NAME
St. Philomena's Cathedral and Rectory
AND/OR COMMON
St. Frances Cabrini Roman Catholic Church and Rectory

LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER
1335 South 10th Street
CITY, TOWN
Omaha
STATE
Nebraska

CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY
BUILDING(S) X STRUCTURE
SITE OBJECT
OWNERSHIP __ PUBLIC
PRIVATE BOTH
PUBLIC ACQUISITION IN PROCESS BEING CONSIDERED
STATUS X OCCUPIED
UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE YES: RESTRICTED YES: UNRESTRICTED NO
PRESENT USE _ AGRICULTURE MUSEUM
COMMERCIAL PARK
EDUCATIONAL PRIVATE RESIDENCE
ENTERTAINMENT RELIGIOUS
GOVERNMENT SCIENTIFIC
INDUSTRIAL TRANSPORTATION
MILITARY OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY
NAME Archdiocese of Omaha, c/o The Most Rev. Daniel Sheehan, Archbishop
STREET & NUMBER 100 North 62nd Street
CITY, TOWN Omaha
STATE Nebraska

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Register of Deeds, Omaha/Douglas County Civic Center
STREET & NUMBER 18th and Farnam
CITY, TOWN Omaha
STATE Nebraska

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE Omaha City Architecture
DATE 1977
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Mrs. Cynthia Schneider, 314 South 67th Street
CITY, TOWN Omaha
STATE Nebraska
**DESCRIPTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONDITION</th>
<th>CHECK ONE</th>
<th>CHECK ONE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXCELLENT</strong></td>
<td><strong>DERIORATED</strong></td>
<td><strong>UNALTERED</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GOOD</strong></td>
<td><strong>RUINS</strong></td>
<td>X ORIGINAL SITE</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FAIR</strong></td>
<td><strong>UNEXPOSED</strong></td>
<td><strong>MOVED</strong></td>
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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

St. Philomena's Cathedral (now St. Frances Cabrini Roman Catholic Church) is a 1908 Spanish Renaissance Revival building on the northeast corner of Tenth and William Streets, one mile south of downtown Omaha. Designed by Thomas Rogers Kimball and built at an approximate cost of $40,000 by contractor Thomas Herd, St. Philomena's is a 45' x 123' stuccoed and limestone-clad brick structure whose roof apex rises to a height of 30 feet.

The ornate, low-relief limestone sculpture which highlights the round-arched portal, central window surround, and parapet of the main facade is also employed in the 60-foot, octagonal, copper-domed bell tower (see photo 1). The low one-story side walls, defined by the projecting eaves of the sanctuary's red-tiled gabled roof, are punctuated by segmental-headed, double-hung windows filled with stained glass. Side bays are also established by stuccoed brick piers which project through the roof's surface and are capped by red-tiled pyramidal roofs that tie into the main roof surface.

The exterior rhythm established by piers is repeated within the austere nave's interior by rafters and beams set against a dark-stained, tongue-and-groove ceiling (see photo 3). The chancel arch is a classical element which breaks the unadorned plaster walls and frames an altar of Carrara marble (see photo 4). An 1869 Johnson and Son pipe organ—the first such musical instrument in Omaha, if not in Nebraska—is located in a loft at the nave's rear.

In 1910, a brick and stucco "Priest's Home" was erected to the east of the church at a cost of $10,000 (see photo 2). Also designed by Thomas Rogers Kimball in the Spanish mode, and constructed by B. J. Bock, this 27' x 39', two-story structure is void of major ornamentation. The smooth walls are regularly punctuated by rectangular windows and red-tiled awnings. Tile-covered hipped roof sections with exposed rafters extend beyond the walls, the only exception being the south wall which ends in a split curvilinear gable.
### SIGNIFICANCE

