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7 DESCRIPTION

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Sweetest Heart of Mary is a typical cruciform plan church built of red brick with stone trim and a patterned slate roof. The main west facade is distinguished by a stone base topped by a quatrefoil frieze over the main portal and twin buttressed towers surmounted by octagonal spires. A smaller spire marks the intersection of the nave with the transept.

Several motifs unify the composition of the edifice: alternating patterns of pinnacles and decorated gables define the bases of the main spires; the gable ornamentation, consisting primarily of blind serrated lancets, is repeated on the four larger gables which mark the ends of the nave and transept; the pointed gable shape is echoed not only on the spires and the roof, but also on the side buttressing and above all of the portals; lancet windows fenestrate the towers, the gables, and the main three-portal facade; and circles dominate the tracery of the tower windows and the smaller windows of the north and south facades.

A six_pointed star highlights the tracery of the window above the main west portal. Awarded prizes at the 1893 World Columbian Exposition in Chicago, the transept windows feature lancet tracery topped by a stone transom. Gables, pinnacled buttresses, and angled side entrances provide the nave facades with a multiplicity of line and form.

The interior is characteristic of the hall church design, with high vaulted ceilings and slightly lower vaulted side aisles. The ceiling is supported by columns faced with plaster colonettes and topped by gold leaf Corinthian capitals. Between the ribs of the vaulting are paintings in a Byzantine style. The sanctuary, which was enlarged and repainted in the early twentieth century, contains a large marble altar with a nine foot statue of the Virgin Mary. The stained glass windows reflect the circle and six-pointed star motifs of the exterior tracery.

To the immediate north of the church proper are three related buildings, the 1889 school, and the Sisters' Convent and rectory, constructed around 1900. The most noteworthy of the three is the school, a three story rectangular brick building with a pedimented Ionic portico on the central projecting bay and an ornamental box cornice. The third story is defined by a stringcourse and windows decorated with round arch architraves and keystones. The roof is hipped and the central bay is distinguished by a gabled dormer. The convent is also a three story rectangular brick building; the central section has a truncated hipped roof while the side blocks have gabled roofs and eyebrow dormers. The rectory, a two story brick building, features ornamental brickwork on the quoins and window trim. The roof is both hipped and gabled, and the main west facade possesses a columned porch and a gabled dormer.

The entire complex is landscaped with small trees and bushes and is protected by a stone and wrought iron fence.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PREHISTORIC	_ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	COMMUNITY PLANNING	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	XRELIGION
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Sweetest Heart of Mary Roman Catholic Church achieves significance as a pivotal parish in the development of both the Polish Community of Detroit and the city's Catholic Diocese. The structure is also noteworthy as one of Detroit's more striking remaining examples of Late Gothic Revival church architecture.

The history of Sweetest Heart of Mary is deeply rooted in the development of Detroit's early Polish communities. Most of the first Polish immigration to this area during the mid-nineteenth century came from Prussian-occupied north Poland. Bilingual because of the German occupation, these immigrants tended to gravitate towards German parishes such as St. Joseph's located on Detroit's near east side. However, when the Polish parishioners learned that they were to be restricted to a localized section of the new St. Joseph's Church, approximately 300 families decided to start a church of their own. The construction of their house of worship, St. Albertus, coincided with the arrival in 1882 of Father Dominick Kolasinski, a dynamic Krakow priest who contributed significantly to the development of both St. Albertus and Sweetest Heart of Mary.

St. Albertus, also nominated to the National Register, was completed in 1885 at a cost which exceeded original estimates by approximately \$20,000. This cost overrun helped to inflame factional feuding between the northern Kazub Poles and more recent immigrants from Galicia in southern Poland. Kolasinski found himself caught in the middle.

Father Kolasinski was dismissed from St. Albertus by Detroit Bishop Borgess following charges of embezzlement and sexual promiscuity which were filed by a group of disgruntled Kazub parishioners. When supporters of Kolasinski tried to prevent a new priest from entering St. Albertus, riots broke out, and animosities subsided only after Father Kolasinski left Detroit in April of 1886 for a new parish in North Dakota. The Diocese then tried to suppress Polish nationalism by promoting Americanization and encouraging Polish involvement in the larger German parish of St. Joseph's. Nonetheless, Father Kolasinski's supporters seceded and formed their own church. When Kolasinski returned to Detroit permanently in December of 1888, he became pastor of the new parish, Sweetest Heart of Mary.

