

**Historic American
Building Survey
Colorado Level II Report
Marycrest Convent Site**

**2851 West Fifty-Second Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80221
5DV.11314**

Prepared by:
Mary Therese Anstey
Kevin Packham
Adam Thomas
Cheri Yost

HISTORITECTURE, LLC

Prepared for:
Marycrest Land LLC

November 2012



HISTORITECTURE LLC
architectural history | preservation planning | digital preservation media



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INTRODUCTION

The Marycrest Urban Redevelopment Plan, approved by the Denver City Council on January 30, 2012, calls for possible demolition of two buildings—the Marycrest Motherhouse (5DV.8026), at 2851 West Fifty-Second Avenue, and the Francis House, (5DV.10405), at 5317 Columbine Road—and significant portions of the cultural landscape at the former Marycrest site in northwest Denver. The City and County of Denver, through its Office of Economic Development (OED), consulted with the Colorado Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and these two parties have agreed that the redevelopment plans will or may have an adverse effect on historic resources that are eligible or potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. In March 2012, the City and County of Denver and Marycrest Land LLC signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the SHPO. In May 2012 Marycrest Land LLC con-

tracted with Historitecture, LLC, to document the Marycrest Motherhouse, Francis House, and the cultural landscape of the former Marycrest site according to Historic American Building Survey Colorado Level II standards per SHPO guidelines. This documentation includes a written history of the buildings, photographic prints, and measured drawings. This report presents the required material in a concise document.

As specified in the MOU, Historitecture also will prepare an interpretive display explaining the history of the Marycrest campus, including the Motherhouse, Francis House, and cultural landscape. The display will be available to the public for one year in a prominent location (agreed upon by Marycrest Land LLC and SHPO). After a year of display, the interpretive materials will be donated to the Denver Public Library Western History Collection.

Map 1. This aerial photograph shows the property and its cultural landscape features. (Marycrest Land LLC)

Key

1. Marycrest Motherhouse (SDV. 8026)
2. Francis House and Garage (SDV. 10405)
3. Emmaus House (former Painter mansion)
4. Assisted living complex (Serenity Building)
5. Assisted living complex (Harmony Building)
6. New housing for sisters
7. Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine (SDV.10411)
8. Garage/maintenance shed (SDV.10410)
9. Juniper windbreak/main entrance
10. St. Francis Statue
11. Chiara Building (SDL. 10406)
12. Sundial
13. Sacred Heart of Jesus Statue
14. Wind chimes



SECTION 1

General Site Information

Name

Marycrest Convent Site

Address

The address of the main convent building, the Motherhouse, is 2851 West Fifty-Second Avenue, Denver, Colorado, 80221, and traditionally has been used for the entire property. The Francis House has a separate address: 5317 Columbine Road, Denver, Colorado, 80221.

Township, Range, Section

This property is located in the northeast quarter of section 17, township 3 south, range 68 west of the sixth prime meridian.

Universal Transmercator

Coordinate System: NAD83/WGS84

Reference Zone: 13

Motherhouse (based on belfry)

Easting: 498065

Northing: 4404682

Francis House

Easting: 498210

Northing: 4404782

United States Geological Survey Topographic Map

Quadrangle Name: Arvada

Scale: 7.5

Year: 1965 (photorevised 1994)

Legal Description

Parcel 2 and part of Parcel 3

Berkeley Hills Subdivision

Present Owner

Marycrest Land LLC

1600 Wynkoop Street, Suite 200

Denver, Colorado 80202

Present Use

Vacant

Historic Use

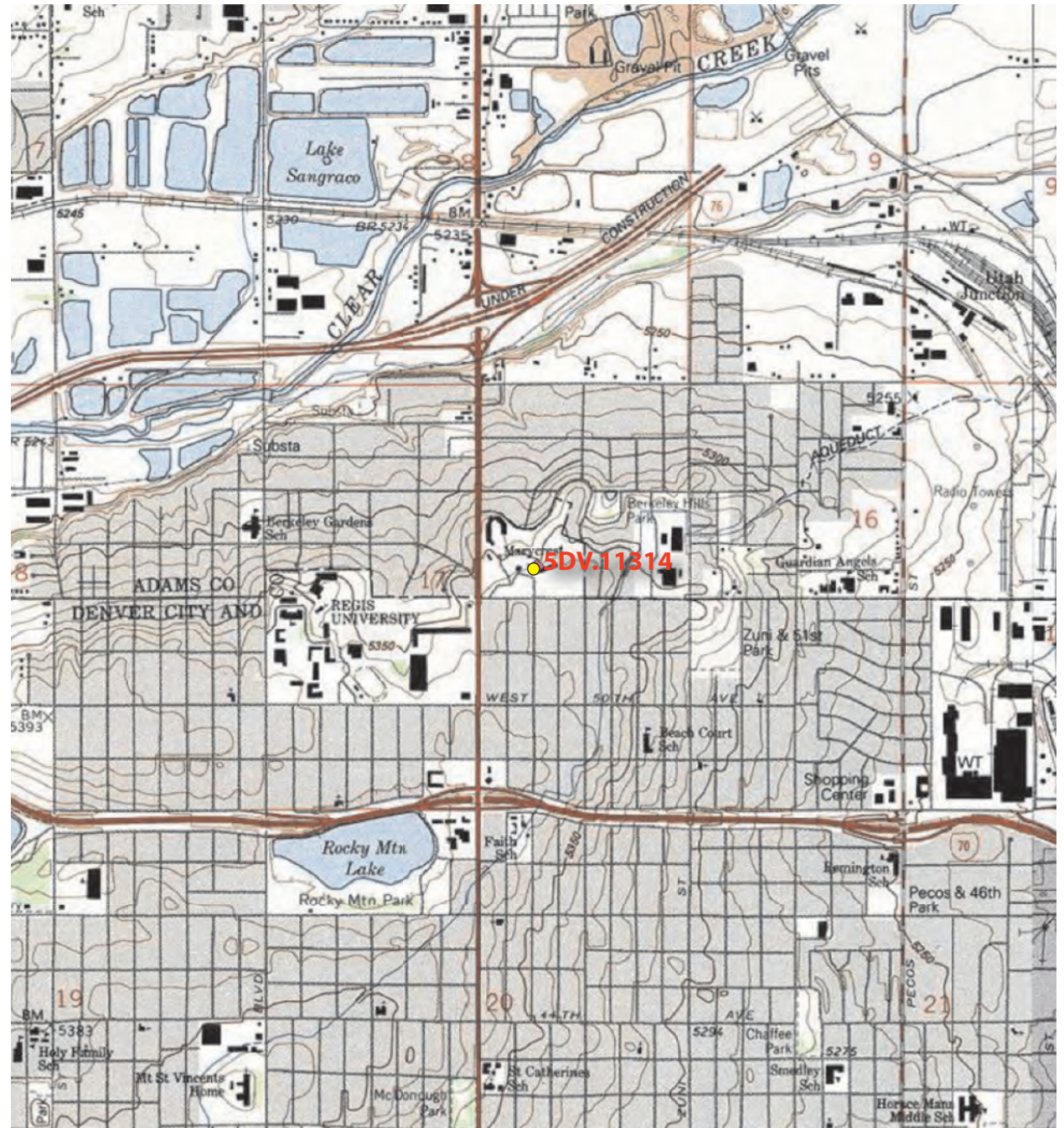
Religion: Religious Facility

Religion: Religious-Related Residence

Landscape Description

The original Marycrest Convent site encompasses twenty-five acres; the Sisters of St. Francis operate an assisted living facility at the northwest corner of this parcel, with the remainder under Marycrest Land LLC management. The site is located at the intersection of West Fifty-Second Avenue (to the south) and Federal Boulevard (to the west) in northwest Denver. The eastern boundary is a line of mostly evergreen trees that separates Marycrest from the backyards of the houses on Lilac Lane. Curving Columbine Road, behind the two-building assisted living community, roughly delineates the northern (rear) edge of the property. The Francis House is located near the northeast corner of the Marycrest site, at 5317 Columbine

Map 2. The yellow dot indicates the property location. (USGS 7.5-minute topographic map for the Arvada quadrangle.)



Road. The convent site is at a slight rise from its surroundings, with an elevation of approximately 6,943 feet above sea level.

Despite its very urban location, the site has a distinctly pastoral feel. Many vantage points offer excellent views of the mountains to the west. Grassy lawns cover the area around all of the buildings. There are windbreaks of junipers planted along the southern, eastern, and western edges of the property, giving the former convent site a sense of both seclusion and enclosure. Elsewhere on the site there are other types of established trees, including cottonwoods, maples, and oaks. Near the northeastern corner of the Motherhouse is a thick layer of grapevines growing over a metal railing. There are also a few rose bushes near the secondary entrance on the western elevation of the former convent building. Hollyhocks sprout somewhat randomly along the main drive that runs from West Fifty-Second Avenue to the Motherhouse. The backyard of the Francis House features both a large maple tree along the southern fence line and numerous apple trees along the yard's western edge.

The Marycrest site hosts a network of internal roadways. The main vehicular entry to the former convent is located along West Fifty-Second Avenue and curves slightly to the west into a large paved parking area southwest of the Motherhouse; this same parking lot serves the rectangular, side-gabled Chiarra building (5DV.10406) to its north. A southwestern exit from this main parking lot leads to a "V" in the road where drivers must turn right (northwest), traveling eventually toward Federal Boulevard. There is a second vehicular entrance to the site located further east along West Fifty-Second Avenue. This driveway enters the property near the west-facing driveway of the rectangular, front-gabled garage/maintenance shed with white asbestos siding

(5DV.10410). This secondary drive leads in a north-northwestly direction toward a small parking area nearly centered on the single-story addition of the Motherhouse. It is also possible to head east on this secondary entrance drive, following the internal roadway behind the garage/maintenance shed and Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine (5DV.10411). This roadway continues to the north, offering another way to access the small parking lot described above, the loading dock-like driveway down to the basement-level door on the east elevation of the one-story addition to the Motherhouse, and, eventually, the rear parking area. This vehicular roadway joins with the unnamed street in front of the two-building assisted living complex and, if followed to its termination at the west, leads onto Federal Boulevard. There is a fourth parking area located immediately east of the second vehicular entrance, situated between some of the southern boundary windbreak junipers and West Fifty-Second Avenue. Francis House is reached by traveling east of the convent site's eastern tree line, turning left on Columbine Road and following its curve approximately a block-and-a-half to the northwest.

Both paved sidewalks and non-paved walkways facilitate pedestrian travel within the Marycrest site. There is a straight concrete walkway between the main parking lot and the Motherhouse. A branch from this sidewalk runs to the east and across the one-story portion of the building's façade. Behind the main convent building, between the rear parking lot and the western side of the Motherhouse, there is a paved circular walkway. This sidewalk runs past a small waterfall, now run dry, which is located near the redwood patio at the rear of the property just outside the door marked "2851 ADULT DAY ENRICHMENT PROGRAM." This sidewalk joins with a paved path that travels from the road in front of the assisted living homes

(to the north), past a statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and along the western side of the Motherhouse to the main parking lot. There is another sidewalk running from West Fifty-Second Avenue up to the “V” in the vehicular roadway west of the Motherhouse. Moreover, a number of well-worn, unpaved walkways crisscross the site, especially in the western lawn between Federal Boulevard and the west side of the Chiarra building; these paths are particularly visible in aerial photographs.

There are numerous objects on the Marycrest site that express its religious use and history, also adding to the contemplative beauty of the former convent:

St. Francis Statue

At the southwestern corner of the site, along West Fifty-Second Avenue, there is a statue of St. Francis, the namesake of Marycrest’s religious order, the Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity. St. Francis is shown in a traditional religious robe with bare feet, attesting to his vow of poverty. This statue is approximately four feet tall and sits on a simple, two-step concrete base. It is in excellent condition, very clean, and visibly intact. There is a light orange, stepped, rusticated stone wall behind the statue. Pink wild rose bushes flank the statue in front of the wall and juniper bushes and several established deciduous trees complete this landscape feature.

Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine

Adjacent to the interior roadway near the eastern boundary of the Marycrest site and located on the lawn about equidistant from the garage/maintenance shed and the northeast corner of the Motherhouse’s single-story addition, stands the

Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine. This distinctive structure has a steep, front-gabled roof covered in wood shingles. The back wall panel, flanking integrated planters, and tall tower on the north side are all of light orange rusticated stone. The stone tower, composed of two vertical elements topped with a shorter horizontal connector, is capped with a metal cross. The shrine rests on a concrete foundation with three concrete steps leading to an altar centered on the rear wall panel. The altar is cast stone with corbeled stone supports. A front-gabled pediment, mimicking the shrine’s roofline and also covered in wood shingles, is centered over this altar. There are two statues near the altar. The one to the south depicts St. Bernadette Soubirous, a young peasant visited by the Virgin Mary in a cave near Lourdes, France, in 1858; this statue is in poor condition, missing its left arm and hand. The statue of Our Lady of Lourdes appears to the north of the altar and is in excellent condition. Near this second statue there is a wooden bench facing south. There are juniper bushes in both of the integrated stone planters. At the north end of the shrine, almost completely obscured by this foliage, there is a dedication plaque that reads: “This shrine was erected by the Sisters of Sacred Heart Province in Memory of Mother Elma Vifquain November 1963.”

Sacred Heart of Jesus Statue

Located at the rear of the Motherhouse, near the sidewalk that runs from the adjacent assisted living complex and southward along the west side of the main convent building, this statue is perched atop a minimal plinth of light stone or bricks. This plinth is centered on a small hill covered in a mixture of grass lawn and large, untreated stones. The hands of Jesus are upraised, as if giving a blessing, and his flaming heart is shown dramatically springing from his chest. This artistic treatment is

intended to show Jesus' caring for all humanity.

Wind chimes

In the main parking lot, approximately equidistant between the west side of the Motherhouse and the Chiarra building, there is a small island with two large evergreen trees. There is a small stone bird feeder between these trees. In the north tree, closer to the convent, there is a wind chime with five long silver metal tubes suspended downward. On the tree there is a plaque which reads: "Dedicated to Marycrest Convent on behalf of Sister Helen Cassino with love from family and friends."

Sundial

The final object on the site does not possess religious significance. There is a stone sundial in the lawn on the west side of the Motherhouse. The sundial is essentially a Doric column and is approximately three feet tall. The top of the lawn ornament features a large metal circle with Roman numerals around the upper half. Centered along the bottom arc is the following inscription: "I COUNT NONE BUT THE SUNNY HOURS." Between the numerals and the saying there is a depiction of an hourglass with feathered wings.

Significance

Motherhouse

The Marycrest Motherhouse is individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. It is significant as the site where new Sisters were trained to take on both secular professions, mostly in education and healthcare, and religious duties. Marycrest is also important as the place where the Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity

launched key social and educational outreach initiatives such as Marycrest Emergency Housing, the Marycrest Food and Clothing Bank, the Marycrest Retreat and Conference Center, and Damen Hall. The applicable period of significance is 1954 to circa 1984, encompassing not only the period when young women and professed Sisters lived in this main convent building but also the time during which the Sisters' key outreach efforts were established at Marycrest. The Marycrest Motherhouse is a good example of religious architecture, combining the work of well-known and established local architects active in designing new edifices and additions during the Archdiocese's postwar building boom under the direction of Bishop Urban Vehr.

The Motherhouse, with its original dormitory wing constructed in 1954 and a major extension added in 1958, exhibits a high level of physical integrity relative to the seven aspects of integrity as defined by the National Park Service and the Colorado Historical Society: location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Modifications include replacement of some of the original windows in 1999. The vast majority of character-defining features both on the exterior and interior of this building remain intact. In addition, the frescoed Chapel, completed in 1976, represents a period room with distinctive décor and interior features. The Motherhouse retains sufficient physical integrity to convey its historical and architectural significance.

Francis House

The Francis House is important for the support role it played in the development of the Marycrest campus. The property was used, for most of its history, as housing for the maintenance men who cared for the buildings and grounds at the

headquarters convent for the Sacred Heart Province. It was used, briefly, for the Damen Hall program that offered lodging and support to women and children fleeing abusive situations. Architecturally, the Francis House represents an example of a greatly modified Bungalow house form. However, its level of historical and architectural significance does not rise to the level of significance to justify individual eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places.

The Francis House, constructed in 1941 with the rear portion of the home added sometime between 1971 and 1983, exhibits a moderate level of physical integrity relative to the seven aspects of integrity as defined by the National Park Service and the Colorado Historical Society: location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Modifications include the rather large rear addition, numerous window replacements, and perhaps the addition of the stucco exterior wall cladding.

Cultural Landscape

The Marycrest site represents an excellent example of a religious and educational cultural landscape. The Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Charity, Sacred Heart Province, shaped

the former Walker estate site to their needs, adapting the existing buildings to provide lodging and a novitiate. Over time they acquired adjacent land (and existing buildings) and commissioned additional facilities as their religious mission and Provincial programs required. Key contributing resources to this cultural landscape that are still extant at the Marycrest campus include the Motherhouse, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Sacred Heart of Jesus statue, and St. Francis entry statue. Also important are the junipers that define the edges of the site and the established pattern of vehicular and pedestrian routes. The applicable period of significance is from 1942 to circa 1970.

The Marycrest cultural landscape has been adapted, repurposed, and changed gradually from the Sisters' purchase in 1938 until they discontinued their missionary programs on the site in 2005. The site exhibits a high level of physical integrity relative to the seven aspects of integrity as defined by the National Park Service and the Colorado Historical Society: location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. While there have been numerous resources demolished on the site over time, the remaining buildings, structures, objects, and features retain sufficient physical integrity to convey the site's historical and architectural significance.

SECTION II

Historical Information

Date of Construction

Motherhouse: 1954 (original) and 1958 (addition)

Francis House: 1941

Sources: *Denver Catholic Register*, 12 March 1953 and "Dedication Program: Marycrest Motherhouse," 26 November 1958.

