

HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI: 1822-1930

BY

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ABSTRACT

Study of the history of the Catholic Church in Kansas City, Missouri from a geographer's perspective can illuminate the city as a whole from a grassroots perspective. This project combines a chronological series of maps showing the boundaries of parishes with parish histories and other archival material to reveal ongoing settlement patterns. Ethnicity is a major topic; secondary foci include how the city grew, the character of particular neighborhoods, and the evolving transportation network.

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Introduction

Religion is a useful tool for geographers seeking to analyze how a city develops and grows. This project explores ways in which the story of Catholics in Kansas City can illuminate the story of the community as a whole. The goal is to use Catholic history to gain insights that otherwise may be ignored or misunderstood. For example, standard histories may ignore why an ethnic group settled in a particular location.¹ Other topics that can be better understood include how the city grew, the character of particular neighborhoods, and the evolving transportation network. Besides providing a historical window into the social geography of Kansas City, I also hope to provide an example of how this type of study can be done for other cities.

Kansas City was typical of America's growing cities in the nineteenth century in that it had a large number of Catholics.² The first settlers in the region were French Catholic fur traders. The first substantial Catholic immigrant group in the region, the Irish, arrived in the early 1850s, followed closely by Germans and then by Italians around the turn of the century. The 1910s saw the arrival of both Poles and Mexicans (Dolan 1985, Doering and Marra 1992).

At the local level Catholics organize themselves into units, called parishes, headed by a priest, who is responsible for their spiritual care.³ In the past, most parishes were assigned based on a geographic region but some were assigned via nationality. National parishes included all members of that nationality, regardless of where they lived in the city. They were created to meet the demands of the

immigrants for a pastor who could preach and hear confessions in their native tongue, as well as to help maintain an ethnic community.⁴ The distinction between territorial and national parishes sometimes was blurred. For example, in many cases the Irish would come to dominate a parish and it might even be known as an “Irish parish” even though it was officially a territorial entity. All parishes in a region are grouped into a unit called a diocese headed by a bishop.

Information Resources

Dioceses maintain archives, and such materials in Kansas City have been fundamental to my research. A published history even exists (Coleman 1992), that describes which nationalities were prominent in each parish.

The archives of the Kansas City diocese, located in the chancery complex at 300 East Thirty-sixth Street, are open to anyone by appointment with the archivist, Father Michael Coleman. No special approval is required for research projects. The archives are locked when he is not present. Father Coleman is flexible and will find time to open the archives, subject to his other commitments as a priest and a canon lawyer. He is also extremely knowledgeable about Catholic history in Kansas City. The archives contain a collection of books that deals with Catholicism in general and with Catholicism in Kansas City, contemporary records of diocesan programs and events, and files on each individual parish. These files include histories written at the time of anniversaries, newspaper articles, correspondence, planning memos, and financial records. Sacramental records for each parish are on microfilm. A significant portion of the archival information deals with planning and finances.

Methods and Techniques

In order to understand and analyze the information in the parish histories, I took a cartographic approach. First, I created a series of maps to depict the construction of new churches, the closing of others, and evolving parish boundaries. These maps, showing the spread of the Catholic population of Kansas City, form the core of the thesis.⁵ Accompanying them is an interpretative narrative covering such topics as background history of the city including key secular and Catholic events, how the city spread, distribution of ethnicities, economic conditions, and transportation networks. Information for this came from the maps themselves supplemented by standard histories, ethnic studies, and Sanborn fire insurance maps. I include the years from 1822 to 1930. In 1822 the first French settlers arrived in the region. The year 1930 was chosen because it was a time when immigration began to slow, the Great Depression halted the growth of the city, and the government began to collect ethnic data at the level of census tracts. This last fact means that church records no longer provided the best method to analyze ethnic distribution.

I also created three charts that display the growth of Catholicism in Kansas City. These charts provide a summary of the periods covered in this project and are a good tool to understand the periods of rapid growth and periods of inactivity by the diocese (Figures 1, 2, and 3).

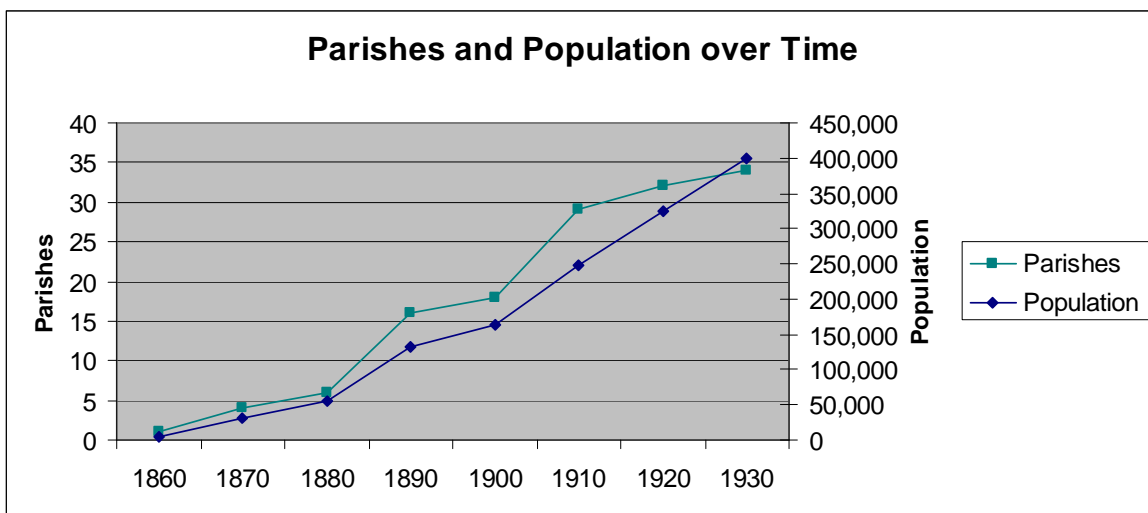


Figure 1 (Coleman 1992)

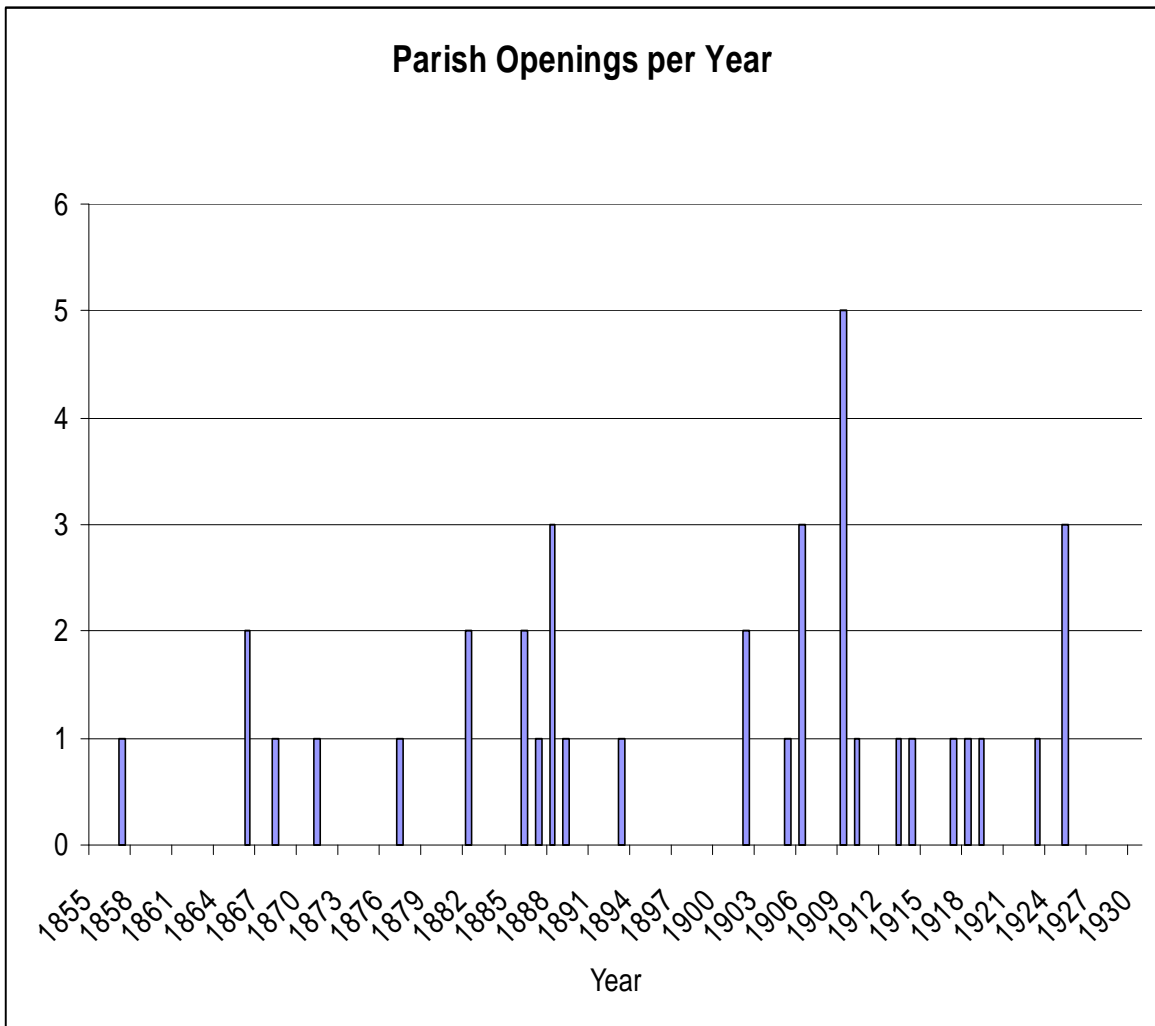


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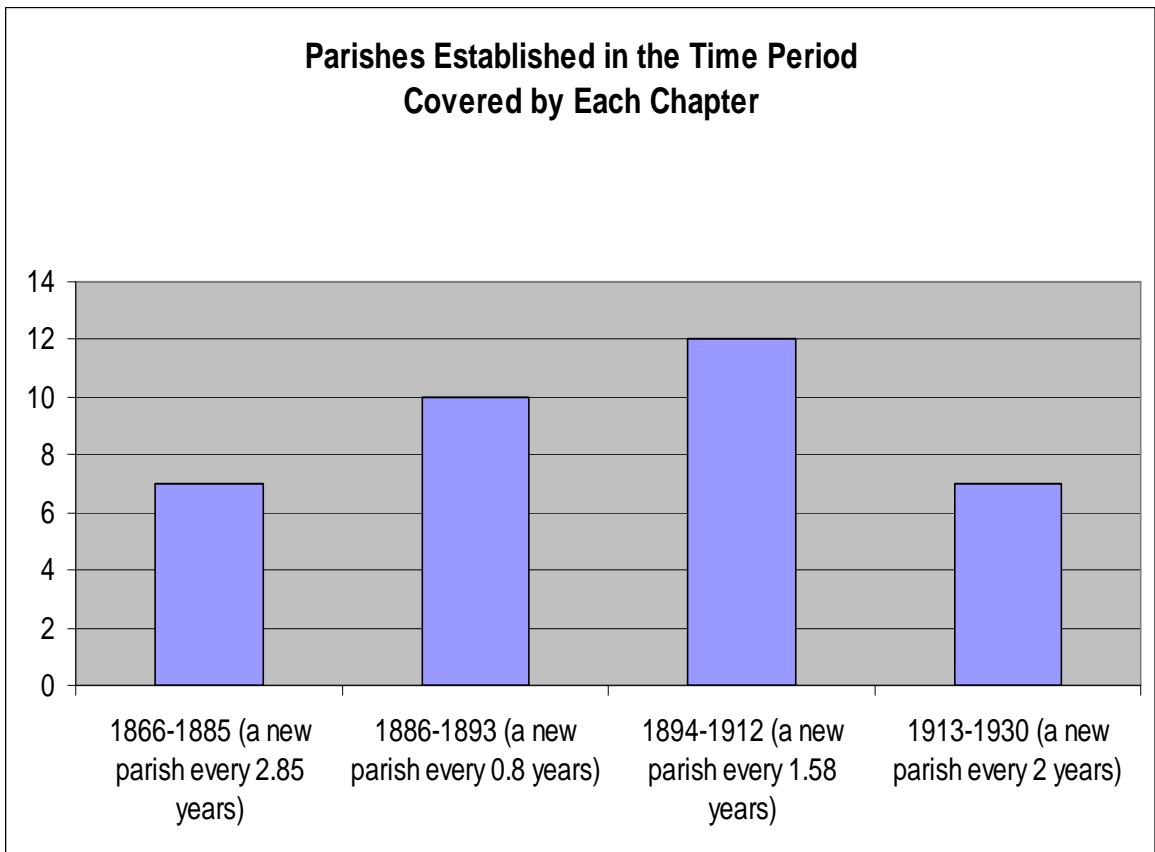


Figure 3 (Coleman 1992)

This project's utility is that it provides detailed information—not found in standard histories and the U. S. Census—on where nationalities gathered in the city. Prior to 1930 the census only collected national origin data at the ward level, which is too coarse a measure to indicate neighborhood situations and the nuances of city growth. Analysis of parish locations and establishment/extinction dates adds useful insight, although areas of the city lacking Catholic population do not show up well. Another benefit of this project is that it reveals social history at the ground level as opposed to a top-down rendition that focuses on political and business leaders, industrial development, and public works. This analysis looks instead at neighborhoods, families, schools, and churches.

I selected Catholicism as the religion of analysis partly because it had become the largest denomination in the United States by 1850. A large number of immigrants also were Catholic, thereby broadening the scope of the analysis. Finally the Catholic Church's parish system allows for systematic mapping and study.

I selected Kansas City as a case study partly because of its presumed typicality as the "heart of America" and because it is large enough to provide adequate data for analysis but not too large to force important topics to be overlooked. Kansas City also makes sense because it was close enough for convenient field work.

Study Area

The area of study is defined by the city limits of Kansas City in 1930 (Map 41). These limits were defined in 1909 as the Missouri River on the north, Seventy-

seventh street on the south, the Kansas state line on the west and basically the Blue River on the east. These boundaries focus the study on the core settlement of Kansas City. The state line boundary excludes Kansas City, Kansas, which is part of the larger metropolitan region today, but developed as a separate entity with its own history and church records.

Literature Sources

Theodore Brown's *Frontier Community* (1963), Theodore Brown and Lyle Dorsett's *K. C.* (1978), and Rick Montgomery and Shirl Kasper's *Kansas City: An American Story* (1999) provided a general understanding of the history and geography of the region. Details on the initial French traders were provided by Dorothy Marra et al.'s *Cher Oncle, Cher Papa* (2001). Some of the diocesan records were published in a two-volume work by Colette Doering and Dorothy Marra (1992) and by Michael Coleman (1992). This work contains a great deal of information on parish geographies and histories but even more in-depth information is available in the archives. This includes newspaper articles from both secular and ecclesiastical sources as well as publications celebrating parish events. Gilbert Garraghan's book, *Catholic Beginnings in Kansas City, Missouri* (1920), covers the activities of the first priests in the city until 1848. Bernard Donnelly's *Scattered Sheets* (2001) and William Dalton's *Pioneer Priest* (1921) give additional information on this early development. Monroe Dodd's work on streetcars in Kansas City, *A Splendid Ride* (2002), provides details on the location, type, and date of construction of the city lines.

Sanborn maps from the years 1885 and 1906 provide excellent context for the neighborhoods and the structures located in them. These highly detailed maps compiled by the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company show the shape and size of individual structures, their use, and even their construction material. When Sanborn information is coupled with the parish maps and the ethnic studies of Pat O’Neill (*From the Bottom Up* [2000]), Sherry Schirmer (*A City Divided* [2002]) and Charles Coulter (*“Take up the Black Man’s Burden”* [2006]), one has a solid base for describing a neighborhood.

Methods

The initial goal was to create a map series showing church locations and parish boundaries through time. In the diocesan archives, no regularized descriptions of parish boundaries exist. So, to create the maps, I went chronologically through the records and platted a new map each year a parish was added or the boundaries changed. For the first several parishes, the records define imprecise boundaries. Some examples include: “east of Main Street,” the “West Bottoms,” the “East Bottoms,” and the “Westport area.” In these cases, I estimated boundary locations based on my understanding of these terms, the terrain, and the street networks. Starting in 1886 most new parishes were given precise boundaries based on city streets. Still, some parishes had no boundaries listed and approximations had to be made when new boundaries overlapped those previously defined.

The mapping process prompted questions as I filled in the growth of the city, such as the following. Why did Holy Trinity Parish in the city’s northeast section not

extend all the way north to the Missouri River? Which parish filled the gap created between Fifteenth and Twenty-seventh streets by the southward movement of boundaries for St. Vincent Parish in 1890? Why was the northeastern area that Assumption Parish filled in 1909 devoid of a parish for so long? Why, in 1917, was St. Elizabeth Parish created so far south (around Seventy-fifth Street) that it left a gap with no parish and deviated from the established pattern? The answers to these questions led to a better understanding of the city. They also reflect the type of analysis that was done throughout the project. I look at events in the city that did not occur in the manner expected and try to explain what actually happened geographically.

Organization

Chapter One (1822-1865): This covers the initial settlement and growth of the region. The first settlers were French fur traders. Soon a small group of their families began farming in the bottoms near the rivers. There were two significant Anglo towns close to this French group: Westport to the south and Independence to the east. The growth of these latter towns, spurred by trade along the trails westward, led to the creation of a new community at the confluence of the Kansas and Missouri rivers: Kansas City. This chapter describes the French farmers settling the area, the growth of Westport, and the establishment of the Town of Kansas.⁶ I also detail changes in the Catholic structure from temporary missionary priests in the wilderness to the start of a permanent community. This period sees the beginning of Irish immigrants in Kansas City.

Chapter Two (1866-1885): This period covers the post-Civil War boom and subsequent growth of the city. The city was nearly abandoned during the war but afterwards quickly grew to thirty-two thousand residents, mainly because of new railroad connections offered by a bridge over the Missouri and construction of a stockyard in the West Bottoms. Irish continued to be the major Catholic group in the city, but the first national parish, Saints Peter and Paul, was established in 1866 for Germans. During this period eight new parishes were added to the single parish that had been serving the entire population. One of these, Annunciation, was created in the West Bottoms for the growing number of laborers in the stockyards, packing plants, and other industries. This period also saw the first Catholic school and the first religious order in the city.

By the 1870s new technology such as telephones, waterworks, electric lights, and streetcar lines helped to bring about a transformation. Cattle and grain shipments increased and Union Depot was constructed in the West Bottoms. By 1880 the city had fifty-five thousand people. That same year Kansas City also became a diocese, and a cathedral was built on Quality Hill as the bishop's seat.

Chapter Three (1886-1892): This period saw one of the largest expansions of the Catholic Church in the city. Nine parishes were added; many were Irish, some were German, and one was Italian. Old Irish neighborhoods continued to grow and new ones appeared on the east side of town and south of Quality Hill. People of all nationalities were beginning to move beyond the city core, especially the people of the West Bottoms as industry took over that section of town. Anti-Catholic bigotry

increased in this period, partly because of antipathy towards the rising numbers of immigrants in the city.

Chapter Four (1893-1912): These years saw a devastating flood that left more than fifteen thousand homeless and the effects of an economic depression. Despite this, the number of Italian immigrants continued to grow. The Kansas City Convention Hall was built and then rebuilt after a fire in 1900. The city also began a beautification project during this time to create parks and boulevards so people would have open air spaces to enjoy. A Lebanese parish opened in 1893 but after that no new parishes were added until 1902.

The growth of parishes resumed in the city after 1905 as these were peak years of immigration. Ten new parishes opened, including another national parish for Germans. St. Monica opened as a parish for blacks, but the diminished population in the West Bottoms forced Annunciation Parish to close. Two Catholic high schools for girls were started during this time. By this time the Catholic Church had established itself in the United States to the extent that the U. S. was no longer considered mission territory by the Vatican.

Chapter Five (1913-1930): During the first seven years of this period four parishes were created including St. Stanislaus, a national parish for recent Polish immigrants, and Our Lady of Guadalupe, primarily serving Mexicans. Both World War I and the postwar influenza outbreak had large impacts on local life. The growing number of Catholics in the city is reflected by the presence of religious orders (nine male and twenty-four female) and the opening of the Jesuit Rockhurst

College. Parishes significantly larger than one square mile in territory were created in the southern part of the city, reflecting the increased use of automobiles. As the city experienced the exuberance of the 1920s four new parishes were added. These new parishes reflect the continued growth of the suburbs in the southern part of the city. Growth of the business district downtown finally forced the closing of Saints Peter and Paul. Immigration was restricted by congressional edict.

¹ While recognizing that ethnicity and nationality are not identical terms, this project uses them interchangeably. National is the word used in historical sources to describe the parishes, while today ethnicity is the preferred term. Those discussed include French, Irish, German, Italian, Polish, Lebanese, Mexican and Swedish. Black parishes were also established and are discussed in a similar manner as the national parishes.

² In Jackson County, where Kansas City is located, the total number of Catholics was recorded in federal census records as follows:

1906: 20,000

1916: 33,000

1926: 43,000

³ Parish comes from a Greek root meaning neighborhood (Sopher 1967, 65).

⁴ While the liturgy was in Latin until the middle of the twentieth century, other aspects of parish life were in the vernacular.

⁵ I created a new map each year a new church was built or moved and each year a new parish was established or the boundaries changed. These are ordered chronologically and located in the first section of the appendix.

⁶ The name of the community has been, successively: Kawsmouth, Town of Kansas, City of Kansas, and Kansas City.

Chapter One
Early Catholic Settlers in Kansas City
1822-1865

The history of settlement in Kansas City and the history of Catholicism in the region began together with French fur traders. In 1821 Francois Chouteau, an agent of his family's St. Louis fur company, started a regional headquarters on the north side of the Missouri River, across from the future downtown of Kansas City. A flood in 1826 destroyed the warehouse and cabins there. The Chouteaus next settled on the south bank of the Missouri at the foot of either the current Gillis or Harrison Street. They built a major trading post a few years later a half-mile east of the current Paseo Bridge. It included a farm, warehouse, and steamboat landing (Marra et al. 2001, 200-202). This post attracted traders, trappers, and employees of the Chouteaus who settled nearby (Garraghan 1920, 15). This was the first of two distinct French settlements in the area of the future Kansas City.

The other community, Kawsmouth, consisted of French trappers, along with their Indian wives and children, who had given up life in the wilderness to farm the lowland area known today as the West Bottoms (Map 42). Although they lacked a priest and a stable parish life, these settlers were Catholic as well (Doering and Marra 1992, 9). They performed their own baptisms and weddings, which was allowed in such circumstances (Doering and Marra 1992, 16). The vows could be blessed later. Berenice Chouteau (wife of the trader Francois) performed the first recorded baptism in the region to dying natives (Doering and Marra 1992, 7).

In 1828, Father Joseph Anthony Lutz became the first priest to visit Kawsmouth, staying for the summer (Doering and Marra 1992, 8). The first permanent priest, Benedict Roux came five years later. He came here, rather than the larger cities of Liberty or Independence, because Kawsmouth had a significant Catholic population. Roux also noted that the two larger towns had a definite bias against Catholicism. This was a period when Mormons were persecuted in Independence and fear of similar persecution caused the French priest to go out only on Sundays for a time (Doering and Marra 1992, 9). Roux noted that there were twelve French families in the area and, if any church were to be built, it would need the support of the Chouteaus (Brown 1963, 14).

Francois Chouteau, in a letter to his uncle, describes the religious situation in 1833:

At the present we have here a Cure, Mr. Roux who desires to remain in our country. I believe he is a worthy man. We intend to build a small church for him. All the French families here are well disposed to supply, according to their ability. Berenice assures me she intends to put in a contribution. You, papa, and Cadet, you are able to judge better than I that the thing cannot be anything but advantageous. We will then later on certainly have a small group of fine people. The riffraff perhaps will improve as this will be a cause of betterment for the area (quoted in Marra et al. 2001, 123).

Because only the Chouteaus could provide Roux with food and shelter, he lived with them at their trading post. This created one of the first geographic problems for the Catholic Church in Kansas City, because Roux needed to perform his ministry three miles to the west in the West Bottoms where most of the French lived (Doering and Marra 1992, 10). Eventually the Chouteaus rented a building near the present Second and Cherry streets that served as a temporary church (Map 43) (Doering and Marra 1992, 11).

The next step in the growth of the Catholic Church in the region was the acquisition of land. In several letters Roux mentions the importance of having acreage enough for the priest to cultivate for his own survival. In an 1833 letter to his bishop, Roux outlined initial plans for such a purchase:

. . . [Francois Chouteau] called a meeting of the Catholics of the locality to discuss means towards getting a church and supporting a priest. I found everybody well disposed and ready to make all reasonable sacrifices. It was agreed to guarantee the priest forty acres of land to serve as a site for church and presbyter, besides furnishing a small tract for cultivation (quoted in Garraghan 1920, 46).

Restrictions some of the organizers wished to place on the process temporarily derailed this plan, however.

In another letter, dated 20 January 1834, Roux describes the process of selecting a site:

A number of Americans declared to me their desire of co-operating . . . to select a piece of land and a site suitable for the object we have in view, which is to build a church and form two establishments, one of Sisters for the education of the young ladies of the locality and the other for the boys. . . . A committee has been organized and instead of forty, eighty acres of land have been picked out. They would have made over the deed of sale to you, Monseigneur, or to myself on the sole condition that if one or the other of the two establishments should not succeed, the property would revert to the four designated members of the committee, a condition which I have not yet approved and shall never approve, for I am far from rendering myself the slave of any one in a matter of this kind (quoted in Garraghan 1920, 57).

As can be seen, Roux vigorously rejected the idea of taking any property that had conditions for its return.

In the spring of 1834, Roux paid six dollars to Pierre Laliberte for forty acres of land on a bluff overlooking the West Bottoms and the confluence of the Missouri and Kaw rivers (Map 43).¹ Thirty of these acres were sold four years later (Garraghan 1920, 66-67). No direct indications why this piece of land was selected

have survived, but the two points that Roux emphasized in his letters were present: enough land for cultivation and no restrictions on returning the land. In addition, the price of the land suggests that it was a gift.

Father William Dalton, a Kansas City priest starting in 1872, described the terrain:

The church was on a bluff looking over the west bottoms and the Missouri and Kaw Rivers. There was a deep ravine south of the church, running to what is Eleventh Street, and growing deeper as it neared Broadway, then taking a course east, skirting the north side of Broadway and making a short turn to Fifth Street. In the rainy season the ravine was impassable except for a very frail-looking bridge near the entrance to the church property. This bridge led into the southeast corner of the ten acres (Dalton 1921, 53).

The location of the church on the periphery, away from the population centers of Kawsmouth, the levee, and the Chouteaus, forced parishioners to travel a considerable distance for Mass. At this time, the desire for arable land seemed to outweigh the need to be close to the people. Roux probably did not imagine the growth of a city on the riverfront. Instead, he likely envisioned a series of farms emerging around the land he had acquired. This would later be an issue of contention between the people and their priest.

A log church, eighteen by thirty feet, was built in 1835 (Donnelly 2001, 10). It was commonly known as Chouteau's Church, due to the prominence of that family and their role in its construction. Roux departed before the church was completed, leaving the community with no permanent priest; occasionally traveling Jesuit missionaries would stop to minister. In 1839 one of these traveling priests, realizing

the church still had no name or patron saint, requested that it be named for St. John Francis Regis.

Jesuit priest Nicholas Point took up residence at St. Francis Regis in 1841. He reported twenty-six families in his parish, all in need of religious instruction because of their rough and informal life style (Map 44). He also noted they had a deep loyalty to their faith. Point decorated the church with candelabra and religious art and officiated at the first Forty Hours Devotion held in this area.² Point was pleased to note that the Blessed Sacrament was never left unattended. Point departed in April 1841, again leaving the people reliant on traveling Jesuits for ministry (Doering and Marra 1992, 15).

