

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

received APR 9 1984

date entered

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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

## 1. Name

historic St. Mary of the Assumption Church

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number 501 West Magnolia Ave.

N/A not for publication

city, town Fort Worth

N/A vicinity of

state Texas

code 048

county Tarrant

code 439

## 3. Classification

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

## 4. Owner of Property

name Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth

street & number 411 East Bolt Street

city, town Fort Worth

N/A vicinity of

state Texas 76110

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. County Clerk's Office

street & number Tarrant County Courthouse

city, town Fort Worth

state Texas

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Sites Inventory

has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date February 1983

federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Texas Historical Commission

city, town Austin

state Texas

## 7. Description

### Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

St. Mary of the Assumption Church is a Romanesque Revival structure built of mottled red brick with limestone trim. The church features an asymmetrically placed bell tower and a triple entrance portal. The large, round-arch window openings are filled with German stained glass which focuses on the mysteries of the life of Christ.

St. Mary of the Assumption Church is situated to the south of the central business district of Fort Worth, and is oriented along a north-south axis. Rectangular in shape, the church measures approximately 53 feet in width and is 113 feet in length. The main gable of the north elevation of the church is detailed by the triple entrance portal formed by three round arches which spring from Tuscan columns set in antis, between the flanking piers. This entrance portal is of limestone which is also used for much of the exterior architectural detailing. Centered above the entrance is a rose window divided into twelve sections. The tracery of this window is of limestone. The peak of the facade gable is embellished by a blind arcade using the mottled brick of the exterior walls. The northeast corner of the church is dominated by the bell tower, which features a blind arcade that reads as a continuation of the same element on the facade gable. Above two limestone belt courses is the openwork section of the tower, which features a pair of round-arch openings on each side, framed by a single round arch that is divided by a limestone column. The tower is capped by a blind arcade which terminates in a corbel table and is covered with a pyramidal, hipped roof with a cross at its peak.

The east and west elevations of the church are divided into six bays by brick piers. The northernmost bay of these elevations does not contain a full-length window, although the upper part of the round arch is detailed above a limestone belt course.

The remaining five bays are nearly filled by the large, round-arch panels of stained glass which make a major contribution to the character of the church's interior. The muntin pattern of these windows divides the lower section into three vertical panels, the central panel being twice the width of the flanking sections. The center section of each window is divided into twelve panels, with the center sections being far wider than those which flank them. The round-arch, upper section of each window bay features a circular window defined within the arch.

The apsidal south elevation of the church combines square and cylindrical forms in its massing, with the apse itself taking the form of a cylinder flanked on each side by the square masses of the two sacristies. The apse's exterior is capped off by a corbel table, and the stepped gable above the apse features a blind arcade similar in detailing to those noted on the north facade.

Access to the church is through a narthex which is entered by one of the three doors of the north portal. Above the central door is a sculpted roundel of the Virgin Mary, with similar roundels depicting St. Joseph and St. Vincent de Paul set above the two flanking doors. The choir loft and the adjacent organ loft are set to the north end of the church. The choir loft is supported by a pair of Corinthian columns. The nave of the church is approximately 80 feet in length, and the great barrel vault which frames the interior of the church rises to a height of 35 feet above the floor of the church. The seating is divided into four sections by three aisles, the largest running down the center of the nave. The pews have a seating capacity of 600 parishioners.