Architect

Motherhouse: John K. Monroe (original) and John F. Connell/Roland M. Johnson (addition)

Francis House: Unknown

Sources: *Denver Catholic Register*, 12 March 1953; "Blueprint: Front Entrance to Motherhouse" by John Connell, 15 August 1957; and "Blueprint: Front Door Motherhouse Stonework for the Silverdale Cut Stone Company," by Roland M. Johnson, 22 August 1958.

Builder

Motherhouse: unknown (original) and Richard O'Brian or John O'Flaherty (addition)

Francis House: Unknown

Sources: Mary Anderies, "Non-Historic Status Certification (for four buildings on Marycrest campus)," submitted to Denver Landmark Preservation Commission, 19 October 2007; John O'Flaherty, "Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity" historic photographs (photocopies), undated (provided by Dana Fulenwider of Urban Ventures, LLC).

Additions and Alterations

Motherhouse

In 1958, the Sisters altered the main convent building, adding a three-story and long, single-story addition along the façade and all portions of the building currently visible along the north (rear) elevation. This substantial expansion of the convent both changed the footprint and dramatically increased the overall square footage of the building. There also have been changes to some of the Motherhouse windows from original, rectangular, eight-lite steel to rectangular, metal (and some vinyl), double-hung replacements; this change was executed in 1999. The window unit air conditioners likely represent non-original features of the convent building.

Francis House

This ancillary building also received an addition, sometime after October 1971 but prior to November 1983. The rear of the dwelling—the dining area, two bedrooms, a second bathroom, and the small rear vestibule area—are all additions to the original Bungalow form. Some of the original windows have been replaced with vinyl. The stucco wall cladding may represent a later alteration, date unknown.

Historic Context

The Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity Order was founded in Holland in 1835, evolving from the humble beginnings and faith of a Dutch peasant, Catherine Dae-



Fig 1. Mother Magdalene Daemen founded the St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity Order in 1835. [*Life of Mother Magdalene Daemen, O.S.F., Foundress of the Congregation of the Franciscan Sisters of Penance and Christian Charity based upon M. Paula Munster's German edition (History of the Franciscan Sisters, by W. J. Metz/Public Domain)*]

Life of St. Francis of Assisi

The son of a wealthy Italian merchant, St. Francis of Assisi was born Giovanni Francesco di Bernardone in 1181. While at war in 1204, Francis had a vision, returned to Assisi, and assumed a religious lifestyle. Yet, this conversion was not seamless and throughout his life Francis spent long hours in prayer, asking God for guidance. He sought, in the face of temptation, to be humble and live a life of poverty. He committed himself to serving the needy, living with beggars, and caring for lepers. In 1210 Pope Innocent II recognized Francis' new religious Order and the former nobleman worked tirelessly to convert additional followers throughout Europe. Francis died in 1226 and was made a saint a mere two years later. He is the patron saint of animals, the environment, and Italy (along with Catherine of Siena). The Feast Day of St. Francis is October 4.

men. She was born in 1787 and experienced a gradual conversion to a religious life when, starting in 1817, she lived with a series of local Sisters near her hometown of Laak, in the southern Netherlands, and adopted their quiet ways of prayer and serving the needy. Over the years Daemen devoted herself to teaching religion, sewing vestments and altar cloths, and caring for the poor and the sick. In 1828 she built a new school and two years later established her own religious community with three other Sisters in a ruined house in Heythusen. The new Order sought to follow the example of St. Francis, with Sisters taking a vow of poverty and committing to serve with humility. Daemen, upon taking her vows, adopted the name Magdalene and served as Mother (Superior) of the convent for ten years, remaining involved in the community's mission, especially its construction of additional convents throughout both Holland and Germany, until her death in 1858.

The first Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity arrived in the United States in 1874, traveling to Buffalo, New York, at the request of Jesuits seeking German-speaking teachers for growing school populations in the city's immigrant neighborhoods. The work of the Order spread throughout the United States, with missions established in West Virginia, Ohio, Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Colorado, Oregon, Washington, and California (all under the control of the German Province in Europe). In 1928 the German Province created a North American Province that assumed control of all of the American missions and remained based in Stella Niagara, New York. Young women from across the country wishing to become nuns within the Order traveled here for their postulancy and novitiate and to take both their first and final vows. For many of them, this train trip was their first travel away from home and family. American Sisters, following the example of St. Francis, engaged in service where needed, with most teaching or nursing.

In 1939 the Order experienced further reorganization, with the North American Province dividing itself into three separate provinces. The Eastern, or Holy Name, Province remained based in Stella Niagara and served the states of New York, Ohio, New Jersey, West Virginia, Florida, and South Carolina. The newly established Western, or St. Francis, Province was based initially in Monrovia, California, to support Sisters' work in California, Washington, Oregon, and Montana. Denver was then chosen headquarters for the new Midwestern, or Sacred Heart, Province, charged with managing the Order's mission work in Colorado, Nebraska, and North and South Dakota.

The Sisters' work in what became the Sacred Heart Province began in 1886 with their service to the Lakota Sioux tribe in South Dakota. The first Sisters of St. Francis came to Denver in 1917, teaching at St. Elizabeth's School and living in the adjacent convent west of downtown. In 1937 St. Cajetan's School, at Ninth and Lawrence streets, opened to cater to Mexican-American students, reducing the student population at St. Elizabeth's dramatically. Amidst continuing declining enrollments and urban renewal efforts, the school, which had been used since 1964 exclusively for an Adult Tutorial Program, closed in June 1973. Much of the surrounding neighborhood was razed to make way for construction of the 169-acre Auraria Higher Education Center, although St. Elizabeth's Church and Monastery remain as resources within the Auraria Ninth Street National Register historic district.

Division of the North American province in 1938 necessitated the choice of a new site to serve as headquarters for the Sacred Heart Province in Denver. Mother Lidwina Jacobs, administrative head of the North American Sisters, visited and rejected both a site in Broomfield and a presumably haunted house along Colfax Avenue. Instead she chose a large estate in north Denver. On May 4, 1938, after receiving approval from Denver Archbishop Urban J. Vehr, she purchased the former

"Willowcrest" estate of John Brisbane Walker for \$25,000.¹ The twenty-acre property located northwest of the Denver city limits featured a twelve-room house with three baths and full basement, mature landscaping that included an orchard and gardens, a four-room apartment over the three-car garage, a barn, and a chicken coop.

The Sisters converted the existing mansion for use as a convent. Mother Erica Hughes was named the first Provincial Superior and postulants and novices arrived in late 1938 and 1939. Father Ernest Dannegher, based at Regis College seven blocks away, served as the first chaplain at Marycrest, renewing a relationship that existed between the early Stella Niagara Sisters and the Jesuit Brothers. The Franciscans at St. Elizabeth also assisted the Sisters of Sacred Heart Province, lending their church for special ceremonies; the Marycrest property did not have enough space within its humble twenty-by-twelve-foot chapel, located within the former Walker mansion, for the hundreds of Sisters, visitors, and family who attended such services.

The living conditions of the nuns and those studying to be nuns, at both Marycrest and elsewhere within the St. Francis Order, were austere, humble, and routine. Prior to taking final vows, the candidates wore a coif (white headpiece under the veil), guimpe (white starched cloth covering neck and shoulder, also known as a wimple), starched bonnet-like veil, and long, simple black dresses. After taking their vows, the nuns maintained similar headwear with black over-veils and wore habits much like those of their founder Mother Magdalen: a long brown dress with a scapular (white rope with three knots) around the waist and a suspended large rosary. The women ate simple meals of whatever was available, often lacking fresh fruit. Sisters at Marycrest were fortunate the former Walker estate had cherry and apple orchards, a grape arbor, raspberry bushes, potato fields, and a barn for a cow and some

pigs. They not only had fresh fruit in the summer, but also canned a great deal of produce at the harvest, sharing with other Sisters in the Denver area.²

The simple furniture inside each Sister's bedroom, or cell, included a small chest of drawers, a bed without a bedspread, shades rather than drapes as window coverings, and a small foot basin for washing; chairs were allowed after 1938 and walls were always painted white or off-white. Visitors were not allowed in this area of the convent. The refectory (communal dining room) had large tables arranged in a "U" shape with straight-backed chairs. Each Sister kept in her own drawer her placemat, silverware, a breadboard used instead of a plate at breakfast and coffee time, and a blue-and-white gingham napkin. The parlor, the main room for receiving guests, was the most elegant in any convent, featuring simple upholstered furniture, pastel painted walls, drapes for the windows, and sometimes original artwork.

Rituals filled daily life. Sisters awoke at 5 a.m., responding to the woman assigned as the caller who knocked on the door of each cell and said, "Arise, you who sleep, Jesus Christ will enlighten you." The traditional response to this early morning greeting was "*Deo Gratias*" (Latin for "thanks be to God").³ They said their morning prayers and, prior to morning mass, meditated for approximately a half hour. Mass concluded with a ten-minute prayer of thanksgiving before breakfast, during which all Sisters listened silently to a reading from Thomas à Kempis' *The Imitation of Christ*. Similar readings were provided during both lunch and dinner. Special chanted prayers in Latin also were offered, in keeping with Canonical time, at 6 a.m., 8 a.m., 11 a.m., 2 p.m., after sundown, and before bed. Coffee time, usually held around 4 p.m., was a forty-minute recreation period during which the Sisters were allowed to chat about their day; on name days (days honoring a Sister's patron saint) or holy days, the coffee break would feature special skits or



Fig 2. Pope Innocent II recognized Francis' new religious Order in 1210. Following his example, Sisters of St. Francis take vows of poverty and commit themselves to service to the poor, sick, and infirm. [St. Francis of Assisi, by Jusepe de Ribera, 1642. (Wikimedia Commons/Public Domain)]

games. Once a week, late in the afternoon, there was a chapter of faults that required each member of the Order to publicly confess any failures to uphold cloistral stillness, such as slamming a door or dropping a heavy object during the hours of silence, or other rules of the community; the penance usually was an “Our Father,” to be recited together. The lights in the convent turned off at 10 p.m.

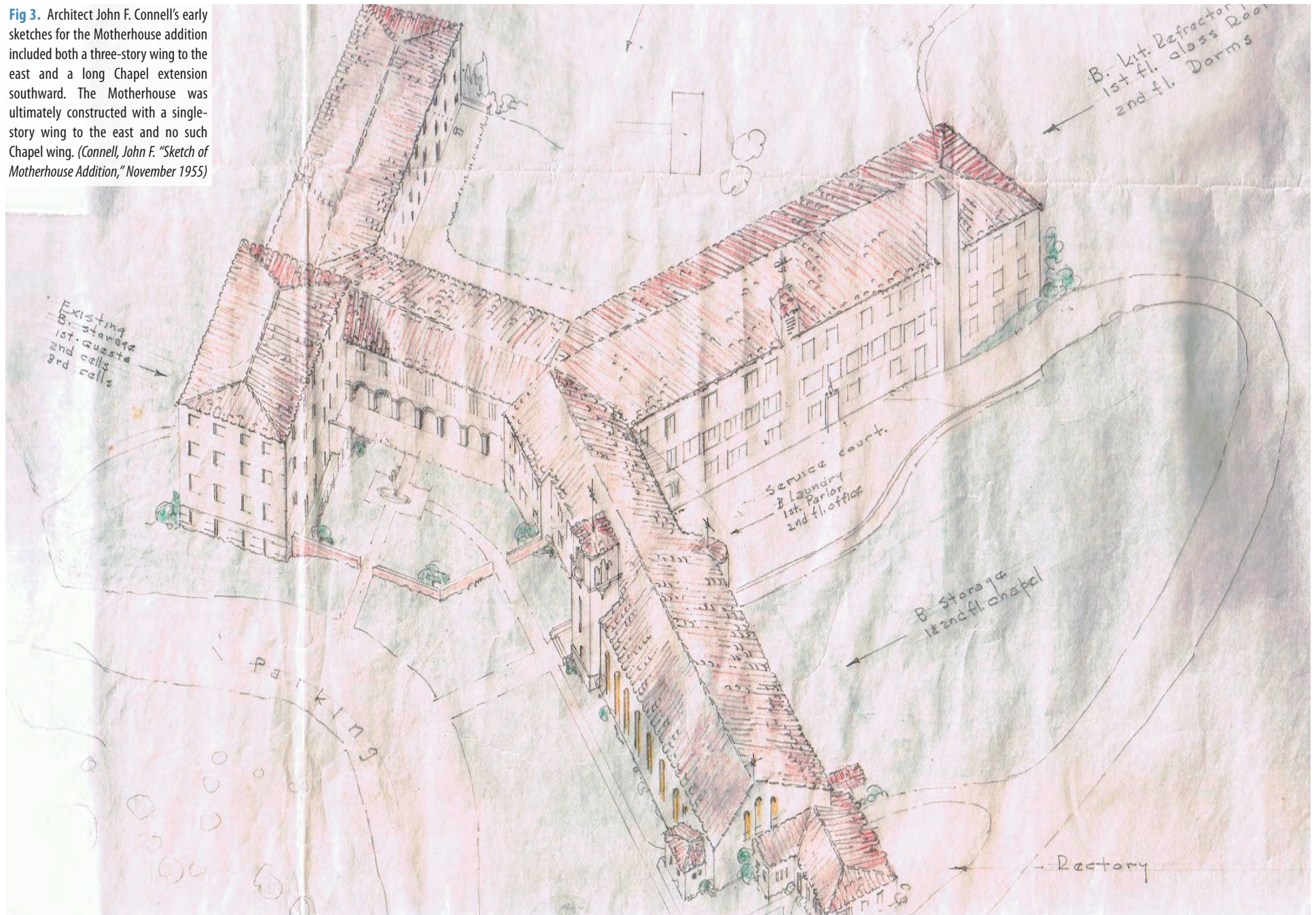
Throughout the late 1930s and 1940s, the Marycrest Sisters made small changes at the property. In 1940 they erected the Lady of Grace statue, donated by the family of Sister Denis Pryor, in a sunken garden with “a charming lily pond, attractive to the eye and fascinating to the mosquitoes” that was located near the rear of the current Motherhouse.⁴ Given this health hazard, sisters eventually decided to replace the pond with a rose garden, hauling buckets and wheelbarrows of dirt from elsewhere on the site to the plot surrounding this statue. Neither this statue nor the rose garden remain; however, the empty plinth still stands near the parking lot at the rear of the Motherhouse. That same year, in response to overcrowding conditions in the Walker mansion-turned-convent, the Sisters converted the over-garage apartment into a Sisters’ dormitory. In 1942 another statue, this one of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, was donated by Sister Christina’s family—the Kebers of Spaulding, Nebraska—and erected on a small rock mound near the current northwest corner of the Motherhouse where it still stands today.

Facing a continuing shortage of space, in the early 1950s the Marycrest Sisters acquired more land and buildings. The Francis House, a modest Bungalow located on Columbine Road northeast of the current Motherhouse, was purchased, possibly from E.P. or Wayne Webster, custodians at Marycrest, for use as housing for the maintenance staff; long-time handyman Dan Stasch continued to live here until his retirement in 1998. In about 1954 the Sisters purchased another small, ad-

jacent property from the Johnson family. Clare House, a 1920s wood-frame dwelling located west of the Francis House, was used as a guest house for visiting family and volunteers. In 1950 the Sisters purchased a far larger parcel of land, the adjacent Painter property. The Painter House—the seventeen room, two-story, red tile-roofed dwelling facing onto Federal Boulevard—became the new administrative headquarters for the Sacred Heart Province, with the former Walker mansion becoming the novitiate.

Sister Immaculata McCarthy was appointed first director of the Marycrest novitiate in 1938, holding this position responsible for overseeing the training of new nuns until 1945. All young women interested in becoming nuns entered Marycrest as postulants, studying religion and living the ways of the Order for a full year before taking their first vows in a solemn ceremony in which the postulants dressed in white gowns to become “brides of Christ” or novices. At this special Mass the novices received their religious names but also earned the right to be addressed as “Sister” and wear the traditional brown robes of the Order. The novitiate period, during which time the women were required to live at Marycrest and receive both secular career and religious education, lasted two years. In the years prior to 1968, when Regis University became a co-educational institution, both Jesuits and Franciscans taught classes at Marycrest, with the novices receiving credit from the nearby institution. After the novice period, the young women became professed Sisters and members of the “juniorate,” a status that lasted another two years and again required residency at Marycrest. These young sisters took annual vows for their first five years within the community, free to leave at the end of each year. Final and permanent vows were taken after eight years of training and life at Marycrest; this period of time was considered sufficient “for a woman to test her vocation for the religious life, and for the order to test her.”⁵

Fig 3. Architect John F. Connell's early sketches for the Motherhouse addition included both a three-story wing to the east and a long Chapel extension southward. The Motherhouse was ultimately constructed with a single-story wing to the east and no such Chapel wing. (Connell, John F. "Sketch of Motherhouse Addition," November 1955)



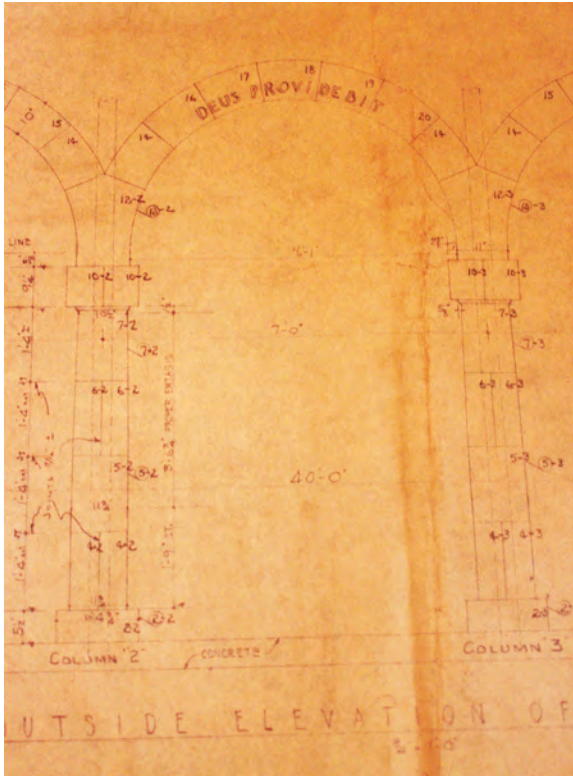


Fig 4. Architect Roland M. Johnson, who took control of the Motherhouse project after Connell passed away, prepared detail drawings for the Silverdale Cut Stone Company of Silverdale, Kansas. The local stone contractor was Herman A. Kasch. (*The Silverdale Cut Stone Co., "Addition to Motherhouse Sacred Heart Province (sic)," Silverdale, Kansas: 22 August 1958*)

Architects

Several architects were involved with buildings on the Marycrest site over its nearly seventy-year history.