In 1845, Father Bernard Donnelly became the resident priest in Independence (Figure 4). This was his first assignment after ordination (Doering and Marra 1992, 29). Donnelly was born in Kilnacreva, County Cavan, Ireland, and spent his formative years there before leaving for the United States in 1839 (Donnelly 2001, i-v). Donnelly referred to the Catholics in Independence as “cold, careless and few” (Donnelly 2001, 3), which probably explains why he often traveled to Chouteau’s Church (Doering and Marra 1992, 29). This is his description of what he first encountered there: “I found a little congregation of Catholics, strange to me in language, manners, dress, and personal appearances. Some of them were fair, some were dusky Indians, some were Negroes, but the majority were pale faced sickly



Figure 4: Father Donnelly (Dalton 1921, inside front cover)

looking half-breeds, whilst all were with a very few exceptions, a pious honest and hospitable class of people” (Donnelly 2001, 45-46). Besides the French, other groups had begun to move into the region by Donnelly’s time. The Indian Removal Act of 1830 forced many Indians from the states north of the Ohio River onto lands just west of the Missouri state line. Methodist and Baptist missions were established in the region. Other traders arrived to serve both the missionaries and the Indians. For example, James McGee in 1828 bought land near Chouteau's post and built a mill, lent money, and contracted to supply the Indians with flour (Brown 1963, 20-21). By the mid-1830s farmers, Indians, missionaries, and traders populated the region. The eastern terminus of the Santa Fe Trail had moved west along the Missouri River to Independence (Miller 1983, 38-41). In 1834 John McCoy bought land along this route and platted the city of Westport. McCoy also built a four-mile road from Westport north to the Missouri River at a spot adjacent to Chouteau’s post. This site, known as Westport Landing, developed into a dockage area for unloading merchandise destined for Westport and the Santa Fe trade. The two Westports were distinct communities, however, separated by rough forests and only connected by a single road (Maps 42 and 45). By 1837 there were fifty people living in Westport, which now included a general store, a tavern, a harness-and-saddle shop, and a school (Brown 1963, 28-29).

Besides trade with Santa Fe and providing supplies to Indians in the region, another major impetus for the growth of Westport was the outfitting of immigrants for travel to Oregon and California in the middle and late 1840s (Brown 1963, 58).

Because of its superior location Westport had overtaken Independence as the prime outfitting spot by the end of the decade. By choosing Westport, traders eliminated the treacherous fording of the Blue River and reduced overland travel by twelve miles (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 28).

In 1838, McCoy and other investors formally purchased the land at Westport Landing and platted the “Town of Kansas” (Map 43) (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 28). McCoy later remembered the reasons for this action:

[A] few men with no capital . . . bought the land because it had a good steamboat landing and was the most suitable starting point for the . . . caravans to New Mexico. The idea that any one of them would live to see a city built up among those precipitous hills and impassable gorges . . . never entered into their calculation. [They] were not disposed to risk much in the experiment, and did very little to push the town (quoted in Brown 1963, 38).

Legal wrangling among members of the company prevented any real development until 1846. Lots were sold to the public starting that year and the town grew rapidly to around five hundred people. It was incorporated in 1850 (Garraghan 1920, 20-21). Four large warehouses, a variety of mills, several shops, and the Troost House (a hotel with more than one hundred rooms) all attested to considerable growth by this year (Figure 5) (Brown 1963, 63).

The first large group of Catholic immigrants to arrive was three hundred Belgians whom Joseph Guinotte brought in 1852 to settle in what is now called the East Bottoms (Map 42). This is land east of the city along the south bank of the Missouri River. Guinotte was Belgian himself and arranged for others to immigrate by providing housing and food, as well as land. Cholera hit the group just as they

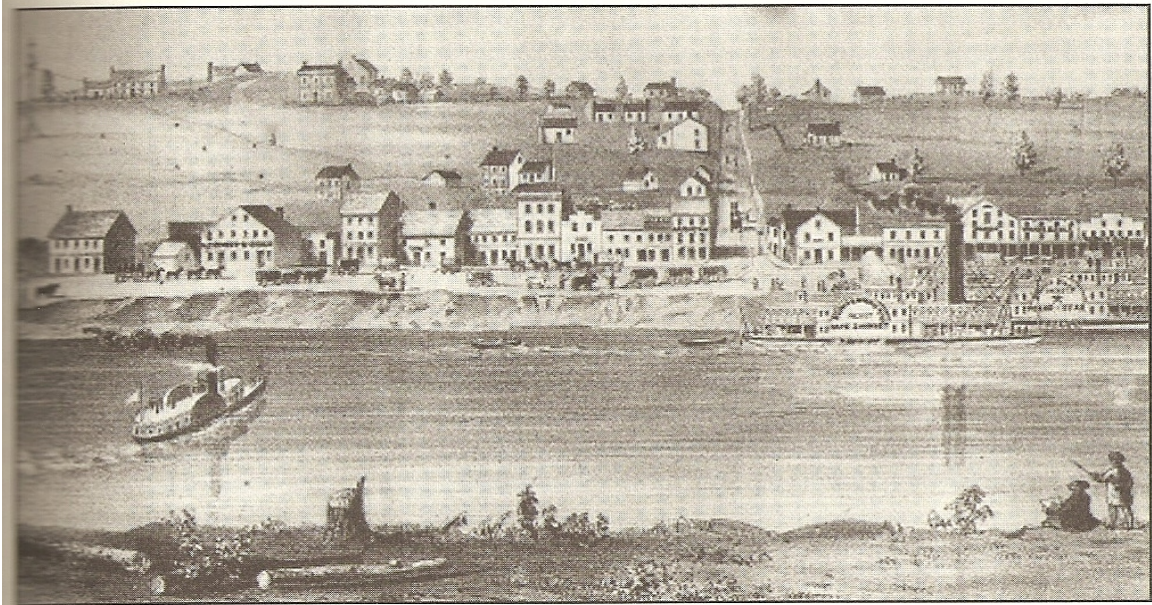


Figure 5: Drawing showing Kansas City in 1855 (Marra 2001, 182)

arrived, however, killing half their number. The rest quickly scattered (Doering and Marra 1992, 33).

From the beginning, Donnelly had to deal with complaints that his church high on the bluff was too remote from riverfront homes. The parishioners wanted a new church on the levee and the old property sold. Donnelly refused to go along with the parishioners. He foresaw the growth of the city and wanted to keep the location at Eleventh and Broadway to serve this larger entity. In a letter to his archbishop he described his geographic vision of the city:

The city is daily growing in population. The limits laid out in the charter are not extensive enough. The city must grow south as the trade is in that direction, and then it must develop a residence district which will sooner or later be on the plateau called Westport. Until that time comes the people will choose the northwest section for their homes. I predict the ten acres and immediate neighborhood will be for years the most desirable residence part of Kansas City. Where the city is now must necessarily be the business district. . . . and after a short time all our parishioners would have moved to newer and more desirable neighborhoods. . . . The ten acres may yet build a cathedral and institutions of charity and learning (quoted in Dalton 1921, 52-53).

Being practical as well as visionary, however, the Irish priest also arranged to rent a building near Second and Cherry closer to parishioners' homes where Mass would be offered (Map 43) (Dalton 1921, 54).

In 1853, Donnelly left another lasting mark on the community. As the city expanded south in the 1840s it encountered steep bluffs. A temporary solution was "tunnellike passages" excavated through to the south, but these alleys were inconvenient and often impassable. The city fathers wanted these bluffs removed but needed cheap labor for the job. Donnelly, who was involved with city-planning meetings, offered to provide the men. He placed advertisements in New York and

Boston Catholic newspapers asking for 150 workers from each city.³ To improve working relationships, the advertisements requested that the men be from a single county in Ireland.⁴ The plan worked despite this restriction and created a sudden spike in the Catholic population of the city. These workers were housed in temporary one-story buildings on Sixth Street, from Broadway to Bluff Street, an area that became known as Connaught Town, a reference to the workers' province of origin (Doering and Marra 1992, 47-48; Dalton 1921, 48-49).

In another venture around the same time, Donnelly began a small brickyard on part of the church property. It proved a success, and the profits provided money for a new church without being dependent on contributions from the congregation. A large ceremony attended by people of all faiths from the surrounding communities marked the groundbreaking for this new church in 1857. Called Immaculate Conception, it measured seventy feet by thirty feet (Doering and Marra 1992, 48-49).

That same year, local historian Theodore Case provided a description of the town:

The hotel and several warehouses dominated the levee, with a few small retail shops sandwiched in between the larger buildings. Only one street—Market, which later became Grand Avenue—was cut through to the levee from the south and could be used for business locations; on the rest the grades were still too steep, and the streets oppressively narrow. Smithies, saloons, and a few stores straggled along Market Street, ending in what seems to have been a little slum inhabited by some Irish settlers. South of the crest of the bluffs, more shops and saloons were joined by residences, in several of which room-and-board was offered. Farther south along Main Street the quality of the houses improved as one approached the neighborhood where lived the Northrups, the Ridges, the Campbells and finally the McGees in their addition. A deep ravine meandered diagonally across the whole townsite, debouching in the river near the foot of Market Street. It was bridged only where it crossed Main and Market, and at the latter place the crossing was ramshackle and dangerous. Most

people it seemed carried arms; the memory of the border troubles was still fresh (Map 43) (quoted in Brown 1963, 138).

At this time Donnelly was still officially the pastor of Independence and not assigned permanently to Kansas City. He wrote often to his archbishop indicating a priest was needed. In 1858, Father Denis Kennedy was offered the job, but because money was still owed on the church, he declined the position. Donnelly then suggested that they trade assignments so he would have the church in Kansas City and Kennedy a debt-free parish in Independence. The archbishop approved this plan and Donnelly immediately began construction of a parish school (Doering and Marra 1992, 49).

The Town of Kansas continued to grow until the start of the Civil War, although the early French influence rapidly disappeared because of families fleeing in the face of border violence between proslavery and antislavery factions (Marra et al. 2001, 5). During the war itself many additional residents left the city, reducing the population from six thousand to only a few hundred (Brown 1963, 158; Doering and Marra 1992, 50). By the end of the war the population had grown back to around four thousand (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 96).

In summary, the 1820s through the 1840s saw the initial settlement of the various communities that came to make up Kansas City: Chouteau's trading post, Kawsmouth, Westport, and the Town of Kansas. The first Catholics in the region were French fur traders followed by a few Belgians and then Irish workers. Most of the growth of the town was provided by other peoples. Donnelly worked hard to establish the structure of the Catholic Church in Kansas City as seen in the permanent

church and the construction of a school. The division of the city during the Civil War put this growth on hold.

¹ The official location was designated as “SE quarter of NE quarter of Sec 6, T 49, R 33.” The ten acres that remained were later bounded by Broadway, Eleventh and Twelfth streets and a line a hundred feet west of Jefferson Street (Garraghan 1920, 66-67).

² During this solemn ritual the faithful adored Christ, present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist, on the main altar of the church for forty hours, the length of time Christ spent in the tomb.

³ The newspapers were the *Boston Pilot* (the newspaper of the Boston Archdiocese, also read in Ireland) and *Freemans' Journal of New York* (Dalton 1921, 48,76)

⁴ In the end, the three hundred workers were not all from the same county but from the same province, Connaught (Dalton 1921, 49).

Chapter Two

Postwar Growth

1866-1885

People of all faiths suffered division during the Civil War with parishioners and clergy supporting each side of the conflict. The Catholic Church did not split into separate congregations but there was still a need for healing after the war. The town itself had acquired a major east-west railroad and was ready to resume its rapid growth as a gateway city to the central Great Plains. Immigrants from Ireland and Germany provided a large segment of the growing population. Creation of three new parishes in the three years after the war demonstrates the growth of the Catholic population in the region.

City History

During the war, competition in the region was between free and slave, Union and Confederate; after the war competition shifted to economics as the cities on the Missouri River battled for trade advantages. St. Joseph, Leavenworth, Atchison, and Kansas City all hoped to become the most prominent city in the region. The key development was obtaining a railroad bridge across the Missouri River. Kansas City secured such rights in 1866 when directors of the Hannibal and St. Joseph line selected Kansas City over Leavenworth (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 74-75). This quickly changed the fortunes of the competing cities even before the completion of the bridge in 1869. From the end of the war to 1870, the population of Kansas City jumped from around four thousand to 32,700, while St. Joseph and Leavenworth only grew from 15,000 to 19,500 and from 15,400 to 17,900, respectively (Montgomery

and Kasper 1999, 81). Two slaughter plants, for cattle and pigs, opened in 1868 (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 96).

Once the bridge was complete the pace of transformation increased. Seventy-thousand travelers per year passed through on the rail line. A Main Street lot worth \$400 in 1856 sold for \$11,000 in 1871. Cattle arriving from the southwest on the way to Chicago packinghouses hinted at coming prosperity (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 80). In 1871, six railroad companies built a "union" stockyard to handle these cattle. This occupied thirteen acres in the West Bottoms along the Kansas River (Map 46). Similarly, this group also built Union Depot nearby in 1878 to serve the rail lines that now branched out to Santa Fe, Denver, Chicago, and the Pacific coast. Kansas City started to flourish because of cattle and wheat shipments (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 97).

By the late 1870s, the bustling atmosphere of the West Bottoms had produced a citywide reputation as a lawless town. In 1878, a local newspaper referred to it as a "modern Sodom." Writing at the time, journalist Charles Gleed described the inhabitants as follows:

The population of the city included as fine a collection of ruffian brotherhood and sisterhood of the wild West as could be imagined. Renegade Indians, demoralized soldiers, unreformed bushwhackers, and border ruffians, thieves and thugs imported from anywhere, professional train robbers of home growth, and all kinds of wrecks from the Civil War (Map 47) (quoted in Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 85).

On the bluffs above the West Bottoms, civic leaders and important businessmen established a cluster of upper-class homes known as Quality Hill (Map 48) (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 42). This same hill contained the ten acres Roux

purchased for a church in 1834 and that Donnelly refused to sell despite the demands of his parishioners. Donnelly's vision of a city moving south, away from the river, was coming true.

Old Town, the original settlement along the river, remained the city core throughout the 1870s. It contained the central business district focused at Market Square, the corner of Main and Fifth. East Kansas, just east of Old Town, was a working-class neighborhood with violence, poverty, and vice that exceeded even that of the West Bottoms (Map 48). During the first half of the 1870s, one-third of the police force patrolled the saloons, brothels, and gambling houses of this relatively small section of the city. During the second half of the decade the city changed tactics, removing the police and reaching agreements with criminal leaders (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 45-46).

A vastly different neighborhood was McGee's Addition, south of Twelfth and east of Main. It was middle class and reporters considered it a boring assignment. German businessmen were concentrated here and lived alongside a mixture of Irish, blacks and other Americans (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 46)

By 1880, fifty-six thousand people inhabited the city. Rapid growth continued over the next ten years as seventy thousand more were added (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 121). By 1882, the city had a telephone exchange, electric streetlights, and seven grain elevators. Electricity powered thirteen stores on Main Street (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 118, 132, 140).

To transport the growing population the first trolley line was established in 1870. Lightweight passenger cars drawn by mules and horses ran from Market Square up the hill on Walnut Street, then south on Grand Avenue to “the middle of a thriving commercial and residential subdivision called McGee’s Addition” (Dodd 2002, 15). By 1871, this line extended on to Westport, four miles south of downtown (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 124). By the next year, a new line opened, running from the eastern edge of the city into the center of downtown. The lines now totaled thirteen miles (Dodd 2002, 27). During the rest of the decade, workers also laid tracks along Broadway and Southwest Boulevard and to the new Union Depot in the West Bottoms. In 1885, a cable car system opened from Woodland Avenue at the eastern city limits along Eighth Street to Quality Hill and then descending the steep incline to Union Depot. By the end of the year, fifteen thousand people rode this line each day (Map 49) (Dodd 2002, 47, 54).

The Church and the People

The Catholic Church entered this period with just Donnelly’s parish, Immaculate Conception, at the top of the hill. After the war, Donnelly resumed building the Catholic community, mainly Irish and German at this time. In addition, 1866 saw three important events in the growth of Catholicism in the city. The first was the arrival of five sisters of the order of St. Joseph of Carondelet who became the first religious community in Kansas City and founded St. Teresa's Academy for girls at the old parish school at Twelfth and Washington. The second and third events

were the establishments of a church in Westport and a German national parish (Doering and Marra 1992, 55-56).

Table 1: Parishes established 1847-1885

Parish	Year	Comments	Location
Immaculate Conception	1847	Original	11 th and Broadway
Sts. Peter and Paul	1866	German National Parish	9 th and McGee
Our Lady of Good Counsel	1866	Westport	39 th Terrace and Washington
St. Patrick	1868	Mostly Irish	8 th and Cherry
Annunciation	1872	Mostly Irish (in West Bottoms)	14 th and Wyoming
St. Francis Seraph	1877	Irish initially, then also Belgian and others (in East Bottoms)	Montgall and Heim
St. John the Baptist	1882	Mostly Irish	1 st and Lydia
St. Joseph	1882	Mostly Irish, southeast of downtown	19 th and Harrison

Source: Coleman 1992

German

Around one and a half million Germans immigrated to America before the Civil War. Between 1860 and the end of the century three and a half million more arrived. The peak was the 1880s with one and a half million German arrivals. Dolan (1985, 130) estimates that around one-third of the total number were Catholic. Many were fleeing religious persecution and economic depression caused by overpopulation.¹ Most of the immigrants were middle-class people from Bavaria, Baden, and Wurttemberg and arrived as family groups (Dolan 1985, 130; Shaw 1987, 280). By 1860, Germans had established a significant presence in Kansas City. One

of the three newspapers in the city was German language, and one of the three companies of the local Union volunteer reserve battalion was German (O'Neill 2000, 26, 29). Most Germans lived in McGee's Addition, south of Twelfth and east of Main (Map 48). It, like they, was solidly middle class (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 46).

The Germans who came to Kansas City encountered the established Irish church of Donnelly (Immaculate Conception) but obviously preferred sermons and confession in their own language. Occasionally a German priest would visit Immaculate Conception from the nearby communities of Germantown (near Clinton) or Weston. Other cultural differences contributed to dissatisfaction with the Irish parish. One was the German tradition of running parishes via a trustee system. This was a democratic system in which certain members of the parish were responsible for the whole and even had a say in the selection of the pastor (Doering and Marra 1992, 63). Another difference was the emphasis placed on parochial schools. Throughout the Midwest Germans placed a high priority on schools, with more than 65 percent of German parishes establishing schools within two years as compared to 27.5 percent for Irish parishes (Shaw 1987, 306). German Catholics in the United States also relied heavily on the parish as a social center with more devotional societies, life insurance organizations, music societies, and military groups than the Irish.² This attitude may have been the result of Catholicism being a minority religion among Germans. German Catholics, both in their native land and in America, saw threats to their religion from outsiders and therefore placed greater importance on maintaining a parish community (Doering and Marra 1992, 63; Dolan 1975, 167-168).

The Germans' desire for a parish experience different from that offered at Immaculate Conception led to a push for a national parish. Such a unit would be for all Germans in the city regardless of location. It would have a pastor who spoke German and a school that taught in German (Doering and Marra 1992, 65). In 1866, in response to a petition, Archbishop Peter Kenrick assigned a permanent German priest to Kansas City, Father Herman Grosse. For the next two years he worked out of Immaculate Conception until the basement of a new church was finished. This building, Sts. Peter and Paul, was erected at Cherokee (now 9th) and McGee streets at the edge of McGee's Addition where most Germans lived (Map 1) (Coleman 1992, 272).

The desire for maintaining a distinct German Catholic community was demonstrated further in 1877 by the establishment of a German Catholic cemetery "out in the country" near 25th and Brooklyn.³ This desire is also seen in the 285 students enrolled at the parish school in 1882 (diocesan archives for Sts. Peter and Paul Parish).

Irish

The Catholics in Kansas City at the end of the war, in addition to Germans, consisted of a few remaining French farmers and a growing group of Irish attributable to the influence of Donnelly. Besides placing the previously mentioned ads for Irish workers, he also wrote letters encouraging other of his countrymen to come to America. In one, he wrote: "Fate is as relentlessly cruel to Ireland as is its brutish oppressor. Don't go to Heaven as a martyr—come to America, and when you die go

to God as a saint" (quoted in O'Neill 2000, 22). Before Donnelly's importation of Irish workers in the 1840s, sacramental records show most Catholics in the city were French or Indian. However, in 1857 fifteen of thirty-three babies baptized had Irish names. The next year seventy-five out of a hundred and five names were Irish (O'Neill 2000, 16-17).

Irish continued to settle in the boarding houses and shanties of Connaught Town (O'Neill 2000, 16-17). Another neighborhood, called "Stringtown," grew up between Fourth and Seventh streets around Delaware, Wyandotte, and Walnut streets (O'Neill 2000, 25). Besides laboring to remove the bluffs many Irish were "cistern builders, brickmakers, carpenters, peddlers, tinsmiths and stone masons," according to the city directory (O'Neill 2000, 26). During the Civil War when many Southerners fled the city, Irish rose to prominent positions. In 1864, an Irishman, Patrick Shannon, was named interim mayor. The next year he was elected to serve a full term (O'Neill 2000, 33). By 1870, nine percent of the city, approximately three thousand people, were Irish-born and up to a third were of Irish descent. Irish constituted twenty percent of unskilled laborers, performing such activities as carving streets, digging basements and stacking bricks. The location of these jobs began shifting to the West Bottoms as it industrialized after 1880 and so many laborers moved there (O'Neill 2000, 51). At the same time, some Irish began to gain enough social standing and wealth to move to nicer neighborhoods. The first such concentration, known as Irish Hill, emerged about 1880, south of Quality Hill around Fifteenth and Summit (Map 50) (O'Neill 2000, 74).

St. Patrick: In 1868, the parish of St. Patrick was established. Immaculate Conception was full and the poorer Irish neighborhoods in East Kansas were a long way to walk for Mass (Map 2) (O'Neill 2000, 25). With the creation of this parish, Catholics in the city were now divided territorially as well as nationally. Non-Germans living east of Main Street went to St. Patrick, while those west of Main Street attended Immaculate Conception (Map 3). Even though the parish was a territorial entity and not national, the two hundred families making up the initial complement were almost entirely Irish. St. Patrick was an active parish: "Almost exclusively Irish, the parish was abuzz with societies holding meetings, planning fairs, picnics and celebrations" (Doering and Marra 1992, 82).

For the first three months, parishioners met at the church of Sts. Peter and Paul. In the next four years, as the number of families attending grew slightly, plans and preliminary work for the construction of a large church on the southwest corner of Seventh and Oak began. A great deal of excavation was needed for the basement, which was intended as the first meeting place since parishioners were unable to afford the superstructure because of the high cost of stonework. However, concerns about the ability of these basement walls to support the intended church superstructure soon led to the parish starting anew at the corner of Eighth and Cherry (Coleman 1992, 259).

The dearth of construction work in the city during the 1860s prevented parishioners from earning enough to hire professional church builders. Instead, since many members were construction workers, they devoted their own time and talents to

the work: "They swung picks and used shovels to excavate the foundation; they laid stone and brick to raise the walls" (Doering and Marra 1992, 69). The church was finished in 1881.

The construction of St. Patrick prompted many Irish to move to that area of town (O'Neill 2000, 57). One section of the parish was the old East Kansas, now more commonly known as the North End, between the Missouri River and Fifth Street. This area is described as containing "working-class homes and multifamily rowhouses." One *Kansas City Star* writer compared this village-like enclave to the countryside of Ireland (O'Neill 2000, 58). By 1880, the parish had grown to two thousand individuals (four hundred families). During the 1880s, however, expansion of downtown forced families out of the parish's western sector and by the end of the decade membership had declined (Coleman 1992, 260).

Annunciation: The disorderly West Bottoms of the 1870s differed markedly from the Irish countryside, from which many of its inhabitants emigrated. A reporter for *Kansas City Times* found it to be: "a district without churches or schools, rough and primitive in its social aspects, made largely of day laborers and poor families struggling twelve and fourteen hours a day for a meager livelihood" (quoted in O'Neill 2000, 53). Along with Irish, there also lived Germans, Jews, Indians, and French (O'Neill 2000, 54).

In 1872, the growing population in the bottoms required a new parish. Father William Dalton, the son of Irish immigrants, was appointed pastor and instructed to found Annunciation Parish where it would not interfere with those already established

in the city. In an empty storefront on Twelfth Street between Wyoming and Genesee Streets, with about sixty people present, he celebrated the parish's first Mass, in June 1872. The next month, the parish purchased two lots in a cornfield on the southeast corner of Fourteenth and Wyoming (Maps 4 and 5). Although some complained the site was too remote, within a month a frame church (thirty by forty feet) was completed. In 1880, a brick church serving 520 families was completed (sixty-eight by one hundred thirty feet). Rapid growth into 1882 brought the total to 1,200 families (from an original twenty-five) making this the largest parish in Missouri. This was the peak population of Annunciation, however, as the expanding stockyards and railroads began to purchase much of the land in the bottoms. In addition, a flood in 1882 contributed to the decline (Coleman 1992, 109-110).

St. John the Baptist: Few records exist for this parish that was established in 1882. At its inception, it was another predominantly Irish parish, taking its territory from St. Patrick to serve the east side. Mass was initially held in the East Bottoms, at First and Lydia. A more permanent church was started later that year on Independence Avenue (Maps 8 and 9) (Coleman 1992, 233)

St. Joseph: This is another largely Irish parish with limited records. In 1882, it was established southeast of what was becoming downtown Kansas City, in what were then suburbs. In 1883, the basement of the church was completed on the northwest corner of 19th and Harrison (Maps 8 and 9) (Coleman 1992, 239).

Immaculate Conception: Donnelly continued to serve the Irish and other church members living between the West Bottoms and Main Street from this original

parish. He lived just long enough to see his town grow into an episcopal city (the seat of a bishop.) Previously Kansas City was part of the St. Louis diocese. Now Kansas City and the surrounding countryside was its own administrative unit under the leadership of Bishop John Hogan. Donnelly gave his remaining money to the diocese and lived under the care of the Sisters of St. Joseph until his death in December of 1880 (Doering and Marra 1992, 78).

Each diocese designates a church as a cathedral (from the Latin *cathedra*, meaning chair) which serves as home for the bishop and the location of his teaching chair. Appropriately for Kansas City this honor went to Immaculate Conception, and the cornerstone for the cathedral was laid at Eleventh and Broadway in May 1882. Reflecting the languages spoken by most Catholics present, one sermon was in English, one in German (Coleman 1992, 125).

Bishop Hogan moved from a position in St. Joseph to take up the challenge of the Kansas City diocese. It contained 23,539 square miles, stretching from the Missouri River south to the Arkansas state line and east to central Missouri. Within ten years Bishop Hogan saw the Catholic population of Kansas City double. According to a church historian: “He was under constant pressure to establish new parishes, build churches, schools, convents, and to help the poor. His task was complicated by the fact that many incoming Catholics did not speak English and needed special attention” (Doering and Marra 1992, 82).

Other Groups

St. Francis Seraph: Belgians settling in the East Bottoms introduced still another language and culture to Kansas City. This was a different group than the one recruited by Joseph Guinotte in the 1850s, but may have been attracted to Kansas City by knowledge of the earlier venture. They arrived in the early and middle part of the 1880s and established truck farms. The parish of St. Francis Seraph, dating to 1877, became even more diverse with this addition. Its congregation was a mix of English, German, Belgian, French, and Polish people (Doering and Marra 1992, 83). No details exist for the church until 1887 when land was purchased for a building between Montgall and North Chestnut streets facing Heim Avenue. The new church was described as a poor frame structure thirty by sixty feet (Maps 6 and 7) (Coleman 1992, 221). St. Francis Seraph was the first parish to have detailed boundaries.⁴

Westport Church: In 1866, Donnelly purchased land at what is now Thirty-ninth Terrace and Washington Street in Westport and built a double log cabin church (Map 1). Donnelly, as well as Jesuit missionaries, celebrated Mass there for the limited Catholic population of Westport, which was still a separate community from the city on the river. Reflecting the lack of attention given this church, it had no name until 1889, when it was titled Our Lady of Good Counsel (Doering and Marra 1992, 55-56).

No priest was assigned permanently to Our Lady of Good Counsel during its first two decades. Assistant priests residing in other parishes offered Sunday Mass there on occasion and the church building was not maintained well. After 1874, in

fact, it was unoccupied for several years because officials had deemed Westport too remote from Kansas City. The small interest in supporting a parish there indicates a minimal Catholic presence in Westport. In 1876, priests of the Redemptorist order preached a mission to the people of Kansas City. Father Donnelly was impressed and the next year invited the order to establish a monastery near Westport (Linwood Boulevard and Broadway), thus becoming the first permanent male religious order in the region. The Westport location for the monastery was selected in order to be away from the urban areas but still on the main road connecting Westport to Kansas City. The Redemptorist priests opened their chapel to the public for Mass. In addition to the monastery, a preparatory college was constructed at the same location for the order's novitiates (Maps 6 and 7) (Coleman 1992, 183).

