

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name St. Louis, Besancon, Historic District

other names/site number 003-382-57001-7, St. Louis Church, Bengancon Church

2. Location

street & number 15529-15535 East Lincoln Highway N/A not for publication

city or town New Haven vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Allen code 003 zip code 46774

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Patricia R. Kalish

8/1/95

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

State of Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain): _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

St. Louis, Besancon, Historic District

Allen Co., IN

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
5	1	buildings
1	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
6	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: Religious Facility

RELIGION: Church-related Residence

RELIGION: Church School

FUNERARY: Cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: Religious Facility

RELIGION: Church-related Residence

RELIGION: Church School

FUNERARY: Cemetery

RECREATION & CULTURE: Sports Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Gothic

LATE VICTORIAN: Queen Anne

LATE 19th & EARLY 20th C. AMERICAN MOVEMENTS:

(See Continuation Sheet 7.1)

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: Limestone

walls STUCCO

BRICK

roof STONE: Slate

other METAL: Tin

ASBESTOS

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

ETHNIC HERITAGE: European

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

Period of Significance

c. 1840-1943

Significant Dates

1870

1893, 1923

1915, c. 1940

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Sallier, Frank (builder of church)

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

ARCH, Inc. Fort Wayne, IN

St. Louis, Bensencon, Historic District
Name of Property

Allen Co., IN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 10 AC.

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	6713220	4546230
Zone	Easting	Northing	
2			

3			
Zone	Easting	Northing	
4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Phyllis G. Brockmyer & St. Louis Historical Association

organization ARCH, Inc. date 19 July 1994

street & number 437 East Berry Street telephone 219/426-5117

city or town Fort Wayne state IN zip code 46802

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Bishop, Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend

street & number 1103 South Calhoun Street telephone 219/422-4611

city or town Fort Wayne state IN zip code 46801

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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7.1

Architectural Classification (Continued)

MODERNE MOVEMENT: Moderne

Materials (Continued)

foundation CONCRETE

walls WOOD: Weatherboard

CONCRETE

roof ASPHALT

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The St. Louis, Besancon, Parish consists of five buildings and cemetery facing south on old Lincoln Highway. This important early trail was also known as Ridge Road or Sugar Ridge Road, later enumerated as U. S. 30 and the Lincoln Highway. These buildings represent a complete rural parish cluster of associated buildings, the most intact French ethnic settlement grouping in rural Allen County and the State of Indiana. The early 1840s French Catholic settlement of New France, later Besancon, radiates from this site in sections 15 and 22 of Jefferson Township, and spills over into Jackson and Adams Townships. The tall 1870 Gothic Revival church with center steeple can be seen from the new four-lane U.S. 30 to the south, looming on the flat landscape, prominent as a small Chartres (Photo. 1). Houses adjacent to the cemetery and school comprise an unincorporated village. Extant commercial buildings, including a gas station and motel, are remnants from the early highway era and are now residences or storage. An open wheat field is across the road from the cemetery.

St. Louis Church

Parish records show the current church building was in service by 1870, having been built around the first log church so that services could continue uninterrupted. The cornerstone was laid in 1871, and records show the church was built by Frank Sallier. No architect or designer is recorded but it is commonly attributed to Rev. August Adam, the pastor at the time. Rev. Adam built the Academy of the Sacred Heart and St. Vincent de Paul Church and rectory in St. Joseph Township, Allen County, circa 1864. St. Vincent de Paul was another rural French parish beginning circa 1840.

The Gothic Revival Church (Photo. 1) is a basilican plan with polygonal apse chapel wall with corner sacristies (Photo. 8) similar to the parish church of Bree, Wexford, England, attributed to Pugin. A projecting center steeple divides the symmetrical gable front of 3 bays on the south wall (Photos. 4 & 6). Side walls have 5 bays divided by projecting buttresses (Photo. 7).

The church has a coursed rock face ashlar foundation with smooth ashlar watertable and partial dug cellar. Originally of common bond brick (Appendix B) burned across the road in a wood-fired kiln, the load-bearing walls were stuccoed in 1923 to imitate coursed ashlar, after the brick was reportedly disintegrating. Referred to as "shamrock", the covering cost \$6,000. The stucco treatment resulted in some loss of detail on the corbel tables and gothic arch lintels, originally with brick voussoirs. The church originally cost \$10,000 to build and was financed by each family contributing a calf, branded by Father Adam and sold at a public sale. Parishioners also furnished timber, reportedly much of it was white ash.

