

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Holy Rosary Academy

Other names/site number: JF 9386

Name of related multiple property listing: NA

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## 2. Location

Street & number: 4801 Southside Drive

City or town: Louisville State: Kentucky County: Jefferson County

Not For Publication: NA Vicinity: NA

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## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination      request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets      does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following

level(s) of significance:      national      statewide      X local  
Applicable National Register Criteria: X A      B      C      D

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title: **Craig Potts/SHPO** Date \_\_\_\_\_  
**Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office** \_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official: Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Holy Rosary Academy  
Name of Property

Jefferson County, Kentucky  
County and State

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

- Private: ☒
- Public – Local ☐
- Public – State ☐
- Public – Federal ☐

##### Category of Property

- Building(s) ☒
- District ☐
- Site ☐
- Structure ☐
- Object ☐

##### Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

2  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
2

Noncontributing

1  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
1

buildings  
sites  
structures  
objects  
Total

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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

RELIGION: Church School

RELIGION: Religious Facility

**Current Functions**

SOCIAL: Civic

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

MODERN MOVEMENT

**Materials:**

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: CONCRETE

Exterior Walls: BRICK, CONCRETE

Fenestration: METAL/Aluminum, METAL/Steel

Roof: ASPHALT

## Holy Rosary Academy

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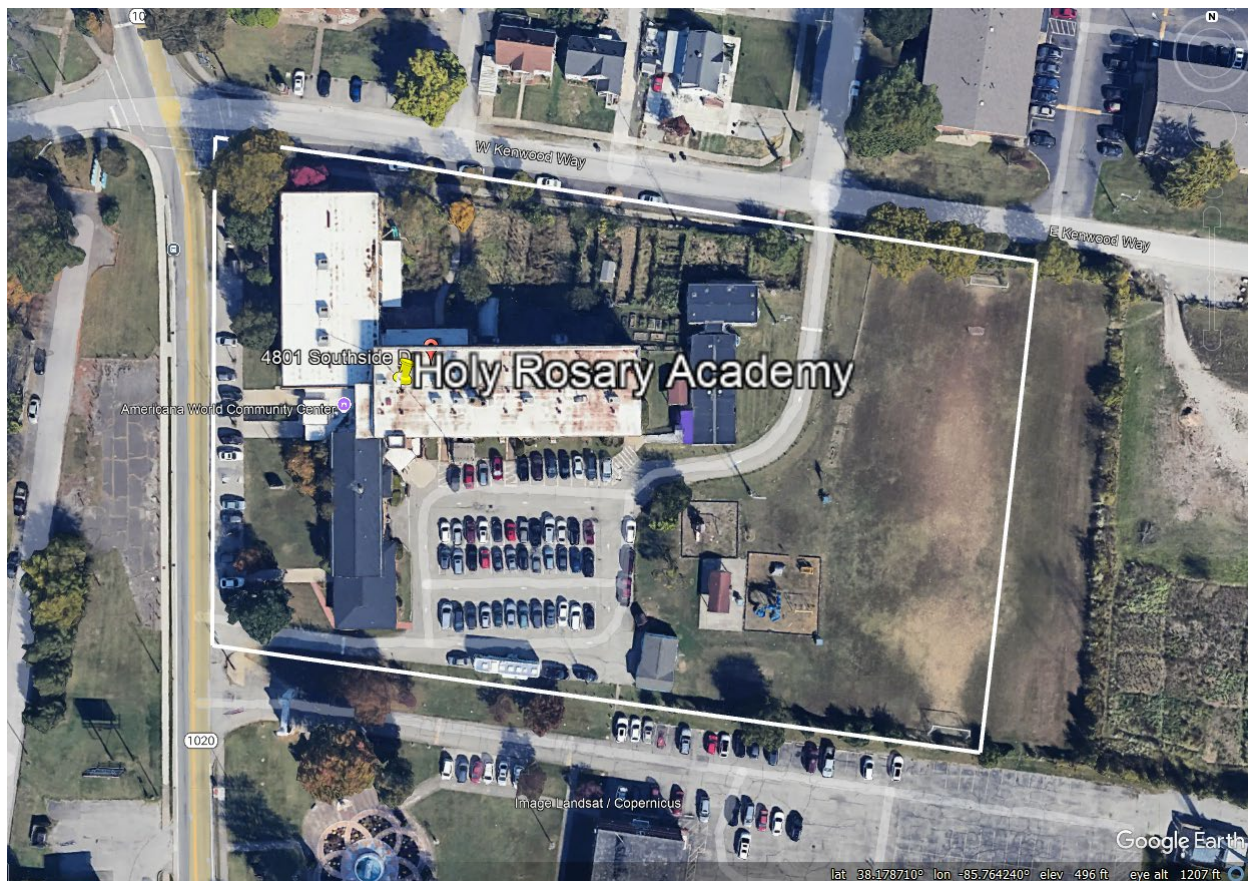
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### Narrative Description

#### Summary Paragraph

The Holy Rosary Academy (JF 9386) is a multi-story building constructed in 1955 and located in Louisville, Kentucky's largest city. The building is located at 4801 Southside Drive on the southeast corner of Southside and Kenwood Way on a lot that contains just shy of 4 acres. The lot is bounded on the north by Kenwood Way, on the west by Southside Drive, and on the south and east by the grounds of the St. John Vianney Church. It is designed in the Modern Style. The building, which was built to serve as the new suburban location for the historic Holy Rosary Academy in the southside of Louisville. The building was designed with ample classroom space, a combination auditorium and gymnasium, and a convent building for the sisters who worked at the school. The Period of Significance of the building begins in 1955, the year the school/convent was constructed and ends in 1976, marking the 50-year threshold typically employed by the National Park Service when establishing historic significance. The area proposed for National Register listing is 3.94 acres and contains two contributing buildings and one Non-contributing building.



Holy Rosary Academy, Jefferson County KY

Latitude: 38.178710°

Longitude: -85.764240°

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**Character of Site**

The Holy Rosary Academy is situated in a primarily suburban residential setting except to the east, where there is a large industrial park and the Louisville Muhammad Ali International Airport, and the land immediately to the south that houses the St. John Vianney Church. The streets surrounding the Holy Rosary Academy are densely packed with single-family dwellings as well as multi-family apartment buildings, including NR-listed Lynn Acres Garden Apartments (NR #15000083), located a couple blocks south. The original development of this area of Louisville was influenced by the creation of Iroquois Park, located just southwest of the Holy Rosary Academy, that was itself a part of the larger Olmsted designed park and parkway system that connected Louisville's road transportation system via the five major parkways (Eastern, Southern, Southeastern, Northwestern, and Algonquin) with three regional parks (Shawnee, Iroquois, and Cherokee). This was the first move that ultimately led to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and post-war suburban sprawl to Louisville's south end. The industrial development of the area east of Holy Rosary Academy began in the 1960s, as the land that was once home to the Douglas Park Racetrack was divided and sold. Parceling of the land continued into the late 20<sup>th</sup> century as it was joined by the growth and expansion of the airport. The suburban development of Louisville's south end was detailed in the recent 2024 amendment to the Southern Heights-Beechmont Historic District (NR #BC100010767), located just west of the Holy Rosary Academy. That nomination highlights the establishment of the streetcar suburb, while others in the area were similarly designed and planned in the fashion typical of the early-to-mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

The Holy Rosary Academy is built on a large, flat lot that was previously, largely undeveloped. The western half of the lot is dominated by the main building itself and the associated parking lot situated in the southeastern ell. The eastern half of the lot is an open grassy area that has been used as a sports field over the years for soccer and other recreational activities for the students of the school. Other ancillary buildings on the lot include a small garage at the southeastern corner of the parking lot, playground and picnic structures, and a simple prefabricated resource immediately east of the main building. There is a paved drive on the south end of the property that leads from Southside Drive to the rear parking lot, and another drive leading from Kenwood Way to the north around the prefabricated building to the parking lot. Additionally, there are sidewalks leading from the public Right-of-Way to the various entrances from both the north and west. The entire lot is lined by trees and vegetation and there is a community garden located north of the main building. The character of the site has largely remained the same since it was constructed in the mid-1950s with the exception of the addition of the ancillary buildings and landscaping.

The land immediately to the south of the Holy Rosary Academy was once a part of the larger lot that was bought by the Catholic archdiocese, and contains a Catholic church and school building—St. John Vianney. The history of the two institutions is separate, despite association with the Catholic Church. The St. John Vianney was established as a new parish to meet needs of the growing Catholic population in Louisville and to cater to those moving out to the suburbs; Holy Rosary Academy was a natural expansion of an already longstanding local institution, one that at the time was steadily growing.