**PERIOD**
- PREHISTORIC
- 1400-1499
- 1500-1599
- 1600-1699
- 1700-1799
- 1800-1899
- 1900-

**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW**
- ARCHAEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC
- ARCHAEOLOGY-HISTORIC
- AGRICULTURE
- ART
- COMMUNICATIONS
- COMMUNITY PLANNING
- CONSERVATION
- ECONOMICS
- ENGINEERING
- EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
- INVENTION
- INDUSTRY
- LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
- LAW
- LITERATURE
- MILITARY
- MUSIC
- PHILOSOPHY
- POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
- RELIGION
- SCIENCE
- SCULPTURE
- SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
- THEATER
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER (SPECIFY)

**SPECIFIC DATES**
1908; 1910

**BUILDER/ARCHITECT**
Thomas Rogers Kimball

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Designed by the nationally recognized Omaha architect Thomas Rogers Kimball and erected in 1908, St. Philomena's Cathedral is significant as an early work in the Spanish Renaissance Revival, a style which reached its zenith in American architecture between 1915-1940. Although the massing is similar to many Mission Style structures that preceded it in the West, surface ornamentation and the asymmetrical composition of the main facade categorize the church as belonging to the later revival period. Significance in the area of religion is attained through the vital role the building and its parish have served for Roman Catholicism in Omaha.

If legend holds true, the first clergyman in what is now Nebraska was the Franciscan friar, Juan de Padilla, who accompanied Coronado in 1541 during his search for the fabled Kingdom of Quivira. The first Roman Catholic church in Omaha was constructed in 1856, at which time the Omaha Nebraskan reported: "It is somewhat significant that the first public house of worship now in progress of building in Omaha City, and perhaps in the Territory, is a Catholic church, a nice fine brick building on park place." This church, St. Mary's, was a structure 24 by 40 feet, its outer brick facade and inner decor indicative of the severity of the life of the day.

St. Mary's was elevated to the rank of cathedral in 1859, shortly before the Catholic community in Omaha began rapid growth. In 1868, a larger cathedral was dedicated, but Omaha's population expanded so greatly that an even larger building was needed shortly afterward. A new cathedral, St. Philomena's, was built in 1908 at a cost of $41,500, with furnishings taken from the old church. Cathedral status was maintained for an interim period until St. Cecilia's Cathedral (listed in the National Register January 25, 1979) was substantially completed.

In 1958 the name of the church was changed to St. Frances Cabrini, since data substantiating Philomena's history had not been authenticated. The new name honored Mother Cabrini, the first American citizen canonized.
See continuation sheet

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one

QUADRANGLE NAME: Omaha South

UTM REFERENCES

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

A [1,5] [2,5] [6,0] [4,5] [6,9] [9,7] B ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C D

E F

G H

QUADRANGLE SCALE: 1:24000

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

lots 11, 12, 13, and 14, Forest Hill Park, Omaha

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE: Robert Peters, Planner

ORGANIZATION: Omaha City Planning Department

DATE: November, 1979

STREET & NUMBER: 18th & Farnam

TELEPHONE: 402/444-5208

CITY OR TOWN: Omaha

STATE: Nebraska

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE X LOCAL ___

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE: [Signature]

DATE: 11/8/79

TITLE: Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

GPO 921-803

"Catholics made modest Omaha 1855 start." Sun Newspapers, September 2, 1976, page 4-B.

"Diamond Jubilee of an Organ", Sunday World Herald Magazine, date unknown, page 9-C.

"Neighboring Churches Offer Contrast in Architecture", Omaha World Herald, August 16-17, 1978, page 2-J.


Sacred Concert at St. Philomena's Church, 1950, pp. 15-19.

Photo 1—west façade, looking east-northeast
Photo by Lynn Meyer, 1978, Omaha City Planning Department
Photo 2—rectory at right; tower of church at left
Photo by D. Murphy, Lincoln, 1976 (DM 7604d:24)
Photo 3—church interior, looking east
NSHS (H673.5-3425)

Photo 4—detail of altar, looking east
NSHS (H673.5-3419)