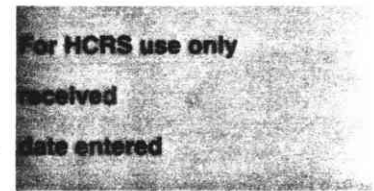


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church & Cemetery (CX00-24)

and/or common The Wilson Church (earlier known as) The Mrazek Church

2. Location Nine miles north of Schuyler, NE, along highway 15 and five and one-half miles west

street & number Wilson Precinct-Colfax County not for publication

city, town Schuyler vicinity of congressional district First

state Nebraska code 031 county Colfax code 037

3. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use |
|---|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public | <input type="checkbox"/> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious <input type="checkbox"/> scientific |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> other: |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> military |

4. Owner of Property

name Archdiocese of Omaha, c/o The Most Rev. Daniel Sheehan, Archbishop

street & number 100 North 62nd Street

city, town Omaha vicinity of state Nebraska

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Colfax County Courthouse

street & number 411 East 11 Street

city, town Schuyler state Nebraska

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date On-going federal state county local

depository for survey records Nebraska State Historical Society

city, town Lincoln state Nebraska

7. Description

| | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Condition | | Check one | Check one |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins | <input type="checkbox"/> altered | <input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>N/A</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed | | |

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church is located in rural Colfax County, ten miles northwest of Schuyler, Nebraska, the county seat, and eighty miles west of Omaha, Nebraska. The church is situated on a treeless hilltop with an adjoining cemetery and a surrounding terrain which is purely agrarian.

The present St. Mary's Church was erected in 1918. The original church, built in 1882, stood on the cemetery plot northwest of the present church.

The present rectangular, gable-roofed, wood-framed church measures 34' x 70'. Five pairs of stained-glass lancet windows alternate with frame buttresses on the longitudinal facades. The corner buttressed and pilastered, battlement-topped steeple tower also serves as an entrance vestibule. The steeple itself is capped by a Celtic cross. The main or east facade is symmetrical with single lancet and circular windows, completed by an elbow parapet. The structure rests on a stuccoed concrete foundation. The cornerstone is written in Czech, as is the verbiage on the cast iron cemetery gate.

Stylistically, the church is a Gothic Revival edifice, based on the previously mentioned features and also based on weatherings and label mold details.

Few changes have been made to the interior of the church. The only additions have been the tile floor applied to the main aisle and the oil furnace which replaced the original wood burning furnace. The simple nave, penetrated only by a balcony at the east end and slightly raised chancel at the west end, is topped by the original pressed tin ceiling. Other original features retained are the hand-carved oak main and side altars and statutory. The pews, vestments, and pine-trimmed confessional are also original. The balcony (choir loft) houses a manual pump organ, retained from the original church of 1882. The original stained glass windows and stations of the cross are adorned with Czech inscriptions, naming various Czech saints.

At this time, only minor repairs and exterior paint are necessary in terms of restoration.

8. Significance

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| Period | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> law | <input type="checkbox"/> science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599 | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> economics | <input type="checkbox"/> literature | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900– | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Ethnic |

Specific dates 1918 **Builder/Architect** Rudy Basta, Construction Co., Schuyler, NE

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church is significant as a place of communion religiously and socially for turn of the century Czech and German immigrants. Architecturally, Wilson Church is significant as a fine example of a midwest vernacular Gothic Revival Church building.

Ethnic significance lies in Wilson Church's concordant setting within the midst of a farming area whose land is still worked by descendents of those families who first settled the land and found the church. Czech immigration into Colfax County varied from 49% in 1890, 56% in 1900 and 70% in 1920 of all foreign-born immigrants entering the county.