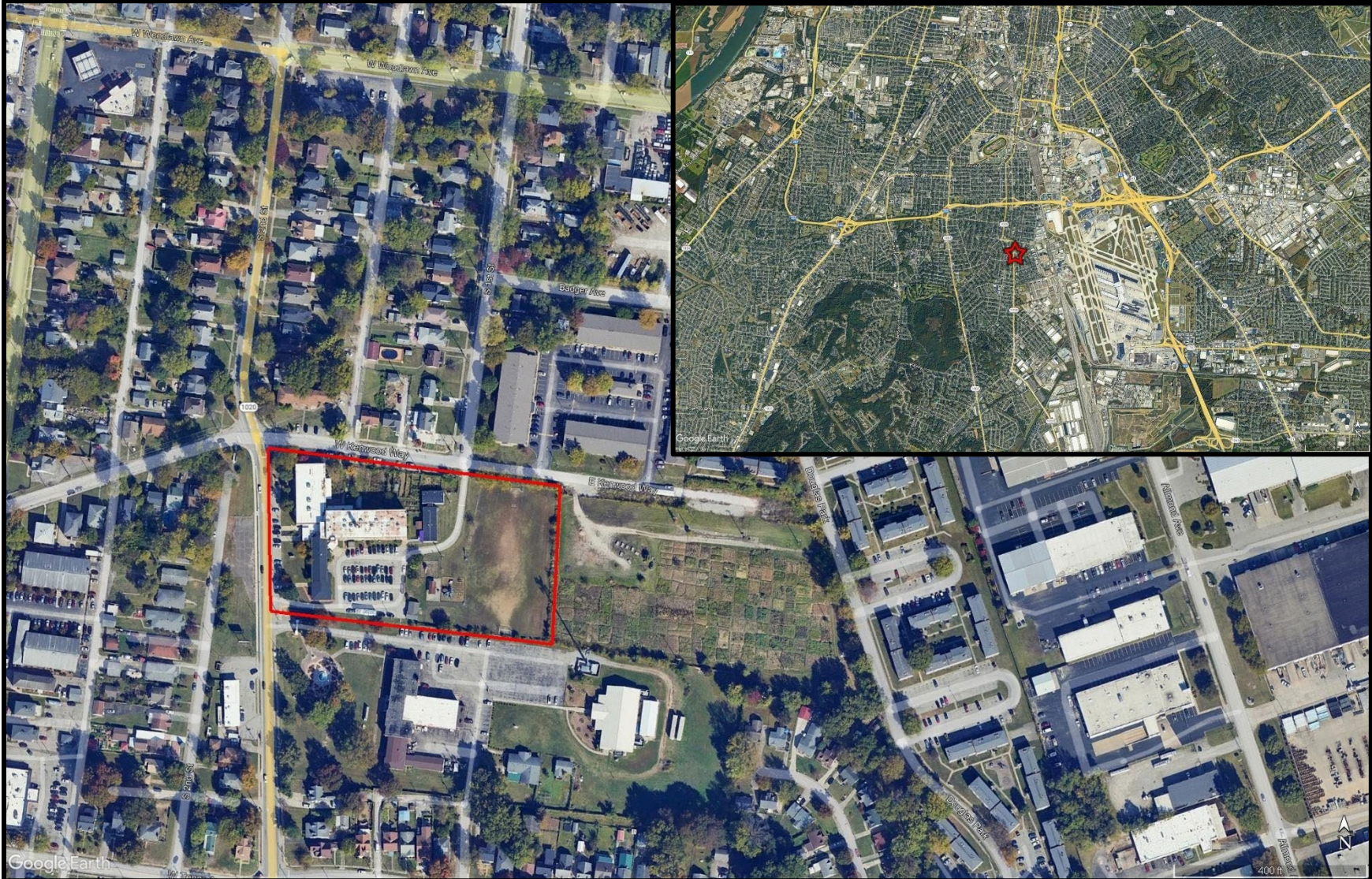


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*Figure 1. Boundaries of the Holy Rosary Academy, as shown on an aerial map (Google Earth®). Location relative to the surrounding area in the insert corner callout.*



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While historically separate, they both tell the story of the suburbanization of Louisville's south end, by both showing how the Catholic diocese adapted to meet a growth in parishioners and expansion of their residential reach, and how an established institution chooses relocation to best serve its growing constituency. Despite the fact that they both are categorized within a similar diocesan context, this nomination is only for the Holy Rosary Academy since the two institutions were not operationally linked.

### **Description of Resource**

The designs for schools in the Commonwealth and the nation during the postwar era, in both private religious facilities and public schools, is integral to understanding and describing the layout, site plan, and architectural characteristics of Holy Rosary Academy. The following is taken from the *Historic Public Schools of Kentucky MPS* (NR # MC100011663), approved by the NRHP in early 2025, particularly the sections on the Post-War School Buildings of Kentucky and the Modern and Consolidation Movements of the time:

Beginning in the 1940s and stretching for the next several decades, American cities, including those in Kentucky, began to experience a large-scale wave of suburbanization, with many residents moving to newly constructed neighborhoods on the outskirts of town. The reasoning is multi-faceted, owing to veterans returning from war and using the GI Bill to purchase homes for their growing families, the increased availability of the automobile and ease of travel throughout the cities. Cultural reasons added to this movement away from central cities, with white people fleeing to avoid having their children schooled with blacks. This centripetal movement from city centers led to a division between urban and suburban identities. Regardless the individuals' motivations, every major population center experienced these patterns, with new neighborhoods accommodating the educational needs of the new residents. In most cases, new neighborhoods, developments, and suburbs had large plots of land designated for schools. These sites provided plenty of space for sprawling school facilities and the necessary land for the associated outbuildings, recreational facilities, and sports fields.

Buildings tended to be primarily one-to-two-stories tall with a central entryway and focal point and sprawling wings to either side. This "finger plan" was intentional, as it allowed for the school to construct additions or alterations easily. The architectural goal was to provide buildings that could best foster learning and with adaptability to meet future needs. In addition to the overall design of the schools, a special emphasis was placed on the materials and fenestration of this era, as educational theory of the time sought to scale the space to best suit children and their learning. As such, light was accentuated as an important feature, something that prevented the cramped feeling of the earlier buildings, so the schools of this era tend to have prominent ribbons of windows along most exterior walls.

The design of these schools, while very intentional and a part of an effort to synthesize architectural design and educational theory, were simple in plan and ornament. Materials used are consistent with the modern architectural styles, utilizing materials for their cost-effectiveness and availability, instead of for their grandiosity. The schools constructed tended to have flat-roofs, rectilinear volumes, and exterior walls covered in brick veneer or concrete with ribbons of metal windows and security doors.

The characteristics explained above are mirrored and implemented in the physical design and construction of the Holy Rosary Academy. This can be seen in the overall site layout and Modern design characteristics of the primary facades, namely the ample lighting afforded by the ribbons of windows, the sprawling design, and the interior rhythm complete with central walkways and "fingers" that extend from the central core.

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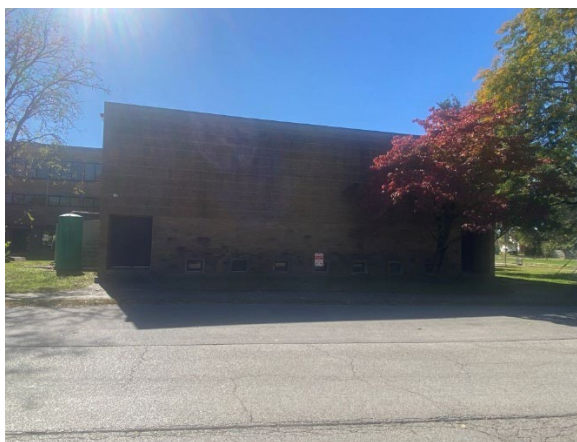
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### ***Exterior***

Similar to other suburban schools from the mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century, The Holy Rosary Academy Building is a T-Shape plan building built in a “finger plan”. This plan design was done intentionally. Whereas most schools from the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20 centuries were built larger, with more verticality, the finger plan allows for the easy construction of additions as the districts grew in enrollment, and to allow for the easy modification and addition of newer facilities, technologies, etc. The Holy Rosary Academy is built in a style that has elements of International Style architecture, again like other schools built in this time period. The greatest feature of the International Style was the greater focus on fenestration, with large sections of windows for natural light, meant to improve students' learning. Additionally, the ability to further expand the original portion of the building better allowed for educational buildings that could best foster learning through their built environment with further adaptability to meet growing needs. The Holy Rosary Academy has its main entrance fronting Southside Drive on its west elevation. The main entrance is accessed through a modern glass vestibule. The vestibule consists of large, rectangular storefront windows that flank a double, glass door entry. The central glass bay for the entry protrudes above the flanking bays. Directly above the entry is a sign that reads “Americana Community Center” underneath a band of glass windows. The vestibule’s roof is flat but sits in two levels due to the protruding section.



**West Side entrance**



**West Side north wing, photo 2**

North of the entrance is the north wing. The west elevation of this wing contains seven window bays. A thick, rough stone band runs along the base of this wing. The rest of the elevation is clad in common bond, blonde brick. The replacement windows each contain large, square two over two lites. The windows feature a limestone surround. Metal coping runs along the flat roof of this wing. The north elevation of this wing matches the wall construction of the west elevation (Photo 2). Two recessed double entry metal doors, accessed by concrete steps are located at each end of this elevation within the rough face stone block band. A series of seven ground level, single-lite windows with limestone surrounds run along the face of this elevation between to entry doors. The east elevation of this wing matches the west, however it is partially covered where it connects with the rear wing. A small, vinyl sided enclosure for mechanical systems is present on this elevation of the wing, below the windows.