Analysis

In this section I analyze several geographic relationships that occurred during the postwar ethno-religious growth of the city. First is the location of the Irish neighborhoods and the route of a parade that helps to verify those locations. Second is an analysis of a link between the location of churches and streetcar lines, and the third concerns the circumstances surrounding placement of churches.

A Parade and Irish Neighborhoods: As described earlier, Irish in the city concentrated in certain districts or neighborhoods. Map 50 shows these neighborhoods and the year their existence is first recorded. These dates should not be taken literally as founding years, rather when they are first mentioned in diocesan records and city histories. From these we can see the initial settlement of laborers in

Connaught Town. Many Irish then moved eastwards. Although Irish neighborhoods are generally close to a Catholic church, they are not always immediately adjacent as one might have suspected. The map raises the question of who attended St. John the Baptist and St. Joseph. Their histories state that they were Irish parishes, but how true is this? There were no known Irish neighborhoods in their vicinities during this time. A popular Irish society was the Ancient Order of Hibernians. In 1873, this group organized a large St. Patrick's Day celebration, including a parade that by 1886 had five thousand marchers (Doering and Marra 1992, 89). Map 50 also shows this parade route for 1885. One section of the parade route corresponds exactly with the southern boundary given for one of the neighborhoods, Twelfth Street. This helps establish the reliability of that boundary. Although no dominant Irish neighborhoods are south of this section of the parade route some Irish probably lived in the middle-class neighborhood of McGee's Addition.

Streetcars and Churches: One of the reasons planners may choose a particular location for a church is the availability of public transportation for the people. Is there any indication of a connection between streetcar lines and Catholic churches in early Kansas City? Map 49 shows the lines constructed between 1870 and 1885 with the color key indicating the year an individual line was completed; churches are labeled by year built. This map clearly shows that churches were not constructed in response to this transportation. Of the two churches built after the first streetcar line in 1870, neither was close to the lines.⁵ Could the reverse relationship be true, however, with the location of a church influencing where the lines were built?

Thomas and Bernard Corrigan who built the 1880 lines (orange on map), were Irish so they likely would have been aware of the location of the churches (Dodd 2002, 33; O'Neill 2000, 94-95).⁶ The Corrigan's Broadway line ran adjacent to Immaculate Conception Cathedral, but this is their only line that passes close to a Catholic church. Given this evidence, it seems likely that the Broadway route was chosen more for its hotels and opera houses than the church. Traffic provided by business customers during the week would naturally have been of more concern to the Corrigan's than the cathedral.

The Peripheral Location of Sts. Peter and Paul: During the years immediately after the Civil War, most Germans are said to have lived in McGee's Addition, clustered around Twelfth and Grand (Map 48) (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 46). If this is true, why was Sts. Peter and Paul built three blocks from the northern edge of this neighborhood and not in the middle of it? Perhaps most Germans lived in the northern part of McGee's Addition or there were additional clusters of Germans to the north of the church not noted by Brown and Dorsett. Perhaps financial or structural advantages encouraged the people to build the church outside of the main German concentration. The diocesan history provides a clue to this mystery when it states that, at the time the parish purchased lots, in 1868, they were near the edge of the city. Brown and Dorsett's history does not give an exact date for the presence of Germans in McGee's Addition, but it suggests that they were well established by 1870. It may be the case that construction of the church caused a

number of Germans to move to the nearby McGee's Addition. Another variable to keep in mind is that the majority of Germans were not Catholic.

The Close Proximity of Sts. Peter and Paul and St. Patrick: By 1875, German and Irish Catholics had built two churches within four blocks of one another. The land for the first, Sts. Peter and Paul, was purchased in 1867 and the land for the second, St. Patrick, in 1874. Just prior to this, between 1868 and 1874, the original St. Patrick Church was even closer, less than three blocks north. What prompted such proximity? As this was a new area of town, land prices were probably advantageous. In addition, because St. Patrick was established as a second parish for Irish, planners would likely have desired it be a reasonable distance from the existing parish (Immaculate Conception) (Map 6).

The Remoteness of St. Francis Seraph: St. Francis Seraph Church in the East Bottoms was built about three-quarters of a mile outside the city limits. What could explain this locational oddity? According to the diocesan history, Belgian truck farmers did not arrive there until the 1880s. It is possible, perhaps, that the Belgians arrived sooner than is recorded and the parish was established to serve them. Brown's history discusses neither the East Bottoms nor Belgians (Maps 6, 7, and 41).

Summary

A map of the growth of parishes looking back from 1885 nicely summarizes this chapter (Map 51). It shows parish boundaries and the year each parish was established. The colors correspond to the year of establishment, with green being the oldest and red the most recent. It reveals initial settlement in 1847 and then the

spread of the city east in 1868. Next comes growth in the bottoms and then spread to the east and south in 1882.

¹ The persecution of Catholics in Hannover is described in a letter by Bernard Reineke: "As you may know, Hannover is now part of the Prussian kingdom. Under Prussia the Catholic religion is being suppressed altogether The Archbishop of Posen is the first martyr and he has been sentenced to several years imprisonment and has been placed in prison Once the bishops are removed, then all priests will get the same treatment, then they will have no other choice than to emigrate to other countries . . . it will be hard for us Catholics because Germany will no longer be our country unless the Almighty overthrows all the great overlords. If I did not have such a large family, I would move at once to America, where religious freedom reigns" (quoted in Doering and Marra 1992, 68).

² A wide variety of social groups were seen in the Kansas City German parishes. One type was gymnastic with clubs such as the Turners or Turnverein. Other types included the St. Joseph Drama club and the Schiller Society, focused on music, poetry and the arts. Germans, like the Irish, often participated in parades. These activities helped to keep a strong national sense to the parishes, yet also served to break down barriers between groups: "These parades delighted the people and they joined each other's festivities, with the Germans marching stalwartly in St. Patrick's day parades and Irish units out in full for Octoberfests or German parish celebrations" (Doering and Marra 1992, 90).

³ Some 1,500 burials occurred here, most in the first two or three decades (Sts. Peter and Paul Parish archives).

⁴ The previously established parish boundaries were imprecise, such as the "West Bottoms," or "east of Main." St. Francis Seraph's initial boundaries were Riverfront to Park Avenue, to Dora Avnue, to Euclid, to Lexington, to Prospect, to Smart, to Colorado (Benton) to St. John, to Porter Road, to crown of bluff, to Topping, and to riverfront. The boundaries for the Germans were "Start at Garfield and St. John, south to Independence, east to Topping, north to bluff, connects to parish boundaries" (St. Francis Seraph Parish archives).

⁵ St. John the Baptist was about one quarter of a mile away and St. Joseph was more than one half mile away.

⁶ They gave money to support St. Patrick Parish and lived at 1701 Summit on Irish Hill (O'Neill 2000, 36, 95).

Chapter Three
New Immigrants in the City
1886-1892

City History

From 1886 to 1892, the city continued to grow based on the foundation of the now established meatpacking and shipping industries in the West Bottoms. “The suburbs are platted far out,” reported Ernest Ingersoll in *Cosmopolitan* magazine for 1889. “The extension of the cable railways has enabled people to live easily far from their places of businesses, and large and thickly settled additions, especially southward, have been added to the municipality within two or three years” (quoted in Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 136). As part of this process, affluent residents began to abandon areas such as Quality Hill and the mansions left behind were divided into apartments for laborers. The center of business moved south, too, from City Market to “The Junction” at the intersection of Main, Delaware and Ninth (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 102). From 1880 to 1890 the city grew from fifty-five thousand residents to one hundred thirty-two thousand. The majority of this growth occurred in the second half of the decade and a large portion consisted of immigrant laborers.

In 1889, the Board of Public Works was established to help beautify what the *Kansas City Star* had called “the filthiest [city] in the country.” In the first year, workers paved almost fourteen miles of street and planked sixty-three miles of sidewalk. The Board also promoted one of the most extensive systems of parks and boulevards in the country (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 135-136).

In the West Bottoms, saloon owner Jim Pendergast became a powerful figure by organizing laborers and directing them towards the Democrat party. During this time, the average American worked sixty hours per week and women were entering the workforce in larger numbers. The American Federation of Labor organized in 1886. Labor grew more important in politics as unions formed and demanded reduced hours and higher wages (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 108; Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 129). Kansas City experienced large railroad strikes in 1885 and 1886. In 1886, the strikers stopped the shipment of freight for several days and the governor called up local militias. The strike itself lasted from early March until May (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 92).

The Church and the People

Bishop Hogan continued to lead the diocese, including some twenty thousand Catholics in Kansas City proper. One of his achievements was a set of standards for the creation and location of new parish boundaries. Each parish was to encompass approximately one square mile so the church would be within walking distance for all members (archives of the Diocese of Kansas City).

Another issue for Bishop Hogan was a growing animosity toward Catholics in the city from the American Protective Association (APA). Established in Clinton, Iowa, this nativist group sought to exclude Catholics from public life. In Kansas City, the APA asserted itself in several ways. First, it established twenty-one councils, each with between fifty and four hundred members. Second, it attempted to ban Catholics from teaching in public schools by spreading the rumor that half the

teachers were Catholic. In reality only eight percent were. Finally, APA-backed politicians purged the police force of Irish, according to local newspaper reports (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 90).

One probable cause of the popularity of the APA in the Midwest and Kansas City was the increasing number of Catholic immigrants. The creation of nine new parishes, from 1886 to 1892, demonstrates this growth. These parishes welcomed Irish, German, Belgian, French, Polish, and Italian families. The total number of Catholics was large enough by 1890 for the Heilman family to start a Catholic newspaper, *The Western Cross*, and a bookstore at Twelfth Street between Baltimore and Wyandotte (Doering and Marra 1992, 87-88).¹

The large number of Catholic workers in the growing labor movement made worker issues relevant to the Catholic Church. Uneasy with certain socialist tendencies of the labor leaders and their attacks on private property, some Catholic officials desired a condemnation of such attacks. Instead, in 1891, Pope Leo XIII issued the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (New Things), subtitled “Rights and Duties of Capital and Labor.” While condemning socialism, the encyclical also criticizes capitalism’s assaults on the dignity of workers. In America, this action legitimized union membership for Catholics, though some in the church still wondered whether they were secret societies (like Masons), which Catholics were forbidden to join (Ellis 1956, 104). In 1887, Cardinal James Gibbons argued that the Knights of Labor was not a secret society and that membership was appropriate for Catholics of the working class (Doering and Marra 1992, 86).

Table 2: Parishes established 1886-1891

Parish	Year	Comments	Location
Holy Name	1886	Irish	23 rd and Walrond
St. Aloysius	1886	Jesuit, mixed	11 th and Prospect
Sacred Heart	1887	Irish	26 th and Belleview
Our Lady of Perpetual Help	1888	Redemptorist, near Westport, mixed	Linwood and Broadway
St. Vincent	1888	Mixed, accommodated Germans	17 th and Oak, then 31 st and Flora
St. Stephen	1888	German and Irish	11 th and Bennington
Holy Trinity	1889	Mixed	10 th and Norton
Our Lady of Sorrows	1890	German	23 rd and Baltimore
Holy Rosary	1891	Italian	5 th and Cherry, then Missouri and Campbell

Source: Coleman 1992

Irish

New Irish immigrants came to Kansas City in the 1880s and joined their countrymen in spreading throughout the city away from clusters in specific neighborhoods. Areas of Irish concentration still existed, but districts composed almost entirely of Irish, such as Connaught Town, were less common. An exception was McClure Flats, a poor neighborhood in a one block area between McGee, Grand, Nineteenth and Twentieth streets. Otherwise, Irish tended to move east along Independence Avenue and south atop the West Bluffs to Irish Hill. In the 1880s, 295 homes and nine stores arose in Penn Valley, creating the Irish shantytown of Vinegar Gulch. These structures composed a makeshift village with no city-supplied gas or water, few sidewalks, and no paved streets. In addition to Irish, some Germans and blacks also lived there (Map 52) (O'Neill 2000, 92).

As the largest Catholic group in the city, Irish suffered heavily from APA discrimination. As already noted they were purged from the police force. Because of violence, St. Patrick's Day parades ceased after 1891. The *Kansas City Times*, in an 1893 headline, proclaimed "No Parade, Luckily . . ." (quoted in O'Neill 2000, 68).

Annunciation: Although industry flourished in the West Bottoms, Annunciation Parish continued to suffer because of land purchases by encroaching stockyards and railroads. Residents who had grown affluent moved up to Irish Hill, while others scattered. By 1892, fewer families were members of Annunciation Parish than when it was founded and closure seemed to be in its future (Doering and Marra 1992, 69-71).

Holy Name: Dominican priests, who originally had come to the city to run St. Mary Cemetery at Twenty-second Street and Cleveland Avenue, started a parish in that neighborhood in 1886. This site, the farthest one east at that time, served about thirty-five people. For the first year or so Mass was celebrated in private homes, but 1887 saw the construction of a church at Twenty-third and Monroe (now Walrond) (Maps 10 and 11). In 1890, the parish added a school served initially by two Dominican sisters. A 1940 history of the parish describes the difficulties of attending Mass in the early years: "There were few streets, nor were there buses, street cars or automobiles to convey them. Some were forced to start for Mass before dawn with lanterns to guide them through the fields, wooded lands or over the muddy roads to get to church" (quoted in Coleman 1992, 149). The lack of streets resulted in

a small number of families belonging to the parish in its initial years (archives of the diocese of Kansas City).

Sacred Heart: Until 1887, the inhabitants south of Irish Hill were members of Immaculate Conception Parish. Sacred Heart was Bishop Hogan's response to local Catholics who sought their own parish (Carton 1980). Initially, the parish consisted of fifty families and celebrated Mass in the home of Edward Doherty on the corner of Twenty-fifth and Holly. Soon a small log frame church was built near Twenty-fifth and Madison (Maps 12 and 13). The central location of the church in the parish was clearly chosen with an eye to the future because, according to Sanborn fire insurance maps for 1895, the entire block, as well as all the surrounding blocks, were undeveloped save one other structure at that date. The parish was sparsely developed in the middle, where the church was located, and along the western edge. The northern blocks were highly developed and the southern blocks were somewhat developed. Scandinavian, German, and English immigrants lived in the parish along with Irish, but it is unlikely many attended Sacred Heart. Most of the English and Scandinavians were not Catholic and the Germans attended Sts. Peter and Paul (and, after 1891, Our Lady of Sorrows—see below). Sacred Heart served many workers for the nearby packinghouses of the West Bottoms. A parish census conducted in 1892 showed 280 families and 280 children enrolled in the school (Coleman 1992, 197-198).

Immaculate Conception: No relevant history was recorded for the cathedral parish during this time.

St. Patrick: The small Italian community served here, discussed later, is the only event related to this study recorded during this time.

St. John the Baptist: During this period the parish added thirty feet to the church and purchased a rectory. No other relevant history is recorded.

German

Our Lady of Sorrows: Affluent parishioners of Sts. Peter and Paul petitioned Bishop Hogan for a new German national parish in 1890. Many German families had moved south, away from their church near downtown. The request indicated children were being forced to walk an inordinate distance to school. Bishop Hogan agreed to the request and arranged for German Franciscans to establish such a parish. Initially the Franciscans offered Mass in a rented two-story brick building on Southwest Boulevard (Map 18). In 1891, a church (one hundred twenty-six by fifty-eight feet) and school were built at Twenty-third and Baltimore in the valley of O.K. Creek. Unfortunately for the church, railroad officials selected this site for the modern Union Station only fifteen years later (Coleman 1992, 192; archives of the diocese of Kansas City.)

Sts. Peter and Paul: No relevant history was recorded for this parish during this period.

African Americans

By 1890, Kansas City was home to around fourteen thousand black residents, an increase of six thousand from ten years earlier (Coulter 2006, 26). Originally, they had mostly lived in the West Bottoms, but the expansion of industry there (the same

force that had reduced Annunciation Parish) also compelled blacks to move out during the late 1880s and early 1890s. Church Hill, between Eighth and Twelfth streets and Locust and Forest streets, was an important hub for blacks in the 1880s and 1890s. They also dispersed to the north side, southward close to the state line, and southeast between Troost and Woodland (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 96; Coulter 2006, 27).

St. Joseph: This parish, which had opened southeast of downtown in 1883, was in a position to serve some of the newly relocated people. In 1891, a church (fifty by ninety-eight feet) had just been completed at Nineteenth and Harrison streets. From the parish history it is unclear whether black residents were included as part of the parish community or were just living within the parish boundaries. During this period, segregation was not as strict as it would later become, so it is probable that blacks were included in the parish. There was no separate black parish as yet (Coleman 1992, 239-240).

Italians

In the late 1880s, railroad work, which did not require fluency in English, drew several hundred Italians from the southern provinces of Basilicata and Calabria to Kansas City. They joined a much smaller number of immigrants from the area of the northern port city of Genoa, who had settled in the North End, between Grand and Lydia, Front and Independence streets over the previous thirty years (Map 53). By 1890, a total of 729 people of Italian descent lived in the city (Bongino 1991).

Holy Rosary: Italians attended St. Patrick before the creation of Holy Rosary. As more immigrants arrived, however, they pushed for their own parish. Bishop Hogan agreed in 1891, inviting a recently formed religious order, the Scalabrini Fathers, to serve a new parish in the North End. Italian Bishop John Baptist Scalabrini, with the goal of serving Italian emigrants in North and South America, had started this order in 1887 and he assigned Father Ferdinando Santipolo to start Holy Rosary parish. For four years Mass was held in storefronts at Fifth and Forest and elsewhere as parishioners struggled to raise money for a church of their own. Santipolo's flock endured poverty and only a few spoke English. In 1892, a religious order, the Sisters of Mercy began teaching twenty-five parish children (Bongino 1991).

Mixed

As the children and grandchildren of first-generation immigrants, especially Irish, became more inculcated in the American way of life, they often moved away from ethnic neighborhoods and lost some of their earlier identity. These parishioners, along with a small number of others who lacked strong ties to their ethnic group or who had converted to Catholicism, led to the development of some parishes I classify as mixed. American is another name commonly applied to these parishes, but this should not be taken to mean that Irish, German, and other parishes were not really American. These parishes did not have one distinctive ethnic character listed in any of their histories.

St. Francis Seraph: This parish, in the remote East Bottoms, continued to be home to a wide range of nationalities as shown by this 1892 quotation from the *Catholic Register*, a local paper:

It is a mixed congregation in the full meaning of the word. It counts about 115 families, and one-third of them are English speaking, 1/3 Germans, and the rest consists of Belgians, Frenchmen and Poles. The gospel is read, therefore, every Sunday in English, German, Flemish, and French; preaching every Sunday in English and German, once a month in Flemish and on high feasts days also in French. Thanks to God, all these nationalities live in the best peace. The congregation is about as poor as one can be. Therefore, after it had been for two months without a priest, the Franciscan Fathers of the St. Louis province took, for pity sake, last May charge of it (*Catholic Register*, "East Bottoms Church Dedication Sunday," 30 Jan 1892).

St. Vincent: Bishop Hogan decreed the establishment of this territorial parish just south of downtown at eighteenth and Oak in 1888. The neighborhood was partly Irish, but the decree also specifically stated that all Germans living within the boundaries of the parish were to attend St. Vincent. This was a change from the policy established for Sts. Peter and Paul, allowing all Germans in the city to attend the national parish. The decree also mandated that the Vincentians, the religious order serving the parish, provide a priest who could speak German. This clearly means that a large number of Germans must have resided within the boundaries of the parish, not a surprising fact given the establishment of Our Lady of Sorrows nearby two years later. The Vincentians originally offered Mass in storerooms near Seventeenth and Grand (Maps 14 and 15) (Coleman 1992, 286).

By 1890, Bishop Hogan realized he had made a mistake by establishing St. Vincent too close to the growing downtown region. It would soon lack parishioners as businesses replaced residences. That year, 225 individuals were considered

members of the parish, but only nineteen families lived within its boundaries. The majority of these families lived in the Irish neighborhood of McClure Flats. Bishop Hogan therefore decided to move the parish south, making the northern boundary Twenty-seventh Street. He and the Vincentians selected a new location for a church at Thirty-first and Flora. This created a gap where St. Vincent used to be that was not officially reassigned to any other parish territory. Farmland and dirt roads surrounded the new site (Maps 18 and 19) (Coleman 1992, 286).

St. Stephen: On the east side of town, at the Sheffield District in the Blue River valley, several Pennsylvania companies built factories, including the Pennsylvania Car Works and the Kansas City Switch and Frog Company. These factories brought skilled German and Irish workmen, many of whom were Catholic. In 1888, Bishop Hogan purchased land on the bluff overlooking the valley, on Washington Park Boulevard (now Fourth Street) between Bennington and Newton avenues, to serve this growing community of workers. In laying out the boundaries, he created a parish significantly larger than those he had created in the more settled parts of the city and one that left a gap between it and parishes to the west. The special circumstances of the factory district of Sheffield explain this oddity, since its creation created an isolated “island” of settlement. The area between the industrial district and the rest of the city was so sparsely populated that Hogan had no problem including it in the boundaries for St. Stephen (Maps 14 and 15) (Coleman 1992, 277). A Sanborn fire insurance map for 1895 indicates that a gap still existed between the manufacturing district and the city proper.

Holy Trinity: This parish located between the Sheffield District and the rest of the city started small in 1889 with only twenty families (Maps 16 and 17). The diocesan history notes that, at this time, the streetcar came as far east as Cleveland and that people often walked downtown. That the streetcar line extended only to Cleveland Avenue confirms a lack of population in the eastern part of the parish as well as in St. Stephen Parish. A church was completed in 1889 on the corner of Tenth and Norton (Coleman 1992, 168).

St. Aloysius: In 1885, the Jesuit Provincial, Leopold Bushart, wrote Bishop Hogan that the Jesuits had permission from their Father General to acquire a site in Kansas City for a church, school, and college. By 1887, they had selected a site on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Prospect and there finished a church basement (Maps 12 and 13). Although some residents opposed the construction of a Catholic school in the neighborhood, the Jesuits eventually purchased property near the church for an elementary school. By 1888, a three-story brick building was ready to house 156 students. One hundred ninety-seven children were enrolled by 1890, and 245 by 1892. In 1890, three thousand people were present for the laying of the cornerstone for the church superstructure that would open in 1891. The boundaries of the new parish were extended north to Smart Avenue in 1891. The parish was growing rapidly, although plans for college construction had been put on hold.

Westport Area

Our Lady of Good Counsel: The church in Westport had been closed and boarded up since 1874 with the people being served by the Redemptorist chapel. In

1888, however, Father R. M. Ryan arrived to lead the completion and refurbishing of the church that had been started twenty years earlier. Bishop Hogan approved the name and the boundaries of the church at this time. The reopening of this church and support given in the form of a name and boundaries strongly suggests a growing Catholic population in Westport (Coleman 1992, 175).

Our Lady of Perpetual Help: Also, during this period, the Redemptorist Fathers continued to celebrate Mass for the community near Westport in their chapel on the third floor of their monastery. In the initial years, the priests offered Mass here as a convenience to the people of the surrounding area, but in 1888, Bishop Hogan canonically established it as a parish with a name and boundaries. This is a second indicator of a growing Catholic presence in the southern part of the city. Seventy families made up the initial parish, with seven of those families living in tents rather than houses. In 1890, the Redemptorist college for novitiates was moved out of the city (Maps 14 and 15) (Coleman 1992, 185).

Analysis

Several ethnic and religious relationships that occurred during the late 1880s and early 1890s deserve closer analysis. I look first at the location of Irish and Italian neighborhoods, second at a link between the location of churches and streetcar lines, and finally at the circumstances surrounding placement of churches and parish boundaries.

Ethnic Neighborhoods: Irish during this period were less clustered in neighborhoods than during the previous years, although some concentrations such as

Irish Hill remained and new ones emerged in Penn Valley and McClure Flats (Map 52). Holy Name Parish is described as Irish in its history but no known Irish neighborhoods are present in its boundaries. This may be a case of a significant number of Irish living in the parish but not gathered in particular neighborhoods.

Italians began to arrive at the start of the 1890s and settle in the North End (Map 53). The description of their neighborhood in the history fits with the dispersion of the storefronts that served as space for Mass during the early years. Three separate stores were used for this purpose, spread throughout the neighborhood. The eventual church was constructed near the center of the neighborhood.

Streetcars and Churches: In the previous chapter I demonstrated little connection between the location of Catholic churches and streetcar lines. Does the increased importance and visibility of streetcars during the late 1880s change this relationship? Map 54 shows the network in 1892 with the location of the churches and the year each was built. Our Lady of Sorrows, the second German church, was built at the intersection of two lines. These lines may have been important to the planners in their selection of the church location. It would be especially important for a national church, which drew parishioners from across the city, to be close to the streetcar network. Sacred Heart, in 1889 was built two blocks or about three hundred yards from a route.

St. Vincent Gap: The relocation of the entire St. Vincent parish by Bishop Hogan in 1890 created a gap where no parish was assigned (Map 55). This raises

several questions about this region: Did any Catholics live there? If so, what parish did they attend? Why were the boundaries not readjusted after the departure of St. Vincent? The reason for the movement of St. Vincent (i.e. the encroachment of downtown) indicates that the northern part of the gap probably had few residents. Diocesan archivist, Father Michael Coleman, provided an additional answer to these questions: The majority of the Catholics living in this area were Germans who attended Our Lady of Sorrows parish, just west of the gap. The remaining Catholics primarily attended St. Joseph but some also went to other surrounding parishes (Michael Coleman, interview by the author, Kansas City, MO, February 2008).

Summary

Map 56, showing when each parish was established, nicely summarizes this chapter. It shows a continued spread of the city east and south plus a jump across vacant land to create the Sheffield Industrial District (St. Stephen Parish). It is also interesting to note that Holy Name and St. Aloysius were created in the eastern and southeastern part of town before Our Lady of Perpetual Help and St. Vincent appeared in the south in 1888. A person familiar with the city today might assume the primary growth of the city always had been to the south, but Map 56 confirms historical accounts that, briefly in the late 1880s, eastern growth outstripped that to the south (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 102).

¹ A fire in 1896 destroyed the bookstore and the resulting debt forced the family to close the newspaper (Doering and Marra 1992, 87-88).

Chapter Four
Depression, Followed by Growth
1893-1912

City History

A depression lasting four years struck the nation and the city in 1893 (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 141). Following this came a time of steady growth and expansion. Observers at the time commented that the city had moved beyond its pioneer roots and reached maturity (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 99-102). By 1900, the population had grown to more than one hundred sixty-three thousand. The annexation of Westport, in 1897, which added twenty thousand citizens and thirteen square miles, fueled some of this expansion (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 137). More growth was provided by meatpacking plants in the West Bottoms, which had begun to recruit workers from southern and eastern Europe. In addition to the Westport annexation, the city limits also moved eastwards in 1897. These boundaries were expanded again in 1909 (Map 41). This time the city grew to almost sixty square miles adding the Leeds district in the Blue River Valley, the Country Club District, the Waldo community in the south, and others. Almost two hundred-fifty thousand people now lived in Kansas City (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 159, 162).

City beautification continued at this time with boulevards connecting large parks, plus a series of smaller neighborhood parks. Many areas were transformed including the West Bluffs and Vinegar Gulch, which became West Terrace and Penn Valley parks, respectively (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 173). Thomas Swope gave two square miles of land to the city, in 1896, for a large park south of Sixty-third

Street (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 166). Street-cleaning, building inspections, hospitals, and sanitation received increased emphasis (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 116, 133). This included creation of the Board of Public Welfare in 1910 to deal with social and economic problems (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 156)

To celebrate the city's growth, support grew for the construction of a grand assembly building. The Kansas City Convention Hall was completed in February 1899 and officials convinced the Democratic Party to hold its 1900 presidential nominating convention there. Just three months before its start, however, the hall burned completely. An amazing reconstruction made a new hall ready in time for the convention, a process that demonstrated the city's organization and became a source of local pride (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 126-128).

Progress was steady for the first decade of the new century, interrupted only by a flood in 1903 that inundated the West Bottoms and killed twenty people. Between fifteen and twenty thousand people, about ten percent of the two Kansas Cities, were left temporarily homeless (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 151, 155-158).

By 1908, almost all local streetcars had been converted to electric power. In the same year, the city began issuing tags for automobiles; 391 were registered the first year. Railroads were also in the news. Their construction activities had attracted two thousand Mexicans to the city (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 169). Some worked on track maintenance, others on construction of a new Union Station south of downtown at Twenty-third and Main (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 178).

