January 1909; an intended pair of lectures at the Detroit art museum February 1918 that were canceled due to a delayed by train; a possible lecture at the Detroit Institute of Arts in 1921; a lecture to the Catholic Study Club in October 1925; and a lecture on church architecture in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in June 1928.<sup>55</sup>

In one of his earliest works, *Church Building*, Cram provided some of the philosophy behind his belief in the Gothic style (as he called it). He also wrote critically of the state of ecclesiastical architecture at that time:

the Church here in America does not stand a degree higher than secular powers in her artistic expressions. In fact, she seems even to fall behind. She has created no religious painter, no music, no school of art work, and, above all, no logical

<sup>53</sup> Although widely known, and most influential, for his advocacy of and work in Gothic Revival as an appropriate style for ecclesiastical buildings, Cram spent a few early years as a writer of fiction. His most famous work of fiction was "The Dead Valley" published in his book short stories, *Black Spirits and White: A Book of Ghost Stories* (1895).

<sup>54</sup> Early on, Cram also wrote fiction, briefly. A collection of short stories, including his most famous... He also wrote a one-act play about a Venetian priest who was hopelessly in love (*Detroit Free Press*, August 8, 1897).

<sup>55</sup> *Detroit Free Press*, March 19, 1908; "Give American Own Architecture," *Detroit Free Press*, January 24, 1909; "R.A. Cram will Lecture at Art Museum Friday," *Detroit Free Press*, January 31, 1918; "Dean Edwards Gives Talk at Art Museum," *Detroit Free Press*, February 2, 1918; "Sculptor to Address Detroit Institute of Art," *Detroit Free Press*, January 10, 1921; "Architect will Address Catholic Study Club," *Detroit Free Press*, October 18, 1925; "Architect Power in Church World Says Noted Visitor," *Grand Rapids Press*, June 12, 1928.

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architecture. In worldly affairs it has become the fashion to affect the splendors of elaborate architectural form, and the results are as chaotic as one could ask.

Style follows style, as fashion changes, until at last we are confronted by an absolutely futile confusion. Has the Church stood aloof from this Babel of tongues? Has she pursued her way uninfluenced by the fads around her? By no manner of means: every newly discovered style has found favor in her eyes; and she has become, architecturally, but the echo of the artificiality of secular life.<sup>56</sup>

This critique, at least in part, explains Cram's search for a true expression of the church through the Gothic style. Cram wrote that the principles of church architecture through the previous centuries had been "radically wrong" and had "slander[ed] the nature of the immutable Church."<sup>57</sup> This had begun with the Reformation, he wrote, and from that time, church architecture had been "entirely artificial and perfectly valueless."<sup>58</sup> Finally, in the first half of the nineteenth century, the "Puritan meeting-houses" and "Georgian pseudo-temples" were seen as inadequate.<sup>59</sup> In the early response to these inadequacies, according to Cram, Gothic forms were copied, but Gothic principles had been ignored.<sup>60</sup> In his view architects of that time "put jig-sawed tracery in their pointed windows and filled them in with ground glass in diamond panes... they designed wonderful buildings with aisles and transepts, arcades of plaster arches on iron columns, and with beautiful Early English mouldings... all was of no effect; and the shocking building remained a meeting-house still."<sup>61</sup> It was not until the Gothic restoration of the early and middle nineteenth century that church architecture had returned to basic principles.<sup>62</sup> Even then, though, Cram saw much ecclesiastical architecture as unbefitting the church. Most of the latter nineteenth century churches did not meet his favor. Writing in 1915, Cram considered churches then to be embellished with "'aesthetic' stenciling in tertiary colours and sunflower patterns, and to paint those of the former, three shades of olive green without, while filling their windows with preposterous stained glass."<sup>63</sup> The Protestant denominations, to his mind, "were hardly more than holding their own, but whatever they did was pretty generally along the inadequate lines of Richardson's immediate successors, while the Roman Church... was just at the start of her career of building multitudes of the very worst religious structures ever conceived by man."<sup>64</sup>

Cram saw a church as not only a house of God on earth, but a place apart from the world where the mysteries of faith (Cram wrote, "the Catholic faith," specifically) may be solemnized, and the creation of spiritual emotion that lifted the thoughts of the congregation from the secular to the spiritual so "that their souls may be brought in harmony with God."<sup>65</sup> When the church, broadly,

<sup>56</sup> Ralph Adams Cram, *Church Building* (Small, Maynard & Company, 1901), 3.

<sup>57</sup> Cram, *Church Building*, 4.

<sup>58</sup> Cram, *Church Building*, 11.

<sup>59</sup> Cram, *Church Building*, 4.

<sup>60</sup> Cram, *Church Building*, 5.

<sup>61</sup> Cram, *Church Building*, 5.

<sup>62</sup> Cram, *Church Building*, 5.

<sup>63</sup> Ralph Adams Cram, "Preface," *American Churches*: Vol. 1 (New York: American Architect, 1915).

<sup>64</sup> Cram, "Preface," *American Churches*.

<sup>65</sup> Cram, *Church Building*, 7-8.

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constructed “flimsy, temporary, chaotic” churches, they did so at their own peril, Cram argued.<sup>66</sup> His solution was, of course, the Gothic style. It was, in his mind, “the only style that we have any right to.”<sup>67</sup>

So, twenty-five years later, Cram was somewhat surprised that special issues of architectural magazines wholly devoted to religious architecture were published in America. Had someone suggested that would occur back in 1885, it would have been a subject “*de lunatico Inquirendo*,” Cram thought.<sup>68</sup> What is more, in that time the country had developed an architecture that was “striking in its beauty and distinction.”<sup>69</sup> Commercial and civic architecture had achieved “splendid culture, refinement and nobility,” but none of those buildings could “really quite equals what has been done in church building,” according to Cram.<sup>70</sup> It was not just churches built in Gothic style that appeased Cram. He found the Colonial churches of the early twentieth century, too, to have been built on sound principles.<sup>71</sup>

In city churches, Cram explained that church architecture could illustrate its “extreme adaptability, its vitality, its power of fitting itself to new conditions without losing any of its historic and spiritual qualities.”<sup>72</sup> These “new conditions,” to Cram were the “straight, uninteresting streets... towering structures... dull blocks of houses and shops” of modern cities.<sup>73</sup> A church, then, should be part of the larger whole and adapt to this environment in its form and features, yet it must still be the “chief structure” and “command its neighbors.”<sup>74</sup>

By contrast, churches built on the outskirts of cities, in areas lightly developed, Cram considered akin to village churches, which were “the center of civilization... the source of education, the guardian of privileges of the people, the spring of material aid and spiritual consolation.”<sup>75</sup> In a village or suburban setting, as opposed to a developed and congested city, the church was the vital center of the area.<sup>76</sup>

In *My Life in Architecture*, written toward the end of his career, Cram highlighted his work at Saint Mary of Redford as one of the projects he took a personal interest in:

And now to bring the record down to date I must make note of a few of those architectural works of the office, following the year 1918, in which I took particularly interest and where I had the initiative in design.” “My own interests, apart from the Cathedral in New York, - where, naturally, Frank Cleveland was

<sup>66</sup> Cram, *Church Building*, 10.