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The most notable features of the interior are the ten large, stained-glass windows set into the east and west walls. These windows, fabricated by the stained glass workshop of H. Mueller in Munich, focus on the iconography of the mysteries of the life of Christ. The windows on the east elevation depict the Joyful Mysteries: the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Nativity, the Presentation, and the Finding of the Christ Child in the Temple. The west wall contains the windows depicting the Glorious Mysteries: the Resurrection, the Ascension, the Descent of the Holy Spirit, the Assumption, and the Crowning of the Blessed Mother, Queen of Heaven. The roundel sections atop the arches which frame these windows depict the Twelve Apostles, with two of the Apostles being set into the half-openings next to the choir loft. The rose window of the north elevation features the face of the Virgin Mary in its center, with the radiating panels containing angels. The stained-glass content of the church continues into the apse, with nine panels each depicting a saint, arranged in groups of three behind the altar. Above the main stained-glass windows of the east and west walls are a series of twelve medallions which were painted on canvas by the Danish artist Harry Larsen in 1944. These medallions are dedicated to five of the deceased priests of the parish, three of the original church trustees including City Fire Chief W.E. Beideker, with the remaining medallions devoted to Roman Catholic symbols, including St. Benedict's Medal and the Chalice and the Cross.

The Communion rail separates the altar from the nave of the church. The rail is made of Carrara marble carved with sheaves of wheat and bunches of grapes as ornamentation on its piers. The rail rests upon a base of black marble. The main altar and the side altars are also of Carrara marble, with the main altar being semicircular in form, with kneeling angels set at the corners of the altar rail. The main altar is focused upon a domed baldachino supported by four marble columns. The side altar to the left features a marble statue of St. Mary, while St. Joseph appears in sculpted form above the side altar to the right. The figures depicting the Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Vincent de Paul are set to either side of the main altar. These four statues were part of the original church fittings and were rescued from the fire of 1922, which consumed the frame church that preceded the present structure.

The ceiling of the apse is decorated by a mural depicting the Assumption of the Virgin Mary into Heaven, flanked on each side by a host of angels. The organ, situated behind the choir loft, was donated to the church in 1928 by John Laneri, and was manufactured by the Kilgen Organ Company. It is the largest operational electropneumatic organ in Fort Worth.

The church has undergone minimal alterations since its construction. The single flight of stone steps to the north elevation has been replaced by more gently sloped stairs and ramps that parallel the facade of the church. The ten large windows of the east and west elevations are now protected by additional exterior glazing, which does not impair the impact of these windows on the interior of the church. The only modification of note to the interior comes in the loss of a pair of angels which were painted on the panels that flank the round-arch opening above the main altar. The church complex includes separate education buildings on separate lots of record, which are of more recent construction and are not included in the present nomination of the church proper.

# 8. Significance

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

**Specific dates** 1923-24

**Builder/Architect** Sanguinet, Staats, and Hedrick

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The fourth Roman Catholic church to be erected in the city of Fort Worth, St. Mary of the Assumption, was built to serve the spiritual needs of the city's rapidly growing southside area. The second church to be built on this site, the present St. Mary's is an intact example of the ecclesiastical designs of the noted Fort Worth architectural firm of Sanguinet, Staats, and Hedrick, the city's most prominent architects from 1900 to 1935.

Following the establishment of the Fort Worth Stockyards in 1901, the city's population increased at a most dramatic and unprecedented pace, the number of residents almost tripling within the next decade. During these years of rapid growth and prosperity when Fort Worth emerged as a major modern commercial and market center, the city expanded outward in every direction, but most notably to the south of the central business district. By 1907, therefore, as the city stretched southward supported by electric traction lines, area Catholic officials like Monsignor Robert Nolan of St. Patrick's Church in downtown Fort Worth and Reverend Edward Dunne, Bishop of Dallas, recognized the pressing need for a parish church to minister to the spiritual and material needs of the faithful in the newly established neighborhoods on the city's fast developing Southside.

But credit was tight that year due to the Panic of 1907 and the ensuing economic depression. Monsignor Nolan at length arranged a loan from an Amsterdam bank so that land could be purchased and a parish church constructed. Thus, the original St. Mary of the Assumption Church, a modest frame structure, was built in 1908 at the intersection of Magnolia and Jennings avenues, in the midst of the new Southside residential development.