In 1908, the real estate developer J. C. Nichols began purchasing land for his Country Club District along Ward Parkway south of Forty-eighth Street. This became an area for wealthy residents who had begun to abandon Quality Hill and a slightly newer area near Armour Boulevard called Hyde Park. Nichols used restrictive deed covenants to keep land prices high, including prohibitions on blacks and other ethnicities from purchasing property in his development. This was a common, though regrettable, practice during the time (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 172-175).

Church History

During this period of general growth, Bishop Hogan led the city's seventeen Catholic parishes. The economic depression of 1893 temporarily halted the establishment of new parishes. Lebanese Catholics began The Church of Our Lady Parish in 1893, but no others were started until 1902. Then came a large expansion. Twelve parishes were set up over the next nine years, including five in 1909 (Table 3). These generally lacked distinct ethnic character, although an African-American parish and a second German parish were notable exceptions. Thomas Casey started an independent Catholic newspaper, *The Catholic Key*, in 1899 and Notre Dame de Sion, a Catholic girl's high school, opened in 1912.

Table 3: Parishes established 1893-1910

Parish	Year	Comments	Location
Church of Our Lady	1893	Lebanese	Various storefronts in North End
New Annunciation	1902	Mixed	Linwood and Benton
Holy Cross	1902	Mixed	St. John and Quincy
Holy Family	1905	Mixed	39 th and Fremont (in Leeds)
All Saints	1906	Mixed	St. Louis and Hickory (West Bottoms)
St. James (The Lesser)	1906	Mixed	40 th and Tracy
St. Michael	1906	Mixed	24 th and Brighton
Assumption	1909	Mixed	Lexington and Benton
Blessed Sacrament	1909	Mixed	39 th and Agnes
Guardian Angel	1909	German	43 rd and Mercier
St. Francis Xavier	1909	Jesuit, mixed	53 rd and Troost
Visitation of the Blessed Mother	1909	English speakers	52 nd and Main
St. Monica	1910	African-American	19 th and Harrison

Irish

No parishes described as Irish were established during these years. Sacred Heart Parish remained strongly Irish but many of the parishes that were previously described as Irish were becoming more “Americanized,” shrinking, and/or integrating other ethnicities.

Sacred Heart: The two hundred and eight families constituting Sacred Heart began to erect a new, small, log-frame church in 1894 at Twenty-fifth and Madison. Three years later a stone church was built around it, and in 1912, an addition (Coleman 1992, 198). Irish and German families made this a strongly Catholic section of town, although the Germans were adamant in attending their own parish,

Our Lady of Sorrows (Doering and Marra 1992, 66). Mexicans, hired to work on the railroads, arrived in the parish starting in 1900. The construction of Union Station nine years later brought more Mexicans to the parish. Some housing was built within the parish boundaries for these workers. Others purchased homes from upwardly mobile Irish families (diocesan archives for Sacred Heart).

Sanborn fire insurance maps for 1895 indicate that this parish was overwhelmingly residential with only a few hotels, a warehouse, a city supply yard and a livery. This high proportion of houses probably explains why the parish had less acreage than the norm.

Annunciation: By 1897, this West Bottom parish, which at one time had been the largest in the state, was now one of the smallest. With fewer than three hundred members and an annual income of only two hundred dollars, the diocese sold the church and rectory to the neighboring Rock Island Railway Company. The parish temporarily moved back into the 1872 frame church at the corner of Fourteenth and Wyoming, but in 1902, closed entirely. The people of the West Bottoms thereafter had to attend Mass at Immaculate Conception.

Holy Name: Construction of new housing in this east side parish sparked ambitious plans. Sanborn maps from 1895 show the southern third of the parish being undeveloped, the area directly around the church lightly developed residential, and the northwest part of parish more densely developed. By 1909, however, the entire parish had been filled with homes. Such expansion prompted a new building in 1907, one cathedral in size that would seat one thousand people.

St. John the Baptist: During the first ten years of the twentieth century, a few Italians began moving east from the North End and into this previously Irish parish. Other than this, no relevant history is available for this parish during this time. Sanborn maps for 1895 show mainly small residential lots around the church with the eastern half of the parish containing larger lots and houses. By 1909, maps show an apartment complex adjacent to church, and a small tire factory on the same block. Some of the former vacant areas are now filled with residences.

Immaculate Conception: No relevant history exists in the parish records for the cathedral area during this time. The neighborhood had become fairly industrial, however. According to the 1895 Sanborn maps, a paper box factory, a candy factory, a boot store, dry goods stores, a furniture and carpet company, the New York Life Insurance Building, other office buildings, hotels, a bakery, a dye works, a homeopathic pharmacy, an indoor swimming tank, and a dance academy were nearby. So were the Coates Opera House, the Kansas City Medical and Surgical Sanatorium, the Sisters of St. Joseph Hospital, Kansas City Medical College, a Baptist church, two Presbyterian churches, a Swedish Lutheran church, and an Episcopalian church.

St. Patrick: Sanborn maps of 1895 depict the western half of this parish as commercial and the eastern half as residential. North of Independence Avenue houses and lots were generally smaller and were built near some industry such as a cider mill, a pitch and tar distillery, the Kansas City Gas, Light, and Coke Company, a brewery, and several brickyards. Two rows of buildings between First and Second,

and Locust and Oak, were labeled “Italian Tenements,” the beginning of the city’s “Little Italy” in the North End. By 1909, Sanborn maps show a replacement of many of the residences in the eastern half of the parish by dance halls, hotels, hospitals, and small businesses.

German

Around the turn of the century, Germans were moving south out of Sts. Peter and Paul Parish. Our Lady of Sorrows gained members in this process, but the moves extended even farther south to the area around Forty-third and Roanoke Parkway near Westport.

Sts. Peter and Paul: This original German parish was rapidly being surrounded by the commercial activities of downtown Kansas City according to the Sanborn maps of 1895. Within four blocks of the church were several hotels, a carriage and wagon shop, a buggy company, a Salvation Army barracks, a Masonic Hall, the Grand Opera House, the *Kansas City Star* Building, a department store, several Protestant churches, and a public library. In addition, a new U. S. post office and customhouse occupying half a city block was under construction across the street. Maps from 1909 show an even greater number of commercial structures in the vicinity, particularly hotels and office buildings.

By 1900, people were predicting that urban encroachment would soon force the parish’s closure. Many former attendees now lived near Our Lady of Sorrows and Guardian Angel churches (diocesan archives for Sts. Peter and Paul). The parish was

able to survive only out of tradition as the *The Catholic Register* of June 14, 1917

explains:

The old structure on McGee Street is one of Kansas City's landmarks. Around it center many hallowed memories. For years it marked what was the residence section of the center of home life. Business crowded it. One by one the people were forced to retreat before commercial offensives. Sky-scrappers rose on every side. Each year for nearly a quarter of a century people thought the old church must go. But in the face of the spirit and power of business it held grimly on and today it stands as almost the last link of the old days (quoted in diocesan archives for Sts. Peter and Paul).

Our Lady of Sorrows: This second German parish, on the city's west side, grew rapidly in the 1890s. Being close to the strong Irish parish of Sacred Heart, it was natural for some rivalry to develop. James P. McGilley recounts the loyalty of parishioners to their ethnic group:

In 1905 Our Lady of Sorrows was German. Period! Plenty of Irishmen lived in the area but they went to Sacred Heart, at 26th and Madison, which was just as Irish as Our Lady of Sorrows was German. To give you an idea of how strong the ties of national heritage were in those days: Max Hensler's family moved from 1821 Main to 1824 Tracy in 1903. Now 1824 Tracy was exactly a half block from St. Joseph's School. But, did Max go to St. Joseph's? Not on your life! He walked over four miles every day to and from Our Lady of Sorrows (diocesan archives for Our Lady of Sorrows).

In 1906, railroad officials with the Terminal Company purchased the church property at Twenty-third and Baltimore for \$51,000. This land was to be used for the new Union Station, which, when finished, had its ticket office where the church used to stand. Parishioners continued to use the church until July 1907. Few sites existed to build a new church and Bishop Hogan did not want it to be too near Sacred Heart at Twenty-sixth and Madison (Map 24). Finally parishioners purchased new land at Twenty-Sixth and Gillham. This property, a former chicken farm, disappointed people who had already built homes near the old church at Twenty-third and

Baltimore. Still, in December 1906 the cornerstone for the new church was laid and in June of the next year the first Mass was offered in the new church (Coleman 1992, 193-194).

Guardian Angel: In 1909, the idea for a new German parish to serve those who had moved near Westport was discussed during a card game among influential Germans. A proposal was presented to Father Ernest Zechenter, the current pastor of Saints Peter and Paul, who then introduced it to Bishop Hogan. Hogan approved the request. The boundaries were listed simply as “all Germans on the south side.” Mass was celebrated first in a vacant grocery store at Forty-third and Belleview (Map 26) while the forty member families oversaw construction of a two-story brick building at Forty-third and Mercer. At this time, most of the streets in the area were unpaved and cattle grazed up to the classroom windows (diocesan archives for Guardian Angel; Coleman 1992, 142-143).

African Americans

St. Monica: In 1910, Franciscan Father Cyprian Sauer searched the black neighborhoods around Fifteenth and The Paseo for Catholics, but discovered only thirty. People there were suspicious of Catholic priests and reluctant to speak with them. When Sauer tried to advertise his services in the local black newspaper, the editor refused to run the ad on the grounds that it would ruin his paper. Sauer wanted to start a parish in the area, but could only gather \$1,050. So he appealed to Mother Katherine Drexel, founder of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored People.¹ Years later he explained the response he got and the source of the

parish's name: "I made a promise to St. Monica of Africa, who prayed so long for the conversion of her son Augustine, that if financial aid were given soon, the mission would be dedicated in her honor. Exactly a week after that day I received a letter from Mother Katherine (Drexel), stating that she was considering my appeal" (quoted in Coleman 1992, 255). Drexel personally inspected the situation in Kansas City during a trip to the western United States and donated eight thousand dollars to purchase the first property (Coleman 1992, 254-255).

Sauer began celebrating Mass for blacks at the St. John the Baptist parish school. Segregation, by this time, had become mainstream in Kansas City and it was unlikely that blacks were allowed to attend Mass anywhere else. Sauer, for example, has himself detailed an encounter with racism that ended Mass at St. John school:

Everything went smoothly until the pastor of St. John Church, ten blocks away, a quaint old Irishman, who really had no connection with St. John School, heard of the Negroes desecrating the school by holding divine services in it. There was a tornado mixed with a thunderstorm and blizzard of execrations. On hearing of the furor I called upon him to explain our object in having their service there, but full of scorn, he told me that I was the craziest man on the earth, a blot on the city, and that I ought to be expelled from the Catholic Church for wasting my priestly life, working for brutes that have no soul. Without a word, I politely shook the dust from my shoes before his door and left his sanctum (quoted in Coleman 1992, 255).

After losing St. John school, the parish moved to a frame cabin remodeled to serve as a church and school at Seventeenth and Lydia (Map 28). There were no kneelers for the pews and a school desk served as an altar. The roof often leaked during rainstorms. Father Zechenter of Saints Peter and Paul and the Koehler family donated needed items. At this location Sister Theophile began teaching fifty children in 1910, five of whom were Catholic. From 1910 to 1915, Sauer made begging trips

through Saints Peter and Paul and Our Lady of Sorrows parishes for money to keep church open. It seems remarkable that he chose the two German parishes. Perhaps he was German. It could also be that these parishes had a reputation for generosity. The parish history of Saints Peter and Paul shows pride in the help given by the parish to blacks and Hispanics (Coleman 1992, 256).

St. Joseph: By 1912, increasing strict segregation and the opening of St. Monica ended African-American attendance at St. Joseph. Sanborn maps for 1895 show the church surrounded by medium-sized houses and some undeveloped lots. The northern part of the parish was distinctively more developed than the southern. By 1909, change had occurred. New commercial and industrial developments appeared, including a lumber yard, a cement factory, a sheet metal works, Western Cabinet and Furniture Manufacturer, a Montgomery Ward warehouse, and a Standard Oil Company tank farm. The rest of the parish was now densely residential.

Italians

Two thousand Italians lived in the city by 1900 and four thousand six hundred by 1910. Nearly all came from the poor, southern sector of that county, most from Sicily. During this time, “Little Italy” emerged as a community in Kansas City’s North End. It had its own doctors, lawyers, stores, and, of course, church.

Holy Rosary: In 1895, two hundred Italian families completed a church on the southeast corner of Missouri Avenue and Campbell Street. By 1897, this parish had grown to 366 families comprised of 646 members, 463 of whom were male. In 1896, Italians held a parade to lead Cardinal Francis Satilli, the first apostolic

delegate to the United States, from the Immaculate Conception Cathedral downtown to the new church. The big flood of 1903 damaged many parishioners' homes and a fire that same year destroyed the church on Easter morning. A new church opened at the same location within months, but the interior remained undecorated for five years. The parish finally had money to build a school in 1907 thanks to a donation of seven thousand dollars by John Benoist, a Kansas City pioneer. In 1910, the growing size of the community necessitated an additional two Sunday Masses (Coleman 1992, 159-160).

Lebanese

Church of Our Lady: In 1893, another group of Catholics arrived to work and worship in the city—a small colony of Lebanese lead by Joseph Moses. Within four months, around eighty-five men and fifteen women had arrived. A local Catholic newspaper reported in 1893 that the chief of the colony expected to receive more colonists within a few months but it is unknown whether these did, in fact, arrive (diocesan archive for Church of Our Lady). The colony was not large enough or wealthy enough to support a church, so they met in storefront buildings they owned downtown using the Maronite Rite to celebrate Mass (Map 57). Father Hanna Iammeen, who came with the immigrants, had received special permission from Bishop Hogan for this practice. The English translation of the name of the parish was “Church of Our Lady,” but most people referred to it as the Arabian church. This Lebanese colony was small enough so that the storefront locations chosen for Mass

likely are good indicators of where these people lived (Coleman 1992, 140; Doering and Marra 1992, 398).

Mixed

Most of the new parishes begun during this period have no distinctive ethnic character listed in their histories. All were mixed parishes of many ethnicities with descendants of Irish who had become more integrated into the mainstream American culture often being in leadership roles.

St. Francis Seraph: In 1897, this isolated parish in the East Bottoms built a school and a rectory. Sisters came every day from Independence to teach. A flood in 1903 caused damage to the area (Coleman 1992, 221-222), but Sanborn maps for 1895 show a sparsely built residential area around the church. One block south stood the massive Heim Brewery with a railyard, grain elevator, and bottling house.

St. Vincent: Bishop Hogan wrote a letter in 1902 describing the south-central area where this parish was located:

St. Vincent's Parish district is without exception the most beautiful, healthy and inviting residential portion of Kansas City. The people who have settled therein, so far, are orderly and well-to-do—without pomp or pride—and have no immoral plague spot amongst them. The parish is very fast becoming populous, and in the course of time will no doubt have Catholics enough to form a large congregation. Several street cars traverse the district, having their terminals in the business and working centers of the city (quoted in diocesan archives for St. Vincent).

Sanborn maps of 1895 show a few houses around the church and the whole parish as sparsely residential. By 1909 several hotels existed in the immediate vicinity of the church along with large houses. The parish was now mainly

residential with especially dense concentrations in its southern portion. The presence of two sanitariums supports Hogan's praise of the parish's beauty and health.

St. Stephen: The depression of 1893 hit the six-year-old Sheffield industrial district in the Blue River Valley hard. Correspondingly, St. Stephen parish also suffered. This was a "year of great panic, the community as a thriving industrial town disappeared almost as rapidly as it had come" (diocesan archives for St. Stephen). Adding to the struggles was a fire that destroyed the Kansas City Switch and Frog plant in 1894. A flood brought further trouble to the parish (Coleman 1992, 227).

According to *The Kansas City Post*:

In 1903, as the parish was having a bazaar, the east bottoms began to flood. The bazaar was forgotten as parishioners rushed to the bottoms to rescue Russian, Italian and Mexican families who lost everything to the flood. The families were brought up on the bluff and parishioners fed and cared for them until they were able to return home (quoted in diocesan archives for St. Stephen).

In 1908, a southward spread of housing in this district prompted the relocation of the church to Tenth and Bennington. The process took several weeks, and Mass was celebrated while the church building was on rollers in the middle of the street (Coleman 1992, 227). Sanborn maps for 1909 show some manufacturing still active in the area. Three districts existed along the Blue River from north to south: Sheffield near Seventh Street containing the Kansas City Bolt and Nut Company and the Snyder Steel and Iron Works; Centropolis near Twelfth Street containing the Sheffield Gas Power Company, the American Roofing Company, and machine shops for the Ford Motor Company; and Manchester near Seventeenth Street containing the Prier Brass Manufacturing Company and the Witte Iron Works.

Holy Trinity: In 1902, Bishop Hogan divided Holy Trinity Parish in half at Independence Avenue and created the new Holy Cross parish in the area to the north. In 1909, Holy Trinity church nearly burned to the ground with all of its contents being lost. The next year the church was rebuilt along with a new school (Map 21) (Coleman 1992, 168).

St. Aloysius: In 1896, two hundred-seventy students were enrolled at this parish's school in the city's northeastern section, but attendance was poor. By 1910, however, increased enrollment prompted the addition of four new classrooms. A rectory was built in 1912 (Coleman 1992, 204). Sanborn maps for 1895 show medium-sized homes in the area along with the Kansas City Exposition Building, a half-mile race track, and some light industry in the southeast along railroad tracks. Maps for 1909 show only slight changes including removal of the race track and construction of a Missouri and Kansas Telephone Company building across the alley from the church.

New Annunciation: When Annunciation church in the West Bottoms was closed in 1902, Bishop Hogan instructed Father Dalton to start a new parish in the area south of Twenty-Seventh Street and east of Brooklyn Avenue (Map 21). This new unit, in a largely rural area, would resurrect the name Annunciation. The diocese bought land at Linwood and Benton where Dalton offered the first Mass in June 1902 with two hundred people present (Map 20). Construction of a permanent church started that year, but because of low membership and economic hardship, it was not

completely finished for more than two decades (Coleman 1992, 110). Sanborn maps for 1909 confirm the rural nature of this parish.

Holy Cross: In 1902, in one room of a large house on the northeast side of town, one hundred twenty members of this parish celebrated its first Mass. A permanent church was started at St. John Avenue and Quincy in 1904 (Maps 20 and 21). By the next year it was usable for Mass, although it was not finished until 1917. The area around the church at the time of construction was largely vacant with pastures and weeds. Few streets existed and fewer still were paved. Thirty-five families comprised the initial parish but they quickly grew to seventy-five within four years.

Holy Family: Until 1905, Catholics in the Leeds neighborhood had to travel up to three miles to attend Mass at Holy Name Church at Twenty-third and Walrond (Maps 22 and 23). A committee of four then petitioned Bishop Hogan and he established Holy Family Parish, to be run by Franciscans. The friars rented a hall between Bennington and Fuller avenues, but the next year parishioners built a permanent structure at Fremont and Thirty-ninth. Monsignor Bauer recalls the geographic problems that limited attendance:

The parish actually was a large one and would have been in attendance if people could have gotten there easily. The entire west side of the parish was cut off by the Little Blue River which ran behind the rectory and church. Most of the people on the West side went to Annunciation or Blessed Sacrament because there [sic] were closer and easier to get to. The Leeds area was mostly commercial and to the East, undeveloped or close to Nativity [parish in Independence]. Though there might have been several hundred families within the boundaries of the parish, probably not more than 50 or 60 attended Mass there (quoted in Coleman 1992, 301).

All Saints: To serve the remaining one hundred Catholics in the West Bottoms after Annunciation Parish closed, Bishop Hogan established All Saints Parish at St. Louis Avenue and Hickory Street in 1906 (Maps 24 and 25). Attendance never was good, however, and it closed in 1910 (Coleman 1992, 108).

St. James (The Lesser): Walsman Hall, at Thirty-eighth and Woodland in the city's southern sector, was a popular place for dances during the week. On the weekends, however, Baptists, Mormons, and Catholics each rented it for five dollars an hour. During the Catholic hour from ten to eleven, people brought in a makeshift altar, constructed of boxes nailed together and covered with white cloth. Priests heard confessions behind the piano on the bandstand. This was the start of St. James the Lesser Parish, comprised of seventeen families in 1906 (Map 25). By the end of the year, a small frame church had been completed at Fortieth and Tracy (Map 24). Four Sisters of Mercy arrived in September 1907 to serve a newly built school. In 1911, the growing parish (now more than one hundred families) needed more room. It expanded the school and built a new church at Thirty-ninth and Harrison that seated four hundred people (Coleman 1992, 229-230).

St. Michael the Archangel: In 1905, at least thirty Catholic families lived east of Jackson Avenue and south of Eighteenth Street. At that time streetcar lines ran no farther east than Jackson making it difficult for these families to attend Mass at Holy Name, the closest church (diocesan archives for St. Michael the Archangel). That year, these families met in the home of David Egan, near Twenty-fourth and Hardesty, to determine if they could support a new parish on the city's eastern edge.

The next year Bishop Hogan approved the establishment of St. Michael the Archangel (Map 23). Mass was initially celebrated in Egan's home until a frame church was built at Twenty-fourth and Brighton in 1906 (Map 24). Parishioners constructed this church themselves, at times working until two in the morning. In 1908, the parish opened a school with sixty students and two teaching sisters (Coleman 1992, 251).

Assumption: In 1909, the approximately thirty Catholic families living in the area between Prospect and Jackson avenues and Independence Avenue and the river bluffs, requested a church (Map 27). Bishop Hogan established Assumption parish later that year and priests offered Mass in both a rented frame building and a private home near Garner and Indiana avenues. In 1910, the parish built a frame church at Lexington Avenue and Benton Boulevard that seated 190 persons (Map 25) (Coleman 1992, 114).

Blessed Sacrament: Bishop Hogan instructed Father Francis McCaffrey of All Saints Parish to found a new parish in the area south of Annunciation and east of St. James in 1909 (Map 27). Thirty Catholic families lived in the area and first celebrated Mass in a home at 3845 Wabash. The next year a frame church was built at Thirty-ninth and Agnes (Map 26) (Coleman 1992, 116-117).

St. Francis Xavier: During the first decade of the twentieth century Jesuit Father Michael Dowling worked to prepare the groundwork for a Jesuit college in Kansas City. He wanted a location within the boundaries of a Jesuit-run parish so, in 1909, he petitioned Bishop Hogan for the establishment of St. Francis Xavier on

Fifty-third Street near Forest Street (Maps 26 and 27).² Only twelve Catholic families lived in the area, but Hogan understood Dowling's rationale and so approved the parish. In 1910, the people built a combined church and school that seated 252 people for Mass. Fifty students attended and three sisters taught at the school when it opened. These sisters lived at St. Aloysius Convent and traveled by streetcar every day to Forty-seventh and Troost. From there the sisters rode a horse and buggy up a steep hill to the school. When their driver missed work, they were forced to climb the hill, often in mud or rain. Parish archives explain that the lack of public transportation limited growth in the early years (Coleman 1992, 222-223, diocesan archives for St. Francis Xavier).

Visitation of the Blessed Mother: The area south of Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish was mostly dairy and truck farms with a few homes at the start of the 1910s (Map 21). In Bishop Hogan's 1909 decree establishing Visitation of the Blessed Mother Parish in this region, he stated the parish was "for the faithful that speak the English language." Father Thomas McDonald offered the first Mass at his farm house near Fifty-first and Main for twelve families. Within a few months, the parish built a temporary church on the northeast corner of Fifty-first Terrace and Grand. They built a permanent church in 1911 on the southeast corner of Fifty-first Terrace and Main (Coleman 1992, 290-291).

Westport Area

Our Lady of Good Counsel: This original Westport parish had grown considerably by the start of the twentieth century and needed a larger church. The

cornerstone for one seating six hundred was laid in 1906. This church was completed the next year, at which time the former church was converted to the parish school.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help: Growth in the Westport region also prompted the Redemptorists to expand. They built a new brick church in 1894 that seated four hundred parishioners, but by 1906, needed an even larger space. They then constructed a church thought to be the second largest west of the Mississippi River. It measured 206 by 120 feet and had room for nine hundred parishioners. At least seven thousand people attended the groundbreaking ceremony along with Irish, German, Slovakian (from Kansas City, Kansas) and Italian societies and bands. Workers finished the church in 1912. Sanborn maps from 1895 indicate this parish was still mostly undeveloped, particularly the northwestern quarter, but by 1909 the monastery was surrounded by residences. By this time, the western edge of the parish contained large houses plus a playing field for the Kansas City Athletic Club.

Summary

Map 58 is an attempt to summarize the events and trends discussed in this chapter. Besides Assumption Parish filling the gap between St. John the Baptist and Holy Cross, all other additions match the urban march south. Westport was now fully engulfed by the city. The parishes created after 1906 are about half a mile longer than previous ones along the north-south axis. This is probably because of a growing ease of transportation, electric streetcars plus the growing presence of automobiles in the suburbs.

¹ Fifty dollars was from Bishop Hogan and one thousand dollars was from Bernard Corrigan, the streetcar owner (Coleman 1992, 254). Drexel was canonized in October 2000, becoming the second recognized American born saint

(http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/ns_lit_doc_20001001_katharine-drexel_en.html).

² The church was named St. Francis Xavier supposedly to honor the name of the first church in the region. This was a mistake, because the first church was actually St. John Francis Regis.

Chapter Five
World War and the 1920s
1913-1930

City History

Spurred by large growth in population and motor travel, the city continued to change during these years. Automobiles were common by the middle of the 1910s (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 171). Population grew from around two hundred fifty thousand in 1910 to over three hundred twenty thousand by 1920 and then to almost four hundred thousand by 1930. In those same twenty years the percentage of foreign-born Kansas Citians declined from ten to six percent and the number of clerical jobs rose from twelve to sixteen percent. These were in line with national trends (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 183-184). In 1917, a fire in the stockyards in the West Bottoms killed seventeen thousand cattle and hogs and caused more than one and a half million dollars in damage. A strike of laundry workers that same year expanded to a larger protest of twenty-six thousand workers that did not end until April 1918. In April 1917, the nation declared war on Germany and attention became focused overseas (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 180-182). After the war, citizens donated two million dollars in ten days for a victory monument—the Liberty Memorial—to be erected at a site just south of Union Station. The groundbreaking, with Generals Pershing and Foch in attendance, was in November 1921. It was formally dedicated in 1926 (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 186, 205).

Spanish influenza hit Kansas City in September 1918, killing two thousand three hundred people. City officials banned public gatherings of more than twenty

individuals. The postwar years saw the passage of laws prohibiting alcohol consumption and restricting the number of immigrants. Coincidentally, this time was the start of the roaring 1920s. Movie houses, bowling alleys, skating rinks, and amusement parks provided entertainment (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 176). Jazz was also becoming popular, along with gambling, both encouraged by Tom Pendergast's Democratic political machines (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 188-194). Citizens began to buy electric refrigerators, washing machines and vacuum cleaners in large numbers. Brewer George Muehlebach, in response to the growing popularity of baseball, built a stadium at Twenty-second Street and Brooklyn. The increased affordability of automobiles allowed middle-class residents to move south, an area which had been limited to wealthier residents. J. C. Nichols continued to develop subdivisions for these residents. In 1923, the Mill Creek Building, the first building on Nichols' Country Club Plaza, the nation's first suburban shopping district was finished. The next year, Wolfermans (a grocery store and bakery) and a shoe store opened there, followed by parking garages, gas stations and a Piggly-Wiggly supermarket (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 194). Construction boomed throughout the city and included factories, warehouses, public garages, hotels, a hospital, and an airport (just north of the Missouri River) (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 207). By the mid-1920s, Nichols's Country Club District had become the prominent white upper-class neighborhood in the city (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 187-188).

Church History

In 1913, Bishop Hogan died and Thomas Lillis became the new leader of sixty thousand Catholics in the diocese. Lillis had grown up in Kansas City and served as a priest there until his appointment as bishop of Leavenworth in 1904. The same year, the *Catholic Directory* recorded nine male and twenty-four female religious orders working in the diocese. Rockhurst, the Jesuit college, finally opened in 1914. Two new national parishes were established, St. Stanislaus for Poles in 1913 and Our Lady of Guadalupe for Mexicans in 1914. During World War I twelve hundred Kansas City Catholics formed a regiment that become the 129th field artillery and served in France (Doering and Marra 1992, 102-110).