<sup>67</sup> Cram, *Church Building*, 43.

<sup>68</sup> Cram, “Preface,” *American Churches*. The phrase *de lunatico Inquirendo* is a legal phrase meaning to inquiry into the insanity or lunacy of a person.

<sup>69</sup> Cram, “Preface,” *American Churches*.

<sup>70</sup> Cram, “Preface,” *American Churches*.

<sup>71</sup> Cram, “Preface,” *American Churches*.

<sup>72</sup> Cram, *Church Building*, 69.

<sup>73</sup> Cram, *Church Building*, 71.

<sup>74</sup> Cram, *Church Building*, 77-78.

<sup>75</sup> Cram, *Church Building*, 73 & 33.

<sup>76</sup> Cram, *Church Building*, 33.

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executive officer, - centred (sic) chiefly in such buildings as Princeton Chapel, the chapels for Saint George's school at Newport, Mercersburg Academy, and Rollins College at Winter Park, Florida; The Roman Catholic churches of the Sacred Heart in Jersey City, St. Mary's (sic) of Redford in Detroit, and Holy Rosary, Pittsburgh; The East Liberty Presbyterian Church, and Christ Church (Methodist Episcopal) in Park Ave, New York.<sup>77</sup>

St. Mary's (sic) of Redford, Detroit, came next; and here the controlling factors were wholly different. The site was some twelve miles out from the center of the city and in a community wholly French in origin and measurably so in its present personnel. The little mission had been established long ago by a very saintly French priest (he was later recalled and made a Bishop), whose dream had been to create here a shrine dedicated to Our Lady. All this meant of course a French stylistic connotation. Now Gothic of that ilk is rather horridly expensive, if it is done right; so recourse was had to the early Romanesque of the South of France. We were again fortunate in being associated with a priest who was both learned and sympathetic, and in conjunction with Father Cook we produced another church in which we take a justifiable pride. Here we were also able to complete all the chancel furnishings just as we wanted them: a high altar of Cosmati work, and, in an absidiole behind, a seven-foot marble statue of the Blessed Virgin by Stirling Calder (its prototype is the little statue in the Chapel at Whitehall), a Chapel altar-piece painted by Robert Wade, a pulpit of Spanish wrought iron and an almost complete showing of stained glass by several men, including a west window of the Coronation of the Virgin surrounded by all the sacred appellations (one of the first things W.H. Burnham ever did for us, and as fine a thing as there is in the country). The aisle windows show the Glorious, Sorrowful and Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary, while the clerestory is sometime to contain the whole Litany of Loretto. In the choir ambulatory are all the prophecies of the Incarnation. I think the saintly founding father must be well pleased that his pious dream has now been fulfilled.<sup>78</sup>

Despite Cram's use of French Romanesque, Saint Mary of Redford embodies several aspects of his Gothic philosophy, as described in *Church Building*. The nave dominates the site and "commands" the adjacent commercial and residential buildings. There should be "a steady progression in sanctity" from the point one enters the church to the altar.<sup>79</sup> The long, narrow (relatively), and high nave is defined by its classical, three-aisle plan. Side aisles are low and narrow. The arcaded columns provide dignity, impressiveness, and a sense of proportion. The interior should be "a temple reared about the altar, and subordinate to it, leading up to it as to the centre of honor, growing richer and more splendid as it approaches the sanctuary."<sup>80</sup> The altar, sanctuary, and the

<sup>77</sup> Ralph Adams Cram, *My Life in Architecture* (Little, Brown, and Company, 1936), 236-237.

<sup>78</sup> Cram, *My Life*, 240-241.

<sup>79</sup> Cram, *Church Building*, 89.

<sup>80</sup> Cram, *Church Building*, 7.

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chancel are to be the most sacred portions of the church.<sup>81</sup> They were “*the church*,” to Cram.<sup>82</sup>

The practical construction of the church, rectory, and convent also followed his early idea to “build a little now, and build it right, instead of trying to build a great deal, and as a result building it meanly.”<sup>83</sup> He thought it better to proceed slowly, as the church had the means to do so, even if it meant occupied a less-decorated or incomplete space for a time. Although some changes have occurred within the church, these are mostly decorative changes and the nave, chancel, altar, and sanctuary retain their historic forms.

Cram used local architects McGrath & Dohmen for the project. The firm was formed in September 1924 as McGrath, Dohmen & Page, with Joseph A. McGrath, Anton G. Dohmen, and John H. Page.<sup>84</sup> In 1928 the firm became McGrath & Dohmen. All three of the partners had, at one time, worked at the office of Malcomson, Higginbotham, and Palmer. Dohmen had also worked at Dise & Ditchy and Page worked for Robert O. Derrick. The firm in both of its iterations specialized in educational buildings, which they produced in iterations of Gothic styles, in particular the Collegiate Gothic style. The firm designed at least eleven schools in Detroit, with five between 1923 and 1928 in the Collegiate Gothic style and two, Isaac Crary School (1939) and Mumford High School (1948) in the Art Deco style. In 1961, after the sudden death of McGrath in 1956, Anton Dohmen became the sole owner of the firm.

The contractor for the church and rectory was Talbot-Meier. George Talbot was a classmate of Father Cook at the University of Detroit.<sup>85</sup> The firm also constructed Starkweather School in Plymouth in 1927 (NRHP 2016); the Hannan Memorial YMCA in 1928 (demolished); and a house for Dr. J. Stewart Hudson in Grosse Pointe (1937).

Along with his architectural practice, and his steady authorship and lectures, Cram also held important roles at Princeton University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the Boston City Planning Board. He was named the supervising architect of Princeton in 1909 and was appointed head of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology architectural department and chairman of the Boston board in 1914. He held the latter two positions until 1921.