Under the guidance of a Vincentian priest, Reverend Edward F. Park, the people of the parish gathered there to worship and celebrate Mass during the next decade. The mission of the church was briefly interrupted in 1918 when a fire swept through the little sanctuary and damaged most of the structure. The parishioners promptly rebuilt and enlarged the church, installing a large new pipe organ and four beautiful Carrara marble statues.

Four years later disaster struck on the hot afternoon of August 21, 1922. That day a fire which began in the choir loft quickly spread and engulfed the entire church. Only altar vestments, statues, and sacred vessels could be saved before the little frame structure was totally consumed by flames. For the next two years Reverend Anthony Malloy, Pastor of St. Mary's, held services and celebrated mass in the basement of the nearby Laneri High School, located at 1400 South Hemphill.

Determined once again not only to rebuild the church on the same site, but also to construct a more imposing edifice, Father Malloy and his parishioners retained the noted and accomplished Fort Worth architectural firm of Sanguinet, Staats, and Hedrick to design such a structure. Marshall R. Sanguinet and Carl Staats had already become recognized throughout the Southwest as master architects, the long list of their design

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work including some of the most enduring architectural treasures in Fort Worth. Among them are the Knights of Pythias Hall (1901), the Flatiron Building (1907), the Burk Burnett Building (1914), and the W.T. Waggoner Building and Neil P. Anderson Building (1920), and the Texas Hotel (1921). Moreover, Sanguinet and Staats were also responsible for designing several of the city's churches; the Old Broadway Baptist Church (A Classical Revival structure destroyed by fire in 1907), the Gothic Revival St. Andrews Episcopal Church (1910), and the Classical Revival Mt. Gilead Baptist Church (1912).

In 1922, their associate Wyatt C. Hedrick had yet to establish himself as a recognized master, his most notable achievements coming within the next decade with the construction of the Fort Worth Club Building (1925), Texas and Pacific Terminal (1931), and the Fort Worth Main Post Office (1933).

Ground was soon broken and by the summer of 1924, the beautiful red-brick, Romanesque Church at 501 West Magnolia was completed, the first Mass being celebrated there on July 20, 1924. It is likely that parishioner John B. Laneri, Southside area merchant and philanthropist, influenced the choice of the Romanesque style, for which he had a great appreciation.

In 1928 the Reverend Aemelian Schmitt of the Order of St. Benedict came to Fort Worth to serve as Pastor of St. Mary's. A native of Germany, Father Schmitt was responsible for the commissioning of the murals which decorate the interior of the church. Father Schmitt was best known for his interest and involvement in the cause of parochial education in Fort Worth, being chiefly responsible for the raising of funds for the construction of St. Mary's Parochial School, which was completed in 1946, and still stands adjacent to the church on South Jennings Avenue. In appreciation for his efforts, Father Schmitt was granted the title "Very Reverend" by Bishop John Lynch of Dallas. The church finally obtained a set of bells for its tower in 1956 as a result of the work of Father Damian Wewers. The bells were originally made for Sacred Heart Church in Muenster Texas, but because of an error in the design of that church, were never installed and were purchased for St. Mary's. St. Mary of the Assumption Church continues to fulfill its mission of serving its Southside parish, and will celebrate its 75th anniversary as a congregation in 1984.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Williams, Madeline Crimmins. n.d. St. Mary of the Assumption Catholic Church: The Parish and its People, 1908-1968. Fort Worth: Evans Press.  
 Fort Worth Star Telegram, Oct. 1, 1944.  
 "Research Data, Ft. Worth and Tarrant County," Texas Writer's Project, Works Project Administration, unpublished manuscript, 1941, Fort Worth Public Library.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Fort Worth, Texas

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	4
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6	5	6	4	9	0
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3	6	2	2	4	3	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

B 

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 Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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H 

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**Verbal boundary description and justification** The property is located at the corner of Magnolia Avenue and Jennings Avenue on the South side of Fort Worth, being exactly: Moodie Blk. 2, Lot 1R1.