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The buildings are outlined by East Lincoln Highway to the south, a wide treelined driveway to the recreation hall on the west, a cemetery fence on the east, and playground and playing fields to the north extending to the agricultural fields, 10 acres in all.

The high pitch gable front roof, originally slate, was covered in asbestos shingles in 1944. The spire is covered in stamped metal in a fishscale pattern (Photo. 6). A gilded cross and globe top the spire. The compound arch entry portal, lintels and sills, buttress caps, and watertables are of smooth ashlar, original to the church.

The projecting, five-part square steeple has a Gothic compound arched entry portal with archivolt, with Perpendicular Style cross and foliated caps. Original oak double doors were refinished in 1973 when eleven coats of paint were removed. A large Gothic-shaped transom light of stained glass contains a trinity of trefoil lights within a circle of wood tracery (Photo. 20). Above the entry is a tall, four-section Gothic arch stained glass window with fine wood tracery. Directly above, the stone nameplate, "St. Louis," rests between the roundel window with cruciform tracery, brick corbelling, and the louvred belfry. This is capped by the square bellcast spire with chamfered corners

On each side of the tower is a tall, narrow lancet arch window with a trefoil and wood tracery with smooth ashlar sills. The side facades repeat the cinque configuration of the tower and chapel wall, with five tall, thin lancet windows (Photo. 7). The tripart wood tracery is unaltered in the windows. The east facade has a door in the south bay leading to the cemetery and used in early church burials.

The interior of the church (Photo. 19), altered in a post-Vatican II fashion with new altar facing the congregation, retains the original ceiling, balcony and windows. The ceiling appears to be an unusual hammer beam roof with only the lower brackets exposed--the hammer beam, curved pendant post and hammer brace. The upper section is plaster-covered, repeating the Gothic arch form. No prototype for this unique ceiling treatment has been found.

The original tall lights repeat a painted Gothic tracery pattern with foliated design topped with tracery cross. Shield nameplates include the French names of the donors--Voirol, Pepe, Girardot, Boitet, Monnot, Pailloz and others (Photo. 22). Lights of primary colors are in the borders. The four evangelists, identified in French: Luc, Marc, Jean and Mathieu, are cinquefoil transom lights high in the apse wall. The center (fifth) window, hidden by the altar, is a donor window from Father Benoit, the mission priest who built the Cathedral in Fort Wayne and served here. Father Benoit was a native of the Besancon area. Saint Louis is depicted in the cinquefoil window above Father Benoit's name. The apse, tower and entry transom lights are brilliantly

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Colored and detailed. There is no record of the artist or studio, but they are original to the church and are imitative of medieval French windows of floreated design.

St. Louis Rectory

The 2½ story Queen Anne rectory (Photos. 15-17), built 1893, sits directly west of the church. The asymmetrical plan has a coursed ashlar foundation, high pitch slate hip and cross gable roof with 3 gables with returns. The common bond, load-bearing brick walls have corbelling below the eaves and three tall chimneys, including an interior chimney.

An early wood porch that wrapped across the front and down the east side (Appendix C) was replaced by a Craftsman style wrap porch on square brick columns with closed brick rail, smooth ashlar trim and wide cornice in 1923. The wrought and cast iron fence, with crosses on the posts, is marked Enterprize Foundry and Fence Company, Indianapolis. It runs in front of the rectory and cemetery; originally it surrounded the cemetery. A turn-of-the-century photograph (Appendix C) shows a wood picket fence running from the rectory past the cemetery.

The rectory has two entries off the porch with multi-light doors and 1-light transoms. Various sized windows are one-over-one double hung sashes with segmental arches and flat brick lintels. Large 2/2 double hung sash windows with multi-light lunette transoms, separated by a brick panel, dominate each gabled wall. All windows have smooth ashlar sills (Photos. 15 & 16).

A brick-faced garage is attached on the northwest corner (Photo. 16), enlarged from an early garage. An enclosed back porch with casement windows, replaces a small wood porch on the northeast corner (Photo. 17).

The interior has minimal alterations although the stairs was moved from the north door entry off the porch to the east side of the house. The two south rooms are now used for Parish office space. The rectory has original woodwork, hardwood floors, hardware, and ceiling height.

St. Louis Academy

The 1915 brick school replaced a frame school which burned, along with the convent house, in January 1915. The original school and convent house (Appendix D) were built in 1897 at a cost of \$4,000. The school is a 2 story T-plan with concrete foundation, above-ground basement with an approximately 18 inch smooth ashlar watertable, brick running bond walls and low-pitch, slate hip roof with

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wide, overhanging eaves. Facing south, the front facade has 3 bays. Three side bays are on the east and west walls, and the wing (Photos. 9, 13, 14). A Craftsman corner porch, with first floor and basement entries, are on the northeast corner ell.