Ralph Adams Cram had an influential and sustained role in American architecture, and was a figure of national importance both within the architectural profession and popularly. As late as 1905 he was considered, at least by some, as “one of America’s

<sup>81</sup> Cram, *Church Building*, 89. In Cram’s text “sanctuary” means the space around the altar provided for the priests, rather than the modern use that refers to the nave.

<sup>82</sup> Cram, *Church Building*, 89.

<sup>83</sup> Cram, *Church Building*, 43.

<sup>84</sup> “New Firm of McGrath, Dohmen & Page,” *Michigan Architect and Engineer* (Detroit, Mich.), September 1924.

<sup>85</sup> Roman P. Godzak, “History of St. Mary Redford,” 1992. [saintmaryofredford.church](http://saintmaryofredford.church). Accessed October 6, 2023. <https://saintmaryofredford.church/godzak-history>.

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leading architects.”<sup>86</sup> His achievements led to honorary doctoral degrees from Princeton (1910) and Yale (1915). Charles D. Maginnis, another prominent Boston architect, to consider him “so pervasive an influence in our national life and the most interesting figure in American architecture.”<sup>87</sup> He was featured on the cover of the December 13, 1926, issue of *Time* magazine, and in that issue was deemed “the Gothic master-builder of the U. S.” and “the dean of Gothic America,” and who “without reference to which no discussion of a major issue in U. S. architecture can be complete.”<sup>88</sup> Cram was also elected to the National Academy of Design in 1938;<sup>89</sup>

Ralph Adams Cram passed away on September 22, 1942, in Boston, Massachusetts. Charles D. Maginnis, another prominent Boston architect who, like Cram, specialized in ecclesiastical buildings, wrote a remembrance of Cram in the February 1943 issue of the *Octagon*, the publication of the American Institute of Architects. In his remembrance, Maginnis wrote that Cram was “to the American public the symbol of the Gothic idea.”<sup>90</sup> Similarly, members of the Executive Committee of the Medieval Academy of America wrote in their journal, *Speculum*, that Cram was “popularly, and naturally, identified with Gothic architecture.”<sup>91</sup> They credited Cram and his associates as not only the “fountainhead” of the “amazing growth of Gothic architecture” in the country, but also of “artistic good taste.”<sup>92</sup> Cram was, in their estimation, “one of the truly great men of our country.”<sup>93</sup>

Cram’s significance has endured over time. Henry F. and Elsie Rathburn Withey wrote in their *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects* that Cram was not only a “distinguished ecclesiastical architect, philosopher and author,” but also “the leading exponent of the Gothic revival” in America.<sup>94</sup> Architectural historians Calder Loth and Julius Trousdale Sadler wrote in 1975 that Cram was the “most eminent among American Gothic Revival architects,” and that Cram (as well as his associates and acolytes), had “breathed new life into the Gothic Revival, giving it a stature it had not enjoyed since the Middle Ages”<sup>95</sup> Peter Ferguson, professor of art history at Wellesley College, wrote in 1990 that the Cram firm was “one of the most prestigious

<sup>86</sup> “Japanese Architecture,” *Detroit Free Press*, November 11, 1905.

<sup>87</sup> Charles D. Maginnis, “Cram: Master Builder,” *Commonweal* (New York City), November 11, 1925.

<sup>88</sup> “Art,” *Time*, December 12, 1926, 20-21.

<sup>89</sup> “R.A. Cram will Lecture at Art Museum Friday,” *Detroit Free Press*, January 31, 1918.

<sup>90</sup> Henry F. Withey and Elsie Rathburn Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)* (Los Angeles, Cali.: New Age Publishing Co., 1956), 145.

<sup>91</sup> John Nicholas Brown, George Raleigh Coffman, and Edward Kennard Rand, “Memoir: Ralph Adams Cram,” *Speculum* 18, no. 3 (1943): 388-89.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2853716>.

<sup>92</sup> Brown, et al., “Memoir.”

<sup>93</sup> Brown, et al., “Memoir.”

<sup>94</sup> Charles D. Maginnis, “Ralph Adams Cram,” *Octagon* (Washington, DC), February 1943.

<sup>95</sup> Calder Loth and Julius Trousdale Sadler, *The Only Proper Style Gothic Architecture in America* (New York City: New York Graphic Society, 1975), 7; 154.

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architectural firms in America in the first three decades of the twentieth century.”<sup>96</sup> Marcus Whiffen, professor at Arizona State University, wrote in his prominent work, *American Architecture Since 1780*, that Cram and his partners (especially Goodhue) were the “pacesetters” of the later Gothic Revival movement in the United States.<sup>97</sup> Similarly, Jeffrey Howe, professor of art history at Boston College, wrote in 2003 that Cram was “the leading architect of [the Gothic Revival] movement.”<sup>98</sup>

#### *Artists*

In addition to expressing important aspects of Cram’s architectural philosophy and later stage of his career, Saint Mary of Redford also illustrates Cram’s beliefs about regarding the importance and role of art in churches. The art that adorns Saint Mary of Redford also reflects the importance of Catholic art, more specifically, in expressing the ideals and truths of faith and doctrine, and in elevating the spirit, heart, and soul.

The firm of Malo & Jordanoff of Grosse Pointe, a small eastern suburb of Detroit, was commissioned to execute the general decoration of the church.<sup>99</sup> In addition to this local firm, a number of prominent artists were commissioned to design works of art for Saint Mary of Redford.

Samuel Yellin (1884–1940), a master blacksmith from Philadelphia, created the original wrought iron pulpit.<sup>100</sup> Yellin established Industrial Ornamental Forge Company in 1909, and within a few years changed to Samuel Yellin Art Metal Worker, and then to Samuel Yellin Metalworker (the firm continues to the present) and became a prominent and sought-after artist over the course of his career. Yellin designed works for residences, schools, government buildings, and religious buildings and for commissions large and small. According to Christina Alphonso of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Yellin’s studio employed 268 at its peak, and received more than 1,200 commissions in the 1930s.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Peter Fergusson, “Medieval Architectural Scholarship in America, 1900–1940: Ralph Adams Cram and Kenneth John Conant,” *Studies in the History of Art* 35 (1990): 127–42. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42620506>.

<sup>97</sup> Marcus Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996), 173.

<sup>98</sup> Jeffrey Howe, *Houses of Worship: An Identification Guide to the History and Style of American Religious Architecture* (San Diego, Calif.: Thunder Bay Press, 2003), 43.