Table 4: Parishes established 1913-1930

Parish	Year	Comments	Location
St. Stanislaus	1913	Polish	18 th and Ewing
Our Lady of Guadalupe	1914	Mexican	23 rd and Madison
St. Elizabeth	1917	Mixed	75 th and Main
St. Louis	1919	Mixed	60 th and Swope Parkway
St. Augustine	1923	Mixed	79th and Paseo
St. Peter	1925	Mixed	Between Holmes and Charlotte on Meyer Boulevard
St. Therese the Little Flower	1925	Mixed	58 th and Euclid

Irish

By the 1920s, Irish families were in their third generation and had lost most of their group identity. The Irish neighborhoods were even smaller and less distinct than before (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 186). Parish histories do not detail if they

maintained an Irish identity, but for organizational purposes I discuss them under the Irish heading.

Sacred Heart: Father John Hogan led this once prominent Irish parish in 1925. He wrote to the diocesan chancellor stating the parish was in a state of decline and unable to pay its assessments (Coleman 1992, 199).

Holy Name: The ambitious plans of 1907 to build a cathedral-sized church that could seat one thousand worshipers were finally fulfilled in 1928. The struggle to build such a structure left a large debt of \$175,000 on the parish, which was at its peak at this time but soon began to decline in numbers. The following year a parish census reported 434 families composed of 1,616 individuals (Coleman 1992, 150-151).

St. John the Baptist: Italians, mainly from Sicily, continued to move into this parish. No exact numbers were found for these years but by 1950 ninety percent of the parishioners were Italian. No other relevant history was recorded for this parish (Coleman 1992, 233-234).

Immaculate Conception: No relevant history was recorded for this parish during this time.

St. Patrick: No relevant history was recorded for this parish during this time.

German

World War I prompted a movement by most German-Americans to show their patriotism and become more “American.” The national parishes reduced or completely ceased Masses in the German language (Doering and Marra 1992, 114).

Animosity because of the war probably sped up the process of assimilation that was occurring more naturally in the Irish community. By the 1920s, Germans, like the Irish, had lost much of their ethnic character. Their neighborhoods became smaller and less distinct (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 186).

Sts. Peter and Paul: Despite the continued decline of the parish, the remaining Germans of Sts. Peter and Paul, under the guidance of Monsignor Zechenter generously supported both the Hispanics of Our Lady of Guadalupe and the African-Americans of St. Monica. In the early 1920s, Sunday Mass attendance was fewer than fifty people with many coming from other parishes. Commercial development continued to surround the church. The *Kansas City Star* reported in June 1921 that a new federal bank, twenty-one stories in height, was being built across from the church. In April of the same year, the *Kansas City Journal* reported that capitalists had been trying to buy the church property for the last fifty years. In August, the diocese finally sold the property to commercial developers on the condition that Zechenter could serve until August of 1922, completing fifty years of service to the parish. Zechenter celebrated the last High Mass and preached in German to one thousand people in attendance in January 1923. A letter from Zechenter to the Sacred Congregation of the council, Eminence Donatus Cardinal Sbarretti, Prefect, Rome, gave four reasons for selling the land: a good lease opportunity was present, the diocese approved the sale, the outside appearance of the church was pitiful, and the church was only four blocks from St. Patrick where three priests were serving (diocesan archives for Sts. Peter and Paul; Coleman 1992, 273).

Our Lady of Sorrows: With the onset of World War I, all the Masses at Our Lady of Sorrows, except the 10:30 A.M. Mass, were converted to English. In 1920, a parish board appointed “vigilantes,” each assigned to a district within the parish, with the mission of monitoring Catholics moving in or out of the area. If a new family had school-aged children, an effort was made to enroll them in the tuition-free parish school. The next year parishioners began raising money for a new church (64 by 152 feet) that was completed in 1923 (Coleman 1992, 194).

Guardian Angel: One hundred families of German origin belonged to Guardian Angel parish in 1914 when Father Peter Rosch became pastor. He soon converted one Mass from German to English in response to the growing number of non-German families moving to the area from Sacred Heart and Immaculate Conception. The growing parish population necessitated the addition of a new classroom in 1915 and another in 1917. During the World War an elaborate flagpole was constructed near the church to demonstrate the people’s loyalty. In 1918 Bishop Lillis assigned boundaries to the parish, converting it from a national parish serving all Germans on the south side to a territorial parish (Map 34). In 1921, ground was broken for a new church that was finished in 1924. This same year Bishop Lillis received a parishioner’s letter indicating a controversy regarding the change to a territorial parish and the new construction. The letter requested that Lillis clarify whether the parish was German or if boundaries existed. The writer was apparently upset because he had donated money for the new church but was now being told that it was for Germans only. From this it may be concluded that many Germans were

unhappy regarding the change and were trying to keep non-Germans from participating in the parish. Perhaps in response to this controversy, Lillis slightly modified the boundaries for the parish in 1926. During the 1920s seven hundred families belonged to the parish (diocesan archives for Sts. Peter and Paul; Coleman 1992, 143-144).

African Americans

During the 1910s, 8,000 of the city's 23,566 blacks lived in the Bowery, an area bounded by Troost and Woodland, Seventeenth and Twenty-fifth streets (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 174). In the 1920s African-Americans began buying houses in a new middle class neighborhood around Twenty-fourth Street and Paseo, replacing Germans and Jews who were moving south (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 185).

St. Monica: The blacks of St. Monica finally obtained a church thanks to a wealthy donor, Dr. Thomas Purcell. He had been caught in a rainstorm and took refuge in the shack that parishioners were using for Mass. The shack's roof leaked badly and Purcell was soaked by the end of Mass. Here he describes the conditions he encountered:

The following Sunday when I went down and saw the "plant" I was amazed. He [the local priest] had two small former Negro cabins side by side, unpainted and forlorn looking, in the very midst of a section made up of poor Negroes. Everything suggested poverty. Over the door of each cabin he had a cross made of laths. The floors of the cabins were wet—there were shingles off the roof and it had rained a few hours before. A little altar was at one end of the Church out of reach of the rain—a few chairs constituted the furnishings. The school was the same. He told me that if it was raining while the buildings were in use the people gathered around the walls in the dry spots. I learned he had not received much encouragements but he laughed it off and did double duty cheerfully. I asked why the roofs were not repaired and he said no one was interested in the work and he had no money. I assured him that the Catholics of KC would not allow the conditions to go on if they knew about them. I

found Fr. Cyprian a modest, retiring, bashful man who, as he said was going to devote his life to the work and after he was gone perhaps someone would become interested. I went to see Bishop Lillis and he assured me there were not enough Catholic Negroes in KC to justify building a Church. I felt there was a field for a man like Fr. Cyprian, for whom the Bishop expressed great admiration. I guess I pestered the beloved Bishop until finally one evening he said, if you think you can interest enough people in building a church down there, go ahead, but I must insist that when built it must be free of indebtedness as the Diocese does not have sufficient funds to assume any indebtedness (quoted in Coleman 1992, 256-257).

Five hundred people witnessed the laying of the cornerstone for this new church in August 1913. In 1916, Bishop Lillis confirmed sixty-five adult converts into the Catholic faith at St. Monica (Coleman 1992, 256-257)

Italians

In 1910, ten percent of the foreign population in the city was Italian; in 1930, 9,500 Italians made up more than fifteen percent of the foreign population, surpassing Germans as the largest group in the city. In the 1920s, Little Italy spread eastward and wealthy Italians moved south along Benton Boulevard and Swope Parkway (Brown and Dorsett 1978, 176). Katy Scardino Gimalva described living in the area in the 1920s and 1930s:

Growing up in those days was hard. Money was scarce. All we earned we brought home to our families. Sometimes it was hard for our parents to find good jobs. A little had to go a long way in big families. Some of us had to quit school to help support the family. We had family, church, school and friends and relatives nearby. We didn't know how other neighborhoods lived, so we didn't know we were poor. We had fun, and at least a woman could walk in the streets around here and not worry about being bothered (quoted in Coleman 1992, 162).

Columbus Day was widely celebrated during these years as the Italian national holiday.

Starting in 1913, many Italians began working at the Kansas City Macaroni and Importing Company at 556 Campbell Street. In 1917, after gaining a nationwide reputation for excellence, the factory expanded. The company was bought out in 1924 and renamed American Beauty. At this time the factory covered the block from Campbell to Charlotte and Independence to Pacific ("American Beauty- Immigration Success Story" *Northeast World*, October 8, 1986, vol. 1 no. 17)

Holy Rosary: Italians of the parish founded the Italian Intersocial Supreme Council of Kansas City in 1917 to distribute money to poor families. The council also donated funds to Italy during World War I. Italians created other groups in response to Protestant efforts to proselytize Italian youths. In 1920, thirty-five prominent Italians founded Comitato Coloniale, which raised money for the school and provided books for families unable to afford them. Father Louis Franchinotti took over the parish in 1921. One of the challenges he encountered was the proliferation of pool halls, more than two dozen within walking distance of the church, contrasted with no permanent multipurpose center for the youth of the parish (Coleman 1992, 160).

In an August 1922 letter to Apostolic Delegate John Bonzono in Washington D. C., Bishop Lillis expressed his concern that the dispersal of Italians in the city gave them a method to avoid accountability for skipping their Sunday obligation to attend Mass. Lillis explained Italians were moving eastward along Independence Boulevard away from Holy Rosary. When questioned by the pastors of St. John the Baptist or the other parishes they resided in why they did not attend Mass, they

claimed to have attended Mass at Holy Rosary. However, Lillis knew these Italians were not going to Mass regularly at Holy Rosary (diocesan archives for Holy Rosary).

Lebanese

Church of Our Lady: The Lebanese moved to their third storefront church at Ninth and Prospect in 1927 (Coleman 1992, 140).

Poles

When the American Radiator Company moved from Buffalo, New York to Kansas City in 1910, it brought along many Polish immigrants. Two groups came, one in 1910 and one in 1912, and settled near the plant in the Centropolis District along the Blue River.

St. Stanislaus: Initially these Poles attended Mass at St. Joseph, a Polish Parish in Kansas City, Kansas, but the strain of the distance prompted a petition to Bishop Lillis for a new parish. Lillis approved, and in 1913 appointed Father Peter Raczaszek to head a new national parish called St. Stanislaus. Initially the seventy-five families and twenty-five single men met for Mass in the parish hall of St. Stephen. In 1914, they built a church on the northeast corner of Eighteenth and Ewing (Map 30). Observers commented that the parishioners walking up the steep hill to the church each Sunday reminded them of people on a holy pilgrimage. These families maintained traditional Polish ways of celebrating Easter and Christmas. In 1929 three sisters, arriving daily by Yellow Cab, began teaching at the new parish school (Coleman 1992, 275).

Mexican

Spurred by the Mexican Revolution and growing anti-Catholicism in the new government, it produced a new group of Mexicans arriving in the early 1910s, joining others already working on the railroads and in the packing plants. Later in the decade, a third group came because of wartime industry in the city. Many of these lived on the Kansas side of the state line. Within Missouri, some lived in the West and East Bottoms and in McClure Flats at Nineteenth and McGee. The biggest concentration, however, was near Twenty-third and Madison on the West Side (Doering and Marra 1992, 119). By 1914, between six and seven hundred Mexicans lived in six Kansas City districts (Badillo 1994, 241).

Our Lady of Guadalupe: Fleeing persecution in Mexico, Fathers Jose Munoz and Arilo Corbato arrived in Kansas City in June 1914. They were extremely poor and unable to provide for other Mexicans until they got in touch with the diocese, which provided worship space at Sacred Heart for the initial twenty families of the parish. Soon, the group acquired its own temporary church at 2331 Holly Street where it stayed for eighteen months (Map 30). Non-Mexican observers were surprised by the piety of these people. This church had no pews because the people stayed on their knees for the entire Mass in respect for the presence of Christ. Within five months of the acquisition of this building, Mass attendance grew from forty to more than two hundred people each Sunday, and within a year it was over five hundred. This sudden growth in attendance is attributable to the acquisition of a fixed spot for Spanish Masses. When this occurred, Mexicans previously spread

throughout the city began moving to the West Side (Coleman 1992, 178-179). Because of their poverty, Mexicans had been ashamed of attending Mass at other parishes, but they were less inhibited with their own, resulting in large crowds (diocesan archives for Our Lady of Guadalupe). Next, a storeroom at 1120 Twenty-fourth Street was rented to celebrate Mass. Mexicans finally had resources to buy their own building in 1919, a Swedish Lutheran church at Twenty-third and Madison (Map 35).¹ German Catholics contributed some money to help pay for this church but most was provided by the Mexicans themselves. In 1916, Father Corbato left to minister to Mexicans in Osawatomie, Kansas. This left Father Munoz as the only Spanish-speaking priest for the entire city. He baptized more than three hundred people and witnessed at least fifty marriages each year, while traveling up to sixty miles for sick calls. In 1926, the parish sponsored its first fiesta as a way to raise funds. This has become a popular annual event.

Mixed

St. Francis Seraph: In 1925, the two hundred-fifty families of this parish, half of whom were foreign born, opened a new church at Martin and Wyman avenues (Map 39). During the dedication ceremonies it was noted that Swedish, Hungarian, Croatian, Austrian, Irish, German, Italian, French, Belgian, Polish, Mexican and Russian families lived in the area (Coleman 1992, 222).

St. Vincent: In 1924, St. Vincent dedicated a new gothic-style church at the same site as the previous structure. It seated eight hundred plus an additional two

hundred in a winter basement chapel. No other relevant history was recorded for this parish during this time (Coleman 1992, 297-288).

St. Stephen: In 1913, St. Stephen's church burnt to the ground, forcing the people to use the basement for Mass until a new church was completed eight years latter. During the influenza outbreak in 1918 the city banned large indoor gatherings, so Mass was offered from the second-story porch of the parish house with the people gathered below. Starting in 1919, groups of fifty to one hundred parishioners worked evenings and Saturdays on the new French gothic-style church. Stone masons and plasterers were hired for tasks the parishioners were unable to perform (Coleman 1992, 277-278).

Holy Trinity: In 1916, the parish purchased property at Tenth and Norton for a new church, school, and rectory. The next year, the then-current church burned forcing Father James Keegan to offer Mass on the second floor of the school for the next nine years until the new church was built. At this time parishioners began to drift away, preferring to attend Mass at St. Aloysius of Holy Cross. Collections fell to only twelve dollars per Sunday (Coleman 1992, 169).

St. Aloysius: No relevant history was recorded for this parish during this time.

New Annunciation: Four hundred families of Annunciation welcomed the completion of their church in 1924, which had been delayed since 1902 because of low membership and intermittent economic depression (Coleman 1992, 111).

Holy Cross: In 1917, three hundred-fifty families of Holy Cross received new boundaries, Belmont Avenue on the east and Jackson Avenue on the west, as well as a new church. In 1923, a school served by seven teaching sisters opened (Coleman 1992, 146-147).

Holy Family: In 1915, the parish remodeled the church, removing a dangerous section. In 1927 parish membership was only twenty-five families (Coleman 1992, 300).

St. James (The Lesser): In 1915, St. James offered tuition-free schooling, becoming the first free parochial school west of Chicago. Patriotism was especially strong in the parish. It was the only one to fly an American flag prior to the United States entry into World War I. In 1919, five masses were offered on Sundays for the four thousand members of the parish (Coleman 1992, 230-231).

St. Michael the Archangel: In 1916, a new gothic-style stone church replaced the parish's frame building on the southeast corner of Twenty-fourth and Brighton. In 1926, a new school with six classrooms opened. The same year a major fire caused fifteen thousand dollars worth of damage to the church (Coleman 1992, 252).

Assumption: No relevant history was recorded for this parish during this time.

Blessed Sacrament: No relevant history was recorded for this parish during this time.

St. Francis Xavier: By 1919, this parish had outgrown its church. A replacement auditorium-style structure was not finished until 1927, however, two years after a fire had destroyed the original church. In 1925, the school was expanded to a capacity of more than five hundred students. At this time 630 families, composed of 3,250 individuals, belonged to the parish (Coleman 1992, 224).

Visitation of the Blessed Mother: A second Sunday Mass was added to Visitation in 1913. By 1915, sixty families were members and plans began for a new permanent church. This new structure, finished in 1917, was inspired by the Spanish Santa Barbara Mission in California. The 1959 parish history describes the influence of this mission style on the Country Club Plaza:

At this time (the dedication of the new church) the Country Club Plaza had not yet taken on its Spanish motif which makes it so distinctive today, and it was not until Visitation Church was completed that the Nichols company saw the possibilities in this design. For several years, while the plaza area was being planned, the company used photographs of Visitation Church in its advertising folders. Later, J. C. Nichols made a tour of Spain, studying the architecture there, and returned with the general outline of the Plaza business and apartment district already formed in his mind (quoted in Coleman 1992, 291).

St. Joseph: In 1914, the parish school was closed. Five years later, forty adults converted to Catholicism and joined St. Joseph.

St. Elizabeth: Forty-one people, from the Waldo district in the southern part of the city petitioned Bishop Lillis in 1917 for their own parish. At this time, the area was undeveloped with few residents and no zoning restrictions. After Lillis approved the parish, his first, Mass was offered in a rented store building on Seventy-fifth Street (Maps 32 and 33). In 1922 a church seating 460 was finished on the block

between Main and Baltimore and Seventy-fourth Terrace and Seventy-fifth Street (Map 37) (Coleman 1992, 218).

St. Louis: Father L. Curtis Tiernan, after serving in the Catholic 129th Field Artillery during World War I, was appointed by Bishop Lillis to start St. Louis parish in the Swope Park district in 1919. One hundred eight people attended the first Mass celebrated in Flacy's Hall on the southwest corner of Fifty-sixth and Swope Parkway (Maps 35 and 36). Land had already been purchased on the crest of a hill one block from a streetcar line. Older members of the parish complained about access to this site, however, so the parish bought new land at Fifty-eighth Terrace and Swope Parkway where a frame stucco church was soon built. The school opened in 1924 with three sisters and one hundred students (Coleman 1992, 244-245).

St. Augustine: By 1923, the Marlborough district on the city's southern fringe had started to shift from a farming community to a suburban one and the forty Catholic families expected their own parish. Bishop Lillis purchased a former Presbyterian "basement" church at Seventy-ninth and Paseo to serve St. Augustine (Maps 37 and 38). In 1928, a school opened with four sisters and forty students (Coleman 1992, 209).

St. Peter: Bishop Lillis established St. Peter Parish for seventy-five families in the southeast section of town in 1925 (Map 40). Lillis desired property on Meyer Boulevard and Wornall Road, but property restrictions prevented this land from being bought. Eventually the parish bought a corn field, with a pre-Civil War farm house, in an undeveloped region of the parish between Holmes and Charlotte on Meyer

Boulevard (Map 39). The parishioners constructed a corrugated iron building, nicknamed the “Tin Cathedral,” on the high ground of this property.

St. Therese the Little Flower: In 1925, the same year that Therese of Lisieux was canonized a saint, Bishop Lillis assigned Father Maurice Coates to a parish named after her in the southern part of Kansas City (Map 40). Initially Mass was offered for the seventy families of the parish in the home of Franck Wheeler near Euclid Avenue and Forty-eighth Terrace (Map 39). For most of 1926 the parish used the Little Sisters of the Poor Chapel at Fifty-third and Highland. At Thanksgiving of that year the basement of the new school was opened for Mass (Coleman 1992, 281).

Westport Area

Our Lady of Perpetual Help: By 1915, the parish had grown to 344 families with 360 children in the school. Growing numbers of students required the construction of a new grade and high school in 1925. The Redemptorists completed a new monastery with twenty-two sleeping rooms in 1928 (Coleman 1992, 188).

Our Lady of Good Counsel: No relevant history was recorded for this parish during this time.

Analysis

Catholic Geographic Discrimination?: Map 32 (of churches in 1917) shows an unusually large, two-mile gap, between Visitation and St. Elizabeth parishes. The region skipped was in J. C. Nichols's Country Club District. Most Catholics of the time would not have been able to afford homes in this area. Although some real estate developers in the city refused to sell to Catholics, Nichols apparently did not

discriminate on this basis (Worley 1990, 148, 273). The original neighborhood plans called for a Presbyterian church between Fifty-ninth and Sixtieth streets on Ward Parkway. This church was never built, but when the Catholic diocese sought to purchase the land, local property holders took legal action that barred construction of a church until 1999 (Coleman 1992, 284). Added to this confusion was a lack of defined boundaries for St. Elizabeth, the parish south of these neighborhoods (Map 33). Such lack of definition was unusual. Perhaps Bishop Lillis did so because he did not want to exclude the small number of Catholics in the skipped region. Perhaps he hoped in the future that more Catholics would move to the area. Setting definite boundaries would have fostered the idea that the Country Club District was a region off limits to Catholics.

Boundaries of Our Lady of Guadalupe: Despite being established as a parish for Mexicans, Our Lady of Guadalupe was also soon given territorial boundaries (Map 31). Throughout the country in the 1920s the idea of the national parish was being phased out (Badillo, 241 1994). Perhaps giving Our Lady of Guadalupe boundaries was Bishop Lillis's way to join the movement away from national parishes. As stated earlier, most of the Mexican Catholics in the city moved to this parish once it was established, so even though boundaries were given, it still remained de facto a Mexican parish.

Decisions on size and location of new parishes: When Bishop Lillis set up St. Louis Parish in 1919 in the Swope Park district, it covered more than four square miles, a much greater area than any previous parish (Map 36). No records indicate

the reasons for this decision. One possibility is the desire to include all the Catholics in the region in a parish and not leave any to an unassigned area. As population density would increase over time, the plan may have been to divide this parish into smaller parishes. Also the greater availability of automobiles allowed larger parishes, although this is an extreme case.

In 1925, Bishop Lillis created two parishes, St. Therese and St. Peter. St. Therese was inserted between Blessed Sacrament and St. Louis parishes, while St. Peter covered an area that was previously skipped (Maps 38 and 40). This indicates that the central area, immediately south of Brush Creek, was seeing an increased Catholic presence.

Summary

Map 59 gives an overview of the growth of the city. The continued southward development is seen along with the insertion of parishes south of Brush Creek. The lower population density of the new suburbs is also apparent in the size of the parishes. The map does not show the new Mexican and Polish Catholic immigrants which increased the diversity of Catholics in the city. Mexicans living in the city during the 1920s provided a base for future expansion as they became an important part of the diocese in the second half of the twentieth century.

¹ The Swedes had moved to a new church in south Kansas City. A letter from Father Munoz indicates that Mexicans were not accustomed to building churches because most of the churches in Mexico had been built centuries earlier by Spanish missionaries (Coleman 1992, 178; diocesan archives for Our Lady of Guadalupe).

Conclusion

A study of the Catholic Church in Kansas City confirms many details present in existing general histories of the city and adds other insights not present in these accounts. French farmers and fur traders were the first Catholics in the area. Then came a large group of Irish brought by Father Donnelly to work on construction projects. Soon an influx of Germans in the city challenged the Irish hegemony. Settling mainly in the middle-class McGee's Addition, these Germans requested and were granted a separate national parish. Early church histories also confirm that Westport was a truly separate town from Kansas City through much of the 1800s. The Westport church did not receive much attention and was even closed for several years, indicating both isolation and a lack of Catholics. St. Francis Seraph parish in the East Bottoms was also separate from the main city but, in contrast to Westport, it did receive church attention. The diversity of Germans, Belgians, French, Poles and Irish in the East Bottoms is not mentioned in general histories. Neither is a Lebanese colony established in 1893 or Polish workers arriving in 1910.

The growth and decline of Annunciation Parish confirms details of the change that occurred in the West Bottoms because of the growth of railroad terminal facilities and stockyards. Italians immigrated to the city slowly at first, but then in greater numbers after 1890, and settled on the north side. The archives indicate that most came from Sicily and show their spread eastward from their home Holy Rosary Parish.

A map showing the establishment of parishes in the 1880s confirms the eastward growth of the city during that time (Map 56). At the end of the nineteenth century, however, Germans led a move to the south, as shown by the establishment of the national parishes Our Lady of Sorrows and Guardian Angel. Streetcar routes and Catholic church locations would seem to be mutually beneficial, but I found only a minimal connection between the two phenomena.

Several larger-level trends are also apparent from this study. Initially the Catholic Church contributed to the separation of nationalities, particularly Irish and Germans, into distinct neighborhoods with individual churches. Over time society countered these trends and brought these people into the general culture. This is reflected in the rationale typically listed in the archives for the establishment of each new parish. Thirteen of the first seventeen parishes established (1847-1891) mention ethnicity. Among the last twenty parishes established (1893-1925), only five mention ethnicity.

Another trend is the location of initial worship for the various ethnic groups. Of the national groups that eventually gained their own parishes, all except the Lebanese began when their numbers were small by using an established territorial parish. Later, each built their own church, often through their own labor (Map 60). Most of the territorial parishes began in either rented homes or storefronts. In addition, the pattern of bishops responding to peoples' requests for new parishes should be noted. In at least seven cases Bishop Hogan or Bishop Lillis responded to a request or petition from a group of people for a new parish. Many times this was an

ethnic group, but not always. No records survive that indicate either Hogan's or Lillis's plans for the spread of the diocese, except that individual parishes should be one square mile in area. So, in some cases, these petitions may have been in line with their expansion plans. In fact, the petitioned new parishes do not show an unusual geographic placement, although in a few situations territory was skipped over. The bishops also responded to changes in the city. One example was the closing of Annunciation Parish in the West Bottoms and another was the relocation of St. Vincent after the realization that it was too close to the growing downtown.

I did not fully utilize historic newspapers as a resource for details on the various neighborhoods. The diocesan archives have some clipped articles that dealt directly with parish activities, but more rigorous searches almost surely would have added useful information. Another resource not fully used was parish sacramental records. These list baptisms and marriages and could be used to approximate the size and ethnic composition of individual parishes. A difficulty present, however, is that during the time period studied, no cumulative totals exist. Instead, the record books list only the names that received the sacrament that year. To be used, the records for each parish would need to be accessed and the numbers tabulated for each year.

In addition to the above resources not fully explored, attendance records at parishes, standardized census of parishes, and consistent school enrollment records, would also be useful. These data are not present in Kansas City but do exist in certain other dioceses.

Future Studies

As the primary church of immigrant peoples in the United States, a study of Catholic parish records can provide a good grassroots supplement to existing histories. Consider the following list of geographically related topics and how Catholic histories may be used to develop them:

Population changes: shown by an increase in number of parishes.

Changes in transportation methods and population density: shown by change in size of parishes.

Where people settled in general and where nationalities settled in specific:

Discovered by mapping parish boundaries and analyzing ethnic settlements.

Economic depressions: shown by lack of new church construction.

Physical descriptions of sections of town: often included in parish histories.

Since all of these topics are typically discussed in general histories, the religious records can either confirm or call into question these histories. If such topics happen not to be covered in existing histories, the religious data become even more critical.

Another aspect of community development that could be analyzed is the importance of the bishop. The archives for Kansas City unfortunately do not contain any diocesan planning notes or letters from the bishops detailing their thoughts. These have to be inferred from the decisions made. Other cities likely have more complete holdings of their bishops' letters and these men may have used different

methods in adapting to immigrants and the spread of their cities. Such comparative study could be fascinating.

Analysis could also be done contrasting how other Christian branches, especially those with a hierarchal and territorial structure, such as Episcopalians, establish churches in a city. A disadvantage with Episcopalians, of course, is that the immigrant aspect is mostly lost.

Another possible project is a smaller-scale study on just a few parishes. This would be similar to Dolan's work (1975) in New York City but with a geographer's insight. Dolan compares a German parish, an Irish parish, and a mixed German-Irish parish, exploring the effects of these churches on their neighborhoods and the surrounding area.