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**Photo 4**



**Photo 5**

The rear has a large rectangular wing that stretches east from the rear of the main entrance (Photos 3 & 4). A secondary entrance is located on the north elevation of this wing. Set back from West Kenwood Way, this entrance is accessed by a concrete sidewalk and consists of a set of glass double doors. The entrance facade protrudes from this elevation of the wing and is differentiated by its brown brick. The entrance is off centered with a set of three-over-one aluminum windows to the east of the entrance and three sets of two-over-one aluminum windows to the west. The windows have red brick sills. A red brick, running course stretches along this entry facade and is located directly above the windows and entry doors. Black, metal coping and a flat roof are present on this entrance protrusion. The north elevation of the wing itself contains a series of symmetrical window bays on the first and second floors. Each bay is defined by vertical limestone bands and sets of three single-lite fixed aluminum framed windows on each story of the wing. The first floor sits underneath a limestone belt course running the length of the elevation. Each bay has a single over-sized single-lite fixed window framed by light-colored stone trim. The eastern elevation has a two-lite aluminum framed siding window on each floor in the center of the elevation; the adjacent sides each have a single aluminum downspout connecting the eaves to ground level. The southern elevation is largely the same as the north, with bands of windows on each bay with sets of three fixed aluminum framed windows separated by vertical limestone bands, as well as single-lite fixed windows on the first floor (Photo 5). A double door entrance is seen on the easternmost bay on the first floor below single fixed windows on the second and first floors. Additionally, a projected CMU utility shed sits at the first floor. Directly to the west is an additional double-door entrance that enters below ground level. A modern vestibule is also present and sits at the intersection of this eastern wing and the southern projected wing. The vestibule is similar in design to the main entry vestibule on the western elevation and has a main entrance that sits above and slightly askew to the rest of the structure. A modern brick elevator tower is also present on the rear of the vestibule attached to the rest of the wing.

The southern projecting wing sits directly south of the main entry vestibule on the western elevation and runs parallel to Southside Drive. The exterior of this wing is running bond, blonde brick. (Photo 0005). The eastern elevation of the building has two bays; the southernmost bay is set on the one-story section of the wing with a center fixed window and three small one-over-one double hung windows directly to the north, the windows are all topped with metal awnings. An

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inset entryway is present on the northern section of this bay, directly below the confluence of the one-story and two-story sections of the building. This entryway sits recessed under the roofline supported by thin round metal posts. The other bay, comprising the rest of the building, is mostly made of a series of one-over-one double hung windows of two distinct sizes. These windows sit on the first, second, and third floors. The center of the bay has a hipped roof overhang supported by the same circular poles as the entryway to the south, this overhang contains an additional entry door, flush to the elevation of the building. The joint between this wing, and the wing to the east, sits the modern entry vestibule and elevator tower. The southern elevation shows mostly the one-story section of the building showing the hip-on-gable roof form of the one-story section (Photo 6). Additionally, the southern gable face of the side-gabled two-story roof is visible from this elevation. This gable face is clad in vertically oriented wood siding on the east side with full-height fixed windows separated by thick mullions on the west side. The first floor of the elevation has a centered set of three one-over-one double hung windows with stone sills next to a single-entry door on the eastern side. The western elevation has two different levels and three distinct bays. The northernmost bay sits three stories tall (Photo 7). The first, second, and third floor windows on this bay are all two-lite double hung with limestone sills. The windows on the first floor are smaller in size. The central bay contains an extended section of the first-floor roofline acting as a belt course between the second and third floor windows. The third floor of this bay has a pair of one-over-one double hung windows with three sets of three-window bay windows on the first floor; this central bay has a unique brick pattern with an overall running bond course with every other course projecting outward. The far eastern bay sits as the one-story side-gabled section and contains a single door entrance on the western side with sidelights, recessed from the main elevation. The bay has windows on the first and second floors. The second-floor windows are three sets of one-over-one double hung with projecting stone frames. The first-floor windows are one-over-one double-hung sashes, identical to those on the first floor of the western bay.



**Photo 6**



**Photo 7**

### ***Interior***

The interior of the Holy Rosary Academy generally consists of central corridors flanked by classroom and office spaces. The rear wing contains a cafeteria, office space, kitchen, and boiler room on the first floor (Photos 0008-0009). The room runs along the north elevation of this wing. Linoleum flooring, CMU walls, and acoustic tile drop ceilings define the space. A series of painted

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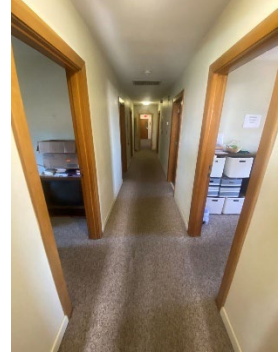
supports run through the east side of the room. The second and third floors contain a series of classrooms (Photos 0010-0011). The individual rooms generally have the same character defining features with painted CMU structure, built-in wood shelving against the exterior walls, chalkboards, and dark-colored 1' by 1' square vinyl tile flooring in both the rooms and interior hallway. Most interior doors are wood with horizontally laid three lite windows with three-lite operable transom windows. All ceilings are drop-ceiling with acoustic tiles and fluorescent lights.



**Photo 8**



**Photo 12**



**Photo 14**

The north wing of the building contains a gymnasium. The gymnasium is a large two-story space located in the north wing (Photo 0012). The room contains wood, gymnasium flooring, CMU block walls, and a flat ceiling with a series of acoustic tiles and square fluorescent lights with projected frames. A large stage is present on the north elevation (Photo 0013).

The south wing is defined by a central corridor flanked by office spaces (Photo 0014). The corridor contains carpet flooring, plaster walls, and a plaster ceiling. The office spaces have the same general layout with carpet flooring and plaster walls (Photo 0015).

***Portable Classroom, Non-Contributing Building (2008)***

A prefabricated portable classroom sits at the eastern end of the parcel, adjacent to the eastern elevation of the eastern wing (Photos 0016-0017). This building was built ca. 2008 and is constructed in a utilitarian style. The building consists of two sections sat in a T-Plan arrangement. The buildings are largely the same on every elevation with two-lite aluminum framed sliding windows interspersed throughout. The buildings are clad in sheets of vertically oriented corrugated metal siding.

***Garage, Contributing Building (ca. 1970)***

A ca. 1970 built CMU garage sits on the southeastern corner of the parking lot. The garage has an asphalt shingle, cross-gable style roof. The main facade has a three-bay design with garage doors on the exterior sides and a central entry door. The cross-gable face projects above the southern garage door. The building lacks fenestration.



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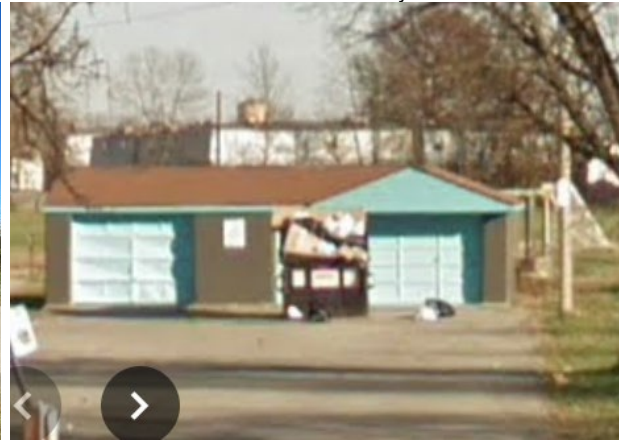
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**Photo 16**



**Garage, 2015**

**Changes to the Property Since the Period of Significance**

The Holy Rosary Academy is almost completely untouched since the period of significance, aside from regular maintenance and upkeep, none of which has altered the physical design or character-defining features.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

- ☒ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

#### Areas of Significance

EDUCATION

OTHER: Suburbanization

#### Significant Person

NA

#### Period of Significance

1955-1976

#### Cultural Affiliation

NA

#### Significant Dates

1955

#### Architect/Builder

Thomas J. Nolan & Sons - Architects

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## Statement of Significance

### Summary Paragraph

The Holy Rosary Academy (JFL 9386) meets National Register Criterion A. It is locally significant in the areas of Community Planning and Development and Education and is evaluated within the historic contexts, “Suburban Development of Louisville’s South End: 1941-1976,” and “the Post-War Suburbanization of Private Schools and Christian Institutions in Louisville, Kentucky.” The Holy Rosary Academy provides insight into the broader context of the Suburbanization of Louisville, particularly the suburbanization south of the City, and how private educational institutions adapted to the city’s changing landscape. The Holy Rosary Academy is a significant private Catholic school that relocated during Louisville’s suburbanization, which, in turn, signifies the importance of the wider suburban movement in the city. This building is able to embody the larger movement by demonstrating first how institutions were adapting to the residential movement and the relocation of congregants and students, and second how a modern architectural and design approach to mid-century educational buildings and sites was implemented to best serve the students. However, what sets the Holy Rosary Academy apart from myriad other institutions that experienced or were affected by suburbanization, is the underlying implications and the changing priorities of the Catholic church and its subsidiaries. While suburbanization on a large scale is a phenomenon that affected most aspects of American life, the adaptation of Catholic institutions such as the Holy Rosary Academy shows a shift in Catholic values; values that once focused on service, morality, and providing a spiritual cornerstone to communities in need of guidance that were abandoned for secular values such as financial viability, social mobility, and getting in line with the larger demographic changes in society. While the newly established institutions in suburban Louisville cannot be faulted with this shift in focus, but instead celebrated for their assimilation and adaptation, those institutions that abandoned the inner-city to the new suburban frontier of white middle-class Louisville seemingly abandoned not only their urban congregants, but also their overall mission. The Holy Rosary Academy has a Period of Significance that stretches from 1955, the year that the school was constructed, through 1976, a point fifty years ago that coincides with the typical NPS age threshold.