<sup>99</sup> Saint Mary of Redford Parish, 70. Little is known of the Malo & Jordanoff firm and any other commissions they received. The principals of the firm, Edward C. Malo and Theodore Jordanoff operated as Malo & Jordanoff and as Jordanoff Studios. Their known offices, 7639 and 7909 Mack Avenue in Detroit no longer exist. Census data indicates Malo continued as a church decorator at least until 1950. No information could be found for Jordanoff.

<sup>100</sup> *Detroit Free Press*, July 24, 1927.

<sup>101</sup> Christina Alphonso, “Samuel Yellin and the ‘Poetry and Rhythm of Iron,’” *Perspectives* blog, Metropolitan Museum of Art, May 30, 2014. <https://www.metmuseum.org/perspectives/samuel-yellin-2>.

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Sculptor A. Stirling Calder (1870-1945) executed the white marble statue of the Blessed Virgin, which is located in the apsidiole. Calder was born in Philadelphia, the son of sculptor Alexander Milne Calder. He studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and Academie Julian and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Calder was a prolific artist, and according to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, “one of the most influential American sculptors of the twentieth century.”<sup>102</sup> The statue at Saint Mary of Redford appears to be one of his minor works. His more notable works include a statue of Dr. Samuel Gross located in the National Mall in Washington, D. C., (1897); George Washington as President in the Washington Square Arch in New York City (1918); Swann Memorial Fountain in Logan Circle, Philadelphia (1924); and the Leif Eriksson Memorial in Reykjavik, Iceland (1932). He is the father of sculptor Alexander “Sandy” Calder III (1899-1976), who designed *La Grande Vitesse* in Grand Rapids, Michigan, which was “the first civic sculpture jointly financed by federal and private funds.”<sup>103</sup> He died in 1945 in New York City.

All of the stained-glass artists used by Cram for Saint Mary of Redford had a long history of working with Cram and created windows in many of his other buildings. The association started with Henry E. Goodhue, the brother of Bertram Goodhue, who got his start creating windows for the firm. Henry Goodhue trained his son Wright Goodhue, Wilbur Herbert Burnham, Charles Connick, and Walter G. Ball. All of the stained-glass artists utilized clear “antique glass”, similar to what was used in the Middle Ages and befitting the buildings primarily designed in the Gothic style where the windows were being installed.

Wilbur Herbert Burnham (1887-1974) of Boston created the Great West Window located in the south facing façade. The theme of the window is the Litany of Loretto, and the window was constructed under the supervision of Ralph Adams Cram.<sup>104</sup> This work was one of the first works Burnham did with Cram.<sup>105</sup> Burnham trained under Henry E. Goodhue and opened his own studio in 1922. Some of his other works include the windows in the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul in Washington D.C.; the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in New York; Riverside Church in New York; Princeton University Chapel; and the American Church in Paris.

Charles J. Connick (1875-1945) of Boston created a series of five windows in the right aisle depicting Mysteries of the Holy Rosary. Born in Springboro, Pennsylvania he grew up in Pittsburgh and apprenticed with Rudy Brothers until 1899. He then studied in Boston for two years before returning to Pittsburgh. He opened his Boston studio in 1913. His work also appears in the Cram designed East Liberty Presbyterian Church (1934) among others. Connick’s work appears in at least six other Pittsburgh area churches. Upon his death in 1945 he willed his studio to his employees, the studio continued producing work until 1986.

<sup>102</sup> “Man Cub,” Metropolitan Museum of Art.  
<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/10354>.

<sup>103</sup> “1967,” National Endowment for the Arts.  
<https://www.arts.gov/timeline/1960s/1967>

<sup>104</sup> *Detroit Free Press*, April 17, 1927.

<sup>105</sup> Ralph Adams Cram, *My Life*.

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Wright Goodhue sketched a series of four roundels located above the nave that depict the Virgin Mary. Wright Goodhue was the nephew of Bertram Goodhue, his father was stained glass artist, Henry E. Goodhue. The elder Goodhue designed glass for the Cram, Goodhue, and Ferguson firm. Wright trained in his father's studio and carried on his father's work after his death in 1918. Wright Goodhue designed and executed windows for over thirty churches before his death at age twenty-six.

Walter G. Ball designed a series of four windows located in the sides of the main apse, on either side of the smaller center apse. The four windows each contain three sections showing the roots of the mass from the Old Testament.<sup>106</sup> Ball trained under Henry E. Goodhue and worked with Wright Goodhue.

### **Giffels and Rossetti**

The 1962 high school building is credited to the Detroit architecture firm of Giffels and Rossetti. The firm was founded primarily as an engineering firm in 1926 as Giffels & Vallet by Raymond F. Giffels (1897-1963) and Victor E. Vallet. Raymond Giffels worked at the American Bridge Company, Whitehead & Kales Company, and Albert Kahn before founding his own firm.

Giffels' brother, Bertram Giffels, also worked for the firm, joining in 1929. A third brother Carl A. Giffels became president of the firm after Raymond's death. In 1929 Louis Rossetti (1895-1983) joined the firm to create an architectural division. The firm name was changed to Giffels and Rossetti in 1957 upon the retirement of Victor Vallet. Notable works of the firm prior to 1957 include the original hangar at the Detroit Wayne County Metropolitan Airport in 1929 (demolished), the Walter A. Briggs Field House (1937) and Bowen Field House (1955) both on the campus of Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti. Beginning in 1953 the firm designed six buildings for the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, the Outpatient Clinic, Kresge Medical Research I, Kresge Medical Research III, Fluids Engineering Lab I, Medical Science Unit I, and the Cyclotron Building. The airport division went on to design cargo facilities, the control tower, and the LC Smith Terminal at Detroit Wayne County Metropolitan Airport also in the 1950s.

Even with working nationwide with designs too numerous to list, the firm designed two Detroit public high schools, Cody (1945-51) and Henry Ford High School (1956), both in the International style, similar to that of Saint Mary of Redford. After 1957 the firm's works included Detroit's convention center and arena, Cobo Hall and Arena (1960, now known as Huntington Place); the Sisters of Mercy Roman Catholic Novitiate Chapel (1965); the main United States Post Office in Detroit (1961); Jeffersonian Apartments (1965); the Federal Mogul Staff Office building in Southfield (1966). In 1969, Louis "Gino" Rossetti left the firm to start his own firm, Rossetti and Associates, which still exists in Detroit as ROSSETTI under Matt Rossetti.