The first Sweetest Heart building, now the school, was erected on the Russell-Canfield site in 1889. This building originally housed a school, a rectory, and a chapel with a seating capacity of 1000. It was designed by Spier and Rohns of Detroit and was constructed so that it could easily be connected to the new church. The main church building, with a seating capacity of 2,400, was completed in 1893 at a cost of \$125,000. Contractors included Rogers, Smith, and McDonald, stonework, and Leonard Price, brickwork. During the late 1890s, a major financial crisis was averted after many parishioners took out second mortgages on their homes in order to accumulate sufficient funds to save the church. Exhausted by this financial crisis and by the

(CONTINUED)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Diamond Jubilee, Sweetest Heart of Mary Parish, 1890-1965, Detroit Michigan: Peters Printing Company, 1965. German, Franciszek, <u>Kolasinski Dominik 1838-1898</u>, Polski Slownik Biograficzny, Tom XIII-2 Sesz.57, S. 294. Smolczynski, W., <u>Historia Osady i Parafii Polskish w Detroit, Mich oraz Przewodnik</u> <u>Adresowy; Detroit, Smolczynski 1907, 242 pgs. (CONTINUED)</u>

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.8

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Sweetest Heart of Mary Church complex is located on the east side of Russell Street at the corner of Russell and Canfield.

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Form No. 10-300a (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED SEP 12	1977
DATE ENTERED	JAN 31 1978

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Significance (continued)

CONTINUATION SHEET

series of hearings which eventually cleared him of the changes responsible for his dismissal in 1885, Father Kolasinski died in 1898.

During the troubled years of the 1890s, the Sweetest Heart of Mary parish acquired an 1894 Austin organ. Now, the oldest electrified organ in the state, it is also one of the nation's few remaining instruments of this vintage. Detroit was a major organ manufacturing center during the 1890s, and Sweetest Heart received the second organ built by the newly organized Austin Organ Company. The firm, now located in Connecticut, is currently the largest producer of custom-built wind organs in America.

Once the heart of a thriving, self-sufficient Polish community, Sweetest Heart of Mary is presently located in the middle of an urban renewal area. Although its congregation has dwindled to approximately 200, new housing in the area may attract more parishioners, and the Polish-American Congress is currently developing programs to draw young people of Polish origin back into the neighborhood.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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CONTINUATION SHEET	ITEM NUMBER 9	PAGE 2	
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9. Major Bibliographical References (continued)

Numerous articles from The Detroit Free Press and The Detroit News, 1885-1973.

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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service WASO No. 7



- 1. Sweetest Heart of Mary Roman Catholic Church 2.
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- Kevin Murphy