### Historic Context: Suburban Development of Louisville’s South End: 1941-1976

The majority of this historic context is taken from the recent NR listing of the Southern Heights – Beechmont Historic District by Mackenzie Davis, Kyra Sexauer, and Carolyn Andrews.<sup>1</sup> In that nomination, the context focuses on the outward expansion of residents from Louisville’s city center, particularly to Louisville’s south end. That outward expansion of residential, and other, development, directly informed the changing trends and movement of other institutions. Understanding this context provides the framework for recognizing why established institutions, such as the Holy Rosary Academy, and large influential organizations, such as the Catholic diocese, sought to relocate to more expansive suburban grounds. The following was taken from the Southern Heights-Beechmont Historic District (Boundary Increase) nomination:

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<sup>1</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Southern Heights – Beechmont Historic District, Jefferson County, Kentucky, NR# BC100010767.



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*Suburban Development of Louisville's South End*

During World War II, this area southeast of the city was an important location for war-related commercial development. It became home to Standiford Field airport in 1941 and soon after hosted a new aircraft assembly plant constructed by the War Department adjacent to the airport. A Naval Ordnance Plant was also established in this area of the city in 1941.<sup>2</sup> Louisville's manufacturing sector gained many wartime industries under the auspices of the War Production Board to supply troops as well as domestic needs. This expansion lured a diverse community of rural Kentuckians to the city, which strained housing and transportation systems under unusual demand.<sup>3</sup>

The housing crisis of previous decades experienced in Louisville and cities across the nation continued after World War II. High rates of homelessness and a baby boom exacerbated the situation. Unlike the years of the Depression however, developments of the Post-War era included positive trends such as renewed prosperity, effective government intervention, and increased possibility for working class people to move into their own homes. Amendments to the National Housing Act in 1948, including the increased financing available to private builders and liberalized terms of FHA-approved home mortgages, along with unprecedented demand for housing and the development of technologies and standards allowing mass production, standardization, and prefabrication of housing materials influenced the emergence of post-WWII subdivisions.<sup>4</sup> The homes comprising these new developments were often constructed in a "cookie-cutter" fashion and the developments themselves were located principally at the fringes of larger metropolitan areas.

In 1950, more than a third of the city's population living outside the urban center resided in the unincorporated fringe of Louisville. Population trends in the South End of Louisville between 1940 and 1970 reflect those of the city as a whole with gradual population shift in the 1940s towards southern neighborhoods, then a pattern of population decline in the 1950s throughout the city. This continued into the 1960s, with the only sections of southern Louisville gaining meager population during the decade being Auburndale, Camp Taylor, Edgewood, and the Standiford Field area, all annexed during or after 1950.<sup>5</sup> Though the small builder ushered in the post-war suburbanization, large-scale developments and their builders edged to the forefront of the process by the end of the 1950s. During this decade, the number of working-class suburbs increased, and were populated heavily by young families seeking material well-being and middle-class status through home ownership. Factors such as distance to quality schools, religious and community facilities, shopping, transportation, and municipal services became the foci of major building publications and the builders of rapidly proliferating suburban developments.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Kramer, 155.

<sup>3</sup> Brother, Ryall, and Stottman, 74.

<sup>4</sup> Ames and McClelland, 28-29.

<sup>5</sup> Kramer, 160.

<sup>6</sup> Brother, Ryall, and Stottman, 111.

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The exodus of residents from city neighborhoods can be attributed to the combination of improved suburban housing and roads, the proliferation of the automobile, and a perception of African Americans gaining housing opportunities within the city. As farms were divided into tracts for suburban housing, the outflow of Louisvillians from the urban core left severely depressed neighborhoods in its wake and new expressways linked increasingly dispersed communities across the county and region to one another and the center of the city. Many developers preferred fringe locations because of a lack of subdivision controls, which first appeared when speculators of the 1920s highlighted the wastefulness of the unrestricted subdivision. Other factors that pushed developers out from the city center included legal barriers such as zoning, deed restrictions, and rigid building codes and the availability of cheap land. Thus, a modernized transportation network and the suburban economy of the mid-twentieth century carved the shape of Jefferson County's suburban areas.<sup>7</sup>

By 1960, Jefferson County's population (outside of the city limits) doubled from the previous decade, and most of this growth continued to be focused outside of Louisville among white suburbanites, a trend which continued through the decade. However, a new movement formed in the 1960s which, contrary to the contemporary preference for homogenous suburban areas, saw residents investing in long neglected neighborhoods in Louisville. Known as neighborhood conservation or historic preservation, adherents to this movement criticized its rapid population growth, unrestricted subdivision, antagonistic land uses, spreading rural slums, and escape from legal jurisdiction of the city as major cons of suburbanization.<sup>8</sup> Preservation activity within South Louisville has been directed toward Southern Parkway and Iroquois Park.

In May 1985, the Southern Parkway Community Plan was published by the Louisville and Jefferson County Planning Commission working in tandem with a Southern Parkway Plan Task Force "to identify the needs of Southern Parkway community residents and businesses in terms of land use, transportation, housing and economic development."<sup>9</sup> The report included specific recommendations to promote revitalization, stability, and preservation in the areas of Oakland, Beechmont, and Wilder Park neighborhood, along Southern Parkway. For instance, in order to return the parkway to its original purpose, a small park has been built at Woodlawn and Southern Parkway.<sup>10</sup> However, for those that chose to, people found satisfaction in living in the fringe areas of Louisville, possibly because they may not have been able to find housing elsewhere. For homeowners in new suburban subdivisions, often first-time buyers, the nearly identical accommodations and affordability of the suburbs fulfilled their dreams of a middle-class, American life. This trend is visible in residential developments throughout Louisville and in larger American cities. The residential developments during this period tended to appear in dense clusters

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 107-108.

<sup>8</sup> Brother, Ryall, and Stottman, 76.

<sup>9</sup> Louisville and Jefferson County Planning Commission, *Southern Parkway Community Plan: A Study of the Beechmont, Oakdale and Wilder Park Neighborhoods*, 1985, <https://louisvilleky.gov/advanced-planning-and-sustainability/document/southern-parkway-community-plan-1985>, i

<sup>10</sup> Louisville and Jefferson County Planning Commission, 20.

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of modest, working-class neighborhoods, often separated based on race and ethnicity.<sup>11</sup>

The African American population in Jefferson County grew at high rates in the post-war years and experienced significant employment gains following those made in industry and military sectors during WWII. Attracted to jobs created by the city's industrial expansion, Black Louisvillians pushed the city and the state to accept integration of parks, factories, hospitals, commercial establishments, universities, and primary and secondary schools throughout the 1950s and 1960s. By 1963, the city passed an ordinance banning segregation in public accommodations and 200 businesses opened their doors to black customers. Larger-scale demonstrations led to statewide civil rights legislation in 1966. By the late 1960s, most public accommodations were desegregated, however, residential segregation was left untouched. Louisville's Black population was heavily confined to the west area of the urban core with small additional smaller communities on the east of the business district and in rural areas. Approval of the open housing ordinance of 1967 was considered a major victory, yet further integration was restricted by factors such as poor enforcement and unequal financial opportunity. Even after fair housing legislation, Black Louisvillians remained segregated in certain urban districts and did not experience significant suburbanization.<sup>12</sup>

While this context was written to highlight the movement of residential housing to Louisville's south end, this movement of people influenced the development and suburbanization of other entities, institutions, industries and the like. Furthermore, the title of the original historic context was "Suburban Development of Louisville's South End: 1890-1965," to correspond with the Period of Significance of the Southern Heights – Beechmont Historic District. For this nomination, the title of the context is reduced, by bringing the beginning year up to the onset of WWI, the beginning of a new era of city expansion and suburbanization, and expanded to include the entirety of the Period of Significance for the Holy Rosary Academy by bringing it through 1976. However, in the 11 years between 1965 and 1976 (the end years on both contextual periods), little changed in the suburban trends of the residential south end. But, during this period, the south end began to expand its industrial presence and solidify portions as an industrial and manufacturing hub of Louisville. This was seen primarily along the railroad line just east of the Holy Rosary Academy, on land that was once occupied by the Douglas Park Racetrack.