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<sup>106</sup> *Detroit Free Press*, April 17, 1927.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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**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 # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 7.8

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### **Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 42.397203      Longitude: -83.205721  
2. Latitude:      Longitude:  
3. Latitude:      Longitude:  
4. Latitude:      Longitude:

**Or**

### **UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927    or     NAD 1983

1. Zone:      Easting:      Northing:  
2. Zone:      Easting:      Northing:  
3. Zone:      Easting:      Northing:  
4. Zone:      Easting:      Northing:

### **Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Beginning at the northwest intersection of Grand River Avenue and Mansfield Street, moving northward along the west line of Mansfield Street to its intersection with the north

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line of Hackett Street; then northward 131 feet; then westward 157 feet; then northward 215 feet to the south line of Chalfonte Street; then westward to the intersection with the east line of Saint Marys Street; then southerly along the east line of Saint Marys Street to the intersection with the north line of Grand River Avenue; then southeasterly along the north line of Grand River Avenue to the point of beginning.

More specifically the two adjacent parcels described as:

N GRAND RIVER PT OF SW 1/4 OF NE 1/4 OF SEC 24 T 1 S R 10 E LYG N OF GRAND RIVER W OF ST MARYS & E OF MOORE PARK SUB 1 THRU 20 S 27.30 FT 21 MOORE PARK SUB L35 P97 PLATS, W C R 22/19 DESC AS FOLS: BEG AT SE COR OF LOT 1 ALSO BEING THE INTSEC OF THE N R/W LINE OF GRAND RIVER AVE ( 100 FT WD) AND W R/W LINE OF MANSFIELD AVE. ( 60 FT WD) TH N 59D 24M 34S W 338.37 FT ALG SD GRAND RIVER AVE, TH N 00D 02M 53S W 642.72 FT ALG ST MARYS AVE (80 FT WD) TH N 89D 55M 05S E 293.75 FT TH S 00D 08M 05S W 822.33 FT ALG MANSFIELD AVE TO P.O.B. 22--- 215 361 SQ FT 4.944 ACRES

N GRAND RIVER PT OF SW 1/4 OF NE 1/4 OF SEC 24 T 1 S, R 10 E LYG N OF GRAND RIVER AVE W OF & ADJ ST MARYS AVE E OF & ADJ MOORE PARK SUB N 12.7 FT 21 22 & 23 133 THRU 126 & VAC HACKETT AVE & ALLEY ADJ EXC PT OF LOT 133 DEEDED FOR ST MARYS AVE MOORE PARK SUB L35 P97 PLATS, W C R 22/19 275 & 276 RUGBY SUB L29 P75 PLATS, W C R 22/18 DESC AS FOLS: BEG AT N W COR OF LOT 275 BEING THE INTSEC S R/W OF CHALFONTE AVE (60 FT WD) AND E R/W LINE OF ST MARYS AVE (85 FT WD) 140 FT EAST TO THE NE COR OF LOT 276 TH S 00D 00M 21S E 196.37 FT ALG E LINE OF LOT 276; TH N 89D 55M 05S E 160 FT TH S 00D 08M 05SW 124.60 FT TO A PTE ON N R/W LINE OF HACKETT AVE (50 FT WD) TH S 89D 55M 05S W 10.68 FT TH S 00D 08M 05S W 142.70 FT ALG W R/W LINE

#### **Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The proposed boundaries encompass the property associated with the parish during the period of significance.

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#### **11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Kristine Kidorf  
organization: Kidorf Preservation Consulting  
street & number: 451 E. Ferry Street  
city or town: Detroit state: MI zip code: 48202  
e-mail: kristine@kidorfpreservationconsulting.com  
telephone: 313-300-9376

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date: October 2024

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### **Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### **Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### **Photo Log**

Name of Property: Saint Mary of Redford Catholic Church

City or Vicinity: Detroit

**Saint Mary of Redford Catholic Church**  
Name of Property

Wayne County, MI  
County and State

County: Wayne

State: Michigan

Photographer: Kristine M. Kidorf

Date Photographed: August 30, 2023

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

1 of 43. Looking north from Grand River Avenue at south elevation of church, convent, and rectory building. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0001.

2 of 43. Looking northwest at south and east elevations of church, and north elevation of rectory building. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0002.

3 of 43. Looking northeast at south and west elevations of church, and north elevation of convent. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0003.

4 of 43. Looking northeast at west elevation of convent. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0004.

5 of 43. Looking southeast at west elevation of convent. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0005.

6 of 43. Looking north along Mansfield at rectory and high school wing beyond. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0006.

7 of 43. Looking southwest at east and north elevations of rectory and garage. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0007.

8 of 43. Looking southwest from high school wing at north elevations of church and convent.  
MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0008.

9 of 43. Looking southeast at elementary wing and convent beyond. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0009.

10 of 43. Looking northeast at west elevation of elementary wing. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0010.

11 of 43. Looking southeast at west elevation of elementary wing. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0011.

12 of 43. Looking southeast at west elevation of elementary wing and high school wing beyond. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0012.

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13 of 43. Looking northwest at east elevation of high school wing. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0013.

14 of 43. Looking southwest at east and north elevation of high school wing auditorium. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0014.

15 of 43. Looking west at detail of high school wing entrance. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0015.

16 of 43. Looking north at south elevation of connector wing. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0016.

17 of 43. Looking northeast at west elevation of elementary wing. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0017.

18 of 43. Looking northwest at south elevation of high school building. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0018.

19 of 43. Looking northwest at east elevation of high school building. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0019.

20 of 43. Looking south at north elevation of high school building multi-purpose addition. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0020.

21 of 43. Looking southeast at west elevation of high school building multi-purpose addition. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0021.

22 of 43. Looking southeast at north and west elevations of high school building. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0022.

23 of 43. Looking north in main aisle of church. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0022.

23 of 43. Looking northwest at detail of main altar. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0023.

25 of 43. Looking northeast at detail of main altar. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0025.

26 of 43. Looking north at St. Joseph altar. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0026.

27 of 43. Looking north at St. Mary altar. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0027.

28 of 43. Looking south at organ loft and Burnham designed Litany of Loreto window. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0028.

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29 of 43. Looking west at baptistry. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0029.

30 of 43. Looking west at elementary wing main entrance. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0030.

31 of 43. Looking north in first floor corridor of elementary wing. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0031.

32 of 43. Looking south in corridor of 1952 section of elementary wing. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0032.