The shaped parapet entrance has double doors with sidelights and a carved limestone nameplate, "19 St. Louis Academy 15" above the door. A multi-light lunette transom is recessed in a round arch portal with limestone keystone and brick voussoirs. The entry is topped with corner battlements, a center cross and smooth ashlar limestone trim. Small windows flank the entrance, lighting the center staircase. A cornerstone on the southeast corner of the building is inscribed in Latin, "Deo et Patrie". Flat brick lintels and smooth ashlar sills remain. The original multi-light windows have been replaced with small lights for energy conservation.

The school is still in use for grades 1-6. A wide central stairway leads to the classroom floors on both sides of the stairwell. Inside the entry is an oak multilight double door with double transom, forming a vestibule. Pierced cast iron stairs (Photo. 23) lead to the second story on each side. The basement serves as the cafeteria and restrooms are on the west side. The school has the warm, open aura of a small rural school.

Recreation Hall

Built in 1948, the recreation hall is determined non-contributing by age. The walls are smooth concrete with impressed surface lines, including a cross, on the front facade. The casement windows on the five bay facade have been covered on two bays flanking the entry. The building sits north of the school, facing south, and is used as a gymnasium and for community activities, including dances, bingo and suppers. An open gable roof shed has recently been attached to the east side for picnics and covered outdoor activities (Photo. 18).

St. Louis Convent House

The convent house was also built in 1915, following the same fire which destroyed the original school (Appendix D). The convent house is a large, 2½ story Craftsman Four Square Style building with an added wing, creating a T-plan. Although added over two decades later, the addition materials are well matched. On a concrete foundation with basement and smooth ashlar watertable, running bond brick walls, the house has its original slate hip roof with gabled clapboard dormer.

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Sitting north of, and sited between the rectory and the church, the house has two porches on square brick columns and closed brick rail with smooth ashlar trim. One porch is on the southwest corner, the other on the southeast (Photo. 10). A small enclosed rear porch, covered with insulbrick, is on the northwest corner. The southwest porch has been infilled with casement windows.

Lights are original single, paired or triple 4/1, 6/1 and 8/1 double hung sash windows of varying sizes in an asymmetrical plan. Openings have flat brick lintels and smooth ashlar sills. Three doors lead from the porches, plus a flush west side door (Photo. 11). Metal finials and a through-roof chimney are original. Used today as a child care center, the convent house shows minimum alteration.

The interior has the original room arrangement with two-part stairs with landing on the southwest side of the house near the entry. Rooms have plain plastered and painted walls with original pine woodwork and hardwood floors. The kitchen on the northwest side of the house appears original. The upstairs consists of small bedrooms and bathrooms; most are unfurnished and unused, although not altered and in good condition.

Old St. Louis Cemetery

The cemetery pre-dates the church. Records indicate some graves were covered when the 1870 larger church was built. The cemetery is the Old World type with burial ground in close physical relationship to the church, in a walled-in manner. St. Louis' markers are within 12' of the church wall on the east and north sides (Photo. 9). The cemetery is of older stones, including many in the French language. Two near-life size religious sculptures form a memorial on a cedar-shaded knoll on the northeast corner of the church (Photo. 19).

One of the most striking monuments is the above-ground mausoleum of the Berthaud Family topped by a limestone angel. Local lore says the Berthaud father left France hurriedly after killing a man in a fight. The family was always reclusive with drawn blinds and little social mingling in a very social community. Not marrying and leaving no heirs, the Berthauds built a large family mausoleum. Their brick house is visible one-half mile east of the church.

This cemetery became full in the early 20th century and a new cemetery was opened in 1918, across Berthaud Road east in Section 16, not contiguous to this property.

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Garage

A circa 1940 wood frame garage sits northeast of the school adjacent to the playground. It has a hip roof of asphalt shingle, exposed rafters, shiplap siding, two overhead doors and a single walk-in door. Two square windows are closed on the north and south sides. It is used for storage.

The buildings create an integral unit aided by mature hardwood trees which line East Lincoln Highway and surround the cemetery, church and rectory, plus the rear yard of the convent house and west drive of the school. The plantings, thus envelope the buildings. The cemetery has traditional mature pine trees, as well. The area between buildings is also divided by picket fence and hedgerows.