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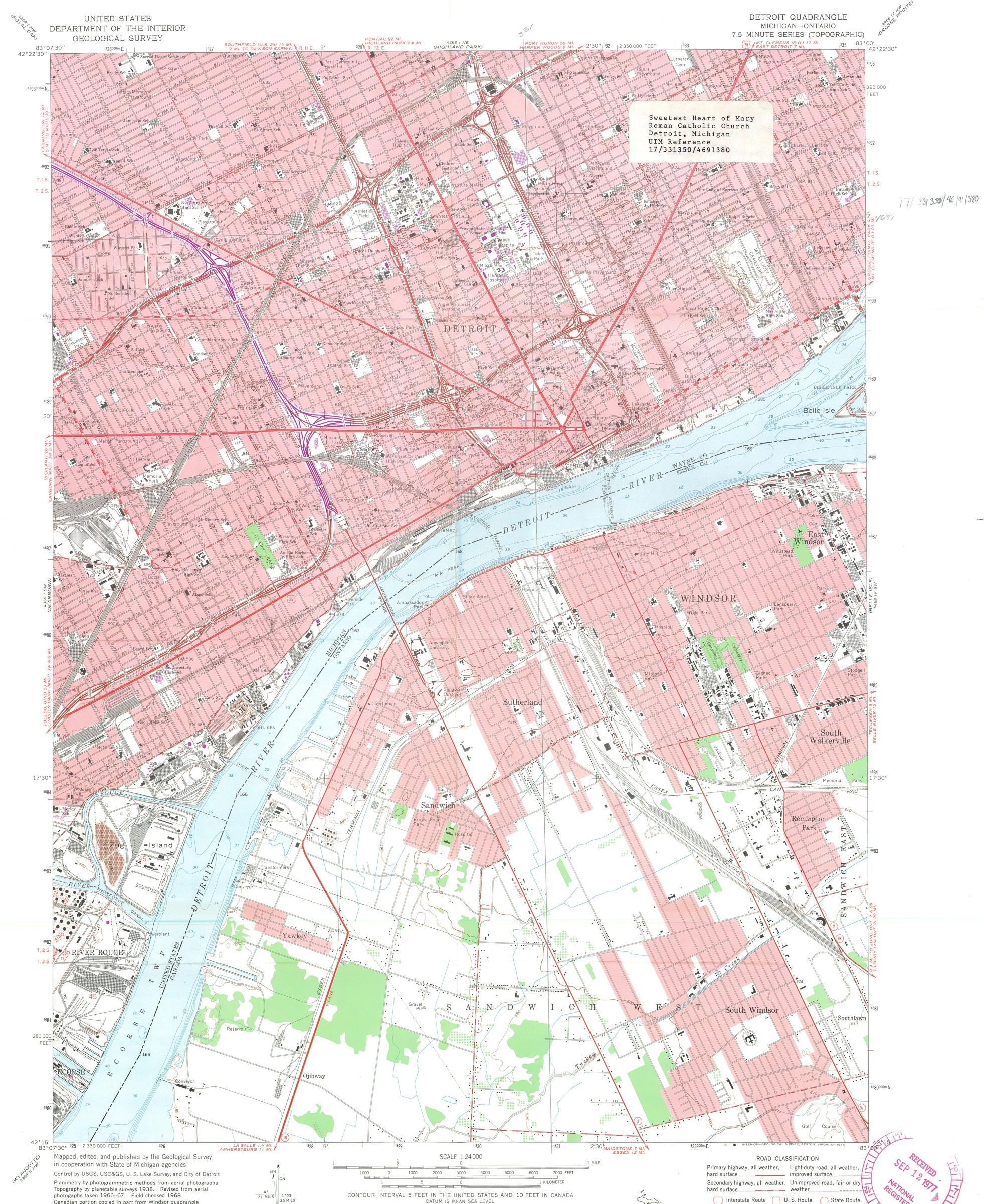
- 3. Kevin Murphy
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Canadian portion copied in part from Windsor quadrangle (1:25 000) 1960, Army Survey Establishment, R. C. E.

Selected hydrographic data compiled from U. S. Lake Survey Charts 41 and 412 (1966). This information is not intended for navigational purposes

UTM GRID AND 1973 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum 10,000-foot grid based on Michigan coordinate system, south zone 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 17, shown in blue Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET—DATUM IS RIVER SURFACE AT FOLLOWING STAGES: LAKE ST. CLAIR-571.7 AND LAKE ERIE-568.6

THE U.S. PORTION OF THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS FOR SALE BY THE U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken 1973. This information not field checked. Canadian portion not revised

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

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U. S. Route State Route DETROIT, MICH. – ONT. N4215–W8300/7.5 1968 PHOTOREVISED 1973 AMS 4368 I SE–SERIES V862 JAN 3 1 1978

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE MICHIGAN

Date Entered JAN 31 1978

Name

Location

Sweetest Heart of Mary Roman Catholic Church Detroit Wayne County

Campbell Farm Site

Cheboygan County

Also Notified

Hon. Donald W. Riegle, Jr. Hon. Robert P. Griffin Hon. Charles C. Diggs, Jr. Hon. Philip E. Ruppe

Regional Director, Midwest Region

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State Historic Preservation Officer Dr. Martha M. Bigelow Director, Michigan History Division Department of State Lansing, Michigan 48918 PH0503789

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