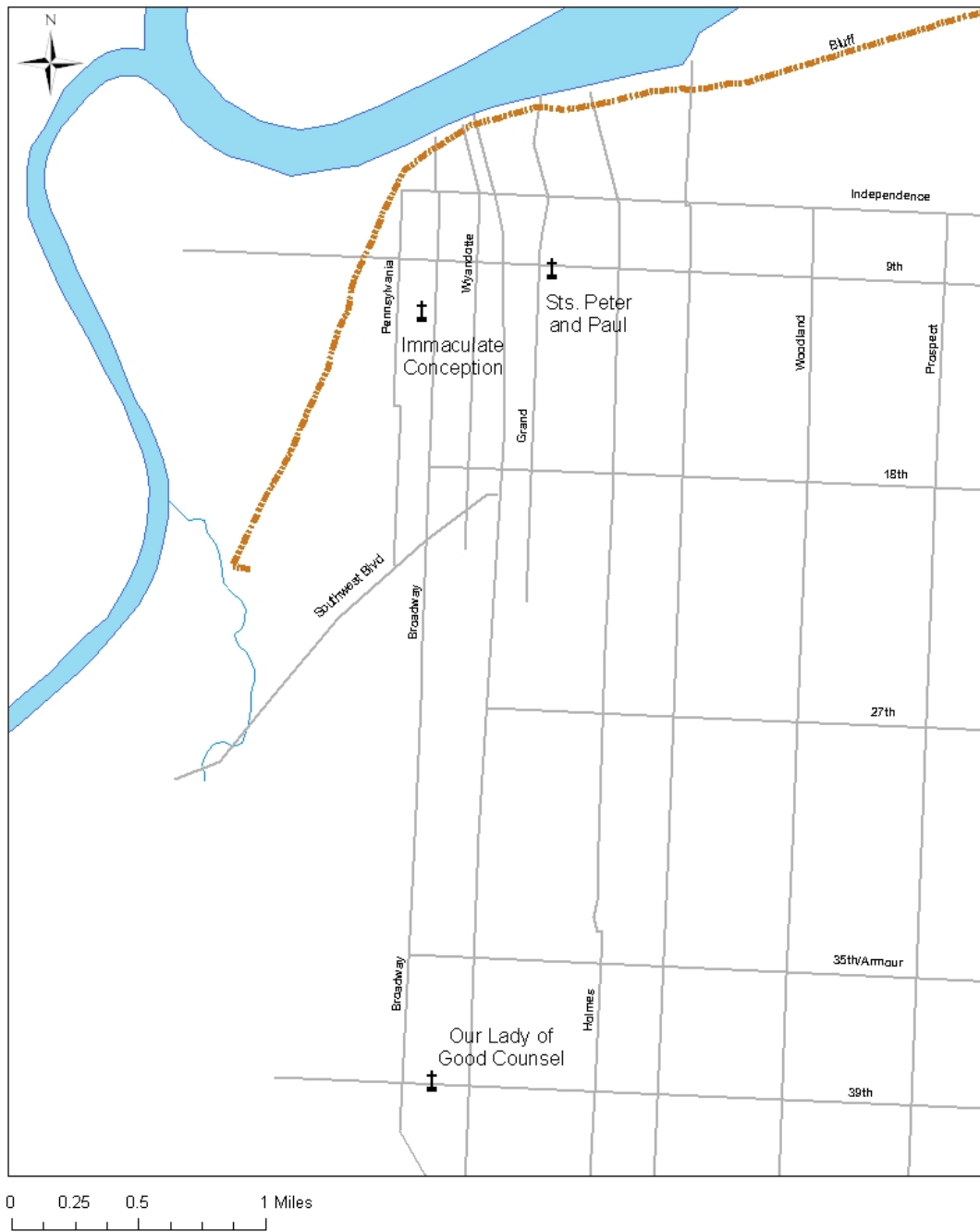
Focusing back on Kansas City, incorporating churches on the Kansas side of the state border would be valuable. Several important ethnic settlements exist in Kansas City, Kansas, including Mexicans and a variety of eastern Europeans. I initially hoped to make these parishes part of my study, but the archivist for that archdiocese discouraged me from doing so, indicating that the records were insufficient and disorganized. If they ever are in a better state for research, it would be worthwhile to compare the growth of the two cities.

My study also could be extended into the post-1930 years. Some new ethnicities enter the scene such as Vietnamese, but the overall ethnic character of the church decreases greatly. As discussed in the introduction, however, the United States Census Bureau began collecting ethnic data at the tract level in 1930. This is a

more precise tool than parish records to analyze ethnic settlement patterns. Given this, I would recommend studies of other cities pre-1930 as opposed to extending forward this study of Kansas City. Another aspect that is now open to study is the form of the Mass. In July 2007, Pope Benedict XVI issued a *motu proprio*, *Summorum Pontificum*, which derestricted the traditional Latin Mass, allowing any priest to celebrate it without permission from his bishop. Some parishes are now offering this Latin Mass, which opens many interesting new geographical questions. Where are these Masses being requested? How does this choice relate to economic, ethnic, or political status. The techniques presented in this study could be modified to facilitate such an analysis.

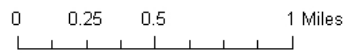
**Appendix 1:-Parish and Church Maps Ordered
Chronologically**

1866 Churches



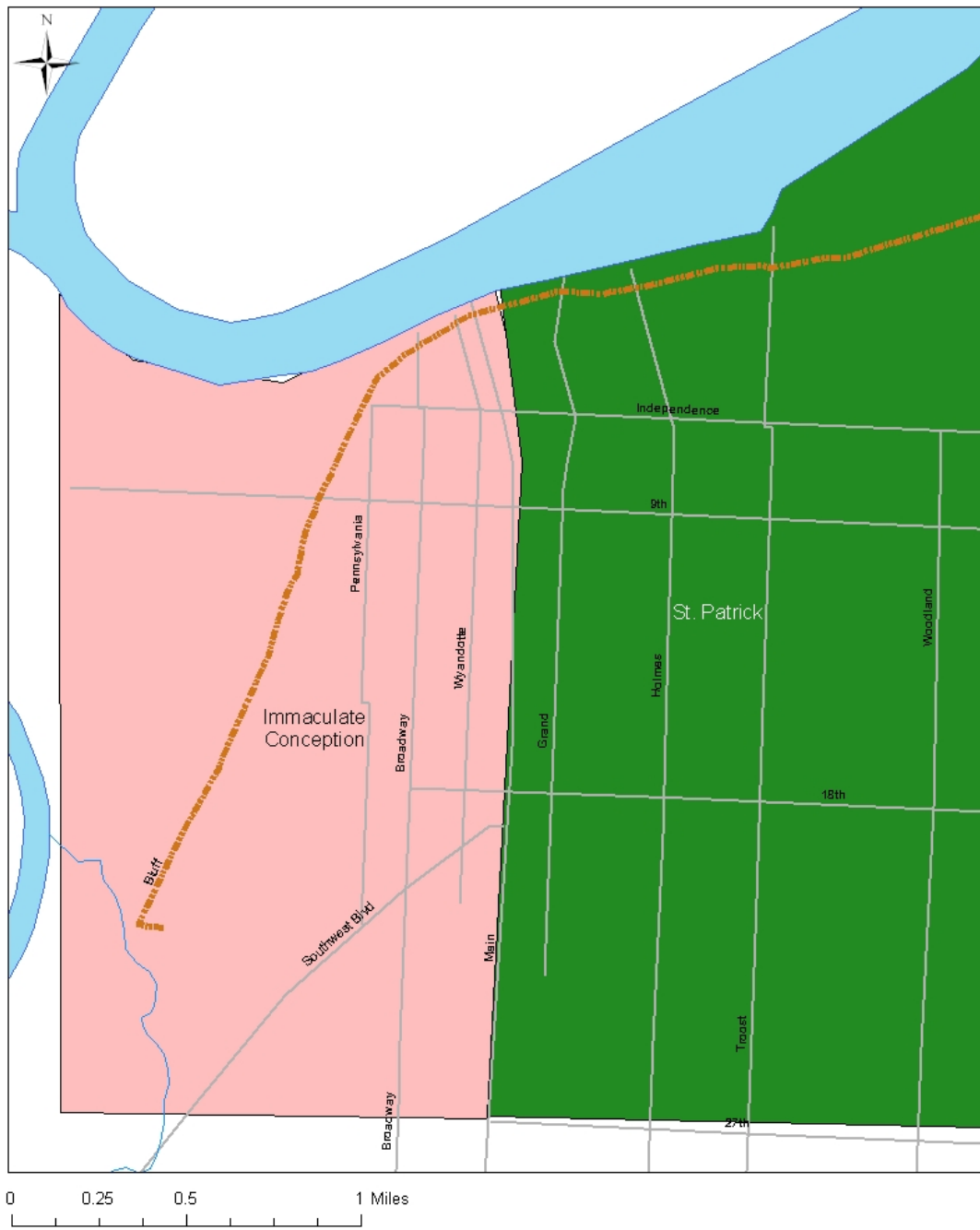
Map 1: Location of churches in 1866 (Coleman 1992)

1868 Churches



Map 2: Location of churches in 1868 (Coleman 1992)

1868 Parishes



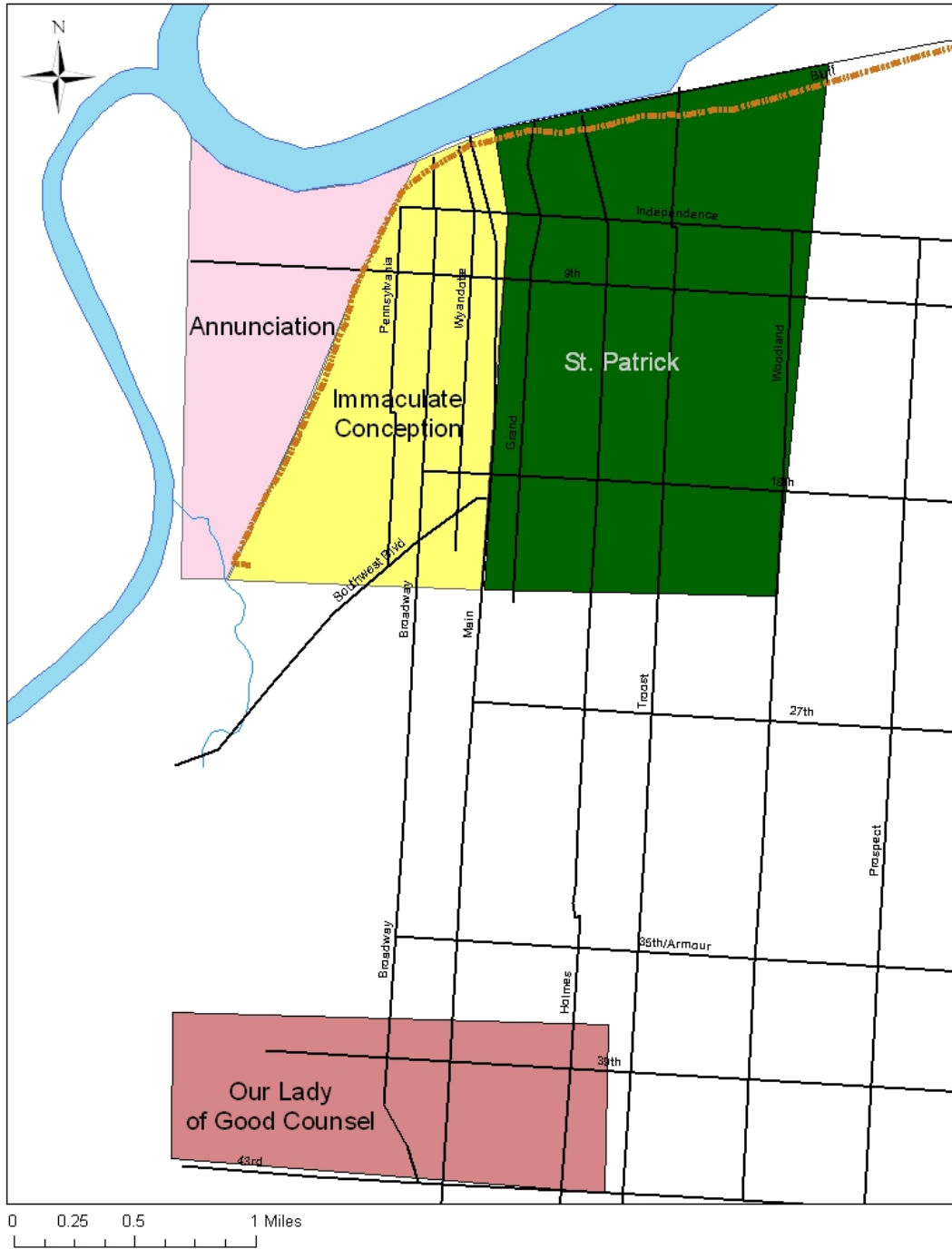
Map 3: Location of parish boundaries in 1868 (Coleman 1992)

1872 Churches



Map 4: Location of churches in 1872 (Coleman 1992)

1872 Parishes



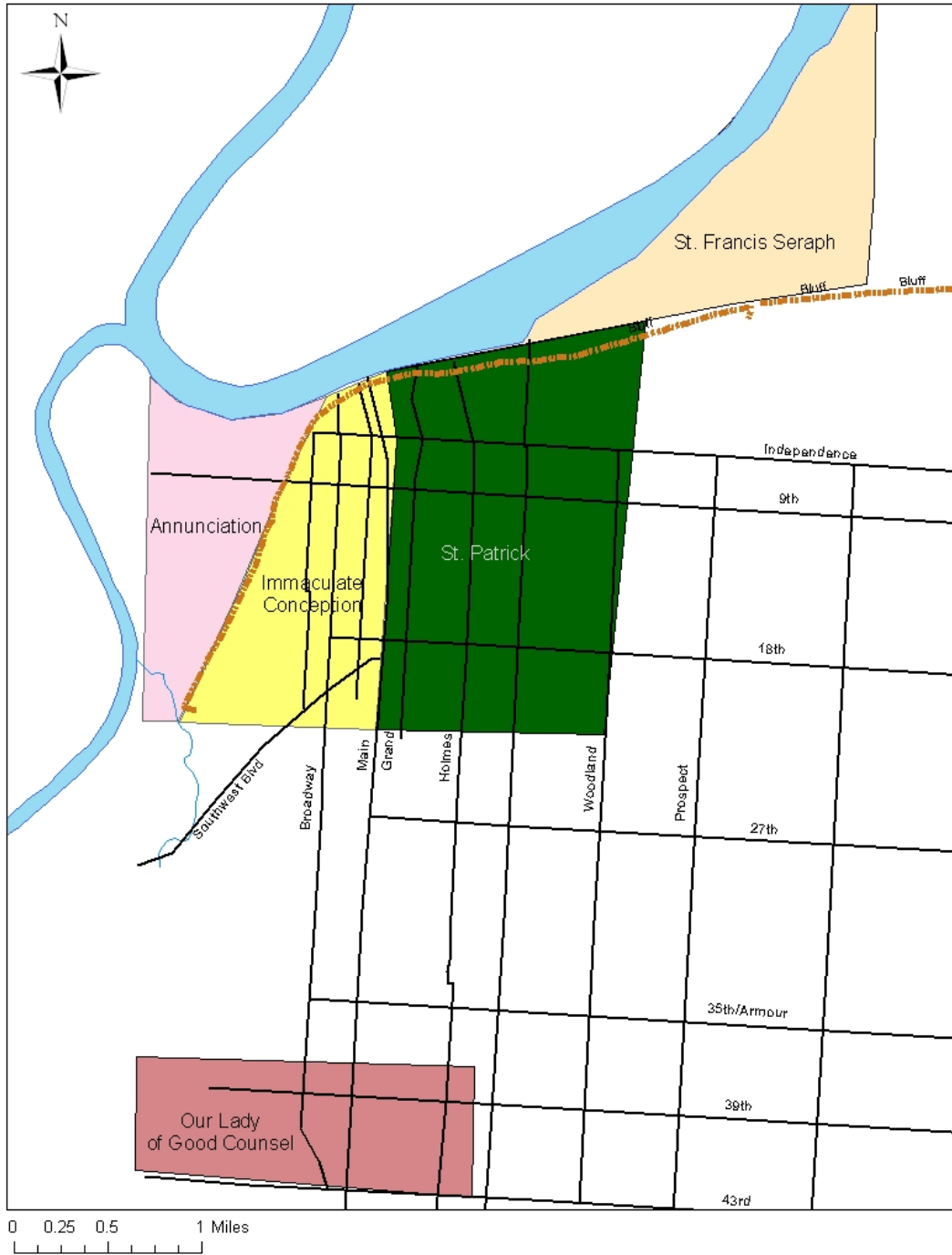
Map 5: Location of parish boundaries in 1872 (estimate) (Coleman 1992)

1877 Churches



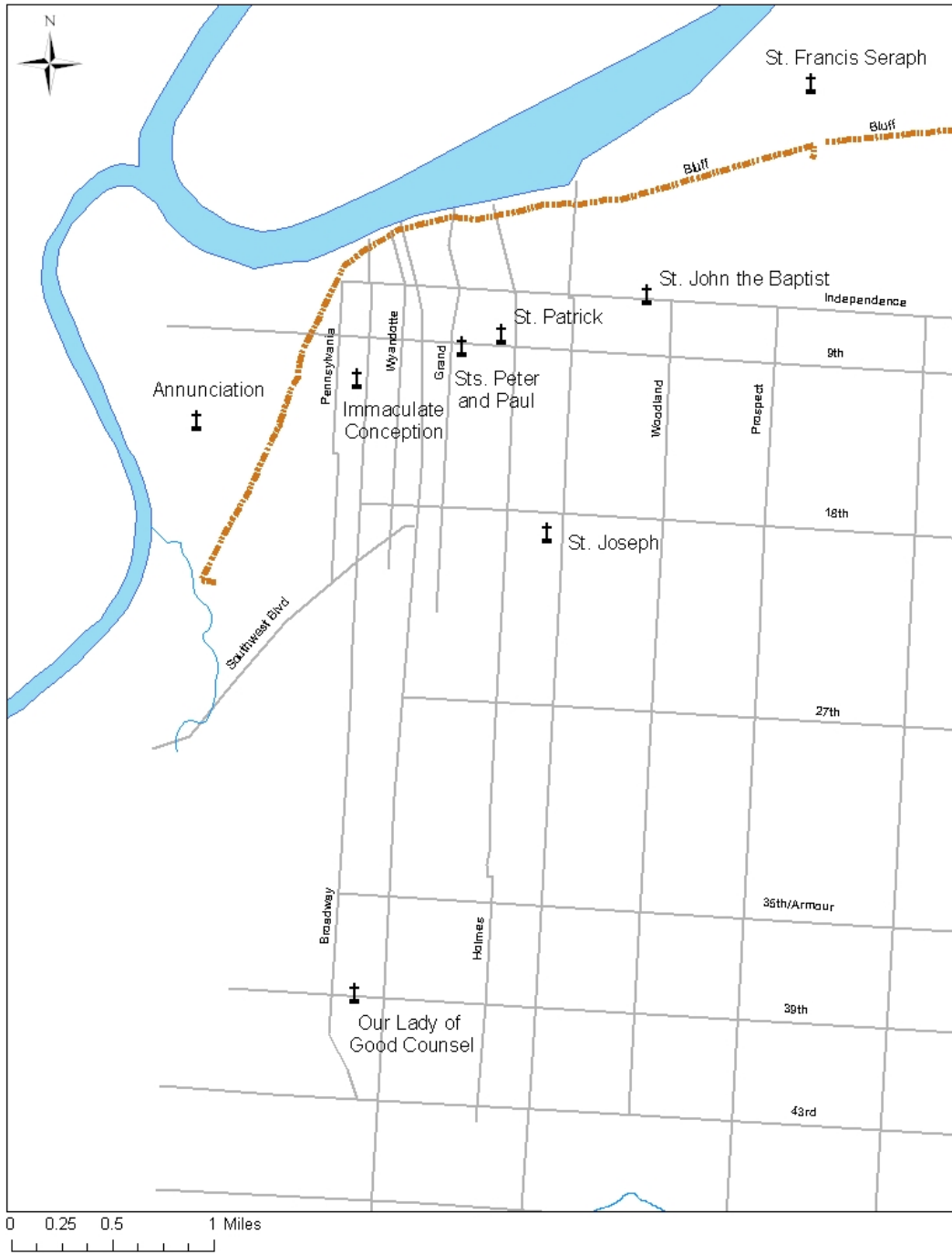
Map 6: Location of churches in 1877 (Coleman 1992)

1877 Parishes



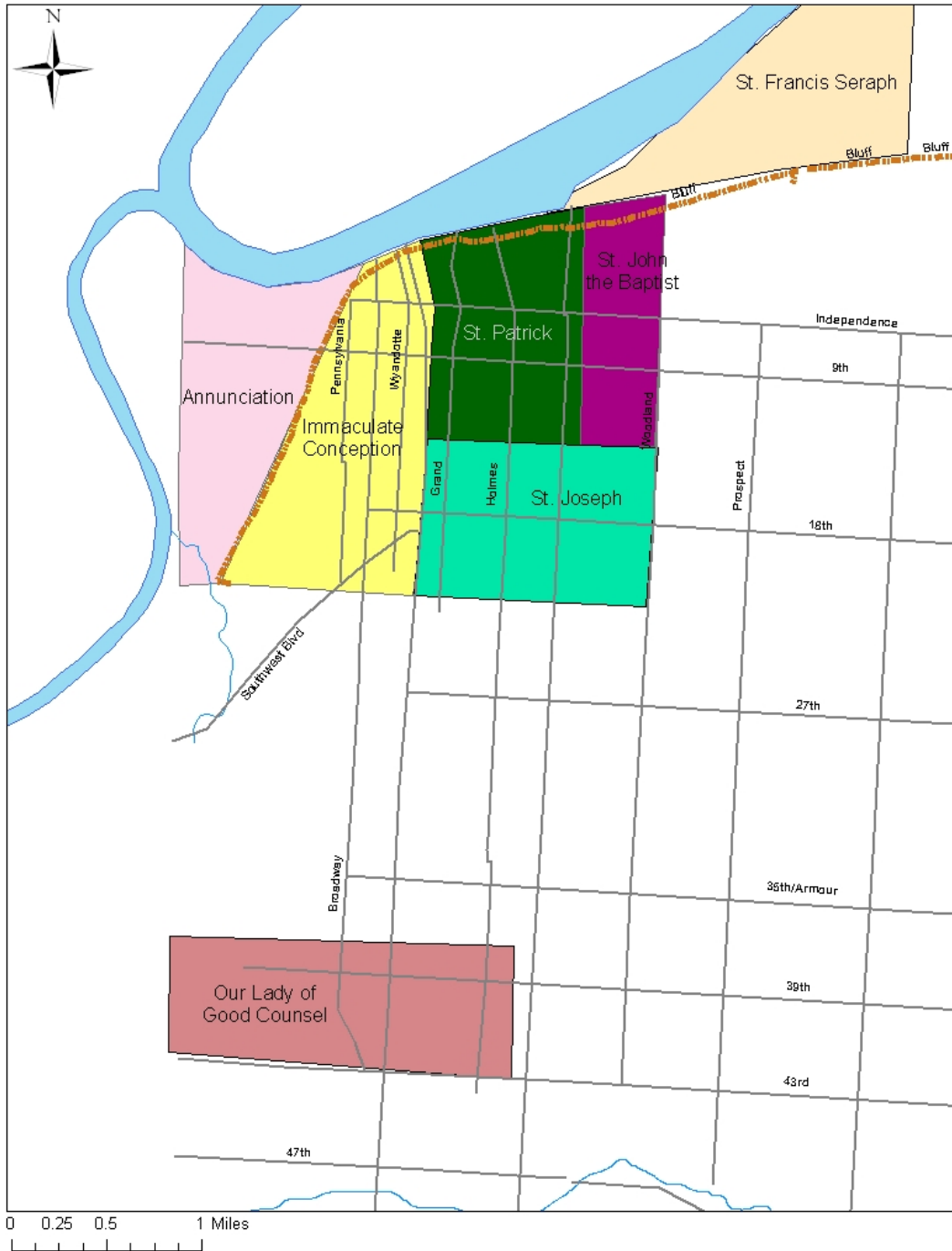
Map 7: Location of parish boundaries in 1877 (Coleman 1992)

1882 Churches



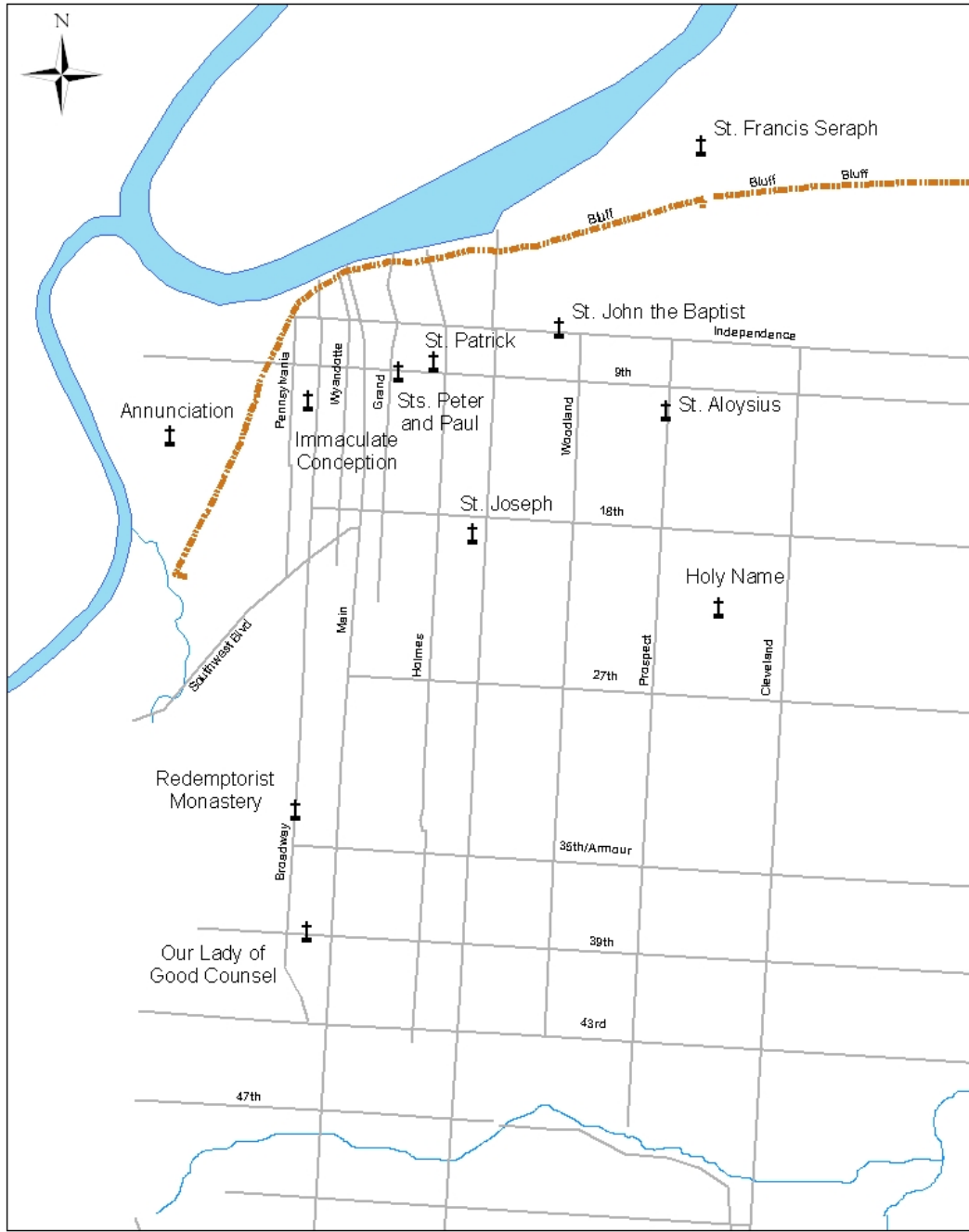
Map 8: Location of churches in 1882 (Coleman 1992)