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Catherine Kenney Carlton, D.O. Secretary of St. Mary's Parish Council.  
 (with John Ferguson, THC)

organization St. Mary of the Assumption Parish Council date 1984

street & number 2505 Ryan Place Drive

telephone (817) 924-3420

city or town Fort Worth

state Texas 76110

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*Curtis J. Purnell*

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 30 April 1984

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register  
 Entered in the  
 National Register

*J. Allores Byers*  
 Keeper of the National Register

date 5/10/84

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

St. Mary of the Assumption Church  
Tarrant County  
TEXAS

Working No. APR 9 1984  
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/5/85  
Date Due: 5-10-84 / 5-24-84  
Action:  ACCEPT 5/10/84  
 RETURN  
 REJECT  
Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Entered in the  
National Register

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review:  sample  request  appeal  NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria \_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_  
Discipline \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: \_\_\_\_\_ technical corrections cited below  
\_\_\_\_\_ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

7. Description

Condition	Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	date _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	
	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

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**8. Significance**

Period \_\_\_\_\_ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates \_\_\_\_\_ Builder/Architect \_\_\_\_\_

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal boundary description and justification \_\_\_\_\_

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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**12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification**

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_\_ national      \_\_\_\_ state      \_\_\_\_ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature \_\_\_\_\_

title \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

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**13. Other**

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



The CHURCH of ST·MARY of the ASSUMPTION

St. Mary of the Assumption Church  
501 West Magnolia Avenue  
Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

1926 Photographer unknown, Copy of a picture in an  
Altar Society Hostess Reference Book.

Steps were straight down to sidewalk. Wooden parish  
house can be seen behind the church. Looking  
southwest.

Photo 1 of 6



St. Mary of the Assumption Church  
501 West Magnolia Avenue  
Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo by Tommy Hawks, September 9, 1983; neg. on  
file at church

Northeast view of church, front entrance, looking  
southwest.

Photo 2 of 6



St. Mary of the Assumption Church  
501 West Magnolia Avenue  
Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo by Tommy Hawks, September 9, 1983; neg. on  
file at church

East view of the church; looking west.

Photo 3 of 6



St. Mary of the Assumption Church  
501 West Magnolia Avenue  
Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo by Tommy Hawks, September 9, 1983; neg. on  
file at church

Southeast view of the rear and side of the church;  
camera facing northwest.

Photo 4 of 6



St. Mary of the Assumption Church  
501 West Magnolia Avenue  
Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo by Tommy Hawks, September 9, 1983; neg. on  
file at church.

Arches over front entrance of church, north view

Photo 5 of 6



St. Mary of the Assumption Church  
501 West Magnolia Avenue  
Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo by Tommy Hawks, September 9, 1983; neg. on  
file at church.