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St. Louis, Besancon, District is comprised of the essential grouping of a rural parish: Church, rectory, school, convent house and cemetery in a physical complex. A 1948 recreation hall is non-contributing. The district is collectively significant for architecture, as some of the most important rural buildings in the county; for ethnic associations with dominant French Catholic affiliation; and for early exploration and settlement in the former Black Swamp region. St. Louis meets the National Register Criteria A and C and Consideration A.

Under Criteria C, the parish buildings, although of a different styles, retain the original architectural integrity and use. Under Criteria A the district is related to not only Allen County, but the State of Indiana's ethnic history as one of the largest French settlements of the 19th century and today.

Architectural Significance

St. Louis, Besancon, Church is an excellent example of a Gothic Revival church, perhaps more influenced by English Perpendicular prototypes than rural French models which had stockier proportions. Built under Father August Adam, it was possibly his design. He is given as the church designer at St. Vincent's, mentioned previously, shown as a board and batten Gothic Revival Church with stylistic parallels to St. Louis. In the 1880 Atlas of Allen County, Indiana, St. Vincent's has 5 side bays, 3 front bays, a 5-part steeple, and tall bell-cast or flared spire (compare Appendix F with Appendix C).

Father Adam, although bearing an English name, was recruited in France by Father Edward Sorin, founder of Notre Dame University. The Sacred Heart Academy adjacent to St. Vincent's Church and also noted as built by Father Adam, advertised classes taught in the French language. Father Julian Benoit, builder of Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne in 1859-60, is also listed as attending St. Louis Parish from 1857-1864 and later gave \$500 to the church, probably going to the stained glass window which bears his name.

The repetition of the units of fives and threes are aesthetically pleasing, as well as widely used in Christian imagery: three representing the Trinity and five representative of the wounds on the Cross. The five unit is used on the number of side facade bays and lights, Evangelists and Saint Louis transom windows in the apse, exterior chapel wall and number of tower sections. The Trinity is represented in the number of front facade bays,

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repeated in the Trinity transom of the entry with trefoil windows of the Father and Son and tracery. The light for the Holy Ghost is deep red and there is not record of it ever containing an image. The windows on the side bay facades also end in a trefoil arch, creating a cross in the transom.

The partially exposed hammer beam ceiling is another unique feature and more commonly seen in English churches. It is perhaps possible Father Adam was familiar with the work of Augustus Welby Pugin in the 1830s in Europe. Pugin wrote of the purity of Gothic revivalism and, as a Catholic convert, made a public avowal of Catholicism while building churches for the Church of England. Pugin's work, through the Cambridge Camden Society, of course influenced the great Gothic Revival architect in America, Richard Upjohn. One is drawn to compare the proportions of the small, vernacular St. Louis with Trinity Church in New York--what one might call a humble descendant. Variations of arch-braced roofs can be seen in the work of John Notman as well.

St. Louis remains an outstanding example of the Gothic Revival Style, American in its interpretation but, nevertheless French in its origins and relationship to medieval ideals of architecture and the glory of God by its worshippers.

The Rectory and Convent House remain significant examples of Queen Anne and early 20th Century American Movement styles. Functional religious residences, they did not contain stained or leaded glass, ornate woodwork or carved details. The convent house, for example, has pine woodwork. They do, however, retain their integrity and use in the Parish.

Significance for Ethnic Heritage: French Catholic

French Catholic immigrants began settling in Allen County in the 1840s, reportedly coming via St. Louis Parish in Louisville, Ohio, near Canton, Stark County. By the 1870s there were rural agricultural parishes at St. Vincent's in St. Joseph and Washington Townships; St. Louis, Besancon, in Jefferson Township; St. Michael's or Pierre Settlement in St. Joseph Township, and St. Leo in Cedar Creek Township. Today, only St. Louis, Besancon, remains predominantly an agricultural parish whose ancestors came from France. Although Jefferson Township was approximately 70% French by 1880, their settlement is not mentioned in the 1880 Atlas which included township histories.

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Aurette Violette of the History Department of Indiana University-Purdue University, Fort Wayne, who has a forthcoming publication on the French in Indiana with the Indiana Historical Society, notes St. Louis settlement is an exception to the common view of French immigrants as characterized by Patrice Louis Rene Higonnet in the Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups. Higonnet describes them as, "middle class, urban, antitraditionalists," stating further that since the American Revolution French immigrants have tended to be isolated individuals, quickly assimilated into the fabric of American life.

Violette found most of the French immigrants who settled in Jefferson Township beginning in the 1840s originated in eastern France in the France-Comte, an area comprising the modern departments of Doubs, Haute-Saone and Jura; some also came from the neighboring French-speaking cantons of Switzerland. Most settlers had belonged in France to the Diocese of Besancon.