33 of 43. Looking southwest at classroom in elementary wing. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0033.

34 of 43. Looking north at classroom in 1952 section of elementary wing. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0034.

35 of 43. Looking east in second floor corridor of connector wing. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0035.

36 of 43. Looking east at main entrance of high school wing. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0036.

37 of 43. Looking south in first floor corridor of high school wing. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0037.

38 of 43. Looking south in second floor corridor of high school wing. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0037.

39 of 43. Looking north in third floor corridor of high school wing. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0039.

40 of 43. Looking north in first floor classroom of high school wing. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0040.

41 of 43. Looking north in committee room in second floor of high school wing. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0041.

42 of 43. Looking northwest in auditorium of high school wing. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0042.

43 of 43. Looking northeast in auditorium of high school wing. MI\_Wayne County\_St Mary Redford\_0043.

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**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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ST MARY OF REDFORD CATHOLIC CHURCH  
DETROIT, WAYNE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

CONTEXT MAP

N

LATITUDE 42.396815

LONGITUDE -83.205721

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ST MARY OF REDFORD CATHOLIC CHURCH  
DETROIT, WAYNE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

LARGE SCALE MAP



LATITUDE: 42.396815

LONGITUDE: -83.205721

Saint Mary of Redford Catholic Church

Name of Property

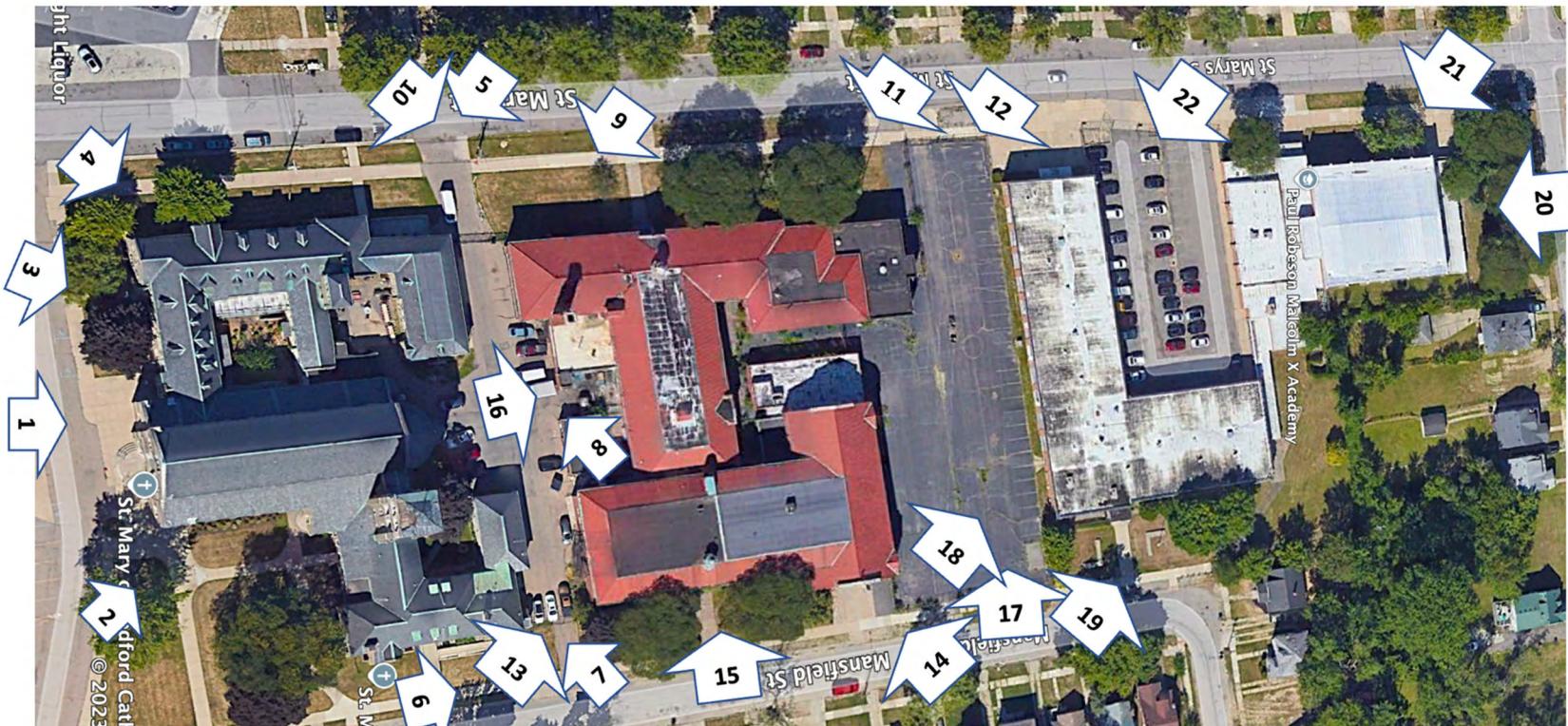
Wayne County, MI  
County and State



Saint Mary of Redford Catholic Church

Name of Property

Wayne County, MI  
County and State



ST MARY OF REDFORD CATHOLIC CHURCH  
DETROIT, WAYNE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

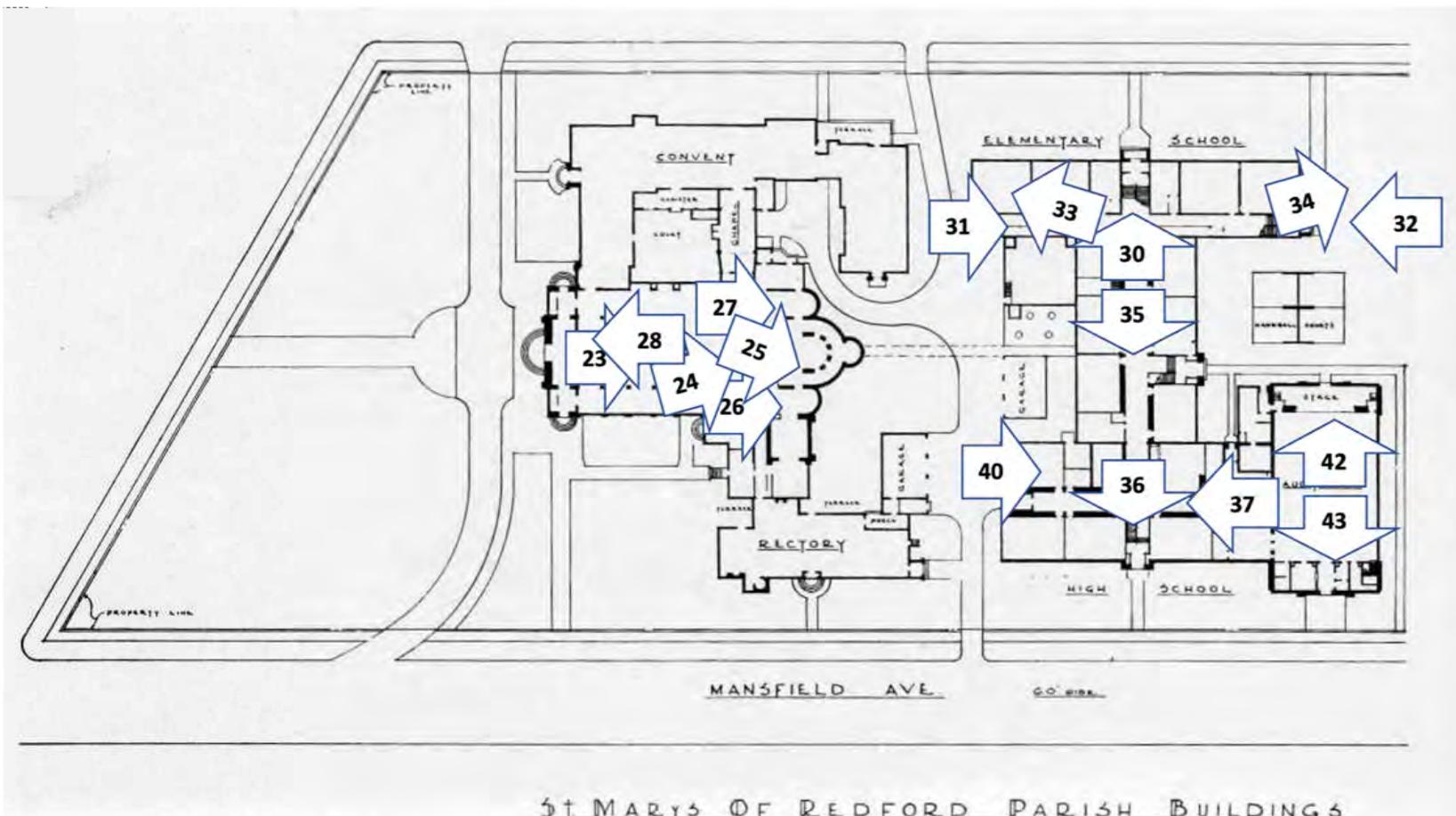
PHOTO KEY – EXTERIOR



Saint Mary of Redford Catholic Church

Name of Property

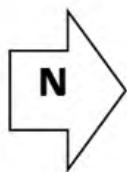
Wayne County, MI  
County and State



ST MARY'S OF REDFORD PARISH BUILDINGS

ST MARY OF REDFORD CATHOLIC CHURCH  
DETROIT, WAYNE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

PHOTO KEY – INTERIORS (1952 ELEMENTARY ADDITION AND UPPER FLOORS NOT SHOWN)

























