These industrial nodes, or industrial "hubs", were common as major cities expanded to the areas immediately surrounding the downtown city centers. These industrial centers tended to appear in areas around the cities that best offered the key ingredients needed for industrialization: key infrastructure and an abundant low-wage workforce. In an era before the popularization of the automobile, these industrial and manufacturing facilities needed access to railroad lines, water (both for function and for transportation), and neighborhoods that, because of the rapid influx of immigration and settlement of newly freed African Americans, were filled with people who were eager to work and lived in dense communities. However, in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, emphasis was placed on areas surrounding major transportation routes and, in Louisville, the ever-expanding Standiford Field Airport, situated on the other side of the tracks from the Holy Rosary Academy,

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<sup>11</sup> Brother, Ryall, and Stottman, 94.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 48-51.



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was a hotspot for industrial development. The proximity to infrastructure was more important than low-wage workforce during this era, because the prominence of the automobile and public transportation made transportation to and from work easier to accomplish, however, the working-class south end provided ample workforce for the growing industrial center.

**Historic Context: The Post-War Suburbanization of Private Schools and Christian Institutions in Louisville, Kentucky**

From the mid-19<sup>th</sup> through the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, America's urban centers were the locus of city life. This is where people lived, worked, shopped, worshipped, learned, and went about their daily lives. Two types of resources that served as community anchors in many of the urban areas, both in the more traditional downtown settings and in the residential enclaves just outside of the city centers, were the schools and places of worship. Each of these places were integral to serving a specific demographic and a relatively small geographic area, as people were limited by transportation. However, in the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, particularly following World War II, access, growth, infrastructure, and movement throughout the city quickly changed through a process we can call "suburbanization," which had an impact on the spatial arrangement of a city. The landscape changes of suburbanization in a city led the religious and private educational institutions to change as well and adapt to the new suburban standards.

While Holy Rosary Academy had no associated church, churches are included in this context. Their postwar activities are greatly influenced by suburbanization in Louisville. The same factors that were affecting the schools and precipitating their relocations or establishment were being experienced by the churches and congregations throughout the city. Because the histories of these two types of institutions are so inexorably linked, sometimes with buildings providing both church services and educational offerings, it is appropriate to include both in this context.

The term "suburbanization" is being used here to describe both a practice and a place. The practice was one of relocating away from the historic city center, and escaping the parts of urban life that were troubling. The place was referred to as "the suburbs," which often referred to a specific subdivision development but also could refer to small incorporated towns in Jefferson County as well as the undefined areas around those smaller towns. Both of these aspects of suburbanization were supported by settlement patterns of the former urban residents, as well as by the relocation of institutions that made this suburban sprawl possible.

During this time, many established institutions in Louisville adapted to the changing landscape and built new facilities to accommodate the residential relocation of their members and students. This was further intensified by the large number of new institutions that were being established in the suburbs to meet the growing demand for new parishes and private education options.

While the exact number of these new institutions is unknown, due to the lack of public databases or centralized data, approximations assert that there were roughly 25-40 new religious schools (the archdiocese alone opened approximately 30 parish elementary schools between 1950-1975), and roughly 90-110 newly established suburban churches (archdiocese established around 20-30 new parishes and a reasonable extrapolation, based on evidence in similar sized cities, shows that there

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are approximately 2-3 Protestant churches for every Catholic church).<sup>13</sup> As the demographic center of gravity for many white Louisville families shifted from older neighborhoods into newly developed Louisville suburbs, congregations that were parish-based, especially mainline Protestant and Catholic parishes, followed their people. The Archdiocese of Louisville, for example, created multiple new suburban Catholic parishes in the 1950s and early 1960s as many Catholics moved from older neighborhoods to suburban locales.<sup>14</sup> Thus, new parishes, such as St. John Vianney adjacent to the Holy Rosary Academy, were created to serve the spiritual needs of families in the suburbs. Private schools and Christian institutions sprang up once the residential shift to the suburbs was underway.

In addition to the post-war suburban expansion and automobile dependence, many private schools were experiencing expanding enrollment and the outgrowing of older facilities, all of which coincided with the suburban movement. Schools sought larger tracts for modern buildings, gymnasiums and playing fields, and easier car access for commuting families. Some schools moved their locations wholesale to the suburbs, such as St. Xavier (founded in 1864 before moving to its new location in 1961 in the Poplar Level neighborhood), while other newly founded private schools popped up along the suburban landscape, such as Trinity (founded in St. Matthews in 1953) and Assumption (founded in the Gardiner Lane neighborhood in 1955).<sup>15</sup>

However, despite this new movement, the presence of such institutions in the outskirts of the city was not new in Louisville. Dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, some early religious schools, such as Sacred Heart Academy (established in 1877 in what is now known as the Crescent Hill neighborhood), were located in Louisville's neighborhoods, anchored neighborhood life and frequently doubled as social and religious centers.<sup>16</sup> These schools, which were largely Catholic, began in these locations to serve the local community and create a presence of Catholic education in the city's suburbs. The fact that these schools have always maintained a presence in the outer

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<sup>13</sup> Archdiocese of Louisville, *Archdiocese of Louisville 2018 Catholic Directory*, Louisville, KY, 2018: Ambrosius, Joshua D. *Religion and Regionalism: Congregants, Culture, and City-County Consolidation in Louisville, Kentucky*, doctoral dissertation, University of Dayton, Dayton, Ohio 2010: The Association of Religion Data Archives, "Louisville/Jefferson County, KY-IN Metro Area Report," electronic document, <https://www.thearda.com/us-religion/census/congregational-membership?y=2020&t=2&c=31140>, accessed November 2025.

<sup>14</sup> "Catholics Establish 5 New Parishes Here." In *The Courier-Journal*, December 9, 1950.

<sup>15</sup> St. Xavier, "History" Electronic Document, <https://www.saintx.com/legacy/alumni/history>, accessed October 2025; Trinity High School, "The Early Years," Electronic Document, <https://www.trinityrocks.com/page/the-early-years>, accessed October 2025; The neighborhoods used throughout this nomination when identifying the locations of schools and churches throughout Jefferson County are the ones that are utilized and recognized by the City of Louisville and enumerated in the Louisville/Jefferson County Information Consortium (LOJIC), the GIS database and mapping application operated by the Louisville Metro Government. While these are the official names of the neighborhoods, they do not always align with the accepted vernacular used by locals, who often view more recognizable neighborhoods as larger with unclear boundaries and who are otherwise unfamiliar with many of the smaller established and city-recognized neighborhoods. Louisville Metro, the Louisville/Jefferson County Information Consortium, *Neighborhoods GIS Map and Database*. Electronic Document, <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/459bd589978e40729bd0b6a3ea31fb85/>, accessed October 2025.

<sup>16</sup> Sacred Heart Academy, "Sacred Heart Schools Celebrates 145 years of Ursuline Education with Ursuline Heritage Room Blessing and Timeline Unveiling." Electronic Document, <https://sha.shslou.org/apps/news/article/1681534>, accessed October 2025.

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reaches of the city, underscores the importance placed on maintaining a suburban Catholic presence.

The outskirts of Louisville had no shortage of places of worship. In fact, in many cases, small churches were among the first buildings to be constructed, or congregation members' houses were used as a meeting place before more established locations could be built or obtained. Some of these early churches continue through today with minimal change in their building or complex's footprint, such as Anchorage Presbyterian (founded in 1869), while others, emulating the suburban model of expansion, built new facilities in the same neighborhoods to continue to serve their growing congregation while offering modern amenities, as seen in churches such as Harvey Browne Memorial Presbyterian (founded in St. Matthews in 1914 but built and relocated to a much larger facility down the road in 1952), and St. Paul Parish and School (founded in Pleasure Ridge Park in 1910 and built a new, much larger building on the same site in 1958).<sup>17</sup> The latter move parallels, but is not necessarily a part of, the more traditional suburbanization of churches, which implies brand new suburban congregations or a relocation of an urban church to the suburbs to follow its congregants, but is still relevant to the overall discussion by indicating the relatively simple idea that: as more people moved to the suburbs, institutions that existed there or relocated there had to grow to accommodate the influx of people.

Providing private or religious education, along with places of worship in the outlying areas of Louisville was not a new task for church groups after WWII. Jefferson County's religious groups responded to the vast changes in the city's demographics and landscape. The factors which fueled these changes include, affordability of the automobile, the expanding and improvements to the city's infrastructure, economic prosperity and a rising white middle class, and the subsequent outward movement of the middle and upper classes as a result of white flight, the G.I. Bill, housing shortages, federal housing policies, and the desire to acquire the American Dream. These factors led to direct benefits to the Christian churches and religious and private schools, such as a growing number of new congregants in churches and an ever-increasing enrollment into private and religious schools, which resulted in the need for newer facilities, larger sites/complexes, and, for schools, campuses and amenities that could cater to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century educational expectations. In fact, some of the reasons for suburbanization, such as white flight, were driven by the same impulses that led to the growth of private schools, which in part swelled to avoid desegregation efforts in the public schools. The story of suburbanization by Christian churches and religious and private schools had an impact on the acquisition of Civil Rights in the old urban core.