1882 Parishes



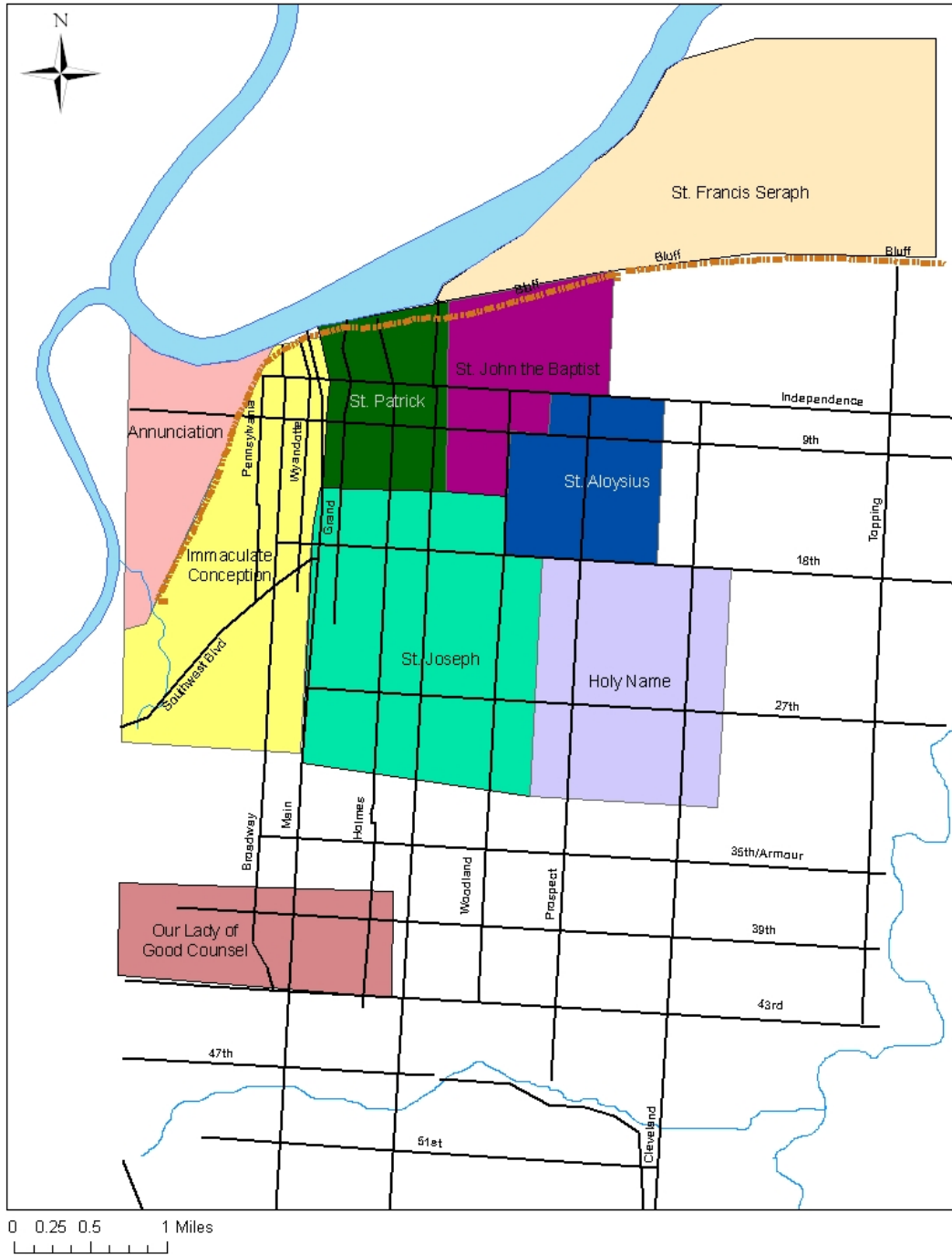
Map 9: Location of parish boundaries in 1882 (Coleman 1992)

1886 Churches



Map 10: Location of churches in 1886 (Coleman 1992)

1886 Parishes



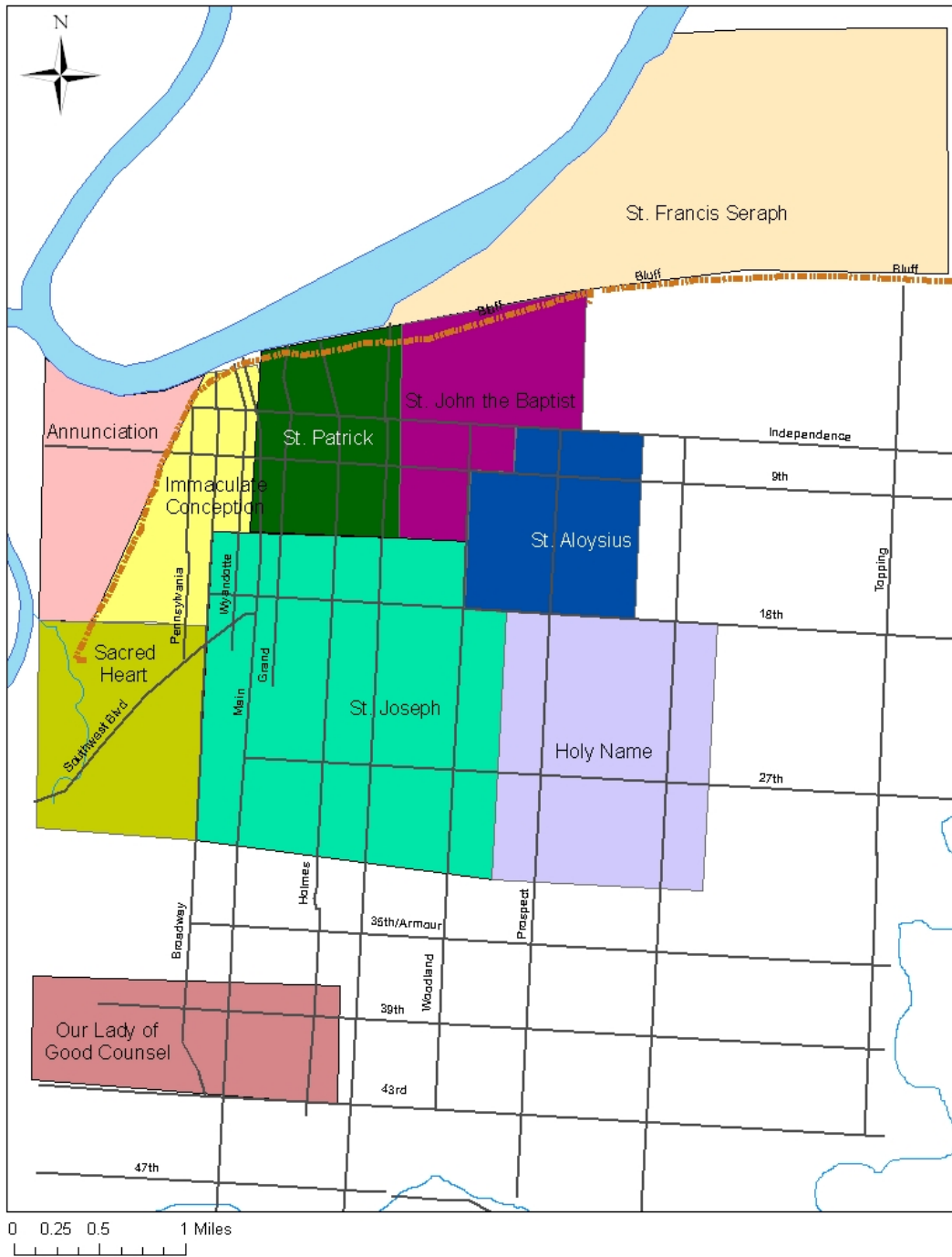
Map 11: Location of parish boundaries in 1886 (Coleman 1992)

1887 Churches



Map 12: Location of churches in 1887 (Coleman 1992)

1887 Parishes



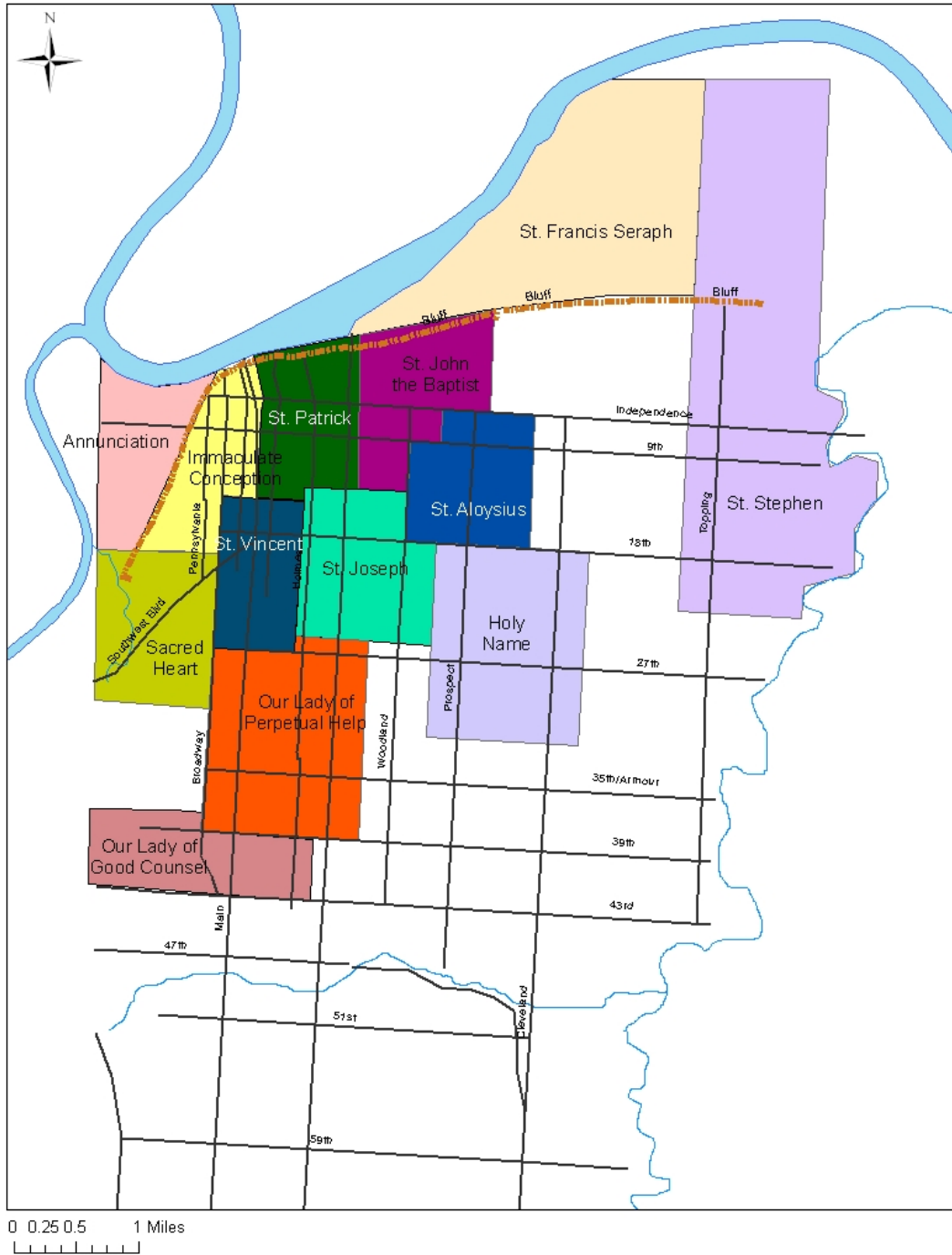
Map 13: Location of parish boundaries in 1887 (Coleman 1992)

1888 Churches



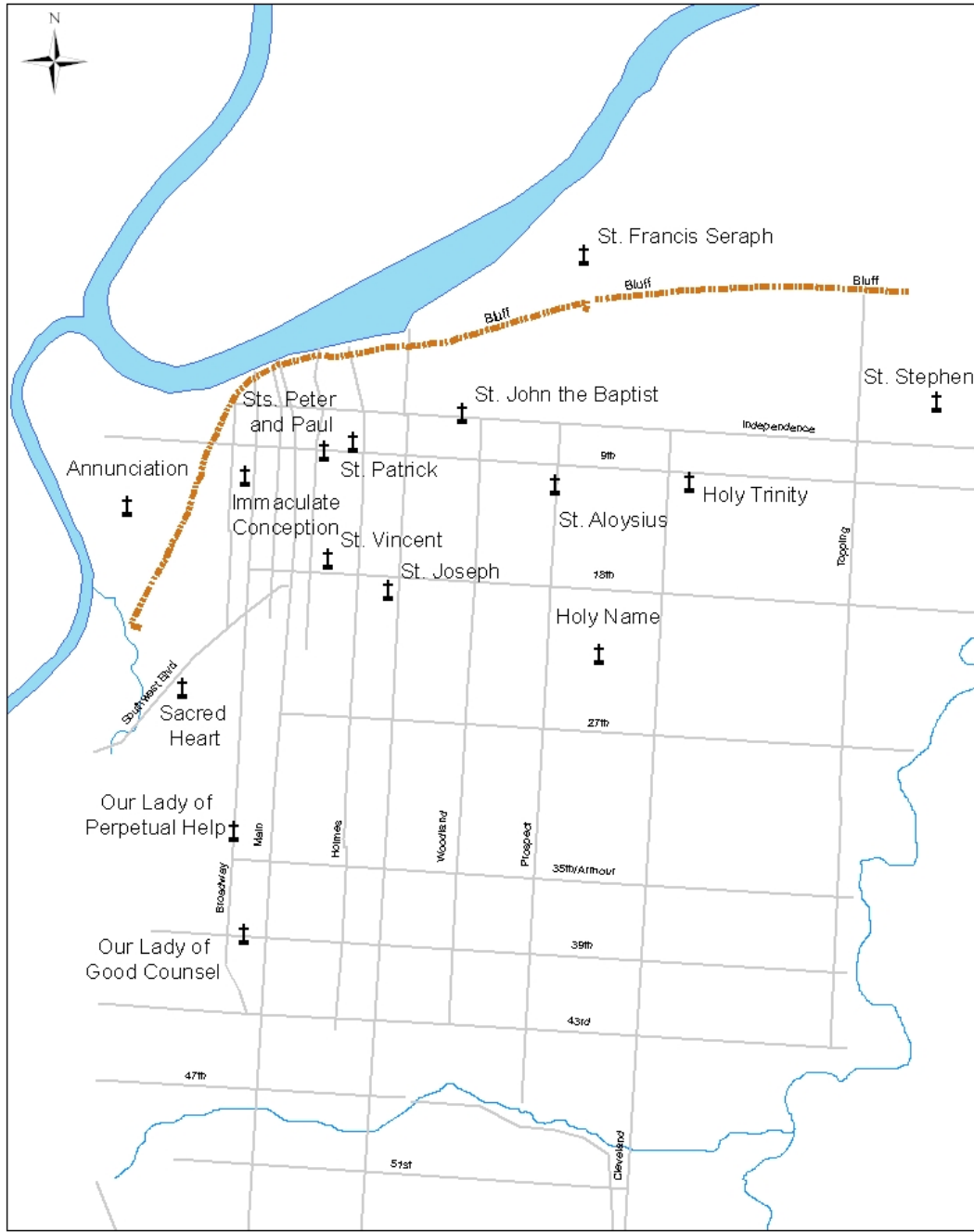
Map 14: Location of churches in 1888 (Coleman 1992)

1888 Parishes



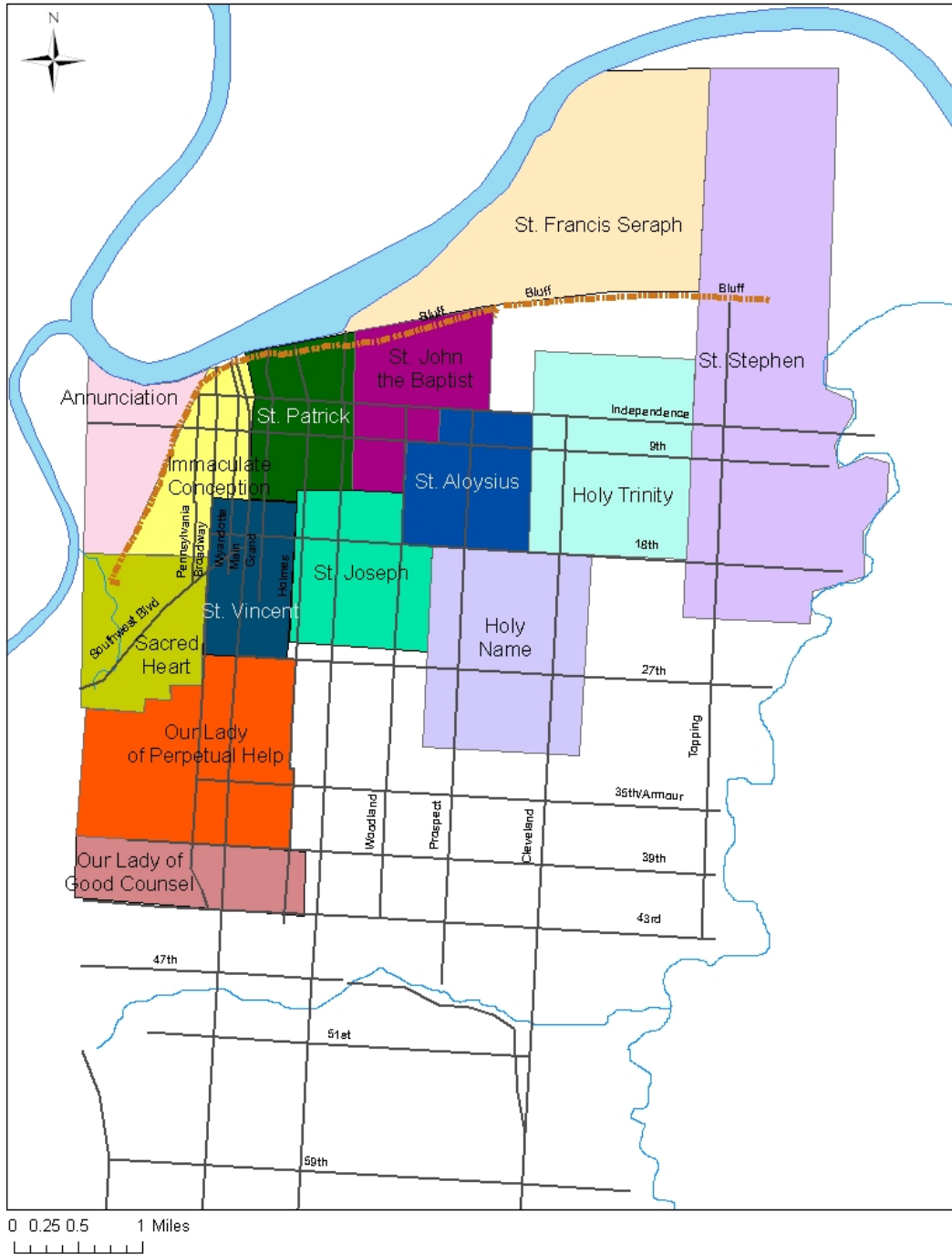
Map 15: Location of parish boundaries in 1888 (Coleman 1992)

1889 Churches



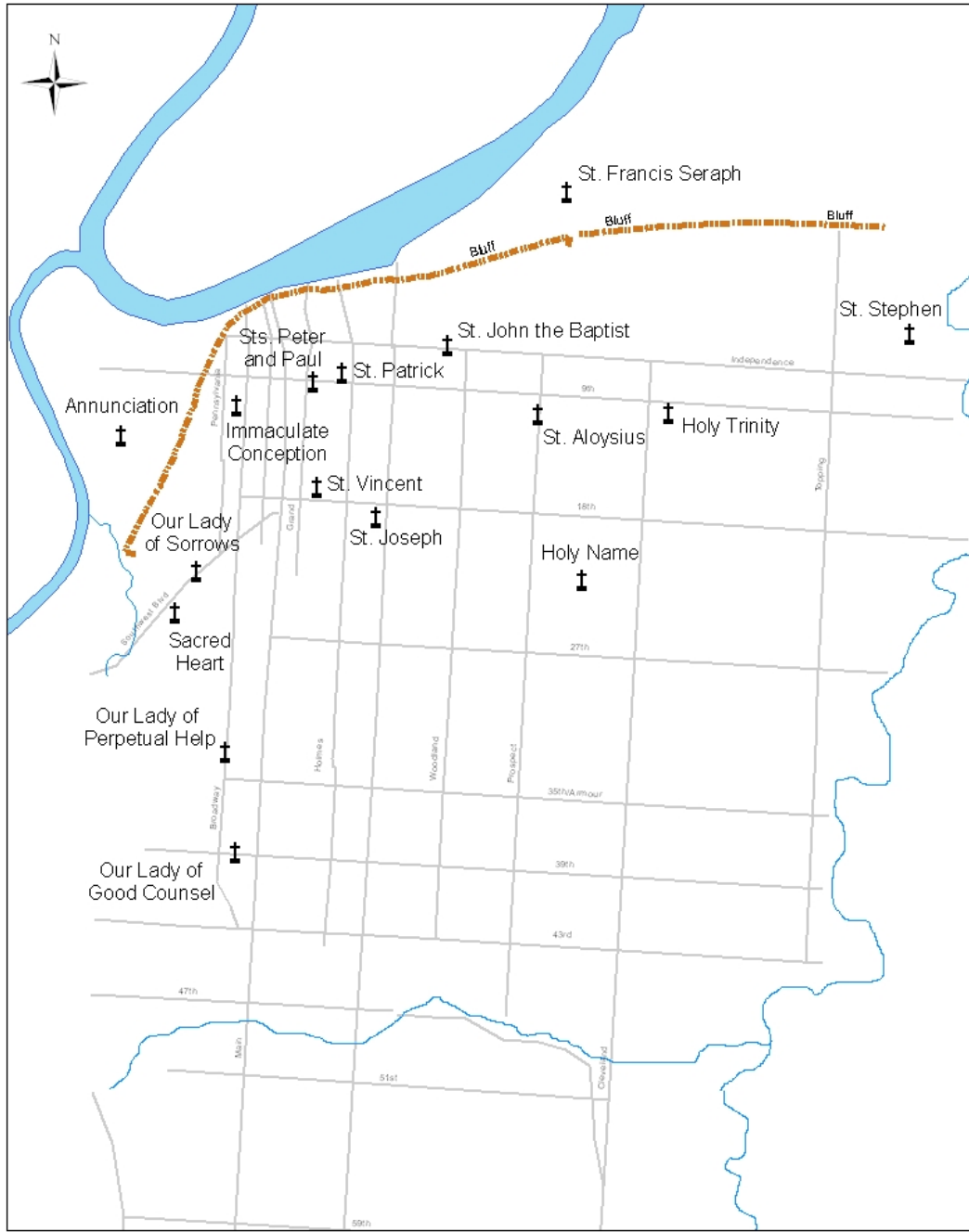
Map 16: Location of churches in 1889 (Coleman 1992)

1889 Parishes



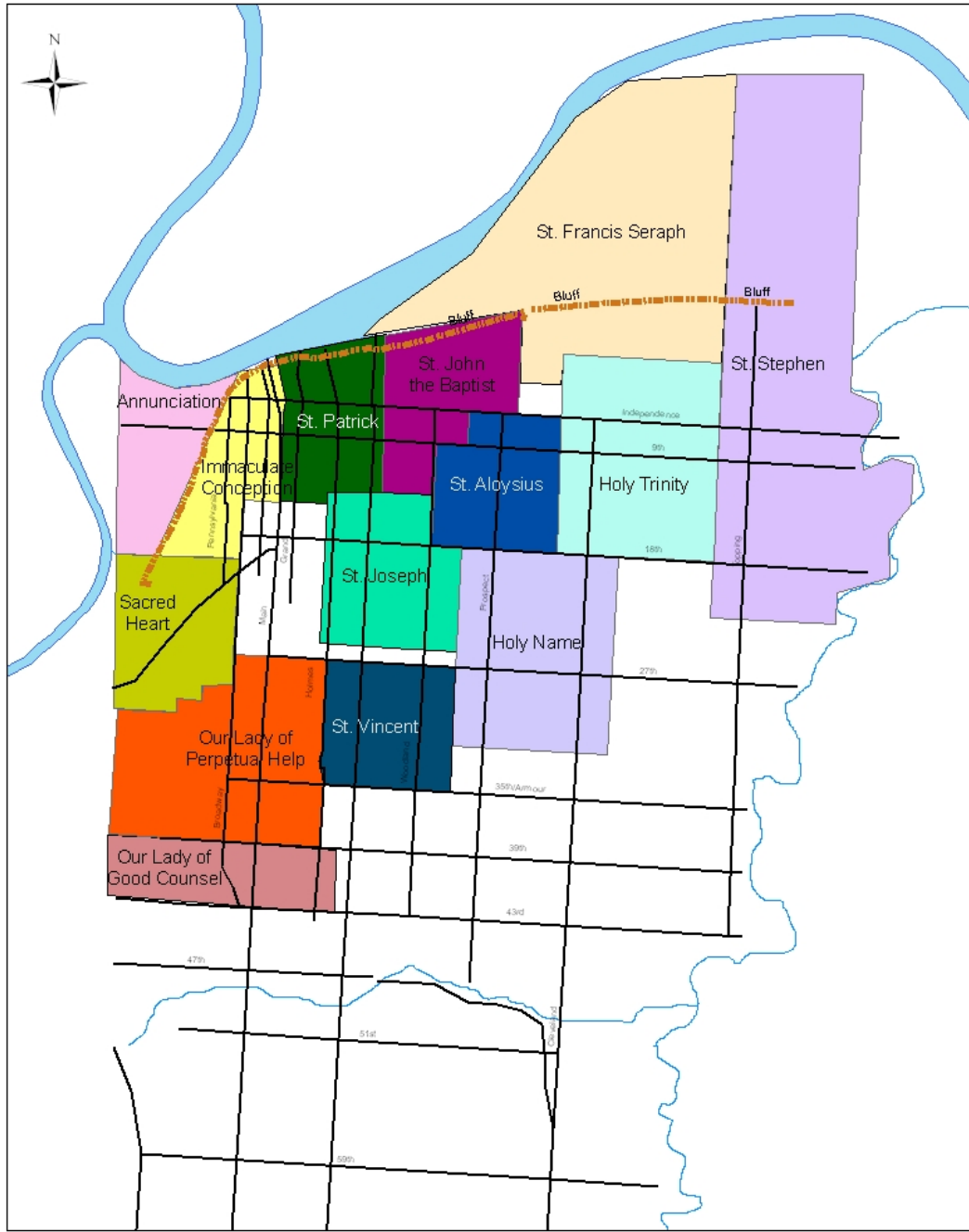
Map 17: Location of parish boundaries in 1889 (Coleman 1992)

1890 Churches



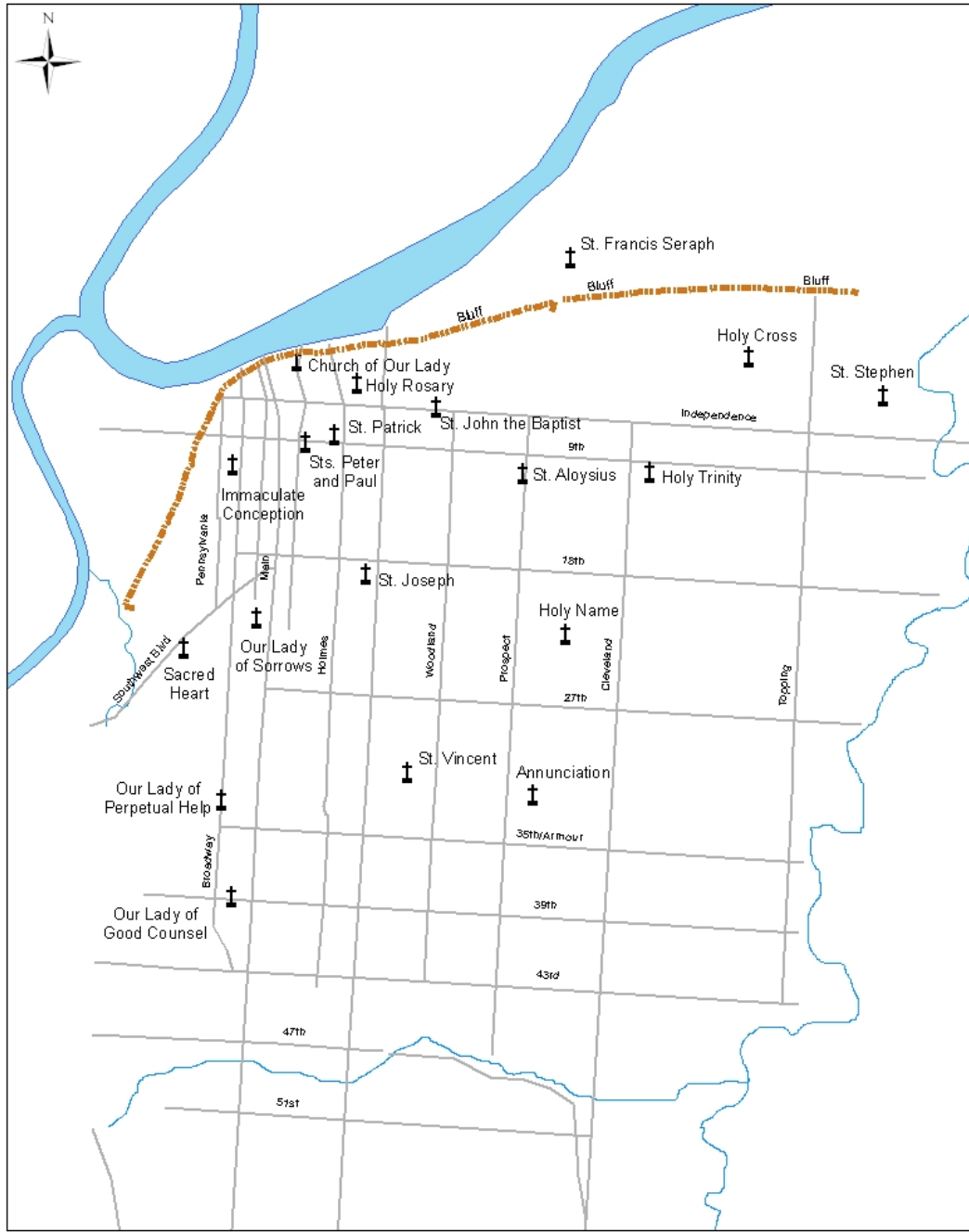
Map 18: Location of churches in 1890 (Coleman 1992)