Czech settlement in the Wilson Precinct of Colfax County commenced in the late 1860's. The parish originated in the 1870's when Czech immigrants began using a school house for their worship services because distances to any town or rural church precluded Sunday attendance at that time. In 1882, on land donated by Josef Mrazek, a parish of 20 Czech and 13 German families built a small wood frame church and dedicated it and the adjoining cemetery to the devotion of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

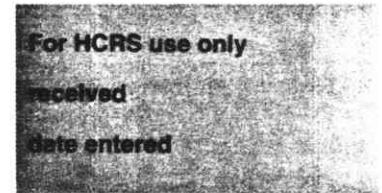
In 1918, the existing Wilson Church was built to minister to the expanding numbers of foreign-born Czech and German immigrants. Czech and German immigrants ranged from 2500 in 1890 to 2000 immigrants still entering the county by 1920. Wilson Church and a now demolished Catholic Workmans Hall, located 200 feet north of the present church, served as the religious, cultural and social center of the community. The parish hall was the scene of many dances, funeral dinners, wedding receptions and slavic "Pout" festivals, where once a year members of neighboring churches would gather at one church for mass and dinner. With the loss of the Workman's Hall, the church and cemetery remain as the only tangible reminders of this important rural center.

The topographical location, which was always devoid of trees, is reminiscent of the prairie as it once was. Wilsons hill crest setting affords views of the church from many miles and the church became a symbol of permanence for the immigrants, showing that this was now their home and they were here to stay.

Colfax County is encompassed within one of the two large Czech settlements within Nebraska. Architecturally, Wilson Church is the best example of the frame Czech Catholic Church in the area. It's Gothic Revival styling is rich within itself, while remaining virtually intact from its original design. The three other frame Czech churches in the area are either dated much later or are altered.

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Continuation sheet Significance

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In a state where rural frame churches are common, Wilson Church stands out because of its unaltered state and its fine vernacular Gothic Revival detailing, including frame buttressing, excellent stained glass and tower pilasters and battlements.

Ecumenical movements within the diocese threaten the historic character of many rural catholic churches through the removal of original furnishings. The most notable furnishings to be removed or which have already been removed include the high altars and side altars. Wilson Church however, remains intact.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property one acre

Quadrangle name Clarkson, SW

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

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| Zone | | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | | |

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| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Zone | | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | | |

Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title James D. Fagler, Survey Assistant (Intern Architect)

organization Nebraska State Historical Society date November, 1980

street & number 1500 R Street telephone 402/471-3270

city or town Lincoln state Nebraska

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Marvin O. Knott 9/24/82

title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society date

For HCRS use only
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register
date

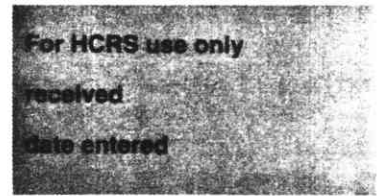
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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Continuation sheet Bibliography

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Dvorak, Marcella, The Story of a Czech Church in East Central Nebraska.

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Schuyler Nebraska Centennial.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

| |
|-------------------------|
| FOR NPS USE ONLY |
| RECEIVED |
| DATE ENTERED |

Verbal Boundary Description

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 2

Commencing at a point 1198.7 feet east of the north section line of the northwest corner of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 35, T19N, R2E of the 6th Principal Meridian thence running south 524 feet, thence running east 83 feet, thence running north 524 feet to the north section line of said section, thence running along said section line 83 feet west to the point of beginning. In all one acre of ground said premises being situated in Colfax County, Nebraska, including all of the historically associated real estate.



Photo 1 of 7 – general view of church and cemetery, looking southwest
Photo by D. Murphy, Lincoln, NE, July 1980 (DM 8007-31)



Photo 2 of 7 – view of north and east facades looking southwest
Photo by D. Murphy, Lincoln, NE, July 1980 (DM 8007-29)



Photo 3 of 7 – view of south and east facades looking northwest
Photo by D. Murphy, Lincoln, NE, July 1980 (DM 8007-28)



Photo 4 of 7 – view from cemetery of north and west facades, looking southeast
Photo by D. Murphy, Lincoln, NE, July 1980 (DM 8007-25)



Photo 5 of 7 – view of nave looking west-northwest
Photo by D. Murphy, Lincoln, NE, July 1980 (DM 8007-21)



Photo 6 of 7 – view of balcony and confessional looking northeast
Photo by D. Murphy, Lincoln, NE July 1980 (DM 8007-27)



Photo 7 of 7 – detail view of stained glass windows and stations of the cross looking north
Photo by D. Murphy, Lincoln, NE, July 1980 (DM 8007-26)