John K. Monroe designed the three-story dormitory that forms the original portion of the Marycrest Motherhouse, completed in 1954. Monroe was born in Denver on April 7, 1893, earned his architecture degree from Washington University in St. Louis, and worked with well-known Colorado architect J.J.B. Benedict starting in 1932. Archbishop Urban John Vehr named Monroe principal architect for the Catholic Archdiocese of Denver in the early to mid 1940s, and he was responsible for designing numerous religious edifices in this boom period for the Catholic Church in Colorado.

Monroe (and Vehr) favored simplified Mediterranean designs featuring red tile roofs, square campaniles or belfries, and terra cotta details. Buff-colored brick with cream-colored, terra cotta trim became "virtually a John K. Monroe signature" and the Marycrest dormitory is a clear example of this favored material choice.⁶ In 1959 Monroe formed the firm of Monroe, Irwin, and Dunham. Irwin left the firm in 1961, replaced by Monroe's son, John K. Monroe, Jr. The elder Monroe retired in 1963 and passed away in 1974.

John F. Connell produced elaborate sketches for the addition to the Marycrest Motherhouse and likely was responsible for designing the three-story and one-story portions of the building, dramatically expanding the main convent building. Connell was born in Illinois around 1900, earning degrees from both Colorado A&M (now Colorado State University) and Notre Dame University. Connell, along with his wife and six children, was a parishioner of Denver's Blessed Sacrament Church, and he drafted plans for both new buildings and additions to religious properties throughout the diocese. His commissions included a new school for St. Rose of Lima parish (1950); the completion of a basement church at St. Joseph's in Akron, Colorado (1952); a recreation center at the St. Thomas Theological Seminary (1953); the original Cure d'Ars Parish church (1954); a new school for Sts. Peter & Paul in Wheatridge (1954); and the new Machebeuf High School (1956). Connell died in 1957, prior to the completion of the Marycrest Motherhouse addition.

Roland "Bud" Johnson took over as architect on the Marycrest Motherhouse project upon Connell's death. He prepared the drawings, for the Silverdale Cut Stone Company of Silverdale, Kansas, of the new central entry wing and other stone details on the addition to the convent's main building in August 1958. Johnson was born in Axtell, Nebraska, on June 30, 1922, and served in the Army Corps of Engineers during World War II. Like the other architects responsible for Marycrest design work, Johnson also executed a number of religious commissions in the Denver diocese. His religious commissions included two churches, one in 1956 and a second in 1968, and a new school at Most Precious Blood parish; a new St. Jude church in Lakewood (1970); and a parish hall for the St. Thomas More Center (1974). Johnson passed away on September 19, 1999, in Denver, leaving behind a wife, five children, and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Henry Joseph De Nicola seems to have been the Marycrest Sisters' favorite designer. He prepared plans for a total of three executed projects at the Marycrest campus: Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine (1963), an addition to the Marycrest High School (1960), and the Queen of Peace Oratory House of Prayer (1968). Early in his career De Nicola worked in John K. Monroe's architectural firm. Like his employer, De Nicola was responsible for a number of religious commissions in the Archdiocese of Denver. These included two new churches (1954 and 1967) for Denver's All Saints parish; Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Convent (1962); the Most Precious Blood Convent (1963); new churches at both Sacred Heart in Peetz, Colorado, (1964) and St. Bernadette in Denver (1965); and the Cabrini Shrine (1970). In 1996, while officially retired, De Nicola also designed the Interfaith Chapel at Denver International Airport (DIA).

Brother Mel Meyer was a Marianist and trained architect who seemed to be better known for his religious artwork than his building designs. In celebration of the 750th anniversary of St. Francis' death, he designed the remodeled Chapel in the Marycrest Motherhouse. Completed in 1976, his scheme featured frescos and furnishings and fixtures of "rusted steel, welded scrap metal, and hammered ammunition shells."⁷ The chapel's stained glass-esque windows represented Meyer's approach to please both the sisters who wanted stained-glass windows and those who preferred views to the outside. Beyond the Marycrest campus, Meyer crafted the baptistry, baptismal pool, Christ sculpture, altar, pulpit, and tabernacle wall for the new Christ on the Mountain Center in Lakewood (1976). Meyer established an art studio in St. Louis, offering instruction to both religious professionals and the lay community.

After this final vow Sisters were free to move to other locations within the Sacred Heart Province. In 1951 Provincial Superior Mother Elma Vifquain determined the Marycrest Sisters needed a larger Chapel and authorized construction of a rear extension to the novitiate that created sufficient seating for fifty worshippers.

The first portion of what was to become the dominant building on the Marycrest landscape, the Motherhouse, was completed in 1954. On January 20, 1953, construction began on a three-story dormitory for the Sisters. The new building, designed by well-known Denver architect John K. Monroe, was located east of the existing novitiate. The executed work represented only a small portion of the design Monroe created in 1947. He envisioned an ornate Motherhouse with a large, east-

facing chapel dominating over half of the building's façade. At a cost of \$100,000, the dormitory wing was designed to house ten professed Sisters, six novices, and four postulants, leaving plenty of space for additional young women interested in becoming nuns. In addition to cells, the new dormitory building featured classrooms and offices on the first floor.

The remainder of the Motherhouse was constructed in 1958 in accordance with plans from a different architect, John F. Connell. It is unclear why the Marycrest Sisters hired this new designer. However, Connell was clearly familiar with the 1947 drawings Monroe had prepared. In fact, both his 1955 and 1957 sketches show a nearly identical plan for the Motherhouse, with the exception of the fact Connell advocated a new Chapel wing which projected southward from the Mother-

house's long façade. Connell's design provided space for an infirmary, visitor dining room, library, study, community room, kitchen, refectory, additional classrooms, and more cells. He suggested the Chapel wing with a rectory could be added later if the Sisters wished, and Mother Elma agreed with this plan. For the most part, the Motherhouse, as constructed, adhered to Connell's plans. His drawings show a three-story wing on the east half of the Motherhouse, although this portion of the provincial headquarters was constructed as a single-story extension. There also are slight differences in the location of the belfry; Monroe had envisioned the bell tower centered on the façade of the Chapel, Connell wanted it on the west side of the Chapel wing, and this feature was ultimately constructed at the northwest corner of the central entry bay. This design change may be attributed to a third architect, Roland M. Johnson, who is listed on August 1958 specifications for the Silverdale Cut Stone Company in Silverdale, Kansas. Connell passed away in 1957 and it seems likely the Sisters hired Johnson to complete work during final construction of the Motherhouse. In celebration of completion of the Motherhouse, the contractor John O'Flaherty donated the Our Lady of Marycrest statue; this object no longer appears to be present on the Marycrest campus.⁸ The Marycrest Motherhouse was officially dedicated on November 26, 1958.

With construction of the Motherhouse freeing up valuable space in the administration building on Federal Boulevard, the Sisters had room to launch a new enterprise: Marycrest High School. In 1958 they welcomed an incoming class of thirty-three freshmen girls to the dining room of the former Painter house; the girls' parents provided necessities such as chalkboards and other supplies and Father Bonnet assisted by celebrating mass on First Fridays and holy days. As enrollment at the new high school continued to grow, the science labs were forced to relocate to the laundry and kitchen of

the former mansion. Clearly, the school needed more space. The Sisters turned to architect Henry J. De Nicola to design a new building for Marycrest High School. His proposed design consisted of three two-unit buildings arranged, facing outward and joined by glassed-in walkways, in an oval pattern with a school chapel located inside the interior oval and a combination gymnasium/auditorium east of the main academic units. The total cost of the new high school was estimated at \$600,000. Lacking such funds, the Sisters approved construction of a single two-unit academic building facing Federal Boulevard and located immediately north of the former Painter house/administration building. Erected at a cost of \$85,000, this new duplex unit contained two classrooms, several science labs, and a lecture hall. An open house for this new facility, intended to accommodate approximately sixty-five students, was held on September 25, 1960. Just two years later, enrollment at Marycrest High School increased to ninety students.

During the late 1950s and early 1960s, the Sisters also made improvements to the grounds of the Marycrest campus. The St. Francis statue near the southwest corner of the campus was erected in the early 1960s when the path of Interstate 70, proposed in January of 1958 to cut through the campus and near the newly constructed Motherhouse, was later moved further south. After much prayer for such an outcome, the Sisters showed their gratitude to the entire community with the new statue of the Order's patron saint facing outward toward the street.

The Sisters consulted with landscape designer Jack Harenburg for assistance on what should be planted at the site. An undated plan from sometime between 1958 and 1963 shows Harenburg's detailed specifications for appropriate trees and plants. This drawing shows the existing line of junipers currently visible along the south side of the Marycrest

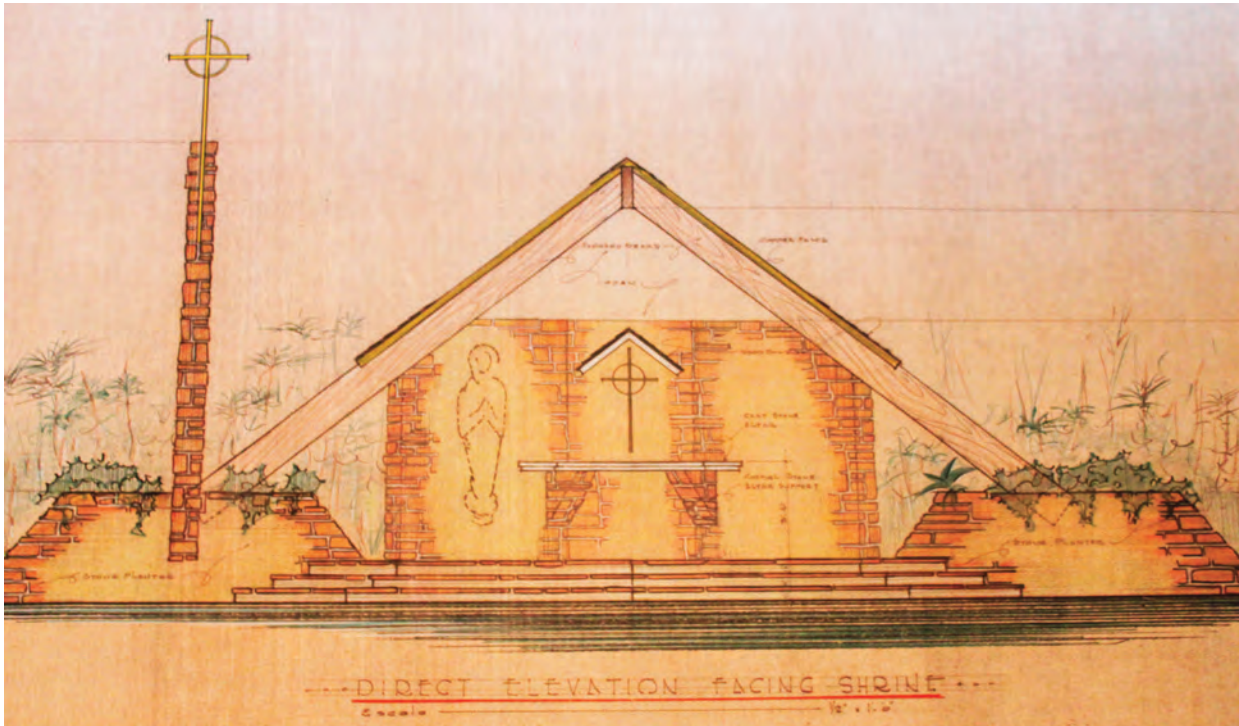


Fig 5. This drawing shows the Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine as executed. (De Nicola, Henry J. "Proposed Shrine for Marycrest Motherhouse - Franciscan Sisters of Penance and Christian Charity - Sacred Heart Province - Rev. Mother M. Elma, OSF Provincial Superior," post-April 1963)

property adjacent to West Fifty-Second Avenue, but does not indicate if these trees were already planted or represented part of his planting plan. Harkenburg suggested use of a wide variety of other tree species—including Ponderosa pines, crab apples, catalpas, Scotch pines, Blue pfitzers, elms, lindens, hackberries, pinyons, maples, white pines, and birches—and also indicated his preference for designed flower beds within the open lawns and near the building foundations. The plan also called for extensive hard scaping, including both walkways and a new entry portal. The sketch of these brick entry gates shows them topped with lantern-like light fixtures and flanking the main drive to Marycrest. Handwritten notes on this drawing indicate Harkenburg intended to charge the Sisters \$4,070 for a parking lot and \$1,870 for walkways. Although it is somewhat difficult to tell how much of this plan may have

been executed, it seems clear this planting plan represented part of a concerted effort of the Sisters to address the grounds at Marycrest. In 1956 they installed an elaborate sprinkler system designed to water any planting plan they chose to follow.

In 1963 the Sisters added another key element, the Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, to the campus' landscape. Marycrest High School architect Henry J. De Nicola also was responsible for this design. Marycrest records include two sets of drawings, one set dated April 4, 1963, with both a site plan and a proposal for the shrine and a second, single undated drawing (but likely post-April 1963) showing the shrine nearly as it appears today. De Nicola's initial concept referred to the shrine as a grotto and included a "religious active area" with benches in front of the statue enclosure that featured an arched top and an off-centered altar.

The Second Vatican Council, also known as Vatican II, was held in Rome from 1962 to 1965 to consider the role of the Catholic Church in the modern world. This series of meetings resulted in revolutionary changes in religious practice, including the discontinuation of Latin as the primary language of the liturgy and the requirement for the priest to face the congregation. These new practices were intended to make the Church more open and accessible.

The outcomes of Vatican II also impacted the Sisters of St. Francis, the Sacred Heart Province, and the Marycrest campus. In the aftermath of Vatican II, nuns could participate in a broader array of secular careers and initiate opportunities for expanded missionary outreach. Both Province-wide and at Marycrest, Sisters engaged in adult education, ministries to delinquent and abandoned youth, emergency housing, missions to Mexico, adult scripture study, and many others. While some Sisters preferred the old, cloistered lifestyle, many others welcomed the changes. In general, Vatican II caused a rift “between those who saw these changes as proper directions and those who saw a way of live they loved so altered that it seemed it was being destroyed. It was a giant step for which some were not prepared.”⁹ Sister Antonella Troshynski, who served as the first principal of Marycrest High School, recognized times had changed and believed, “something had to be done to make religious life, to make religion, to make the faith come alive for people.”¹⁰ It was during this time that Provincial Superiors dropped the reverential title of Mother, continuing to be called Sister even if they assumed the role of leader of one of the three provinces. Also as a result of Vatican II, Sisters had the option of not wearing the traditional habit and veil. Sister George Shoemaker was one of a group of nuns who chose to continue wearing the traditional garb because it felt right for her. However, she had “no objections whatever to Sisters who choose to dress in the contemporary. They are not

less Sisters, nor am I more a Sister because I wear...a veil. A veil does not a Sister make.”¹¹ Vatican II also brought changes to daily life in the Denver Motherhouse, with an intercom system used to make the morning call to worship, talking aloud at meals after the reading, Sisters being permitted to drive cars, and a slight increase in the amount of free time.