Church/School	Founding	Original Location	Suburban Location	Date Moved
Broadway Methodist - Indian Hills/Christ Methodist Church	1865	Downtown	Windy Hills	1954-1956
Second Presbyterian Church	1830	Downtown	Rolling Fields	1956
St. Paul's Episcopal Church	1839	Old Louisville	Hurstbourne Area	1957
Broadway Baptist Church	1870	Downtown	Druid Hills	1950

<sup>17</sup> Anchorage Presbyterian Church, "History," Electronic Document, <https://www.anchoragepresbyterian.org/history>, accessed October 2025; Harvey Browne Presbyterian Church, "History," Electronic Document, <https://hbpres.net/history/>, accessed October 2025; St. Paul Parish and School, "150+ Years of Faith and Perseverance," Electronic Document, <https://saintpaulschool.net/school-about/history-of-st-paul-parish-school>, accessed October 2025.

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Church/School	Founding	Original Location	Suburban Location	Date Moved
Calvary Baptist Church	1833	Downtown	Parkland	1957
St. John Vianney Church and School	1951	Southside	NA	NA
St. Margaret Mary Parish and School	1953	Lyndon	NA	NA
Holy Rosary Academy	1867	Downtown/Old Louisville	Southside	1955
St. Xavier School	1864	Downtown	Poplar Level	1961
Mercy Academy	1885	Downtown	Between Highview, Buechel, and Fern Creek	2007
Trinity High School	1953	St. Matthews	NA	NA
Assumption	1955	Gardiner Lane	NA	NA
Francis Parker School of Louisville (Formerly St. Francis School)	1965	Harrods Creek (in a church)	Goshen (64-acre campus)	1970

*Non-Exhaustive List of Christian Congregations and Religious and Private Schools that were Established In, or Relocated To, the Suburbs in the Post-War era*

For private schools, as new facilities and campuses were being constructed, the modern architectural and educational ideologies of the time were reflected in the site selection and stylistic influences. Similar to their public educational building counterparts, these private and religious institutions sought to provide plenty of space for sprawling school facilities and the necessary land for the associated outbuildings, recreational facilities, and sports fields. Moreover, the architectural designs that were often employed exhibited the prevailing ideologies of the time. As seen with the Holy Rosary Academy, the use of ribbons of windows to bring natural light into a building, an emphasis on horizontal lines, the utilization of materials for their cost-effectiveness and availability, instead of for their grandiosity, and the sprawling floorplan, complete with the use of “fingers” and a central corridor, all mirror what was taking place throughout America as new schools were constructed.<sup>18</sup> The use of such architectural design in these schools further parallels the broader suburban trends of the time, firmly incorporating the significant history of religious and private educational offerings into the understanding of Louisville’s suburban movement.

### History of Nominated Property

*History of the Holy Rosary Academy (Institution, not this NR-nominated property)*

The Sisters of the Dominican Provincial in the Louisville Roman Catholic Diocese founded the Holy Rosary Academy in 1867. It started as a convent and was originally associated with the St. Louis Bertrand Catholic Church, near the academy’s first location. They operated their convent, which had also expanded to include childhood education as a formal academy for girls, until financial issues caused them to move, first to a family house on Sixth Street, and then to another family house on Kentucky and Eighth Streets. In 1894, the academy moved again, only this time it did not reopen until 1897, creating a three-year gap, during which, elementary school offerings continued at the St. Louis Bertrand School. The Holy Rosary Academy opened again, this time on Ormsby Ave., and continued its educational offerings. It remained at this location for nearly two decades, until relocating once again to 1433 Fourth Street. It is at this location, in a large family

<sup>18</sup> Historic Public Schools of Kentucky, Multiple Property Listing, Kentucky. 2024



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house in Old Louisville, that the Holy Rosary Academy remained before expanding enrollment and the need for more space led to the final move to the suburbs.<sup>19</sup>



*Holy Rosary Academy at its location on Fourth Street, 1921.<sup>20</sup>*

### *History of the Building*

In 1950, the archdiocese of Louisville bought 21 acres on Southside Drive in south Louisville that had previously been a part of the Douglas Park Racetrack, marking the first subdivision of that land and the beginning of the end of the racetrack's tenure.<sup>21</sup> Later that year, the diocese announced that five new parishes were to be established in Louisville, one of which, St. John Vianney, was slated for the Southside Drive property.<sup>22</sup> In 1954, just three years after the St. John Vianney Church and School site was developed, the land was further subdivided, and the northern half of the lot was conveyed to the Dominican Sisters in order to build a new building to house the historic Holy Rosary Academy.<sup>23</sup>

The new school building was designed by Thomas J. Nolan & Sons architects and completed in 1955.<sup>24</sup> The new school building was designed in the contemporary architectural style common

<sup>19</sup> Hollerman, Paul Wolf, "Holy Rosary Academy," In *The Encyclopedia of Louisville*, Kleber, editor. University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky. 2001. Pp 395-396.

<sup>20</sup> Caufield & Shook. ULPA CS\_035551. 1921. Archives & Special Collections, University of Louisville, Louisville. [https://digital.library.louisville.edu/concern/images/ulpa\\_cs\\_035551?locale=en](https://digital.library.louisville.edu/concern/images/ulpa_cs_035551?locale=en), accessed October 2025.

<sup>21</sup> Sutton, Carol. "Douglas Park Track To Be Put to Grass Like Old Race Horses." In *The Courier-Journal*. March 16, 1958

<sup>22</sup> "Catholics Establish 5 New Parishes Here." In *The Courier-Journal*, December 9, 1950.

<sup>23</sup> "Holy Rosary School To Get New Building." In *The Courier-Journal*. November 6, 1954.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

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among post-War school construction with “a lot of glass” and “room for 500 students, a combination auditorium and gymnasium, and a convent building for the sisters.”<sup>25</sup> The academy foresaw an expansion in enrollment, as the total enrollment at the time of construction was just 150. Prior to the construction of the expansive modern school building, the Holy Rosary Academy occupied buildings in Old Louisville for over eighty years, buildings that were not built for education and not well suited for growth or expansion. Conversely, the new school building embodied the modern architectural aesthetics associated with the new educational ideologies.

The Holy Rosary Academy operated independently under the Dominican Sisters at this location for just over forty years until, in 1997, due to enduring issues stemming from “declining enrollment, diminishing revenues, and an aging facility,” the school was purchased by Spalding University.<sup>26</sup> Spalding, a private Catholic university with over 200 years of history and a 100-plus year presence in Louisville, attempted to keep Holy Rosary Academy open, but persistent problems led to the permanent closure of the school in 2002. That same year, the school building was purchased by the Americana World Community Center, a non-profit organization that offers a wide range of programs to “provide holistic services to Louisville’s refugee, immigrant and underserved population to build strong and healthy families, create a safe and supportive community and help every individual realize their potential.”<sup>27</sup> The Americana World Community Center continues to operate out of the Holy Rosary Academy building today, offering invaluable resources and providing healthcare to the community.

### **Evaluation of the Significance of the Property within the Historic Context “Suburban Development of Louisville’s South End: 1941-1976”**

The Holy Rosary Academy is a significant example of how an established educational institution adapted to the shifting residential patterns of the post-war era and not only relocated and reestablished itself in a new suburban neighborhood, but completely altered their physical plant approach to education by constructing a contemporary facility complete with the modern design, layout, amenities, and everything else needed to provide adequate educational opportunities in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

From the mid-20th century onward, Louisville’s private and parochial schools witnessed, and adapted to, a rapidly changing landscape. Suburbanization, driven by many factors, was causing the City of Louisville to hastily expand outward and its residents to abandon the densely populated urban areas for the newer residential suburbs and planned neighborhoods that promised a better life with more opportunity. This trend can be seen in every major metropolitan area across the country and has been well documented in Jefferson County, especially to its eastern and southern expanse. In an effort to evolve and adapt with the times, many Christian schools moved from dense urban neighborhoods or church basements into larger suburban campuses or were founded directly in the suburbs as the population shifted. These moves were driven by a handful of repeatable pressures, such as suburban population growth, movement of congregants and parishioners,

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Oates, Thomas R. “The Decision to Close Holy Rosary Academy.” In *The Courier-Journal*. March 17, 2002.

<sup>27</sup> Americana World Community Center, “Our Mission.” Electronic document, [americanacc.org/about.html](http://americanacc.org/about.html), accessed October, 2025.

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availability of land for expanded facilities (athletics, parking, additional classroom space etc.), changing parish boundaries and demographics, educational program changes that required modern facilities, and the promise of reaching newer populations, especially at a time when interest was on the rise.

But perhaps, what is most telling about this property is not only that the school was an example of religious or educational suburbanization, both of which occurred across the country and across faiths and divisions of Christianity. Instead, what makes this example especially significant is that it marks a shift in the outward expression of Catholic values in the face of social and economic changes. Superficially, the decision to relocate to the suburbs highlights the family-centered character of the Catholic church and the commitment to serving the future Catholic family, thus requiring schools and parishes to follow the congregants to the suburbs, as well as the desire to provide modern facilities by building new buildings on new sites in the suburbs with room to expand.

However, at its core, this move seems to contradict traditional Catholic Values. The move appears to align the Catholic institution more closely with typical worldly and financial values, in other words, the secular values that were commonplace elsewhere in Post-War America. The movement to the primarily all-white suburbs in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century displays a preference for stability, safety and predictability. People inhabiting urban Louisville were experiencing the threat of economic decline and housing deterioration, factors that led many people to fear plummeting property values and a rise in crime. Those fears led to peoples' self-preservation responses. But when the church placed financial security above its urban mission of helping those in need, it can be seen as a realignment of Catholic values for the church to serve the suburban ideals of opportunity, social mobility, and middle-class respectability.