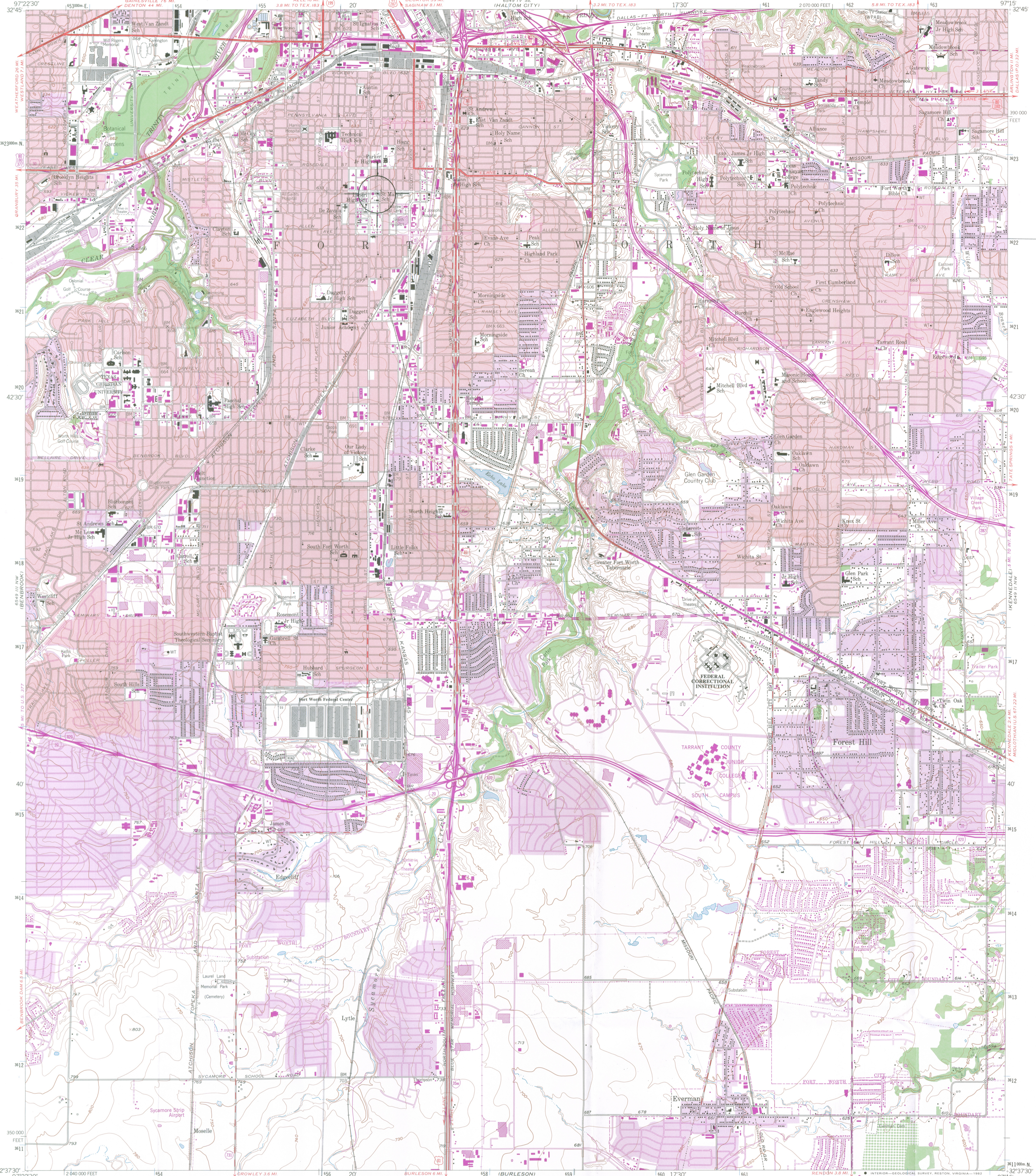
Interior view of church taken from the choir loft.

Photo 6 of 6

ST. MARY OF THE ASSUMPTION CHURCH  
 501 WEST MAGNOLIA AVE.  
 FORT WORTH, TARRANT CO., TEXAS  
 UTM REFERENCE: 14/656490/3622430

UNITED STATES  
 DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

FORT WORTH QUADRANGLE  
 TEXAS-TARRANT CO.  
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
 Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA  
 Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs  
 taken 1952-1954. Field checked 1955  
 Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Texas coordinate  
 system, north central zone. 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator  
 grid ticks, zone 14, shown in blue. 1927 North American Datum  
 To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection  
 lines 10 meters south and 28 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks  
 Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown  
 There may be private inholdings within the boundaries  
 of the National or State reservations shown on this map

Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled from  
 aerial photographs taken 1979 and other sources. This  
 information not field checked. Map edited 1981  
 Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

UTM GRID AND 1981 MAGNETIC NORTH  
 DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
 FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

3297-424

ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
 Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———  
 Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———  
 Interstate Route U.S. Route State Route

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
 NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

FORT WORTH, TEX.  
 N3237.5-W9715.7/5  
 1955  
 PHOTOREVISED 1981  
 DMA 6549 III NE-SERIES V882