Mother Muriel Witte, Provincial Superior from 1963 to 1975, during the Vatican II-era transition, welcomed the greater sense of openness, hoping it would aid Sisters in “building a just and peaceful world.”¹² She led Marycrest when the number of women who chose to take religious vows peaked in 1966. Nationally there were 181,421 women serving as or in the process of becoming nuns throughout the United States and twenty-six women were studying at the Marycrest novitiate. Mother Witte also oversaw the establishment of several new Marycrest ministries:

- In the early 1960s, as an extension of the Province’s long-established mission work in South Dakota, Sisters opened the DeSmet Indian Center in downtown Denver. The facility provided a lounge, library, canteen, and tiny clothing shop for Native Americans who recently had moved from rural areas to the city. Sister Margaret Schneider acted as the “house mother,” offering a place for socializing, attending mass, and often delivering job leads or other services.
- In 1963 the Sisters repurposed the Marycrest novitiate building to serve as Damen Hall, a home for young girls, with Sister Jeanne Flahaven acting as foster mother. Over time this program moved to several other facilities on the Marycrest campus, including the Motherhouse basement and Francis House. It is currently located in the administration building (former Painter mansion), now known as

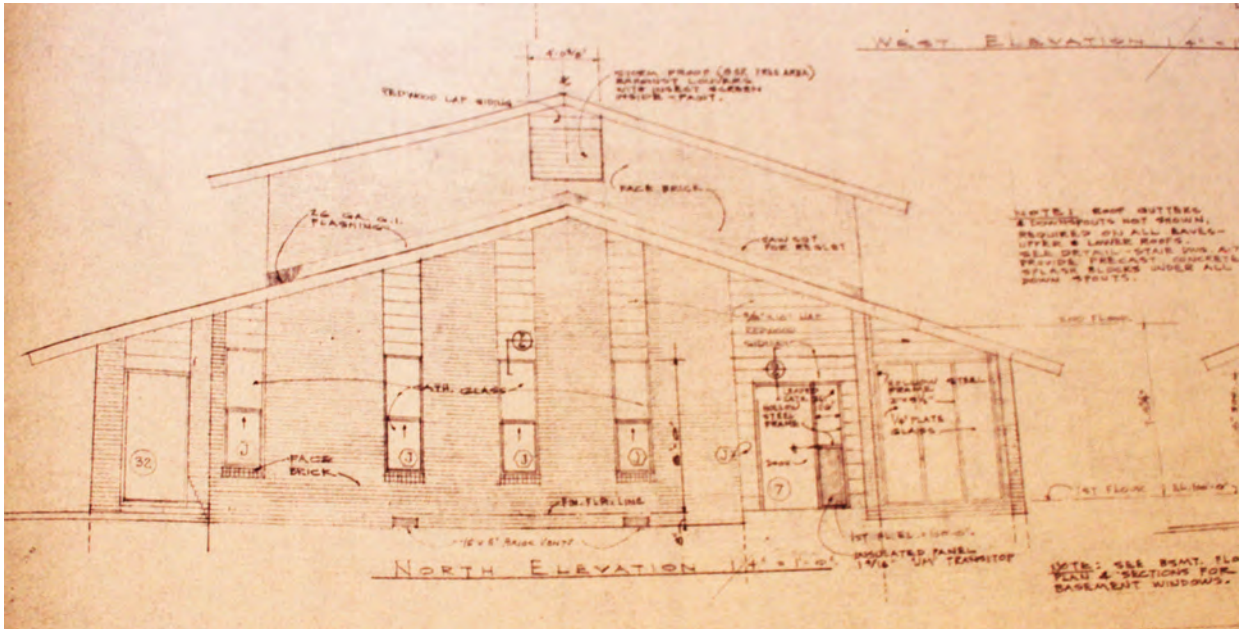


Fig 6. Architect Henry J. De Nicola designed the Queen of Peace Oratory House of Prayer as a place for Sisters, other religious professionals, and the lay public to engage in prayer and reflection. (De Nicola, Henry J. "A House of Prayer for the Sisters of St. Francis – Marycrest – Project Location on Columbine Road Between W. 54th and Primrose Lane," 12 September 1967)

- Emmaus House, and provides room for approximately thirty mothers and children.
 - On November 4, 1964, Sister Cecelia Linenbrink established the Adult Education Tutorial Program, held at St. Elizabeth's School, as a pilot program. With the assistance of students from Regis University and Loretto Heights College, during the program's first year forty students, mostly Hispanics from the housing projects in west Denver and African Americans from Five Points, learned a wide variety of skills ranging from basic literacy to college preparation. Over time this program spread to over twenty-two neighborhood learning centers, reaching 28,000 learners with the help of 7,000 volunteers. In 1999 Sister Cecelia, in recognition of her success in the field of adult education, was the inaugural recipient of the "Everyday Heroes" Award from KMGH, Denver television channel seven.
 - Starting in 1969, Marycrest Sisters and volunteers operated the Migrant Mobile Unit, purchasing a vehicle to operate as a mobile health clinic to serve migrant workers in the agricultural fields of eastern Colorado. Operating only in the summer, this service offered basic healthcare, immunizations, referrals, and general assistance. The Sisters discontinued this program when the State and other agencies developed more comprehensive services for migrant workers.
- A new building erected on the Marycrest site in 1968, the Queen of Peace Oratory House of Prayer, was not only part of a Franciscan tradition but also in keeping with the spirit of Vatican II. St. Francis himself established *retires* (houses of recollection) for monks and friars, often spending time in contemplation at such facilities. The Marycrest Sisters quickly discovered members of the lay community also craved a place of quiet prayer and this new building became a popular oasis,

Fig 7. After using vacant rooms in the Motherhouse as elderly housing, the Sisters, in 1971, considered the possibility of constructing two fifteen-story high rise buildings for the same purpose on the site. This project was never executed. (Miles Lantz Architect, "Marycrest Housing," 1971)



offering Sisters an opportunity to pray with, rather than just for, the public. The Sisters again hired architect Henry J. De Nicola to design the simple 9,973 square foot building, one of the first of its kind in the United States, located northeast of Marycrest High School. The gable-front, two-story, wood frame building, constructed for a price of \$115,916, featured both wood and brick veneer siding and had a large north-facing window wall in the Chapel. The House of Prayer could accommodate four Sisters joined by up to twelve guests, with all worshippers observing silence outside of meals and a short evening recreation period. Marycrest maintenance men Dan Stasch and Art Palubo built the altar, with other furniture transferred from the administration building. Sister Regina Boyle, art teacher at Marycrest High School, created the chalice and ciborium (ceremonial cup and plate used for the consecration of the Eucharist) of hammered silver. The length of stay at the House of Prayer was not predetermined. Instead both Sisters and visitors were welcome to stay for as short a time as a day or as long as a year, depending upon their spiritual needs.

During the 1970s there were major changes within the novitiate program and Marycrest High School continued to grow. In the first part of the decade, novitiate training for the Sacred Heart Province relocated to St. Louis, Missouri. However, by 1978 this program had returned to Denver, moving from the novitiate, now in poor condition, to the administration building, which had been renamed Emmaus House. The nuns in training took classes at Regis University, St. Thomas Seminary, and other area universities, reflecting more diverse secular career options now open to Sisters. For a short time, the novitiate program was housed at the Queen of Peace Oratory House of Prayer. Meanwhile, in 1972, after years of fundraising, including a \$100,000 gift from the Bonfils estate, the Sisters finally constructed the remainder of the Marycrest High School complex (except for the planned chapel). Al-

though the Sacred Heart Province had once held a great deal of academic real estate throughout its region, by 1972 Marycrest High School represented the only school the Province still owned. The high school continued its steady growth through the mid to late 1970s, reaching its peak of 279 students between 1975 and 1979.

The Sisters also developed key programs aimed at housing the needy, specifically the elderly and the homeless, in the 1970s. With the temporary departure of the novitiate and overall decreases in the number of women taking vows, by the fall of 1970 there were several empty rooms in the Motherhouse. The Sisters invited nine elderly women to live at the convent, share meals with the Sisters, and, generally, become a part of the community. Sister Borromea Befit, who had always worked in the laundry at Marycrest, became the head caretaker for these elderly residents. This new senior living arrangement allowed the mothers of many Sisters to live with their daughters at Marycrest. The success of the elderly housing program likely prompted the Sisters to explore the possibility of expanding this mission in a new facility at the Marycrest campus. In 1971 architect Miles Lantz prepared two drawings, each showing options for constructing fifteen-story housing units on the Marycrest site. One drawing, quite basic and presumably the earlier of the two, shows two tall rectangular buildings, each with 150 residential units and adjacent parking areas, located one at the southeast corner of the campus and the other near the northeast corner of the Motherhouse. Executing on this plan would have required removal of the garage/ maintenance shed and a great deal of the open space surrounding the Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine. The second, more detailed drawing proposed a single, "Y"-shaped, fifteen-story building near the southeast corner of the Marycrest site. This facility would have featured a choice of efficiency, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units plus other amenities such as a lobby, reception

desk, club room, game room, meetings rooms, mail room, elevators, trash room, and lounges or laundry facilities on alternating floors. A notation on this set of drawings indicated the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) had not determined the exact location of the proposed building, indicating a spot facing Federal Boulevard might also be an option. As the Sisters' label on the drawing stated, this plan was never executed.

The Emergency Housing Program at Marycrest, although officially established in the fall of 1971, had its origins in the aftermath of a natural disaster that struck Denver six years earlier. A severe flood on June 16, 1965, caused disruption to approximately 8,000 telephone lines, inundated sixty-seven percent of the city's industrial areas, washed out numerous bridges, and forced a massive cleanup that took several months to complete and cost in excess of a million dollars. In the wake of this crisis, Marycrest offered emergency housing to those displaced by the rising flood waters. One family, before arriving at Marycrest, had been living for ten days with nine children and virtually no food in their pickup truck in a Denver park. Sister Rose Wenz, who always had a soft spot for children, took care of these young charges and her new emergency housing ministry was born. Having used vacant garden-level cells at the Motherhouse during the flood, Sister Rose investigated if such an approach could be used to address the acute need for housing for homeless families. She managed the Emergency Housing program, inviting temporary visitors to eat with the Sisters and assist with chores like laundry, gardening, and basic maintenance. Most families stayed, on average, for three to ten days and Sister Xavier Kirscht offered classes for the children as needed. The program served about thirty guests every ten days, for a total of about 800 homeless individuals each year. The program survived on donations from the public and an allocation from the Archdiocese. In 1982 Sister Rose shifted her focus to the Marycrest Food and

Clothing Bank; with the 1986 construction of Samaritan House in downtown Denver, a shelter with space for homeless families, the Marycrest Emergency House Program was discontinued and the Sisters turned their focus to other types of housing efforts like the Damen Hall program.

The 1980s was a decade of mixed blessing for Marycrest, with some long-established institutions, such as the novitiate and Marycrest High School, experiencing decline while other new endeavors were established or refined to better serve the Sisters' ever-expanding flock and mission. In 1980 Marycrest introduced a new, full-time vocation director, appointing Sister Karen Crouse to offer support to all women, not just the traditionally young candidates straight out of high school, interested in adopting a religious life. As part of her outreach, Sister Karen established a "live-ins" program that provided a weekend-long taste of what living at Marycrest and being a Sister was like. Mimicking a nationwide trend, the women who attended these events and the few who ultimately took their vows were older and many already had secular, professional careers.¹³ The Order now accepted women who had been married and widowed, and a handful of new nuns actually had grown children and grandchildren. Despite Sister Karen's best efforts, however, no new novices joined at Marycrest after the mid 1980s. The few who had made commitments earlier no longer lived and trained in the Marycrest novitiate. This building, the only original Walker estate edifice on the Marycrest campus, was in poor condition and expensive to maintain; the few new novices moved into Emmaus House (former Painter mansion and administration building) instead. In 1983 the old novitiate was demolished to make way for a new office building for the newly-established Sacred Heart Corporation, the entity charged with overseeing all of the healthcare properties and operations in the Province. Located on the footprint of the former novitiate, west of the southwest corner of the

Motherhouse, this modest, rectangular, one-story building with a full basement and faced in brick veneer had several offices and a great deal of storage space.

Marycrest High School maintained decent enrollment numbers, between 200 and 230, during the early to mid 1980s. However, costs associated with providing a high-quality education for these girls continued to rise. In 1982 the Sisters established a long-range development program to raise funds for both ongoing expenses and future renovations. In 1987, when the school's enrollment dwindled to just 157 students, the Sisters were keen to trim expenses any way necessary and started to share staff with Holy Name High School in Englewood. On the Feast of St. Francis, October 4, 1987, Marycrest High School celebrated its silver anniversary. Unfortunately, the school was not destined to reach other landmark anniversaries and, amidst both declining enrollment and rising costs, the Sisters decided to close the school, leasing it to the Colorado Christian Home for Abused Children. On June 3, 1988, a Mass to celebrate the high school's history was held in the gymnasium; this well-attended ceremony honored the over 1,100 graduates of this institution and the hard work of many Sisters who had taught there since 1958.

Sister Rose Wenz, having made such a tremendous impact with her successful Emergency Housing program, shifted her focus in 1982 to developing the Food and Clothing Bank at Marycrest. She had been providing food to the needy since the 1960s, initially delivering small donations to those living in Denver's projects. One year at Thanksgiving she was inspired to put together food baskets for twenty-four of the families who had been Emergency Housing clients. She approached a gentleman who had supported Marycrest endeavors and also worked at the Safeway store on Lowell Boulevard, in Denver, asking him if the store would donate the twenty-four loaves of bread she needed. The Safeway store gave Sister Rose not

only bread but also apples, potatoes, and M&M candies that had just passed their sell-by date. After this experience, Sister Rose started making weekly trips, in a donated van, to Safeway to collect all of the store's just expired food for distribution to the poor. Eventually her delivery rounds became quite time-consuming and it made more sense to develop an established, rather than a mobile, operation. The Marycrest Food and Clothing Bank received assistance from Safeway stores, local parishes, countless individuals, and also the Colorado Clearing House, a nonprofit that stored unused food donations from throughout the metro area at St. Patrick's School and delivered large loads to Marycrest on a weekly basis. Many of the former Emergency Housing clients returned to Marycrest to receive food from Sister Rose, and often large queues formed near the distribution area outside the Motherhouse kitchen wing. On an average day Sister Rose and her army of volunteers distributed food to 150 needy people. She was satisfied with her hard work to help "thousands of poor families," and attributed her success to God, stating "whatever I was put in charge of I had that belief it was what God wanted me to do and that's what I entered [the convent] for and I think He was very close to me, because He certainly blessed every job I had." Showing characteristic Franciscan humility, Sister Rose downplayed her enormous efforts with the food and clothing bank, claiming, "I never had to ask for anything. It all just came in. Everybody was so happy to help, that they were able to do something and be a channel through which they could go to help others."¹⁴ Sister Rose continued to manage the Marycrest Food and Clothing Bank until 1988. In the late 1990s, with Sister Elizabeth Fuhr at its helm, the program changed its name to the Marycrest Resource Center and expanded its offerings to include discounted food for purchase, job skills and computer training, counseling, and other services aimed at making the clients more self-sufficient.

Two other new forms of outreach launched in the 1980s, the Catholic Biblical School and the Marycrest Conference and Retreat Center, further expanded the influence of the Marycrest Sisters. Starting in fall 1984, Sister Macrina Scott organized classes, wrote the curriculum, and delivered the lessons at the Archdiocese's offices for the Catholic Biblical School. The first year's classes had 151 students, but by 1987 the program had expanded its reach, teaching over 500 students in Denver, Fort Collins, and Longmont. Sister Macrina's model spread throughout the United States and her curriculum and study materials became popular teaching tools for these classes. Available lodging space in the Motherhouse was again repurposed, this time for paying guests, when the Sisters launched the Marycrest Conference and Retreat Center. Former Provincial Superior Elma Vifquain acted as the welcomer for this program, which offered on-site religious education and spiritual renewal for a wide variety of groups and individuals. The center became a preferred location for the Archdiocese's Teens Encounter Christ (TEC) groups, monthly gatherings in which over a hundred young people stayed at the Motherhouse for three days of prayer, instruction, and fellowship. The popular Marycrest center served an average of 2,500 guests each year and in 1998 the remaining Sisters actually moved to the third floor of the 1954 dormitory wing in order to make more space for these visitors.

During the 1990s and 2000s, as fewer and fewer Sisters lived at the Motherhouse, more and more of the sprawling Marycrest campus was turned over to other organizations involved in social welfare programs or repurposed for the Sisters' initiatives. The Sisters offered much-needed space in the Motherhouse basement to the King Adult Day Enrichment program to provide dining, care, and activity space for patients with multiple sclerosis. In 1995 this program transformed the former site of the sunken garden on the north (rear) side of

Motherhouse with a redwood deck, goldfish pond, and fountain. There also were changes made to the Motherhouse to improve the function and offerings of the Marycrest Conference and Retreat Center. In 1998 the Sisters added a new lighted parking lot at the front of the building, replaced many of the windows, and built a bookstore to cater to the needs of their guests.

There were also new occupants in several of the accessory buildings at Marycrest. In 1993 the Sisters leased Emmaus House to Bridgeway, a charity charged with caring for unwed mothers and their babies; by 1994 there were eighteen young women in residence, but the program lost its funding in 1998. The departure of Bridgeway made space in this historic building for expanded operation of the Damen Hall program, housed for a time during the 1990s at Francis House and allowed the Sisters to serve approximately thirty mothers and children fleeing domestic abuse. By 2000 an on-site preschool was established for these clients at Emmaus House. As recently as 2012, Americorps volunteers had an office in the Francis House.

Two Marycrest buildings, the corporate office building and Queen of Peace Oratory House of Prayer, were repurposed in the 1990s. On April 17, 1998, the Sacred Heart Province sold all of its remaining healthcare properties and discontinued the work of the Sacred Heart Corporation. The corporate office was converted for use as both the Province Archives and financial offices, with the facility renamed Chiarra, a term meaning "clear" in Italian. In September 1999 the Queen of Peace Oratory House of Prayer changed its name to Queen of Peace Community and operated as the provincial novitiate under the direction of Novice Director Sister Marie Therese Archambault. In 2007 there were seven Sisters living in this building.

Having both temporarily been in the elderly housing service at the Motherhouse and considered building a high-

rise building for elderly housing in 1971, the Sisters again contemplated the prospect of such care taking place on the Marycrest campus. In 1995 they commissioned Swinerton and Walburg Company of Denver, a commercial construction firm, to complete a feasibility study for an assisted living community to be built on the Marycrest High School site. In 1996 the Sisters held a reunion mass prior to the demolition of the former school. In October of that same year the groundbreaking for the new assisted living complex took place and the two buildings, named Serenity and Harmony, were dedicated in 1998. The facility offers studio apartments with small kitchenettes to the elderly in the Serenity property, where there is space for ninety residents, and forty eight residents under the age of fifty-five and in need of residential care at the Harmony building. The entire complex, located at the northwest corner of the campus and managed by the Sisters, is called Marycrest Assisted Living.

Faced with dwindling membership in the Order and ever-rising costs for site maintenance, the Sisters decided, in 2005, to sell the Motherhouse and much of the twenty-five acre Marycrest campus. The Sisters initially selected Mercy Housing, a national housing non-profit, as a development partner. After two years of working on a redevelopment strategy, Mercy Housing decided not to pursue the project. In 2007 Marycrest Land LLC a joint venture between Urban Ventures LLC and Perry-Rose, announced their intention to redevelop twenty-one acres of the overall site. They envisioned a development similar to the Perry-Rose project in Highlands Garden Village on the former site of the original Elitch Gardens amusement park. Early plans called for approximately 200 to 300 housing units built to attract a diverse mix of owners and renters and 30,000 square feet of retail and office space along Federal Boulevard. The development company also expressed a desire, if it is economically feasible, to find an adaptive reuse

for the Motherhouse, perhaps as a co-housing development for the elderly.¹⁵

In 2005 the King Adult Day Enrichment Program, Warren Village program (continues work of Damen Hall), and Marycrest Assisted Living complex remained on the site; the Sisters also retained use of the chapel within the main convent building. Provincial Superior Sister Karen Crouse sought to be optimistic about this change, stating the Sisters' "passion to serve God's people continues to burn strongly... and this re-birth of our Marycrest property will fan the flame of our mission to burn more brightly than ever."¹⁶ A small group of Sisters continue to live at the Marycrest site. They moved, in 2010, into a small complex of eight new eco-friendly duplexes dubbed Casa Chiara and located on the former site of the Queen of Peace Community, demolished in 2008. These units—designed by architect Michelle Kaufmann of Oakland, California, and developed by Urban Ventures—have space for both Province offices and housing for twelve sisters. All of the buildings have earned five-star home energy rating certificates and all construction materials came from in-state vendors. These duplexes feature xeriscaping, low-flow plumbing, solar panels, energy efficient doors and appliances, and tank-less water heaters.