Suburbanization was often the product of white flight, or the idea of middle-class upward progress, which in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century was synonymous with white families searching for advancement, since Black citizens were prohibited from many opportunities for upward mobility. While white flight was not outwardly stated as a reason behind the suburban movement of Catholic parishes or schools, the Louisville church seems to have followed national trends which favored white Catholics over blacks. A 2022 study by Pew Research Center, estimated that only 4% of the recent Catholic population is Black. If the church devoted its resources in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century to serve the suburbs, one consequence might be a drop off in African American attendance. Constructions such as Holy Rosary Academy are evidence that the Catholic church was prioritizing its financial advancement over its more costly mission, to serve the impoverished. By de-emphasizing service in the older areas of Louisville that were experiencing social and economic troubles, and increasing service to the parts of the county that were economically thriving, the church supported suburbanization at the expense of inner city needs.<sup>28</sup>

Thus, the Holy Rosary Academy relocation not only exemplifies the broader suburbanization movement of Louisville, seen in the logical desires to find property that allowed for growth, the adoption of contemporary ideologies, and the abilities to reach a larger suburban demographic, but it also marks the shifting nature of Catholic institutions to adopt secular values, financial prudence,

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<sup>28</sup> Diamant, Jeff, Besheer Mohamed and Joshua Alvarado. *Black Catholics in America*. Pew Research Center, 2022.

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and self-preservation at the expense of the historic missions on which they were founded. While all newly established Catholic schools and parishes in the suburbs could claim that they were serving spiritual needs, those operations that abandoned their inner-city Catholic congregants or students in favor of suburban locales call into question the interests of the church. This shift in priorities is one important factor in understanding the meaning and evolution of Louisville's suburban landscape.

**Evaluation of the Integrity Between the Significance of the Holy Rosary Academy and its Current Physical Condition**

This building has been evaluated in terms of its overall relationship to the general integrity standards and its ability to convey the significance outlined above. The task of evaluating whether a building is potentially eligible for NRHP listing means first evaluating its significance according to at least one National Register eligibility criteria, and then, in this case, a criteria consideration, and then evaluating whether there is an integrity between that resource's physical condition and the sense of significance. That will call for ". . . sometimes a subjective judgment, . . . it must always be grounded in an understanding of a property's physical features and how they relate to its significance."<sup>29</sup> There are seven aspects of integrity as identified by NPS: Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling, Association.<sup>30</sup>

The Holy Rosary Academy is highly intact. The building has seen very little alterations over the years aside from routine maintenance and upkeep and the introduction of a prefabricated outbuilding to the building's rear. A building which meets Criterion A and which possesses integrity of **Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling, and Association** will be eligible for listing in the NRHP.

The property possesses integrity of **location**. This building has not been moved from its original site. The location is a key aspect to its significance, as it sits on what was once a larger lot that was acquired by the archdiocese and in the heart of Louisville's south end that was rapidly suburbanizing in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The selection of this lot for the site of the Holy Rosary Academy was intentional as it provided the land necessary to build the modern school, was along a major thoroughfare, and it was nestled in a residential neighborhood that was deemed perfect to both accommodate, and supplement, the growing enrollment.

The building possesses strong integrity of **setting**. The suburban residential developments around the Holy Rosary Academy all predate the school and have changed very little, allowing the building to still convey the setting of a midcentury suburban educational facility. Being located along major roads and amidst the residential neighborhood was an important and deliberate decision, and the area has changed little. The only changes since the date of construction is that

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<sup>29</sup> United States Department of the Interior. *National Register Bulletin #15: Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning*. (Washington D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, 2002.)

<sup>30</sup> United States Department of the Interior. *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. (Washington D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, 1995) 46.



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now the school is surrounded on all sides by residential development, whereas at the time of construction, the area to the east was still occupied by the Douglas Race Track.

The building also retains integrity of **materials, design, and workmanship**. The materials throughout the building are nearly all original and the overall design, which is a calculated expression of the Modern style and an excellent representation of a contemporary school that was designed around the prevailing educational architecture ideologies, has not been altered. Moreover, the workmanship can still be seen in the use of architectural methods that were predominant at the time.

The Holy Rosary Academy was constructed for a religious school moving to the suburbs in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, and the building's appearance still reflects this purpose, giving it a strong integrity of **feeling**. While the building has not been in use as an operational school for nearly 20 years, the site layout, architectural style, and prominent design allow for the outward appearance to remain indicative of the original purpose. Moreover, because the building was built during the suburban movement of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century and still exists among a well defined and minimally altered residential suburban neighborhood, and because the building retains integrity of location, materials, and design, the building conveys its historic integrity of **association**.

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Holy Rosary Academy

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Jefferson County, Kentucky

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Holy Rosary Academy

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** JF 9386

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 3.94 acres

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

## Holy Rosary Academy

Name of Property

## Jefferson County, Kentucky

County and State

1. Latitude: 38.178660

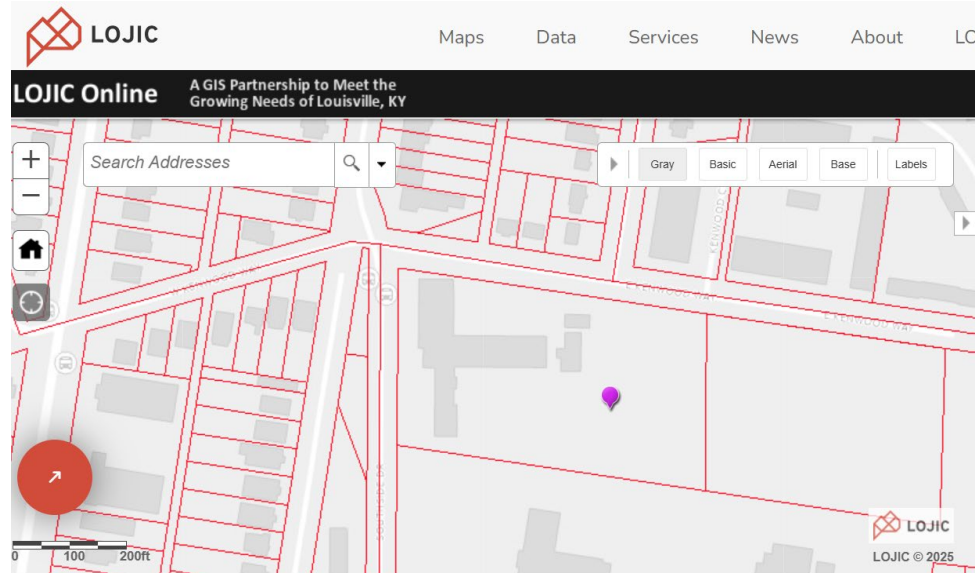
Longitude: -85.763834

### **Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary of the Holy Rosary Academy includes the entire legal parcel on which the building is located at the southeast corner of Southside Drive and Kenwood Way. The formal parcel description, found in Deed Book 7962, page 0676, is as follows:

“Beginning at a pipe at the southeast corner of Kenwood Way and Southside Drive, thence with the easterly line of Southside Drive, south 0 degrees 43 minutes east 317.64 feet to a pipe at the northwesterly corner of the tract conveyed to Right Reverend John A. Floersh, Roman Catholic Bishop of Louisville, a corporation sole, of record in Deed Book 2639, page 390, in the office of the Clerk of Jefferson County, Kentucky, thence with the northerly line of said tract, south 82 degrees 25 minutes east 555 feet to a pipe, thence north 0 degrees 43 minutes west 316.73 feet to a pipe in the southerly line of Kenwood Way, thence with said line north 82 degrees 19 minutes west 555.27 feet to the beginning.”

A map showing that area follows below. The map is identified as a part of the LOJIC mapping system, used by Jefferson County government for property identification.