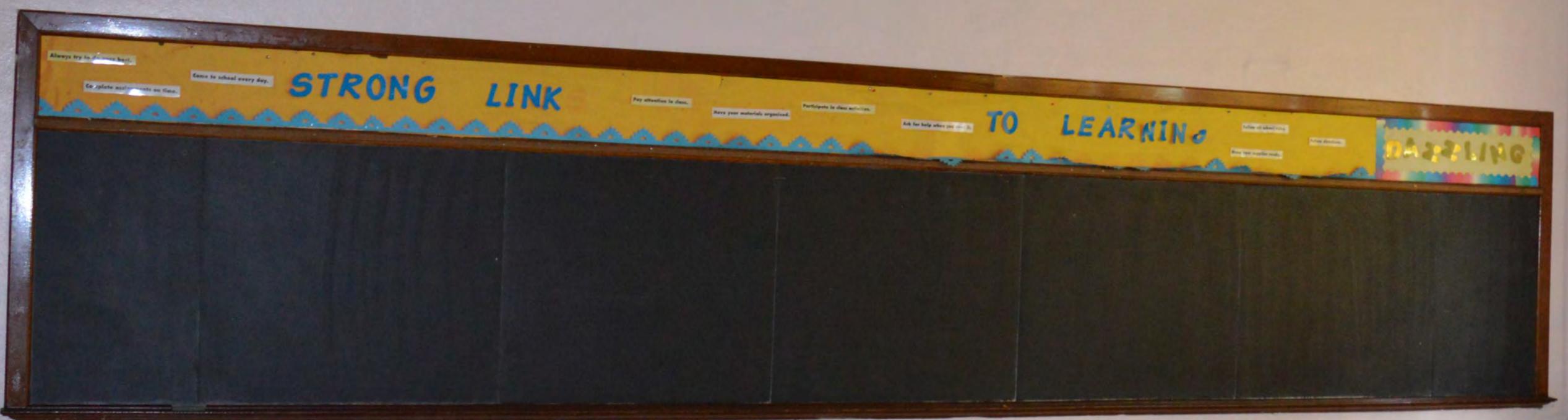






























A man in a light-colored shirt and dark pants stands on the left side of the gymnasium, holding a black bag. He is looking towards the center of the room.

**BONUS**  
VISITORS 1 2 3 4 HOME





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:  Nomination

Property Name: Saint Mary of Redford Catholic Church

Multiple Name:

State & County: MICHIGAN, Wayne

Date Received: 2/26/2025 Date of Pending List: 3/17/2025 Date of 16th Day: 4/1/2025 Date of 45th Day: 4/14/2025 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100011641

Nominator: Other Agency, SHPO

Reason For Review:

<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PDIL	<input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue
<input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Photo
<input type="checkbox"/> Waiver	<input type="checkbox"/> National	<input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary
<input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource	<input type="checkbox"/> Period
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> TCP	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years
	<input type="checkbox"/> CLG	

Accept  Return  Reject 4/7/2025 Date

Abstract/Summary  
Comments: Locally significant in architecture and Social History. The parish complex, with church and school, was associated with the explosive growth of the Catholic church in the early through mid 20th century and the incumbent need to expand facilities and services. The church itself was designed by Ralph Cram as a tour de force of French/Romanesque; the school and its Modernist addition are also notable examples of their respective periods. POS 1920-68

Recommendation/  
Criteria: Accept / Criteria A & C

Reviewer Jim Gabbert Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275 Date

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
MICHIGAN STRATEGIC FUND  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

QUENTIN L. MESSER, JR.  
PRESIDENT

Wednesday, February 26, 2025

Ms. Joy Beasley, Keeper  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
1849 C Street, NW, Mail Stop 7228  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Beasley:

The enclosed files contain the true and correct copy of the nomination for **Saint Mary of Redford Catholic Church, Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan**. This property is being nominated for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. This nomination is a  New Submission  Resubmission  Additional Documentation  Removal.