On January 30, 2012, the Denver City Council approved the Marycrest Urban Redevelopment Plan, officially creating the redevelopment area and permitting the use of tax increment financing (TIF) to repay the \$4.9 million investment from from NSP2 and Skyline funds. Urban Ventures, LLC, President Susan Powers praised the opportunity to create not only a new Denver neighborhood but also redevelop on the "remarkable setting of Marycrest."¹⁷ Tracy Huggins, DURA Executive Director, recognized Marycrest's rich history, stressing the "aim to preserve" select features of the site and praising how "the redevelopment plan embraces the site's legacy of community

improvement and environmental stewardship supported by the Sisters of St. Francis.” According to Huggins, the new mixed-use development has the potential to draw “from the property’s rich past while envisioning the future of what communities can be—connected, inspiring, affordable, diverse places that use resources efficiently and creatively.”¹⁸

After weathering the economic downturn that affected real estate nationwide, the land transfer between the Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity Sacred Heart

Province and Marycrest Land LLC took place at an official ceremony on May 6, 2012. At this event the Sisters praised Divine Providence, which both guided Mother Lidwina to the site in 1938 and led them to sell the property seventy-four years later. They also expressed joy in the fact the Marycrest site would be transformed into “a community for a diversely wide range of ages and incomes, in the spirit of our mission.”¹⁹ Marycrest Land LLC planned to begin the first phase of construction on the former Marycrest site in summer 2012.

SECTION III

Architectural Information

Narrative Architectural Description

There are a total of five previously recorded historic resources on the 25-acre Marycrest site. These include the Marycrest Motherhouse (5DV.8026), the Francis House and Garage (5DV.10405), a garage/maintenance shed (5DV.10410) near the southeast corner of the site, and the Chiarra office building (5DV.10406) located west of the main convent building. The site also features the Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine (5DV.10411). The MOU between Marycrest Land LLC and the SHPO specifically called for documentation of the Marycrest Motherhouse and the Francis House and Garage. The architectural descriptions for both of these resources appear below.

Marycrest Motherhouse Exterior

Oriented to the south, this approximately 54,120-square-foot, irregularly shaped building rests on a concrete foundation. The restrained example of Mediterranean style architecture is constructed of concrete block faced in blonde brick. The Motherhouse was constructed in two phases. The first portion, completed in 1954, is a rectangular, three-story dormitory building with a red-tile hipped roof that comprises only the southwest bay. The second phase of construction, completed in 1958, produced a central entry bay with belfry; single-bay three story connector; a long, single-story addition to the east of the original convent building; and the entire rear of the existing building. The taller portion of the addition fea-

tures a red tile shed roof and the single-story extension has a flat roof covered with a synthetic membrane.

South elevation (façade)

The southwest corner of the building façade, part of the original construction, features a metal fire escape offering safe egress from lodging rooms on the second and third stories of this wing of the convent. A flush stringcourse of light stone runs along the façade and is located immediately underneath the windows on the third story. The top two stories both feature centrally-located steel doors painted cream to match the building's blonde brick. These doors have a rectangular fixed pane of security glass in the upper portion. On the second and third floors, a single rectangular double-hung window appears on either side of the central door. The first floor features a total of three windows, a six-lite steel window in the center with double-hung windows flanking this central opening. The double-hung windows on the first story are slightly larger than those on the other floors. The ground floor of the building, on this portion of the façade, is not visible.

The east-facing elevation of this same original dormitory wing features windows looking out toward the walkway leading to the Motherhouse main entrance. The stringcourse continues from the façade, again appearing below the third-story windows. Each floor has a total of six, rectangular, double-hung windows, oriented across the elevation in three pairs.

The windows on the first floor are slightly larger than those in the other two stories. A quarter-height, blonde-brick wall, starting at the southeast corner of the previously described portion of the façade, hides both the four, double-hung rectangular windows and an air conditioning unit along the east elevation on the ground floor. Behind the wall, the heavily scored concrete foundation is visible.

The addition to the original convent dormitory building begins on the façade at the northwest interior corner, where the east elevation intersects with the convent's central entry wing. At this intersection there is a three-and-one-half-story belfry. The blonde brick tower has a shallow, pyramidal-hipped, red-tile roof, with a large iron cross rising from the center of the roof peak. The stone string course continues across the façade and the east side of the belfry. The upper half-story portion of the bell tower has tripartite openings facing north and south, with double openings on the east and west elevations, all filled with decorative iron work. The façade of the central entry wing has a centered, recessed entry porch on the first story. This portion of the building features the greatest amount of architectural detail. A stone arcade of five round arches with four Doric columns extends across the width of the entry porch. The inscription "*Deus Providebit*" ("God will provide") is carved into the central arch. The porch surface is composed of a concrete slab with simple, red floor tiles. Centered on both the east and west walls of the porch interior are empty stone plinths. Behind each plinth a tall, narrow pattern of decorative brickwork with a simple round arched top appears; it seems likely these spaces were intended for some sort of statue. The primary entry is a wood door with a decorative carving of an ornate cross above a cloud-like shape from which extend two arms crossing at the forearm. The arm on the left is clothed in

a long sleeved robe and the arm on the right is bare. The hand on the left is pointing with the thumb and index finger extended. The right arm has its outstretched palm facing upward. Within the cloud-like shape there is a banner with the inscription "*Pax et Bonum*" ("Peace and Goodness"). There is a small peephole between the carved cross above and arms from the cloud below. The primary entry also has a black steel security door with screen in the top portion only. The decorative surround for the primary entry to the convent is composed of blonde brick, stone molding in a rope-like pattern, and two cream tiles with stylized black crosses that appear in the upper corners of this ornamental element. There are two double-hung, rectangular windows to either side of the front door; these windows have simple stone sills and integrated, blonde-brick surrounds. A red-tile shed roof, starting at the string-course that extends across the entire façade, marks the second-story portion of the central entry bay. There are five, original steel windows along the second-story of the central entry bay. These windows offer a view out to the front of the property from the second-floor library, which is located immediately across the hallway from the Chapel. The center portion of the third floor, above the entry porch, has three small, square windows evenly spaced across the width of this bay. There also is a small, rectangular, second-story window located in the portion of the façade flanking the east side of the entry bay. Foliage along the foundation partially obscures a granite plaque on the southeast side of the central bay façade; the plaque's inscription reads, "Dedicated AD 1958 The Centennial of Lourdes."

A west-southwest-facing elevation defines the other side of the central entry portion of the Motherhouse. The narrow, west-facing portion of the exterior wall, closest to the central

bay, features a single, rectangular, double-hung window on the first story. The southwest-facing elevation has, on each floor, three large, rectangular, double-hung windows with stone sills. The stone stringcourse from the façade continues here, again appearing below the third-story windows.

There is a three-story portion of the façade under a gable roof. A small finial appears at the gable peak and a vent in the elevation surface is located immediately below. Both the second and third stories feature three, double-hung, rectangular windows. On the third floor, the sill-less windows are located at the extreme east end of this elevation. The windows on the second story all have stone sills. There is a single window nearly centered on the second floor of this portion of the building, with the other two windows appearing immediately below the eastern-most two windows of the third story. There are four, rectangular, double-hung windows, with nearly flush stone sills, on the first floor; these windows appear to be slightly taller and wider than those on the second and third stories. One of these first-story windows is near the southwest corner of the elevation, with the remaining three in alignment with the openings on the third story. There is a window air conditioning unit in the bottom part of the second (from the west) window. As with the remainder of the façade of the Motherhouse, the flush stone stringcourse appears below the third-story windows. A slightly projecting stone stringcourse is visible below the windows on the first floor.

The three-story portion of the Motherhouse addition, located closest to the central entry wing, features a red-tile, side gabled roof. Along the roofline ridge there is a metal television antenna. There are three, rectangular, double-hung windows with flush stone sills on both the second and third stories. These windows are arranged as a pair closer to the central

entry wing and a single opening further to the east. On the first floor there are two rectangular, double-hung windows and a metal door; this door is painted cream to match the blonde brick and features a large, fixed pane of security glass. There is a metal, flat-roofed projection immediately above this entrance. The stone stringcourse continues onto this portion of the building addition. There is a metal drain pipe, located near the eastern edge of the three-story part of the convent addition, extending from the roofline to just below the second-story windows. The east-facing side of the three-story portion of the addition features a single, rectangular, double-hung window nearly centered on the elevation and looking down onto the flat roof of the single-story portion of the Motherhouse addition.

The south-facing, single-story part of the addition is a long rectangular extension to the convent building. The lower stone stringcourse, located below all of the windows, continues along this section of the building's façade. Across this portion of the façade are numerous windows and doors. Starting from the west end of the single-story part of the addition, there is a boarded up steel window, leaving only the top two lites visible. Next there are six, rectangular, double-hung windows, plus a black-painted metal drainpipe. The next element along the one-story addition is four, rectangular, double-hung windows, the fourth of which is slightly shorter. There is a large brick chimney, which extends approximately a single story above the flat roofline, nearly centered on the one-story addition. Immediately east of the chimney there is a grated brick projection along the foundation. Near the center of the single-story portion of the Motherhouse, there is a wooden door, which is painted yellow and has a large, rectangular, fixed pane of security glass; a flat-roofed metal projection appears above

this entrance that leads to the public hallway near the commercial kitchen. There are seven, double-hung, rectangular windows to either side of a square, black, metal drain pipe; the second window east of the drain pipe features a drawer-like alteration that appears to have been used for making donations to the Marycrest Food and Clothing Bank. A white, wooden door, with a small, square, fixed-pane window, opening beneath the same flat-roofed metal projection used elsewhere on the building, appears at the extreme southeast corner of the addition.

East elevation

There are three, rectangular, double-hung windows evenly spaced along the single-story east elevation of the convent addition. These windows are positioned directly above the stone stringcourse, with the window sills integrated into this element. A roughly L-shaped concrete driveway leads from the asphalt internal road along the east side of the site and terminates in an enclosed basement-level entry. There is a single, gray-painted metal door, with a large, fixed pane, centered on the basement level. Like the foundation along this side of the convent addition, the walls defining the approach to this entrance are stucco-covered and painted cream to match the building's blonde brick exterior. Deciduous bushes and vines appear above the portion of the front/south wall nearest the east elevation of the convent addition. Simple metal railings, painted black, top the remainder of the south wall as it extends up the driveway to the northeast. This same railing appears along the north retaining wall, which, instead of running directly up the driveway, forms a square enclosure to the north. At the base of the rear/north wall, where the driveway curves to the northeast, is a low triangular planter built with railroad

ties. There are low, wood benches, painted dark red, attached to both sides of this wall; the benches run from near the basement door to the point where the driveway curves to the northeast.

North elevation (rear)

The entire rear of the convent building is part of the addition to the original Motherhouse. At the northeast corner of the convent addition only the first-story portion of the building is visible. There are a total of three windows and a solid-wood, double door, painted white, on this north-facing part of the building. All of the windows are rectangular, double-hung, with integrated window sills and appear above the stone stringcourse. The northeast corner of the building, which includes one of these windows, is slightly recessed. There are large window wells along the foundation, each with a metal grate, below each window. A wooden bench, painted light blue, is positioned on the grate underneath the second window on the north-facing elevation. A narrow concrete walkway runs from the internal roadway along the east side of the site and extends all the way across this portion of the rear elevation, offering access to the double-door entrance. Approximately six concrete steps up from the asphalt parking area at the rear of the building connect to this concrete walkway. There is a slightly sloping area of grass, with established grapevines, located at the southern edge closest to the building, and an enclosure of simple, metal railings, painted black, defining this landscaped area.

Both the basement and first-story levels are visible on the remainder of the north-facing (rear) elevation of the Motherhouse addition. A concrete retaining wall, topped with a simple metal railing, painted black, defines the east end of the

surface parking lot near the addition's heavily scored concrete foundation, which is visible on the entire rear of the building. There are numbers, one through nine, stenciled on the building's foundation with black paint, likely identifying individual parking spaces. A total of twenty-three windows appear on the basement level along the rear of the addition: thirteen rectangular, eight-lite, steel windows (one located behind a large air conditioning unit) and ten smaller, rectangular, double-hung windows, which appear to be replacements. These replacement windows appear consecutively, running from the portion of the basement level nearest the parking area retaining wall toward the west. The steel windows are located from about half-way along the rear elevation and continue to the west. A large central air conditioning unit, with extensive ductwork, is located on the basement level about three-fourths of the way along the rear elevation of the addition. A tall, white, vinyl fence runs along the north and west sides of this utilities area. There are two doors, both dark-brown-painted metal, both with a large, centered rectangular fixed pane of glass, along the basement level rear elevation of the Motherhouse. One of the doors, located just west of parking space number nine, has a painted inscription near the top of the glass portion that reads, "PLEASE USE WEST DOOR • THIS IS AN EMERGENCY EXIT. THANK YOU." The second basement-level door is located slightly west of the semi-fenced utilities area and its signage reads, "2851 ADULT DAY ENRICHMENT PROGRAM." There are a total of twenty-five windows on the first story of the north-facing (rear) elevation. This upper portion features eighteen double-hung, rectangular windows, again starting near/above the parking area retaining wall and running to the west; these windows also appear to be replacements. As with elsewhere on the addition, a stone stringcourse runs below

the first-story windows and the window sills are integrated into this feature. Between the sixth and seventh windows (counting from east to west), there is a wood door painted cream with a four-light fixed pane opening in the center. There is a flat-roofed metal projection over this entry and a simple concrete slab balcony extends from the elevation below the door. At one time there may have been stairs from the surface of the parking lot up to this first-story entrance. The eighth window along the one-story rear of the Motherhouse addition appears to be one of the steel originals, although only the upper two lites are intact, with a large air conditioning unit filling the remaining six panes. An integrated brick chimney, with a curved, concrete bottom and a steel coal door, appears between the ninth and tenth windows, extending above the flat roofline of the one-story part of the Motherhouse. The twelfth window along this elevation, also rectangular double-hung, is slightly shorter than the others along the rear of the addition. The seven westernmost openings on the rear of the addition are all eight-lite, steel windows.

The three-story (plus basement) addition on the rear of the convent is roughly "V" shaped, with a short elevation facing north and a much longer one facing east. There are stone stringcourses below both the first- and third-story windows, running across the surface of the brick chimney as well. Along the basement level the heavily scored concrete foundation is visible. All of the basement windows, except two, are eight-lite, steel, rectangular openings, with concrete sills. There are three such windows on the north-facing rear elevation. The east-facing rear elevation features, from south to north, a single steel window; a pair of steel windows; a trio of steel windows; two doors; a single, rectangular, double-hung window; a steel window with lites in one half and a long louvered panel

in the other; and the large, square projection of the brick chimney. The rectangular, double-hung window is smaller than the steel windows and appears to be a replacement. The two metal doors are nearly centered on the basement level of the east-facing elevation. The one to the south is painted pale gray with a rectangular, fixed-pane window in its upper part. The other door, directly north of the first, is solid and painted white. The massive brick chimney, which runs the entire height of the building and extends above the roofline, defines the intersection of the side-gabled and front-gabled portions of the east-facing rear elevation. The front-gabled section is located near the northwest corner of the Motherhouse. There are two, rectangular, double-hung windows, situated nearer the chimney, on the basement level of the front-gabled section; this same fenestration pattern is repeated on the other floors in this area of the building.

A concrete staircase, with a decorative, black wrought iron railing, located near the intersection of the north- and east-facing rear elevations, offered exterior access to a first-story concrete balcony. The first-story balcony has a temporary railing crudely constructed of two-by-fours and metal clamps. A board currently blocks the top three stairs nearest the balcony. There is a round, concrete pillar, most visible from behind the stairs facing west, supporting the staircase. On the shorter, north-facing elevation are rectangular, double-hung windows flanking a wooden door. This door is painted cream, has a large rectangular, fixed-pane lite in its upper portion, and features a minimal metal projection over the entry. This door opens onto the first-story balcony. Along the first story of the east-facing elevation are four pairs of French doors with two, double-hung, six-over-six-lite windows between each door unit, for a total of six such windows along this portion of the

rear addition. There is also a single, six-over-six-lite, double-hung, rectangular window south of the first (closest to intersection of north- and east-facing elevations) pair of doors and another similar window just south of the chimney projection; only the three bottom lites of this opening are visible underneath an oversized window air conditioning unit. The wood French doors, painted light brown and featuring white, wood storm doors with screens, allow balcony access from the first-floor Community Room. A flat-roofed, concrete overhang both provides shade to the first-story balcony and forms a basic platform balcony on the second story.

The second story of the rear elevation features three, rectangular, double-hung windows on the north-facing surface. The fenestration pattern on the east-facing elevation (from south to north) includes two, eight-lite, rectangular steel windows; a door; four eight-lite, rectangular steel windows; a second door; three more steel windows; the chimney; and two double-hung, rectangular windows near the northwest corner. The middle steel window in this final trio is boarded over. Both of the doors are wood, with four-lite, fixed-pane windows near the tops of each. The windows and doors, between the north- and east-facing elevation intersection and the large chimney, all serve the second-story Chapel. All glass, both in the windows and the doors, has been treated with colored adhesive film to simulate the appearance of stained glass. The third-story of the north-facing portion of the rear elevation, like the second story, features three rectangular, double-hung windows. Across the east-facing portion on the third story there are twelve rectangular, double-hung windows (the third window is boarded over), the chimney, and two rectangular, double-hung windows in the northwest corner bay. A simple, red-tile finial appears at the peak of the front-gabled roof.