Holy Rosary Academy

Name of Property

Jefferson County, Kentucky

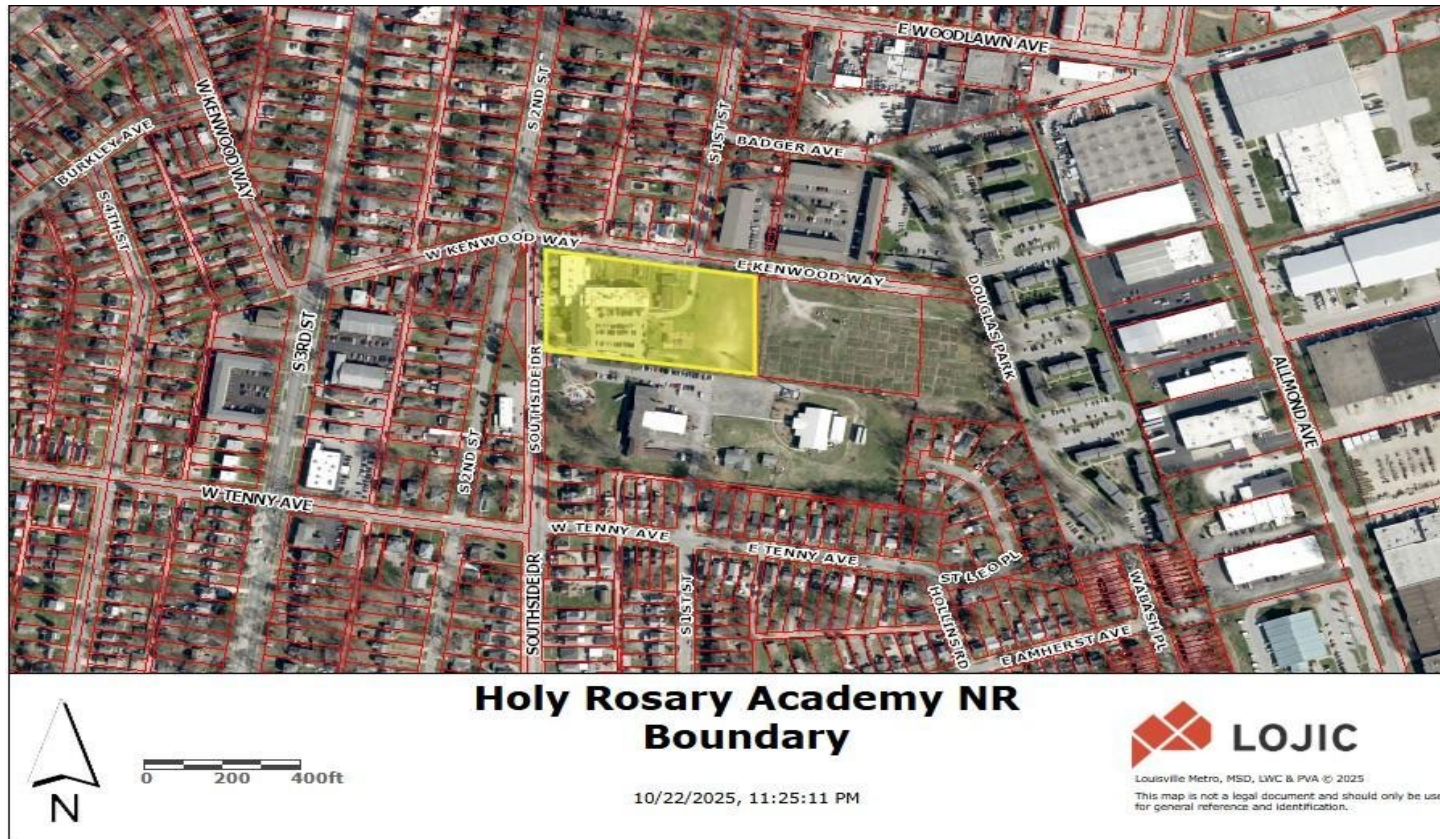
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**Holy Rosary Academy property marked by purple teardrop.**

**Source: LOJIC maps, official maps of Jefferson County, Kentucky, government**

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary encompasses the entirety of the property historically associated with the Holy Rosary Academy.



Holy Rosary Academy

Name of Property

Jefferson County, Kentucky

County and State

**Property Owners:**

name The Americana Community Center Inc.  
street & number 4801 Southside Dr.  
city or town Louisville state Kentucky zip code 40214

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Wes Cunningham, MA, Sr. Principal Investigator History/Architecture, Director of National Register Nominations & Research  
organization: Pinion Advisors  
street & number: 223 S. 5<sup>th</sup> St. Suite 351  
city or town: Louisville state: Kentucky zip code: 40202  
e-mail: wcunningham@pinionadvisors.com  
telephone: 502-807-0575  
date: October 2025

name/title: Abby Marshall MS  
organization: Architectural Historian  
street & number: 895 N 6<sup>th</sup> St.  
city or town: Columbus state: Ohio zip code: 43201  
e-mail: abby\_marshall@outlook.com  
telephone: 260-229-4200

**Additional Documentation**

**Photographs**

**Photo Log**

Name of Property: Holy Rosary Academy  
City or Vicinity: Louisville  
County: Jefferson County  
State: Kentucky  
Photographer: Joe Pierson  
Date Photographed: October 22, 2025

- 1 of 17: View of the south wing of Holy Rosary Academy, facing east.
- 2 of 17: View of the north façade of Holy Rosary Academy, facing south.
- 3 of 17: View of the north façade of the east wing, facing south.
- 4 of 17: View of the northern ell, facing southwest.
- 5 of 17: View of the east and south wings, facing northwest.
- 6 of 17: View of the south façade, facing northwest.



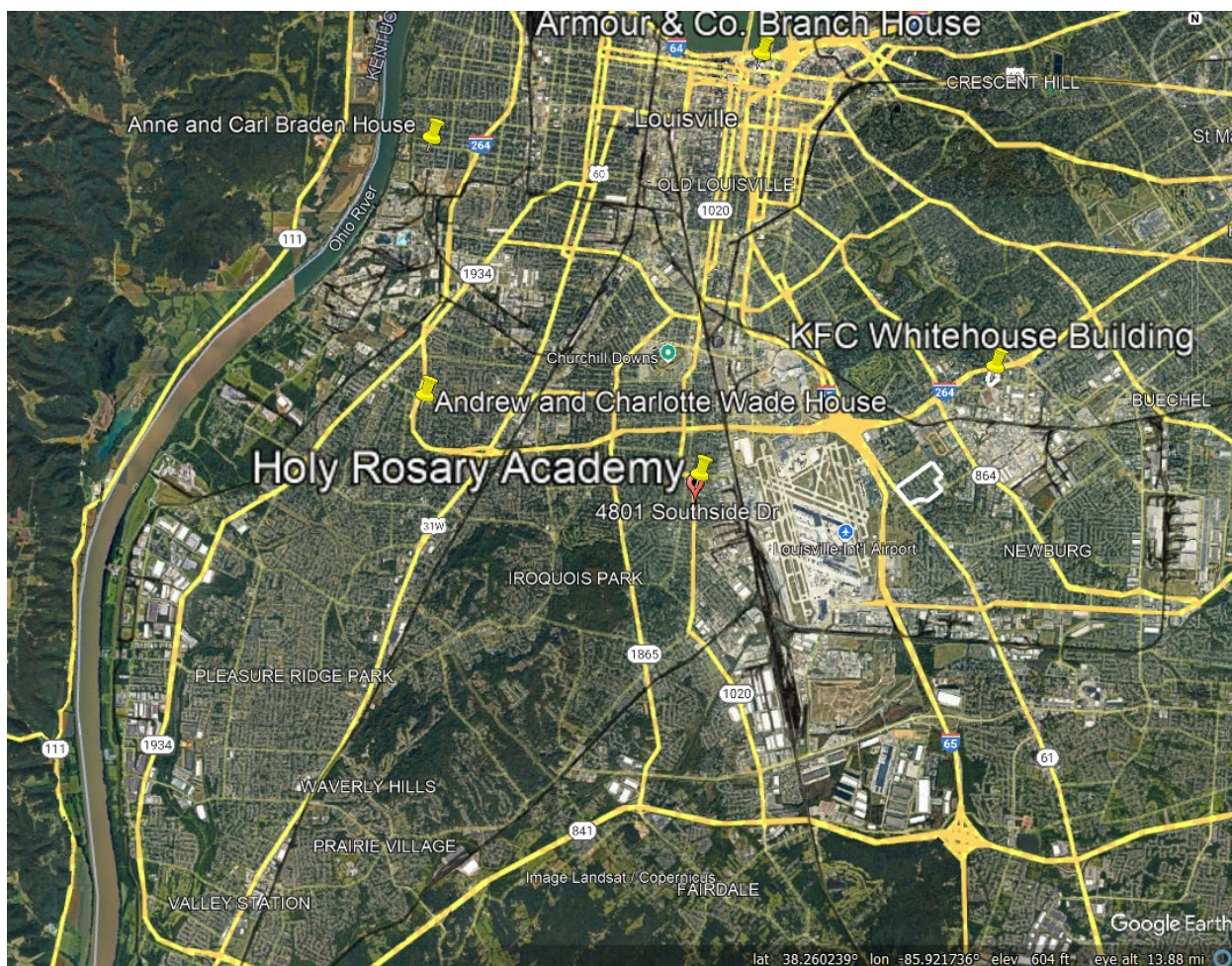
## Holy Rosary Academy

Name of Property

## Jefferson County, Kentucky

County and State

- 7 of 17: View of the south wing, facing east.
- 8 of 17: Interior of the cafeteria, facing east.
- 9 of 17: Interior of the cafeteria, facing west
- 10 of 17: Interior classroom, facing east.
- 11 of 17: Interior classroom, facing west.
- 12 of 17: Interior of the gymnasium, facing north.
- 13 of 17: Interior stage, facing east.
- 14 of 17: Interior hallway of former convent, facing south.
- 15 of 17: Representative interior communal space, facing southwest.
- 16 of 17: Rear non-contributing building, facing northwest.
- 17 of 17: Rear non-contributing building, facing northeast.



**Large area map showing location of Holy Rosary Academy in relation to recent National Register listings and the wider Metro Louisville area. The location of National Register listings is indicated by the yellow pin icon.**



Holy Rosary Academy  
Name of Property

Jefferson County, Kentucky  
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