1 Signed National Register of Historic Places Registration Form  
2 Locational maps (incl. with nomination file)  
3 Sketch map(s) / figures(s) / exhibits(s)  
1 Pieces of correspondence (incl. with correspondence file)  
43 Digital photographs  
       Other (incl. with nomination file): \_\_\_\_\_

#### State Historic Preservation Review Board

The Michigan State Historic Preservation Review Board reviewed the nomination materials at its meeting on Friday, January 17, 2025. The Review Board voted 7 to 0 to approve the nomination under National Register Criterion/Criteria A and C and recommended the State Historic Preservation Officer approve the nomination.

#### Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credits

       This property is not utilizing the Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credits  
X This property is being rehabilitated using the Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credits. A preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

## Notifications

Notification of the nomination was sent to the property owner(s) and chief elected official(s) on: December 12, 2024.

No objections to the nomination were submitted during the public comment period.

One or more objections to the nomination were received during the public comment period.

One or more letters of support to the nomination were received during the public comment period.

## Certified Local Government

The nominated property is not located in a Certified Local Government community.

The nominated property is located in a Certified Local Government community. A copy of the local commission's review X was        was not received within 60 days, and X is        is not included with the correspondence file.

## NPS Grant-Funded Submissions

Not funded with an NPS grant

Underrepresented Communities Grant

African American Civil Rights Grant

History of Equal Rights Grant

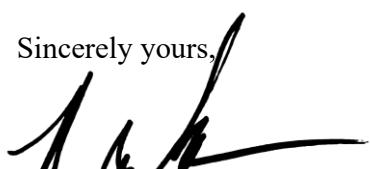
Tribal Heritage Grant

Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grant

Disaster Recovery Grant

Questions concerning this nomination should be addressed to Todd A. Walsh, National Register Coordinator, at (517) 331-8917 or [WalshT@michigan.gov](mailto:WalshT@michigan.gov).

Sincerely yours,



Ryan M. Schumaker  
State Historic Preservation Officer

St. Mary of Redford Catholic Church  
14601 Mansfield Street  
Detroit, Michigan 48227  
313-273-1100

November 8, 2023

Mr. Ryan Schumaker  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
**MEDC**  
300 North Washington Square  
Lansing, Michigan 48913

*Re: Saint Mary of Redford, Detroit, Wayne County*

Dear Mr. Schumaker:

As the owner of Saint Mary of Redford Catholic Parish, I am aware of VOA Saint Mary Limited Dividend Housing Association Limited Partnership's submission of Parts 1, 2, and 3 of the Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Application and have no objection to the request for certification.

I am also aware of the requirement to list the complex in the National Register of Historic Places and have no objection.

In Jesus through Mary,



Fr. Athanasius Fornwalt, Priest *In Solidum*

c: Joe Heaphy, Ethos Development Partners  
Kristine Kidorf, Ethos Development Partners  
Michael McInerney, Archdiocese of Detroit



# Certified Local Government National Register Nomination Review Report

**Please complete and return to:**

National Register Coordinator, Michigan State Historic Preservation Office  
300 North Washington Square, Lansing, Michigan 48915

**Property Information**

Property Name: Saint Mary of Redford Catholic Church Complex

Property Address: 16098 Grand River Avenue

Property Owner: St Mary of Redford Parish Detroit & Detroit Public Schools

Date Approved by

SHPO Staff: November 25, 2024

**Expedited Review**

The CLG agrees with SHPO to expedite the review for this nomination:  Yes  No

Signature of review commission/board Chair

1/16/2025

Date

**Certified Local Government Commission/Board Review**

Date of review by commission/board:

JANUARY 16, 2025

Date written notice of meeting provided to property owner:

DECEMBER, 2024

Description of opportunities for public participation in reviewing this nomination:

THE JAN 16, 2025 HDAB meeting was virtually attended by FR. FORNWALT AND

Were public comments (written) received regarding nomination?

Yes

No

Was the nomination distributed to commission/board members?

Yes

No

Did the commission/board make a site visit to the property?

Yes

No

If so, when?

Was SHPO assistance sought in evaluating this property?

Yes

No

**Verification of Professional Qualifications of Commission/Board Members**

List those commission members who meet the 36 CFR 61 qualifications, in accordance with Appendix 1, of Michigan's Certified Local Government Program (use additional pages as necessary).

**BOARD  
Commission Member****Professional Qualification**

1. CALVIN JACKSON, CHAIR LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT BOARD MEMBER
2. MELANIE BAZIL, VICE-CHAIR ARCHIVIST
3. THERESA HOLDER-HAGOOD RETIRED EDUCATOR
4. DR. CAROLYN CARTER HISTORY RESEARCHER
5. LOVIS FISHER ARCHITECT
6. ERIC HERGENREDER WRITER / RESEARCHER
7. OSVALDO RIVERA PROF. of SOCIAL WORK / HISTORY
8. SHARON SEXTON DIR. - Black Historic Sites Comm.
9. WILLIAM WORDEN RETIRED HDAB DIRECTOR

### Use of Consultant

Was an outside consultant used during CLG commission/board review?  Yes  No

If yes, 1) provide the name of the consultant: KRISTINE KIDORF - PRESENTER

2) list the 36 CFR 61 qualifications they meet: PART 61 - KIDORF PRESERVATION CONSULTING

### CLG Commission/Board Review

The CLG Commission/Board finds that the property meets the following National Register Criteria for Evaluation (if none, mark no lines):

A

B

C

D

The CLG Commission/Board finds that the property meets the National Register requirements for historic integrity:

Yes

No

Recommendation of the CLG Commission/Board (if the commission disapproves, specify reasons on a separate page)

Approval

Disapproval

### Chief Elected Official

Signature of Chief Elected Official

Date

### Transmittal to SHPO

Date this report was transmitted to the SHPO: \_\_\_\_\_

Date this report was received by the SHPO: \_\_\_\_\_