West elevation

Both the basement and upper three levels of the convent are visible on the west elevation; the foundation is heavily scored concrete. This side of the building also features the intersection of the original convent (toward the front of the building/south) and its large addition (toward the rear/north). A caulked or mortared seam appears immediately north of the central entrance; there also is a difference in the color of bricks for the original dormitory and the addition. There are stone stringcourses below both the first- and third-story windows, across the entire elevation; again, the first-story window sills are integrated into this element. The original building's ground floor, from the southwest corner toward the north, has three pairs of small, rectangular, double-hung windows. The slightly projecting, centered entry—a cream-colored wooden door with a rectangular, fixed-pane lite and sidelights—features a corniced, metal, flat porch roof, supported by simple metal poles and rests on a concrete stoop. The basement level of the addition has four rectangular, double-hung windows, one close to the secondary entrance and a trio closer to the northwest corner of the building. This same window type and fenestration pattern is repeated on the remaining stories of the addition. The other stories of the original dormitory have six rectangular, double-hung windows each, arranged in three pairs across the elevation. There are two small, nearly square, double-hung windows centered above the entrance. These windows are located at approximately the one-and-a-half- and two-and-a-half story marks on this elevation.

Marycrest Motherhouse Interior

The Motherhouse features quite modest interior finishes. In the southwest corner of the ground floor, part of the origi-

nal dormitory, there is a large room with numerous wooden shelves that appears to have been used as a library prior to the closure of the convent. The historic blueprints for the building label this same space as a classroom. There is a communal restroom with showers and three sleeping rooms, used most recently as part of the Marycrest Retreat and Conference Center, in the northwest corner of this level. The sleeping rooms have built-in cabinets, louvered entry doors, faux paneling, utilitarian carpet, in-room sinks, and single-lite, double-hung windows. There also is a large utility room on this level of the Motherhouse. More sleeping rooms (lacking built-in cabinetry and in general more spare) and communal restrooms, all with original tile work, exist on the second- and third-levels of the west wing of the dormitory building.

The first story features various offices, storage areas, and a space labeled on the fire escape plan map as a Lecture Hall located immediately across a small entry hallway from the Motherhouse's primary entry door. The main dining room is nearly centered within the first-story portion of the addition and is located near the front of the building. There are numerous cubbies with wooden doors on the west wall of this room; they appear to have been used for storage and perhaps were used to hold the Sisters' tableware between meals. A large, industrial kitchen is located near the southeast corner of the building. The Community Room is located across the hallway from the dining room. This gathering space has access to the first-story balcony on the northeast-facing rear elevation. The interior doors in the Community Room have eighteen fixed panes; selected lites have been filled with a colored window film to create a green cross on a frosted white background. In the hallway outside the Community Room are numerous gold plaques affixed to a large wooden block on the wall. These en-

gravings seem to honor individual donors to Marycrest at named levels, such as the “Companions of St. Francis” and others.

By far, the Chapel represents the most impressive interior space in the Marycrest Motherhouse. The large, rectangular room is located on the second story, above the Community Room. Along the north wall there are steel windows covered in decorative geometric patterns of window film, giving the appearance of stained glass. The doors along this wall, with windows also covered in colored window film, offer access to the second-story balcony along the northeast-facing elevation on the rear of the convent. Frescoes cover nearly all of the wall surfaces in the Chapel; some of the panels have been removed and placed on the floor. The colors in these frescoes are somewhat muted and include hues of brown, gold, gray, moss green, orange, maroon, and light blue. The designs are more impressionistic than realistic, featuring geometric blocks of color similar to those in the window panes. However, some motifs are clear in these decorative murals: leaves, a bird, and flames. Frescoes on two pillars flanking the double-door entry from the Motherhouse hallway, on the Chapel’s south wall, depict the Stations of the Cross. This decorative element features liberal use of gold, maroon, grey, and brown and appears slightly brighter than the rest of the wall surfaces. The decoration along the east wall into the southeast corner of the room is devoid of color, instead appearing like etched decorative shapes and motifs made in the gray cement surface. The ambry, a small storage area for the holy oils, is centered in the east wall. This storage space likely featured a small door when the Chapel was in use. The light fixtures in the Chapel are highly decorative. They have semi-circle, metal bases (allowing them to be affixed to the ceiling), painted dark brown, with

two large circular cut-outs. Each light fixture features three, canister-like pendulums, with a highly decorative, almost like chunky lace, treatment. There are a total of ten light fixtures in the Chapel, arranged in two lines of five starting near the center of the worship space and continuing toward the rear of the room. There is a small vestibule along the west wall at the back of the Chapel. The walls of this small area feature more simple frescoes: a stylized cross on the north wall and the Madonna and child on the west wall. There is only a bit of blue paint on the second motif, indicating perhaps this portion of the Chapel décor was left unfinished. Next to the cross pattern on the wall is a small inscription that states: “TRUE FRESCO MURAL 4/29/76 SR. REGINA BOYLE, SR. GERALDINE CLIFFORD, SR. ARLEEN HANA, BRO. MEL MEYER, ART PALUMBO, DAN STASCH, BRO. TOM SUDA.” The Chapel features dark brown, nearly black, stained wood work. The floor is covered in rusty orange shag carpeting.

In the hallway outside the Chapel, on the wall backing up to this room, there is a large, rectangular painting. This artwork features flames, flowers, thorns, and the same crossed arms motif as appears on the Motherhouse front door. The painting has been executed in a variety of colors, including red, pink, light blue, light yellow, black, and white. Across the hallway from this large piece of art is a small area designated as a library. This area, located along the building’s central entry wing, is reached via three terrazzo steps up from the hallway. The south elevation features at least six windows, each with six rectangular lites of glass tinted light purple. On the hallway side of the library are a number of arched openings. Some of the arches have been covered to create more shelf space. There are built-in shelves and cabinets on both the east and west walls of the library alcove.

Francis House Exterior

Oriented to the east, this approximately 1,715-square-foot, rectangular-shaped Bungalow, with a rear addition and full basement, rests on a concrete foundation. The building is faced in cream-colored stucco and has a front-gabled roof covered in composition shingles. The primary entry, a solid wood door, painted white with a white steel security door, is asymmetrically placed nearer to the south of the façade, within the front porch. The open front porch has a front-gabled roof and is reached via three curved, concrete steps, which face south. Both the steps and the porch surface are covered in peeling, light blue paint. There is a simple metal railing, painted cream to match the dwelling, beside the stairs along the southern side of the façade. The house number 5317 (Columbine Road) appears nearly above the front door, in the trim of the porch roof pediment. A metal vent is centered in the home's gable face. A pair of original, rectangular, double-hung windows appears on each side of porch; the brick sills are painted cream to match the siding.

The long, south-facing elevation features numerous windows and a single door. Close to the southeast corner of the home is a window well bump-out with a rectangular, fixed-pane basement window. A shed roof, covered in brown composition shingles and supported by two simple wooden posts, offers shade to this opening. There is a large sumac tree growing out of this window well. Immediately west of this bump-out is a small, original basement slider window. All of the home's original windows feature wood trim painted cream to complement the stucco and, with the exception of the basement sliders, all have painted brick sills. A pair of original, double-hung rectangular windows offers a view to the south, over the driveway, from the bungalow's first-story front room; the

eastern edge of this opening is centered over the basement slider. West of this window pair is a secondary, wood entrance door, with a square, fixed-pane opening near the top. This opening, with its white metal security door featuring decorative grill work, offers access, stepping down, to the basement and, stepping up, to the landing between the home's front room and kitchen. Continuing west along the south elevation is a small, rectangular, first-story, double-hung window. This opening offers a view from over the kitchen sink. A second, slightly longer, rectangular, double-hung window appears to the west. This window is also in the kitchen, located behind the microwave shelf. There is another original basement slider window located approximately equidistant between the two kitchen windows.

The remainder of the south elevation to the west represents an addition to the home, with the connection between the original house and its rear wing visible as a slight seam or crack in the stucco surface. There is a single, horizontally oriented, aluminum, rectangular slider window. This opening offers a view from the dining area to the north side of the garage. Near the southwest (rear) corner of the house is a gate, offering access to the backyard, set within the tall, wood, dark-brown-painted privacy fence. The gate and fence appear to join the home and the garage.

Foliage obscures much of the house's north elevation. Near the northeast corner there is a vertically-oriented, rectangular, single-pane operable window in the basement, with a well of built-up wood or untreated railroad ties. West of this opening is a first-story, vinyl replacement window and a basement-level slider window. The first-story window offers a view of the north yard from the front bedroom. West of the bedroom window is a vertically-oriented, narrow, rectangular

opening with three glass blocks; this opening is located inside the closet in the front bedroom. Even with the west edge of the glass block opening, along the roof's ridgeline, is a simple brick chimney. On the basement-level, directly below the line of the chimney, is another slider window. The large, central air conditioner partially obscures a portion of this opening. Above the air conditioner is an original, rectangular, double-hung window offering a view from the bathroom onto the side yard. On the wall surface west of this opening are two utility boxes painted the same color as the stucco siding. A tripartite basement slider window appears immediately below the utility boxes; the western-most pane hosts a small metal dryer vent. The next window to the west, an original, vertically oriented, horizontal, double-hung, offers a view from the second bedroom. The basement-level window immediately below this bedroom opening is a rectangular, fixed pane, with the same type of wood window well as the basement window at the northeast corner of the house.

A drainpipe, painted the same color as the stucco siding, runs from the gutters along the elevation and away from the house. This drainpipe marks the intersection between the original home and the rear addition. There are three windows along the north elevation of the addition. The one west of the drainpipe is a horizontally oriented, rectangular, aluminum slider window that offers a view of the side yard from a third bedroom. A security light is mounted between this opening and the small, square window to the west; this smaller window looks out from the second bathroom. Near the northwest corner of the house is a vertically oriented, rectangular, double-hung window that serves the rear vestibule. Immediately west of this window is an intact portion of the tall, wood privacy fence, but only the fence supports remain to the north, offer-

ing open access from the north side of the house to the backyard.

The west (rear) elevation hosts three window openings, a single secondary entrance, and a basic porch. Near the southwest corner of the home is a tripartite, rectangular, vinyl fixed-pane window that offers views from the rear bedroom to the backyard. At the opposite (northwest) corner of the house is a vertically-oriented, rectangular, double-hung window; this window looks out from the small rear vestibule. A rectangular basement window, opening within a large window well, is covered in a board painted the same shade as the window trim elsewhere on the house. This lower-level opening appears below the vestibule's double-hung window, just north of the porch. The secondary entrance is a solid wood door painted cream and with a white metal security door exactly like the one on the south elevation. This first-story entrance is reached via four concrete steps leading to a basic slab porch. There is a black metal railing running up the stairs and around the porch. Two round concrete piers at the rear corners of the porch offer support. There is a small vent on this elevation near the gable peak.

Francis House Interior

The Francis House retains its original Bungalow layout, with a large rear addition. The primary entry opens into the living room/main room, with its pair of double-hung windows (located on the south side of the façade). The other pair of façade windows belongs to the front bedroom. A short hallway from this bedroom leads past a linen closet and the original bathroom to the second bedroom. Just east of the bathroom door is a long, rectangular, arched niche in the wall, likely used for a telephone. A small landing, covered in newer

linoleum, offers access from the front room to the kitchen, basement stairs, or hallway toward the original bedrooms and bathroom. The entryways in the original portion of the home, between the front room and the landing and between this landing and the short hallway, are arched. The kitchen, although original to the house, has been substantially altered, with very new linoleum and likely replacement (circa 1950s-1960s) kitchen cabinets. There is also non-original, faux wooden paneling along the north wall in this room.

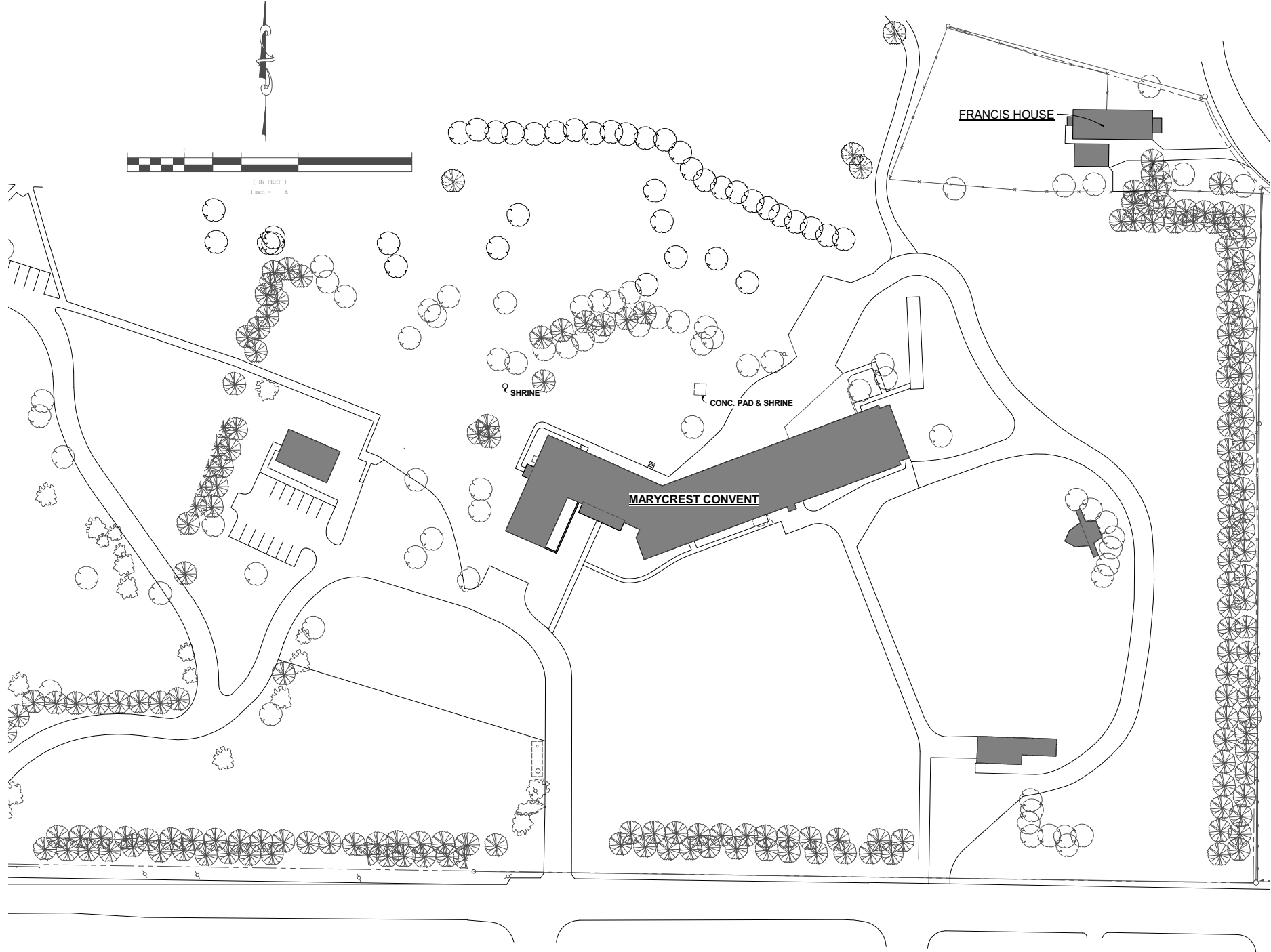
The remainder of the house to the rear represents an addition. There is a large, rectangular dining area, with the same new linoleum, west of the kitchen. This room also has two large, rectangular skylights inset into the ceiling. There is access to two more bedrooms off the dining room, one to the north and the second to the west. A very short hallway leads north from the dining room to a second bathroom equipped with a handicap-accessible shower. The last room in the rear addition, a small entry vestibule, is located in the northwest corner of the house.

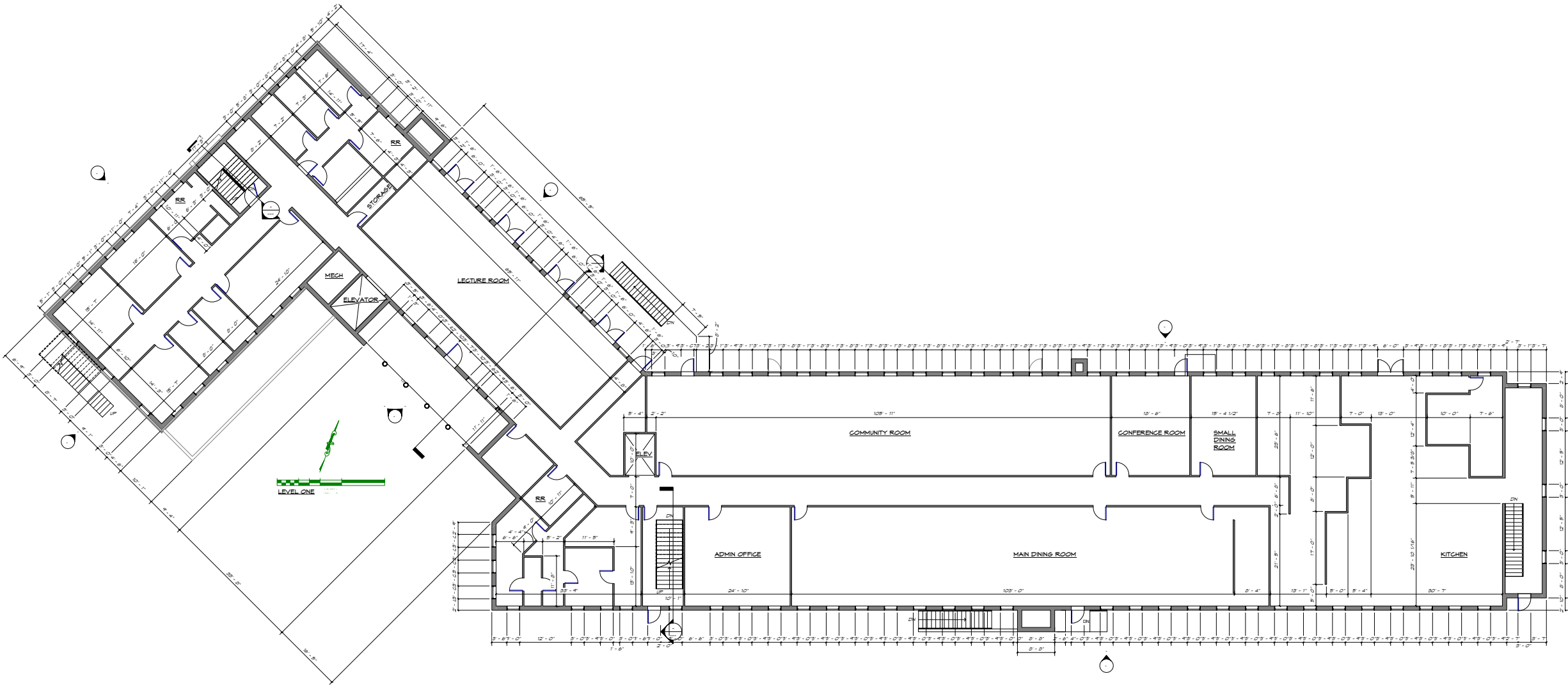
The basement is reached via two flights of stairs separated by a small landing. This landing features the secondary entry (visible on the south elevation): a stained wooden door with a centered, square, fixed pane lite. At the bottom of the basement steps is a tall, built-in shelf along the west wall. The basement features a large main room in which the washer and dryer are located, also on the west side of the room. The décor indicates the basement's use for childcare when Francis House hosted the Damen Hall program. The main room in the base-

ment features not only a series of under-stair cubbies but also a decorative wallpaper border with children dressed in brightly colored clothing and linked hand-in-hand. There are also three large bedrooms, a utility room, and a bathroom located in the basement.