Professor Violette notes,

St. Louis parish is unique in Indiana and perhaps the United States. It is the only parish in Indiana settled exclusively by French immigrants which has retained its original rural character and a congregation made up largely of descendants of the original settlers. Architecturally, St. Louis Church is the only remaining example of a type of Gothic structure, French in its inspiration, which was once typical of other French settlements. While all structures on the property have been remodeled over the years to meet changing needs, they have nonetheless retained their architectural integrity.

Exploration/Settlement Significance

while permanent settlement in Allen County ~~did not occur until after~~ ^{red} *before the* removal of the Miami Indians to Kansas, ~~but~~ occurred even later in Jefferson and Jackson Townships because of the Great Black Swamp. Lying between two ridges left by the glacial melting of the last ice age, this area was impenetrable and the only area to see settlement in the 1830s was in the northwest corner of the Township paralleling the Maumee River, later route of the Wabash and Erie Canal.

Early land was purchased by speculators, many from the East and New England, who waited for permanent settlement. Original plat entries show two quarter-sections of Section 15 were owned by George W. and William G. Ewing, early fur traders and speculators who owned land in every township in the County. French fur traders were among the first Europeans in the Fort Wayne area, but the

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majority were not permanent settlers. One exception was Francis Camparet and his family who came to Fort Wayne from Detroit in 1820, opening an Indian trading post. He went on to be involved as a merchant, contractor of the proposed Fort Wayne-Chicago canal, county commissioner, grand jury member and other posts. The first mass was said in his home by Rev. Theodore Badin and the purchase of the land for St. Augustine Church, later the Cathedral, was made in his name. At this time Fort Wayne was in the Vincinnes Diocese.

Comparet may have been involved with the settlement of immigrant groups as well. The land in St. Joseph Township where St. Vincent's was built was the site of the Comparet and Klingler mill, a water-powered mill on a stream called Becket's (also spelled Bequette) Run. On an early 1860 plat map his sons' company on Columbia Street, Comparet, Hubbell & Company, owned Section 22 in Jefferson Township, across the road from the St. Louis Church.

The Ridge Road, originally a footpath, was cut through by members of the township in 1837 and 1838. Joseph Dodane had an original plat of 80 acres in the southeast quarter of Section 16. It was in his log home the first mass was said in 1846. Land was given for the church in 1851 and a log church was built which was used until the present church was built around it.

Griswold notes in his 1917 Pictorial History of Fort Wayne, Indiana:

About 1840, a colony of French immigrants began to gather in Jefferson township, near the center forming a settlement known as "New France" or "French Settlement." The land they took was largely swamp, but they have made it equal to the best in Allen County. Roussey, Reuille, Pepe, Grosjean, Girardot and Dupeyron are prominent names among this group and their residence in the township dates as far back as when there were no roads in their part of Jefferson, and the winter wolves howled around their doors at night...1

Today only St. Louis, Besancon, retains historic and architecutural integrity. St. Vincent's is a suburb with farms cut into subdivisions; only the cemeteries remain at St. Michael and St. Leo parishes.

1

Griswold, Bert G., The Pictorial History of Fort Wayne, Indiana. Vol. I, p. 643.

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Verbal Boundary:

1851: Four acres of land beginning at the south end corner of the west half of southwest quarter of Section 15, Township 30, Range 14 east, thence north 35 rods, thence west 18 rods and 28/100, thence south 35 rods, thence east 18 rods and 28/100 to place of beginning.

1889: Commencing at the South East corner of the West half of the South West quarter of Section fifteen (15) Township thirty (30) North, Range Fourteen (14) East thence running forth sixty two (62) rods; thence West Twenty six (26) Rods; thence South to the Fort Wayne and Van Wert Road; thence running East along said Road to the place of beginning excepting the four (4) acres thereof known as the Catholic Church Lot described in the deed recorded in Book M page 502 of the Deed Records of said County, leaving six acres hereby conveyed.

Boundary Justification:

The ten acres described above represent the historic property of St. Louis, Besancon, Parish and all historic buildings. Property not included in the nomination is a new cemetery located approximately one-half mile east. There are no buildings at this site.

FORT WAYNE (JUNC. U.S. 27 & 33) 7 MI.
3966 H 38 2 1 MI. 10 U.S. 24
(FORT WAYNE EAST)

2.5 MI. TO U.
NEW HAVEN

NEW HAVEN 0.9 MI.