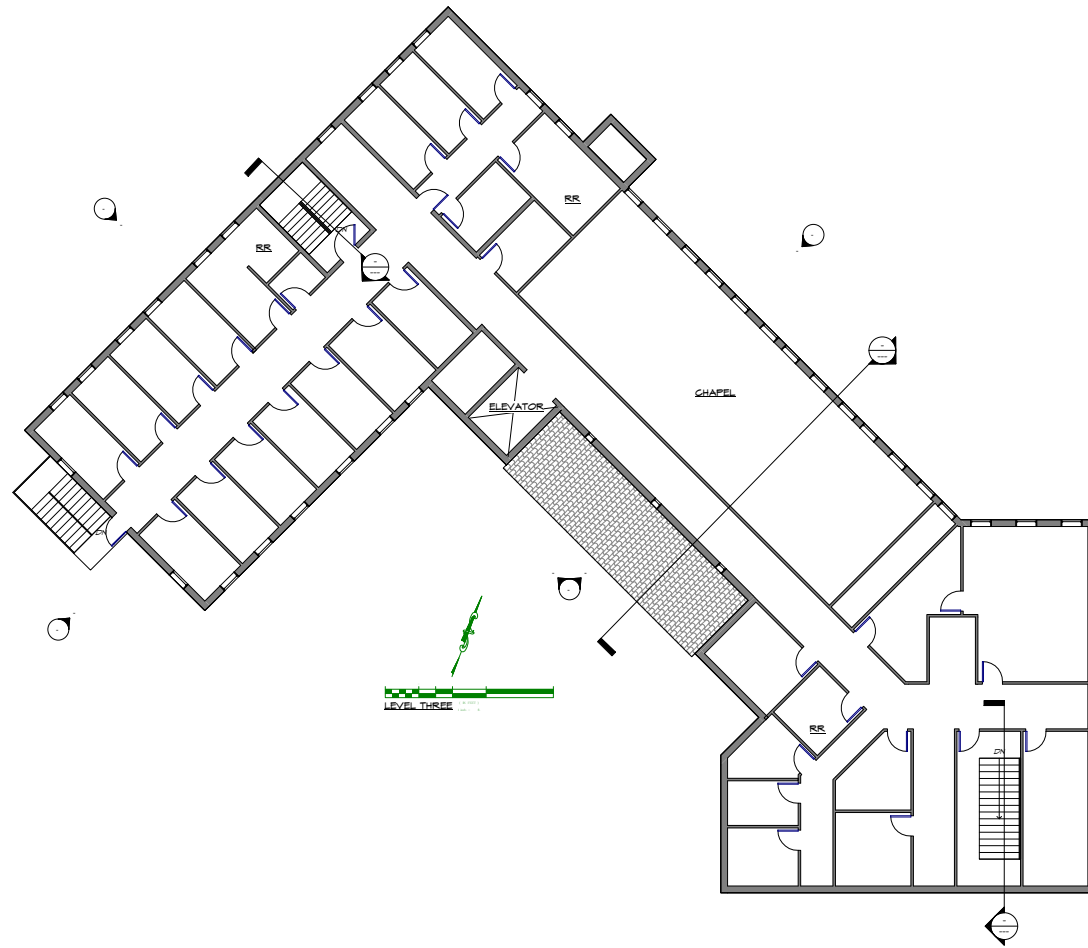
Francis House Detached Garage

This rectangular secondary building is located immediately south of the house. Oriented to the east, it rests on a concrete foundation and has a front-gabled roof covered in composition shingles with simple gutters. It has stucco exterior wall cladding that matches the house. The façade features a two-car, vinyl, roll-up garage door. There is a large, concrete driveway running from Columbine Road up to the garage door. A continuation of the tall, brown-painted, wood privacy fence obscures the view of the southwestern two-thirds of the south-facing elevation; no openings are visible along this side of the garage. The north elevation faces the house and has a single, solid wood door near its northwest corner. The gate to the tall wooden privacy fence attaches the garage to the house near the rear of the two buildings. The west (rear) elevation of the garage features a single rectangular opening with a brick sill, like the original windows of the Francis House. This opening is covered with a board painted the same color as the stucco exterior wall cladding. There is a dilapidated metal shed located south of the garage on the rear of the property adjacent to the privacy fence.





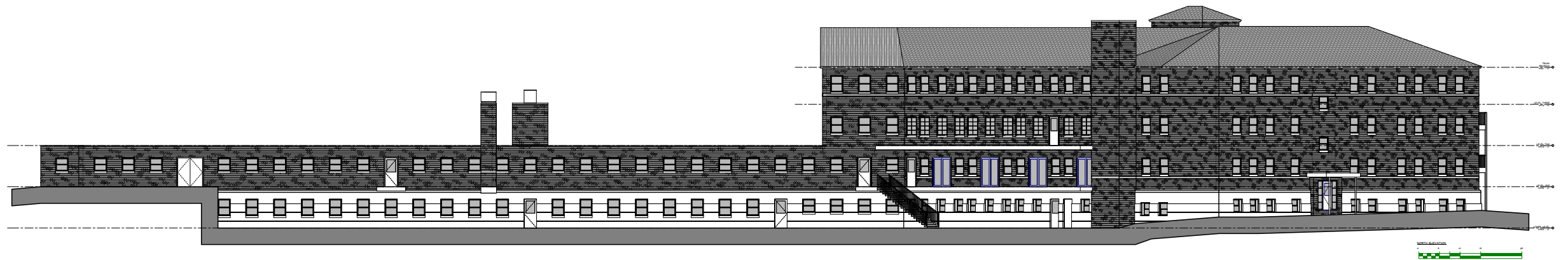




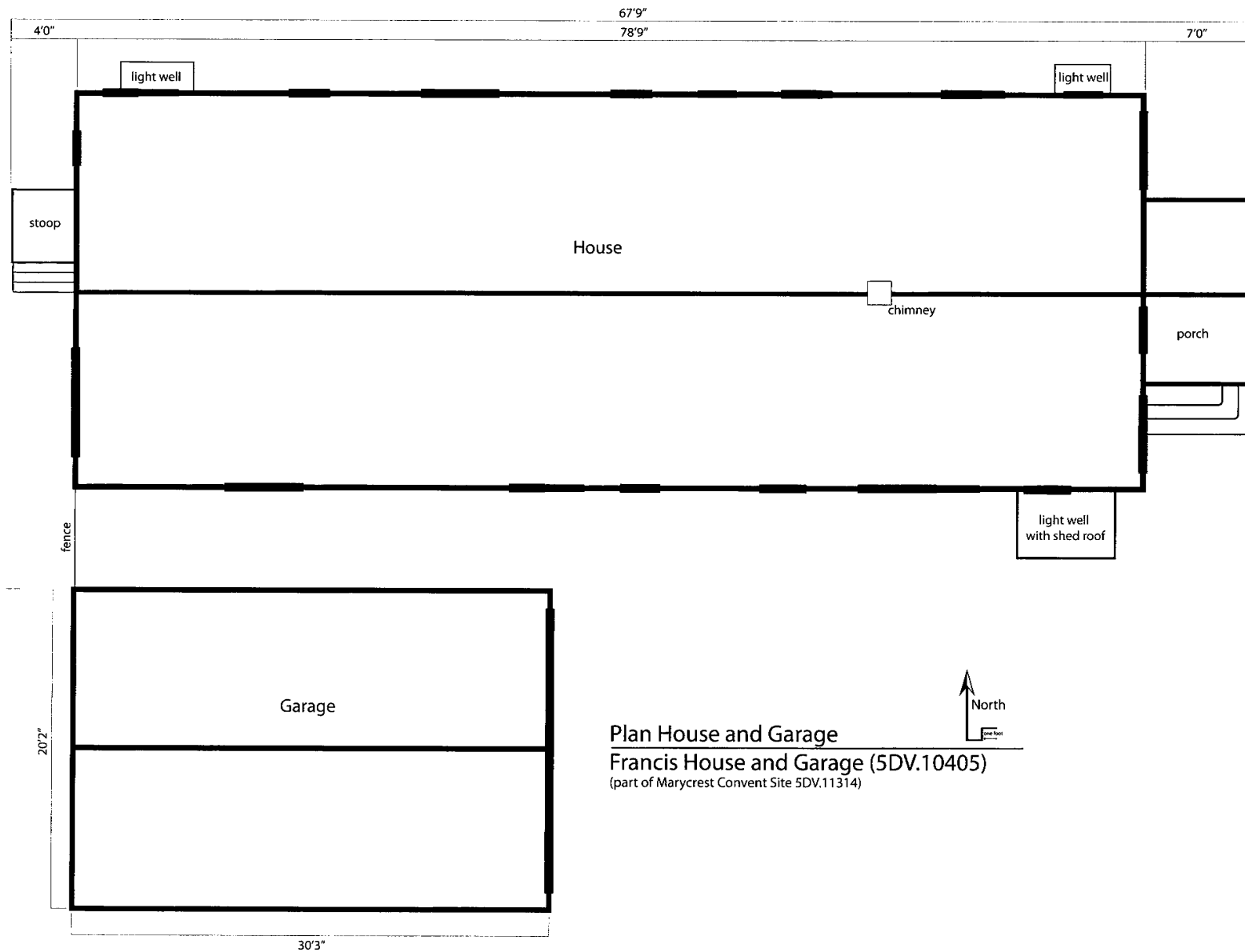


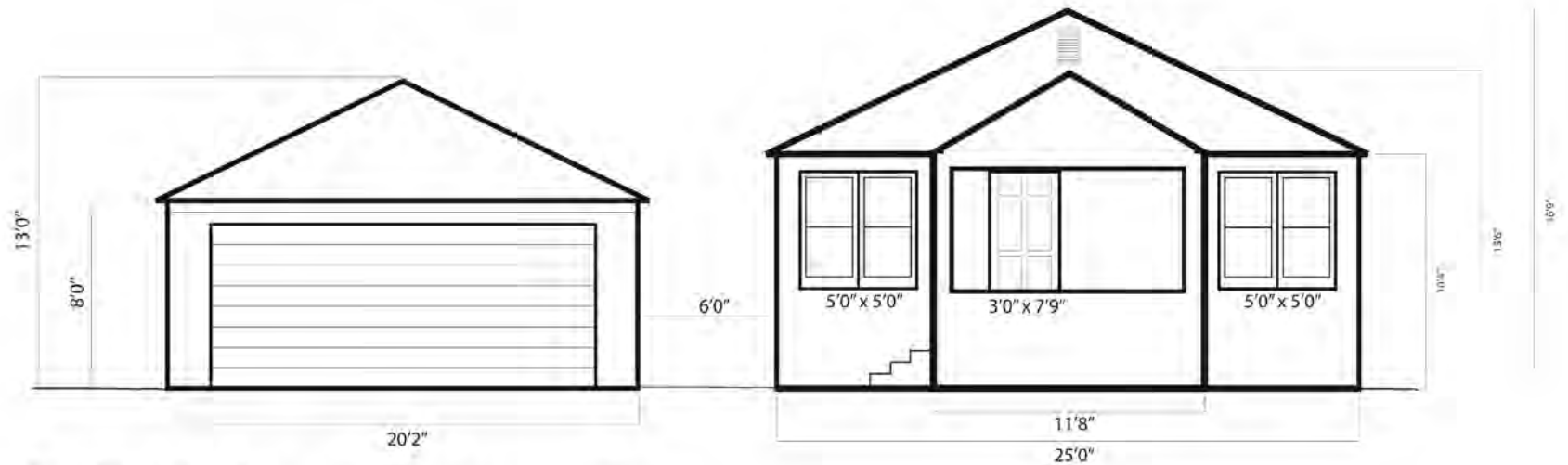




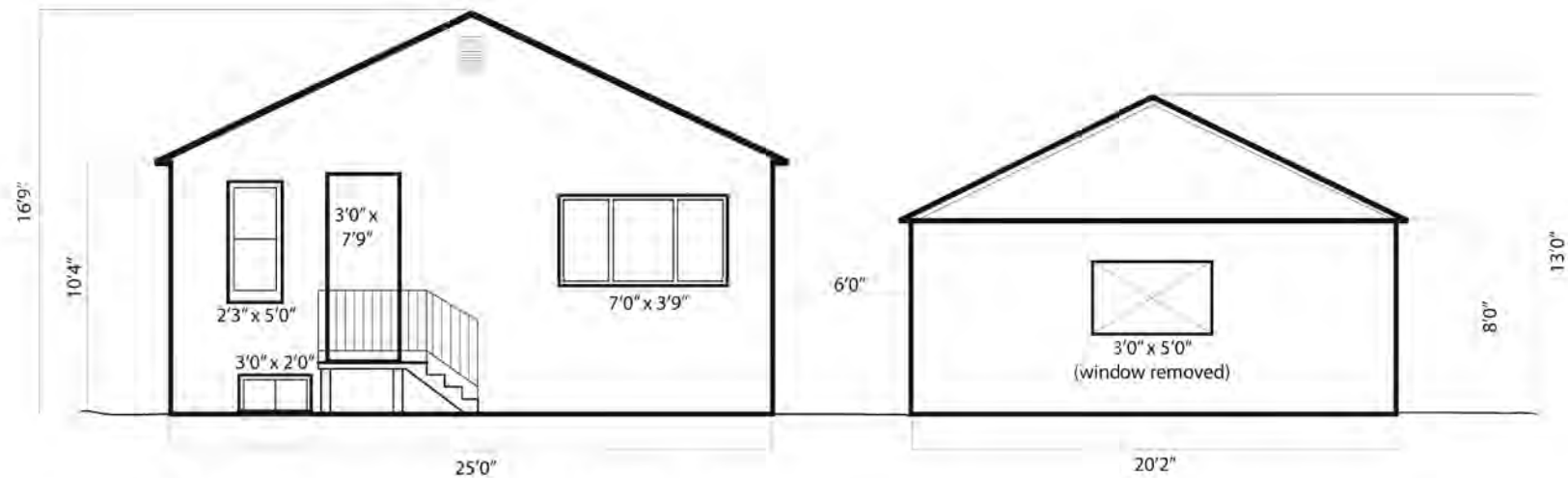




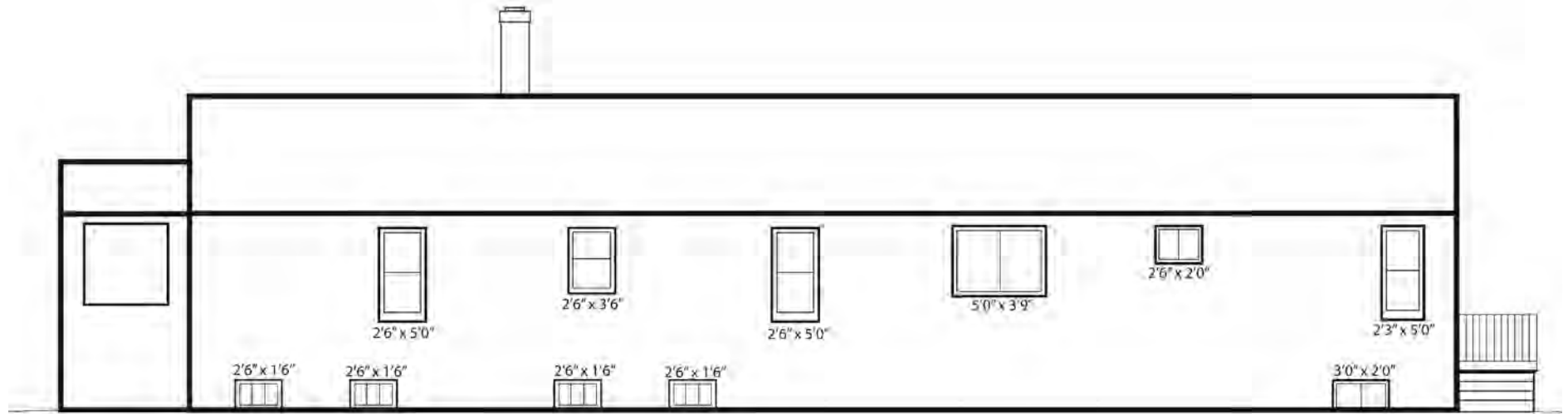




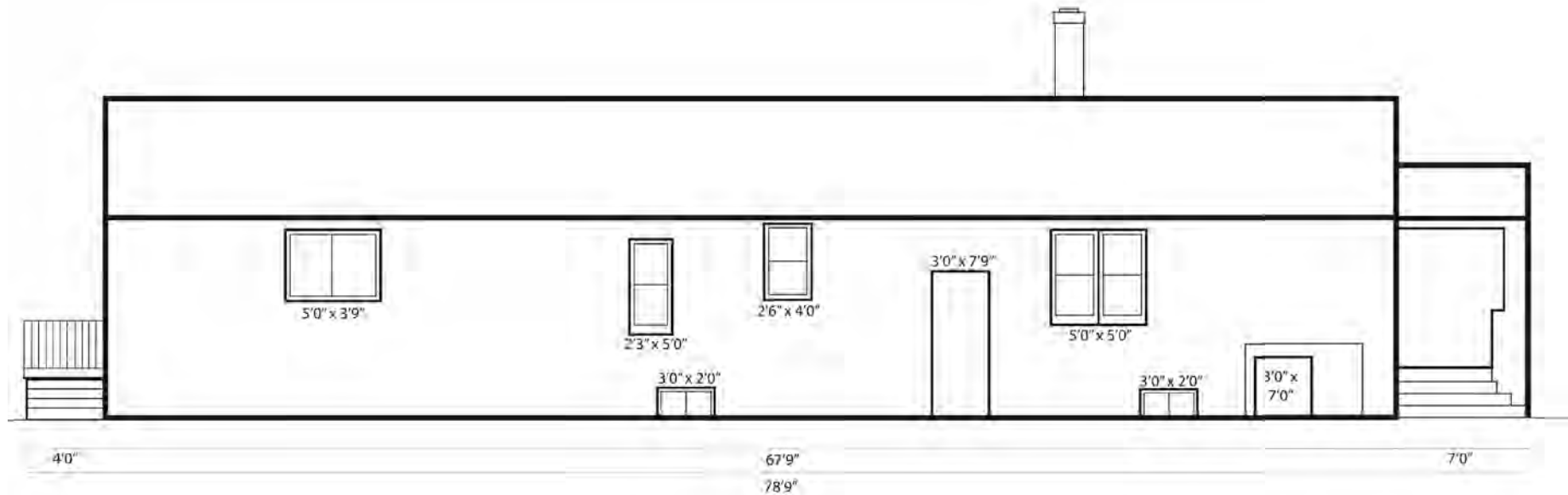
East Elevation House and Garage
Francis House and Garage (5DV.10405)
 (part of Marycrest Convent Site 5DV.11314)



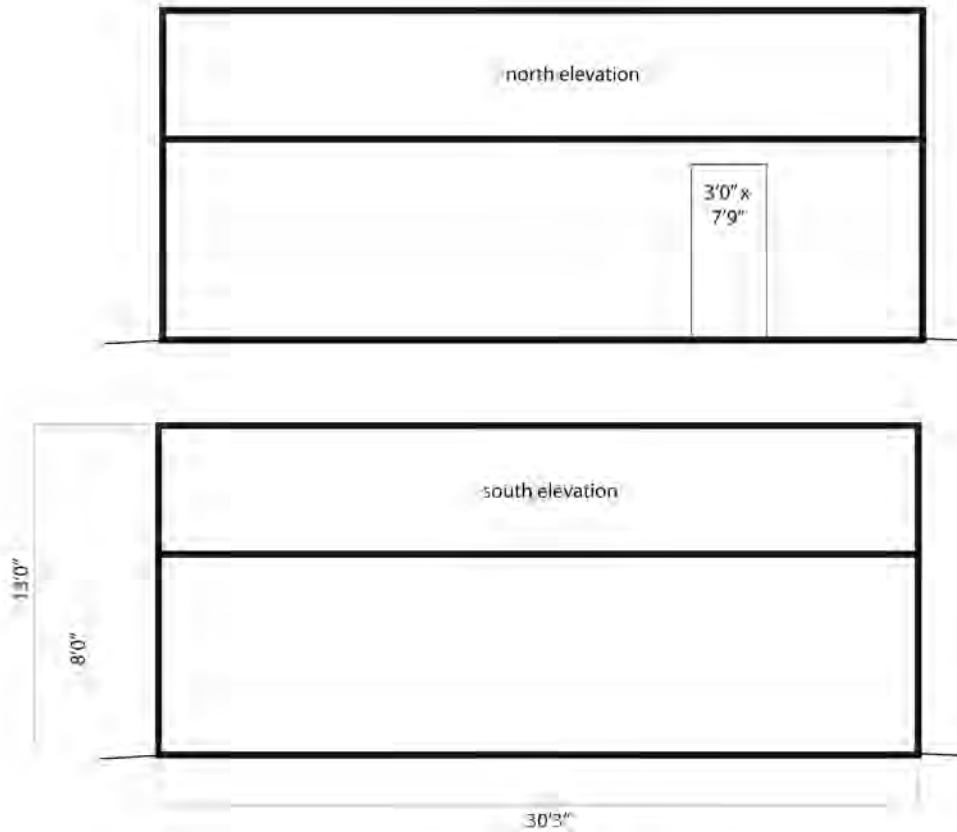
West Elevation House and Garage
Francis House and Garage (5DV.10405)
 (part of Marycrest Convent Site 5DV.11314)



North Elevation House
Francis House and Garage (5DV.10405)
(part of Marycrest Convent Site 5DV.11314)



South Elevation House
Francis House and Garage (5DV.10405)
(part of Marycrest Convent Site 5DV.11314)



North and South Elevation Garage 
Francis House and Garage (5DV.10405)
(part of Marycrest Convent Site 5DV.11314)

SECTION IV

Photograph Log

Property name: Marycrest Motherhouse (SDV. 8026)	16	S	North (rear) elevation lower level door detail
Property location: 2851 West Fifty-Second Avenue Denver, Colorado 80221	17	W	North (rear) elevation balcony and stair detail
Photographer: Mary Therese Anstey			
Date taken: May 15, 2012 and May 22, 2012(*)	18	E	North (rear) elevation stair detail
Digital files located at: Denver Public Library	19	W	Northeast (rear) elevation chimney detail
Paper and inks: Epson Claria Hi-Definition ink on Epson archival-quality, Ultra-Premium Glossy Photo Paper	20	SE	West elevation
	21	E	West elevation door detail
	22	N	Interior: plaques in hallway outside first-story Community Room
Photo Facing Description			
1 N Convent Motherhouse and sign	23	S	Interior: first-story Community Room door detail
2 NE Southeast corner and fire escape			
3 W East-facing façade wing	24	SW	Interior: second-story Chapel fresco
4 N Façade central entry wing	25	S	Interior: second-story Chapel Stations of the Cross
5 N Façade entry arch inscription detail			
6 NW Façade entry porch column detail	26*	S	Interior: second-story Chapel Stations of the Cross detail
7 N Primary entry door detail			
8 NE West-facing façade wing	27*	NW	Interior: second-story Chapel windows
9 N Façade (shows both original convent and portion of addition)	28	N	Interior: painting in hallway outside second-story Chapel
10 NW Façade (one-story addition)	29*	SE	Interior: second-story arched opening from hallway into Library
11 NW Southeast corner			
12 NW East elevation lower level door	30*	SW	Interior: second-story Library south elevation
13 SW Northeast corner			
14 SW North (rear) elevation			
15 SW North (rear) elevation chimney detail			

Note: The photograph log details images of three particular resources. The Motherhouse is shown in photos 1-30. Photos 31-44 illustrate the site/landscape features. The Francis House and Garage appear in photos 45-61.

Property name: Marycrest site (5DV.11314)
 Property location: Fifty-Second Avenue and Federal Boulevard Denver, Colorado 80221
 Photographer: Mary Therese Anstey
 Date taken: May 15, 2012
 Digital files located at: Denver Public Library
 Paper and inks: Epson Claria Hi-Definition ink on Epson archival-quality, Ultra-Premium Glossy Photo Paper

Property name: Francis House and Garage (5DV. 10405)
 Property location: 5317 Columbine Road, Denver, Colorado 80221
 Photographer: Mary Therese Anstey
 Date taken: May 22, 2012 and June 16, 2012(*)
 Digital files located at: Denver Public Library
 Paper and inks: Epson Claria Hi-Definition ink on Epson archival-quality, Ultra-Premium Glossy Photo Paper

Photo	Facing	Description
31	NE	St. Francis statue at Southwest corner of property
32	N-NW	Main driveway
33	E	Trees and parking area east of main driveway
34	NE	Trees along east boundary of site
35	NE	Garage/ maintenance shed (5DV.10410)
36	N	Internal road (taken from behind garage/ maintenance shed)
37	E	Shrine
38	NE	Shrine detail
39	SE	Sidewalks behind Motherhouse
40	NE	Jesus statue near northwest corner of Motherhouse
41	N	Sundial in lawn west of Motherhouse
42	W	View of mountains from west side of Motherhouse
43	W	Trees, wind chime located near Motherhouse southwest corner
44	E	View of western boundary of site

Photo	Facing	Description
45*	W	Façade
46	N	Front porch stairs
47	N-NW	South elevation
48	W-NW	South elevation: windows in kitchen and dining room
49	SW	North elevation
50	E-SE	North elevation: northwest corner
51	E	West (rear) elevation
52	N	Interior: hallway niche
53	W	Interior: basement decorative border
54	W	Garage: façade
55	W-SW	Garage: north elevation
56	W-NW	Garage: south elevation and fence
57	NE	Garage: south elevation and metal shed (from backyard)
58	E	Garage: west elevation (rear)
59	W-NW	View from north side of Francis House
60	N	View of trees along western boundary of Francis House backyard
61	S	Large maple tree near south fence in Francis House backyard

MARYCREST MOTHERHOUSE (5DV.8026)



Photo 1
Facing: north
Description: Convent Motherhouse and Sign



Photo 2
Facing: northeast
Description: Southeast corner and fire escape



Photo 3
Facing: west
Description: East-facing façade wing



Photo 4
Facing: north
Description: Façade central entry wing



Photo 5
Facing: north
Description: Façade entry arch inscription detail



Photo 6
Facing: northwest
Description: Façade entry porch column detail



Photo 7

Facing: north

Description: Primary entry door detail



Photo 8

Facing: northeast

Description: West-facing façade wing



Photo 9

Facing: north

Description: Façade (shows both original convent and portion of addition)



Photo 10

Facing: northwest

Description: Façade (one-story addition)



Photo 11

Facing: northwest

Description: Southeast corner



Photo 12

Facing: northwest

Description: East elevation lower level door



Photo 13
Facing: southwest
Description: Northeast corner



Photo 16
Facing: south
Description: North (rear) elevation lower level door detail



Photo 14
Facing: southwest
Description: North (rear) elevation



Photo 17
Facing: west
Description: North (rear) elevation balcony and stair detail



Photo 15
Facing: southwest
Description: North (rear) elevation chimney detail



Photo 18
Facing: east
Description: North (rear) elevation stair detail



Photo 19

Facing: west
Description: Northeast (rear) elevation chimney detail



Photo 22

Facing: north
Description: Interior, plaques in hallway outside first-story Community Room



Photo 20

Facing: southeast
Description: West elevation



Photo 23

Facing: south
Description: Interior, first-story Community Room door detail



Photo 21

Facing: east
Description: West elevation door detail



Photo 24

Facing: southwest
Description: Interior, second-story Chapel fresco



Photo 25
Facing: south
Description: Interior, second-story Chapel Stations of the Cross



Photo 26
Facing: south
Description: Interior, second-story Chapel Stations of the Cross detail



Photo 27
Facing: northwest
Description: Interior, second-story Chapel windows



Photo 28
Facing: north
Description: Interior, painting in hallway outside second-story Chapel



Photo 29
Facing: southeast
Description: Interior, second-story arched opening from hallway into Library

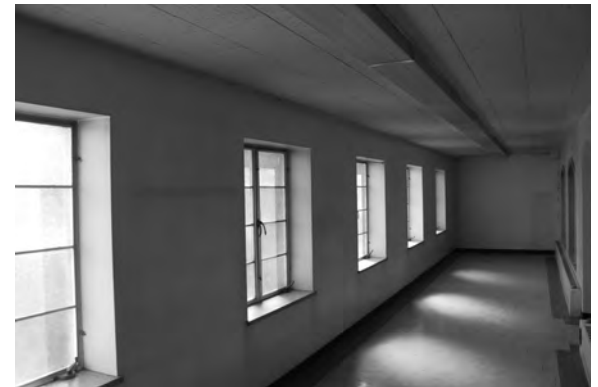


Photo 30
Facing: southwest
Description: Interior, second-story Library south elevation

MARYCREST SITE (5DV.11314)



Photo 31

Facing: northeast

Description: St. Francis statue at Southwest corner of property



Photo 32

Facing: north-northwest

Description: Main driveway



Photo 33

Facing: east

Description: Trees and parking area east of main driveway



Photo 34

Facing: northeast

Description: Trees along east boundary of site



Photo 35

Facing: northeast

Description: Garage/ maintenance shed (5DV.10410)



Photo 36

Facing: north

Description: Internal road (taken from behind garage/ maintenance shed)



Photo 37
Facing: east
Description: Shrine



Photo 40
Facing: northeast
Description: Jesus statue near northwest corner of Motherhouse



Photo 38
Facing: northeast
Description: Shrine detail



Photo 41
Facing: north
Description: Sundial in lawn west of Motherhouse



Photo 39
Facing: southeast
Description: Sidewalks behind Motherhouse



Photo 42
Facing: west
Description: View of mountains from west side of Motherhouse



Photo 43

Facing: west

Description: Trees, wind chime located near Motherhouse southwest corner



Photo 44

Facing: east

Description: View of western boundary of site

FRANCIS HOUSE AND GARAGE (5DV.10405)



Photo 45
Facing: west
Description: Façade



Photo 46
Facing: north
Description: Front porch stairs



Photo 47
Facing: north-northwest
Description: South elevation



Photo 48
Facing: west-northwest
Description: South elevation: windows in kitchen and dining room



Photo 49
Facing: southwest
Description: North elevation



Photo 50
Facing: east-southeast
Description: North elevation, northwest corner



Photo 51
Facing: east
Description: West (rear) elevation



Photo 52
Facing: north
Description: Interior, hallway niche



Photo 53
Facing: west
Description: Interior, basement decorative border



Photo 54
Facing: west
Description: Garage, façade



Photo 55
Facing: west-southwest
Description: Garage, north elevation



Photo 56
Facing: west-northwest
Description: Garage, south elevation and fence



Photo 57

Facing: northeast

Description: Garage, south elevation and metal shed (from backyard)



Photo 58

Facing: east

Description: Garage, west elevation (rear)



Photo 59

Facing: west-northwest

Description: View from north side of Francis House



Photo 60

Facing: north

Description: View of trees along western boundary of Francis House backyard



Photo 61

Facing: south

Description: Large maple tree near south fence in Francis House backyard

NOTES

1. Some sources refer to the property Mother Lidwina purchased as the Winslow estate. However, the Walker ownership seems more likely since this real estate developer, credited with early plans for Red Rocks Park and other local amenities, also donated the land for adjacent Regis College (now University). Walker died in 1931, but, according to an April 15, 1964, *Denver Post* article, Harry Bundy and J. Brainerd Smith also owned the property over time.
2. According to the caption for an historic photo provided by Urban Ventures, L.L.C, the grape arbor was located where the present Motherhouse stands. The 2007 Anderies' report stated the barn was torn down to make room for the "East portion" of the Motherhouse.
3. Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity. *A History of Sacred Heart Province of the Sisters of Saint Francis of Penance and Christian Charity Denver, Colorado 1938-1999* (publication details unknown), 151.
4. Ibid, 12.
5. *Denver Post* (15 March 1964) Contemporary section, pp. 6-7.
6. Colorado Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation (12 July 2000).
7. Gian Ackermans, Ursula Osterman, & Mary Serbacki, eds. *Called by God's Goodness: A History of the Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity in the Twentieth Century* (Buffalo, NY: Holling Press, 1997), 219.
8. A framed plan showing architect Henry J. De Nicola's plans for a new Marycrest High School Building, dated November 1959, indicates this statue may have been located far behind the existing Motherhouse, near the road which currently runs in front of the assisted living complex.
9. Ackermans et al, 216.
10. Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity. *Sharing Hearth and Home* (oral history collection), Tape #10 (15 June 1988).
11. Ibid, Tape #8, (14 June 1988).
12. Ackermans et al, 215.
13. According to Robert A. Burns in *Roman Catholicism Since Vatican II*, by 1993 there were only 94,022 nuns (of all Orders) in the United States. Of these women, only three percent were younger than forty, while 37 percent were older than seventy and 12 percent were older than eighty. By 2001 the median age for American nuns reached about sixty-eight.
14. *Sharing Hearth and Home*, Tape #12 (11 June 1988).
15. The Colorado State Historical Fund offers non-competitive grants, awarding funds to complete a Historic Structure Assessment (HSA). Such a completed document could be useful for detailing the physical condition of the Marycrest Motherhouse, from both an architectural and engineering perspective. A HSA also provides accurate cost estimates for needed work and recommends appropriate phasing for such changes.
16. *Denver Catholic Register* (30 August 2006).
17. *North Denver Tribune* (16 February 2012).
18. Ibid.
19. Sisters of St. Francis, Sacred Heart Province. "Honoring the Land We Call Marycrest" (6 May 2012).

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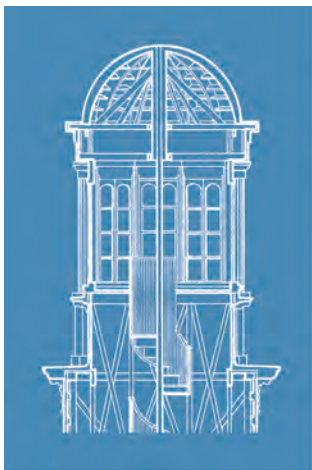
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