1890 Parishes



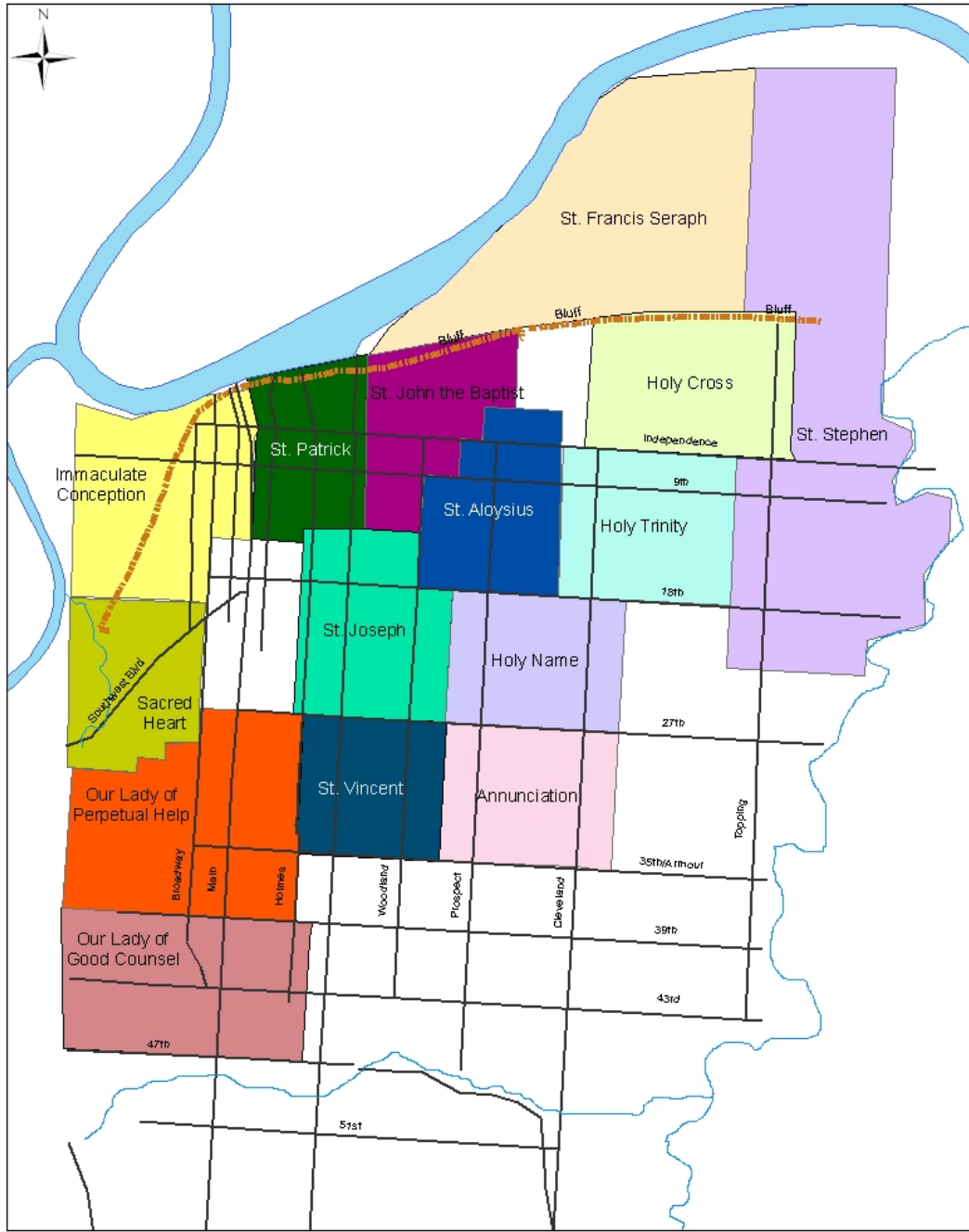
Map 19: Location of parish boundaries in 1890 (Coleman 1992)

1902 Churches



Map 20: Location of churches in 1902 (Coleman 1992)

1902 Parishes



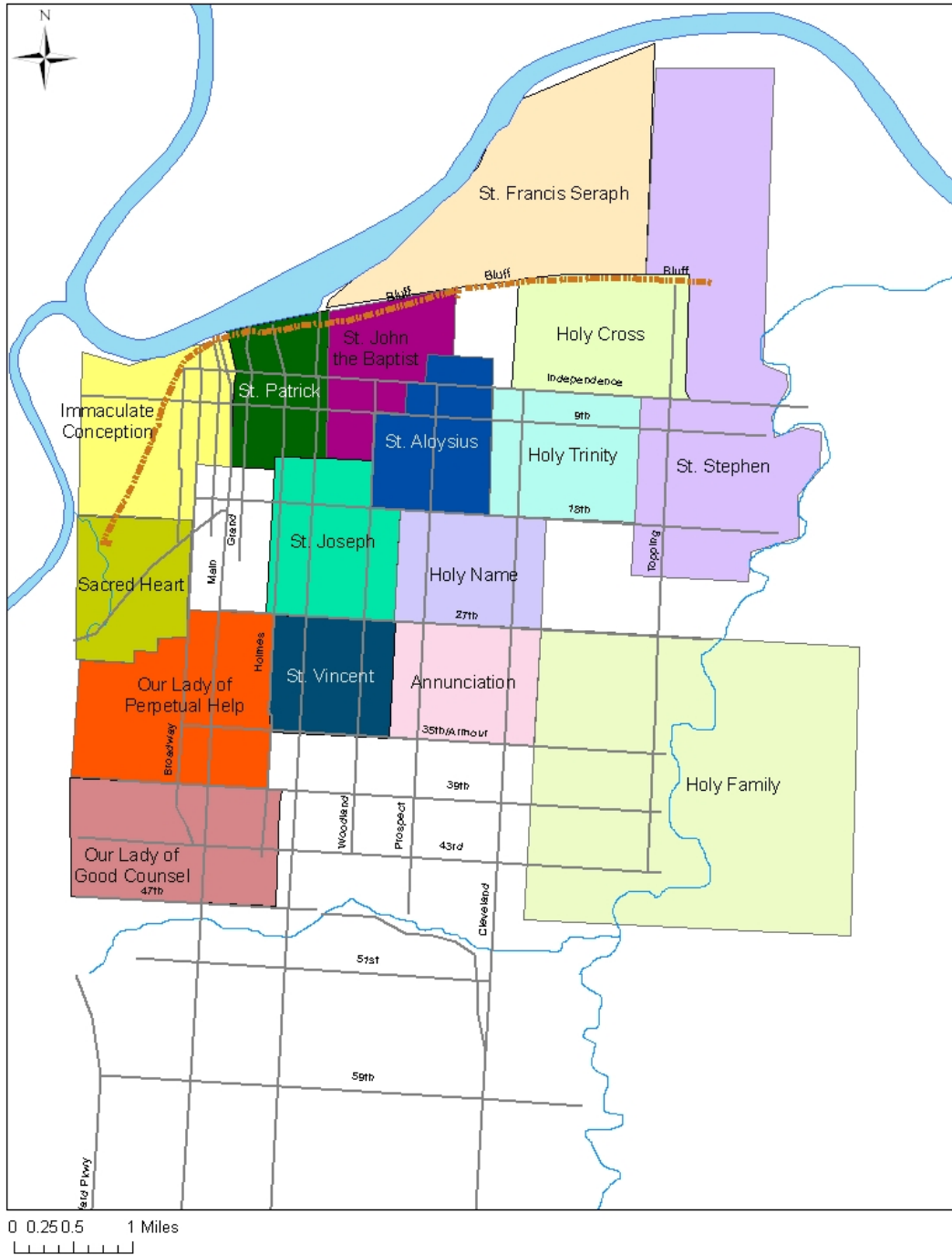
Map 21: Location of parish boundaries in 1902 (Coleman 1992)

1905 Churches



Map 22: Location of churches in 1905 (Coleman 1992)

1905 Parishes



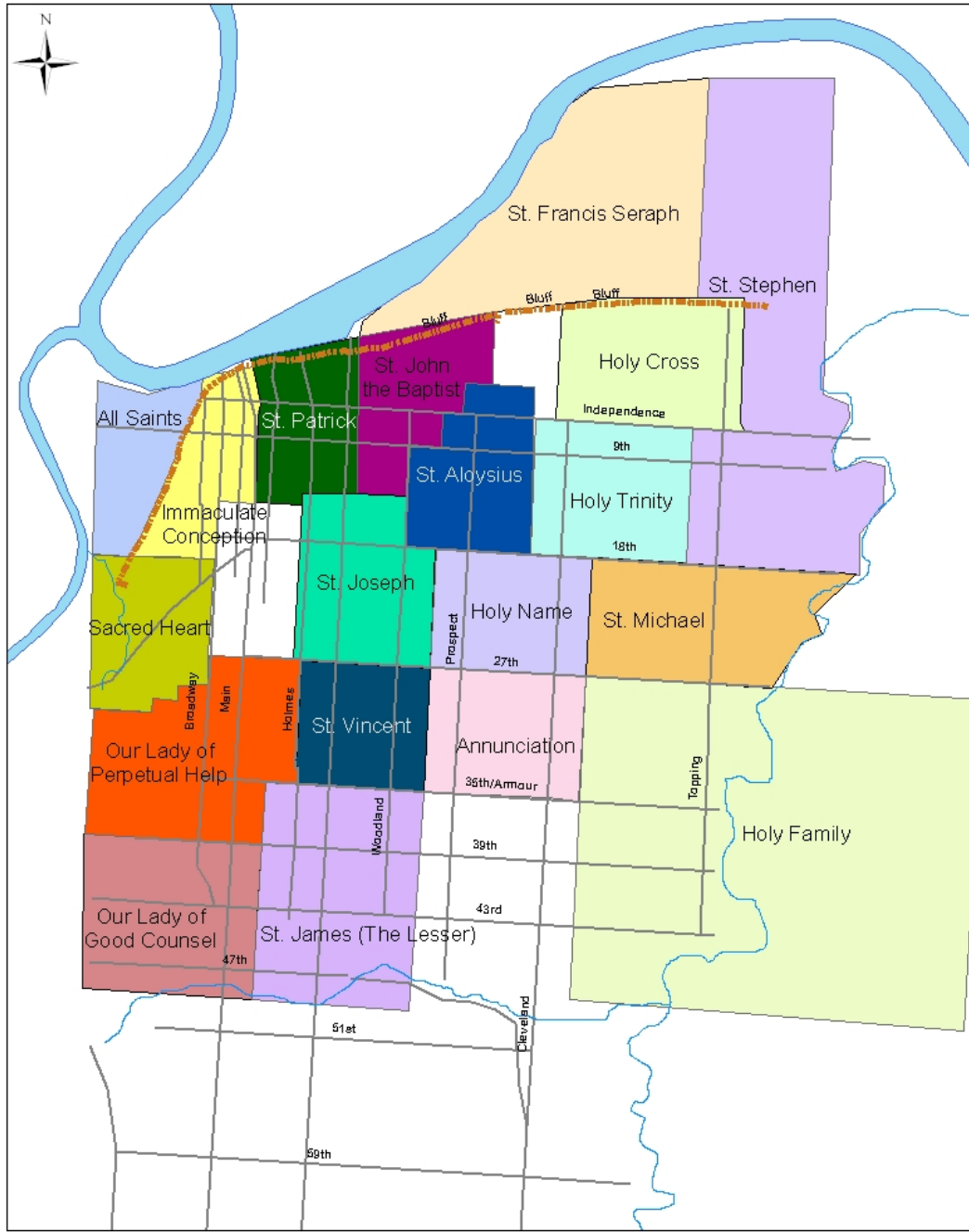
Map 23: Location of parish boundaries in 1905 (Coleman 1992)

1906 Churches



Map 24: Location of churches in 1906 (Coleman 1992)

1906 Parishes



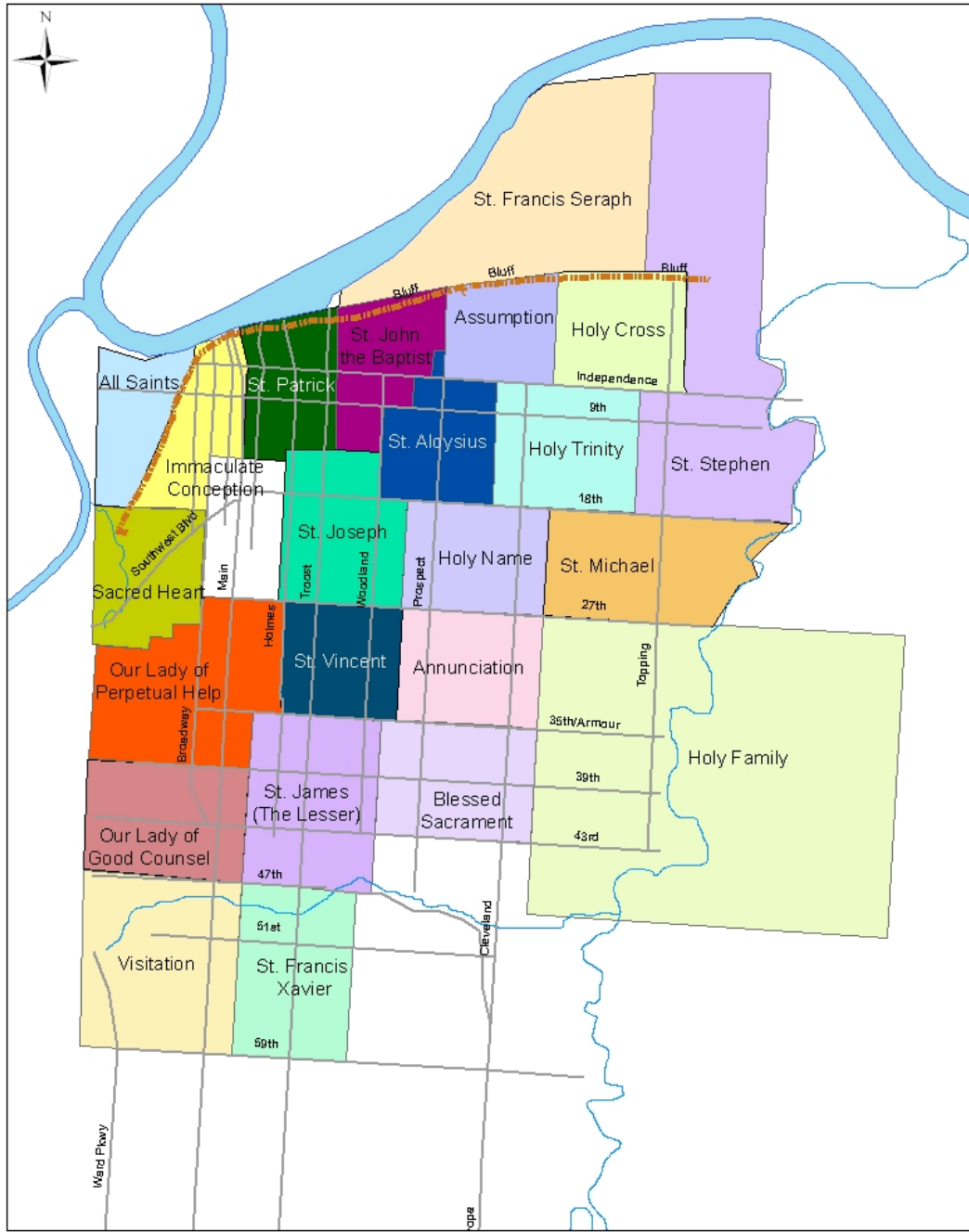
Map 25: Location of parish boundaries in 1906 (Coleman 1992)

1909 Churches



Map 26: Location of churches in 1909 (Coleman 1992)

1909 Parishes



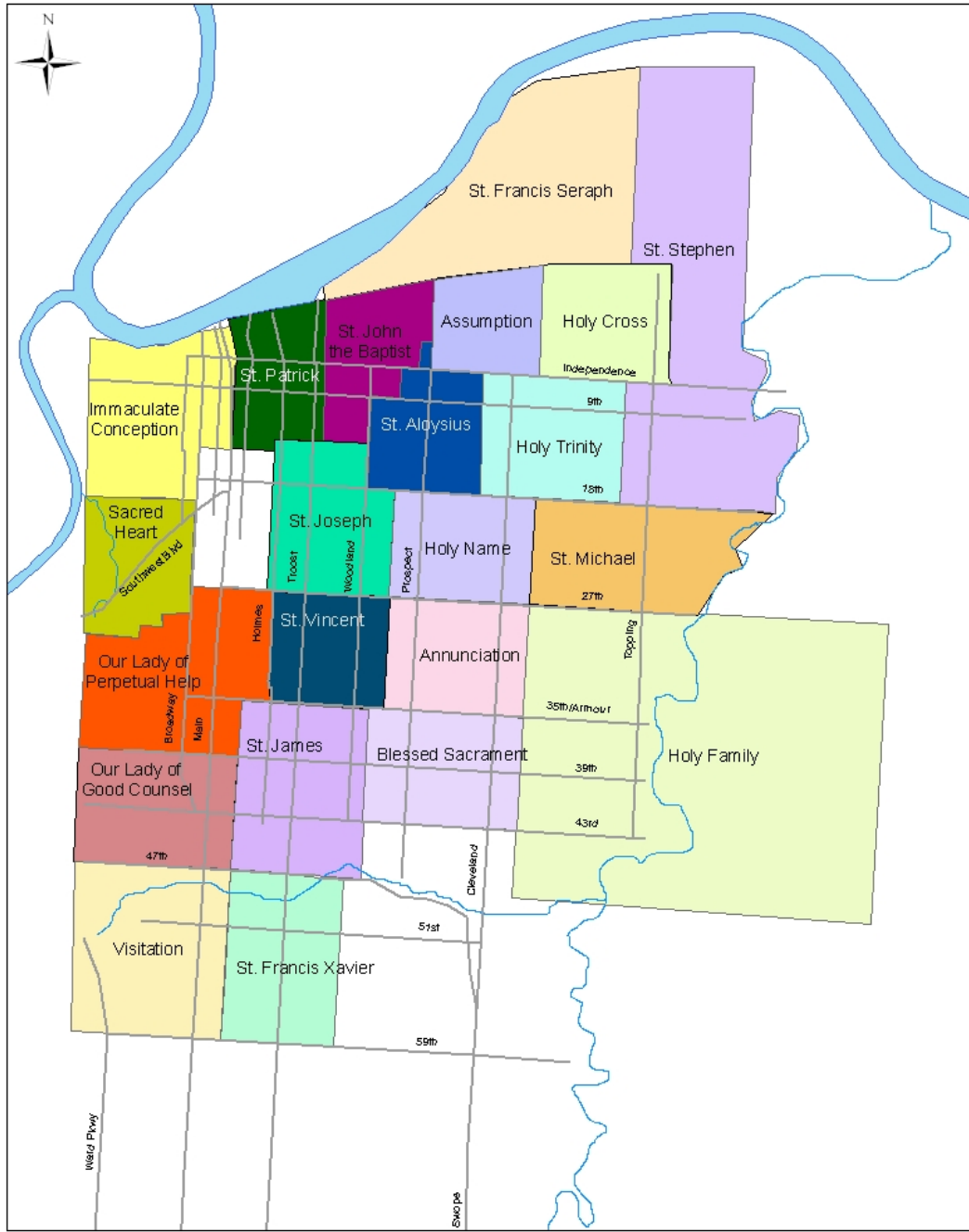
Map 27: Location of parish boundaries in 1909 (Coleman 1992)

1910 Churches



Map 28: Location of churches in 1910 (Coleman 1992)

1913 Parishes



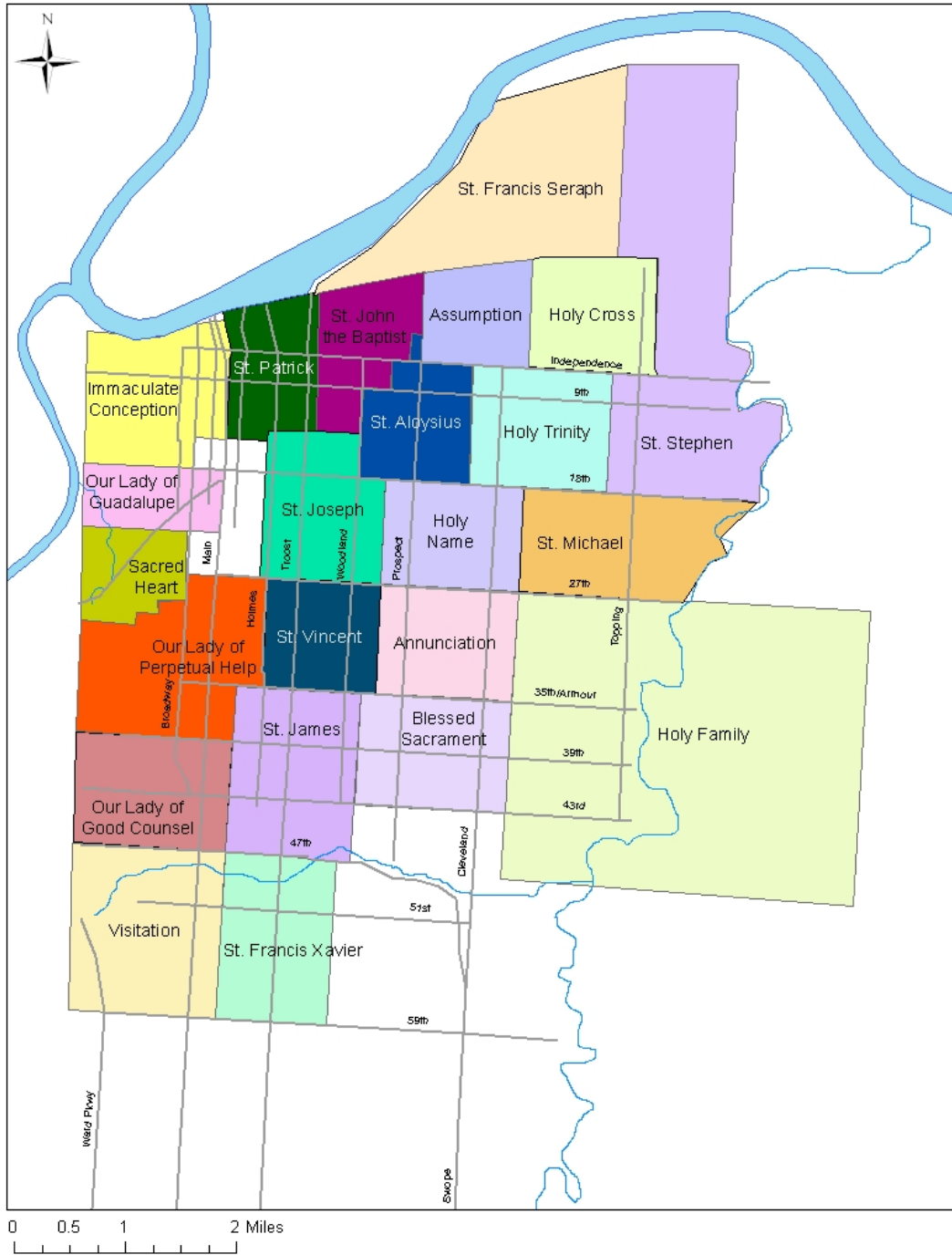
Map 29: Location of parish boundaries in 1913 (Coleman 1992)

1914 Churches



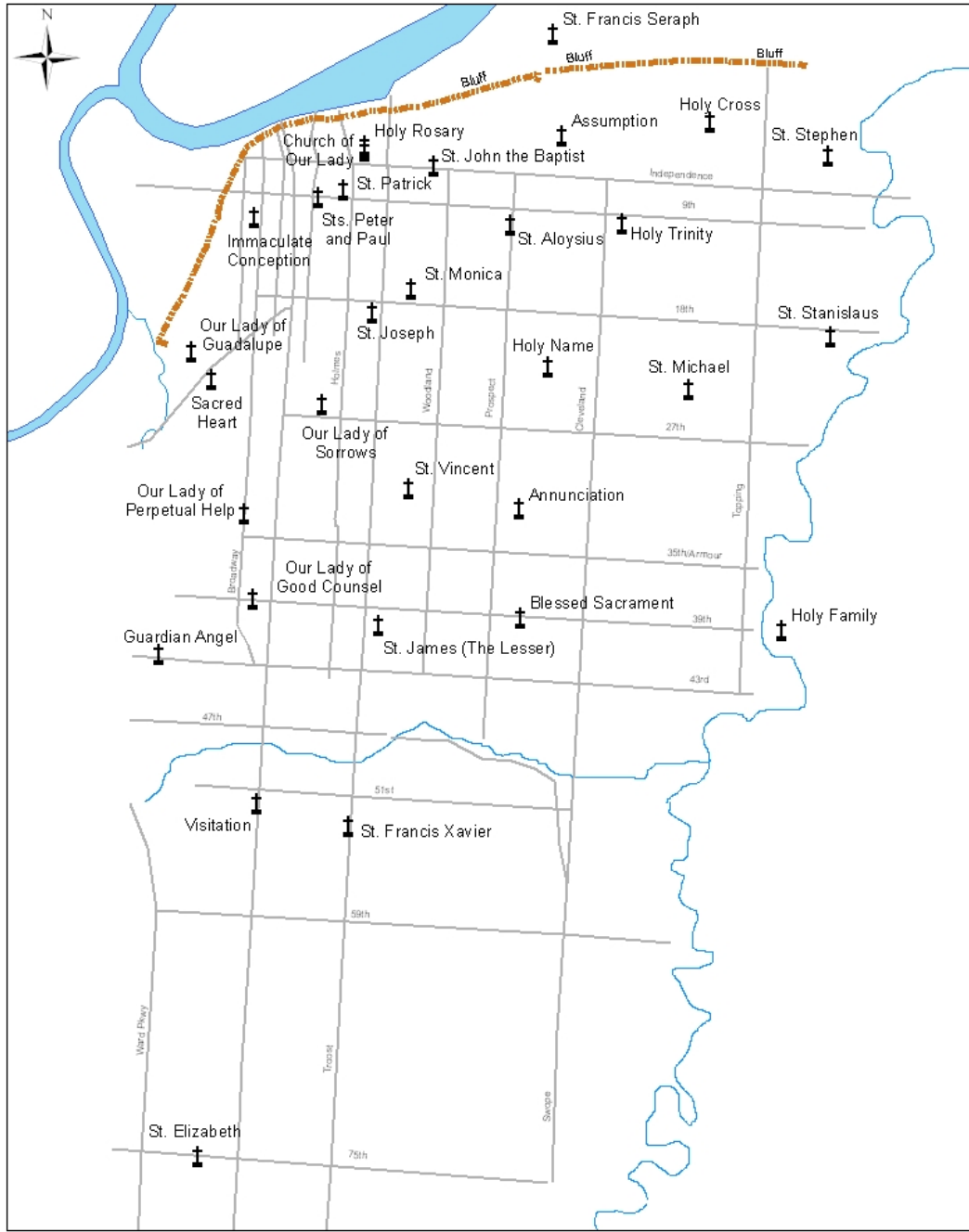
Map 30: Location of churches in 1914 (Coleman 1992)

1914 Parishes



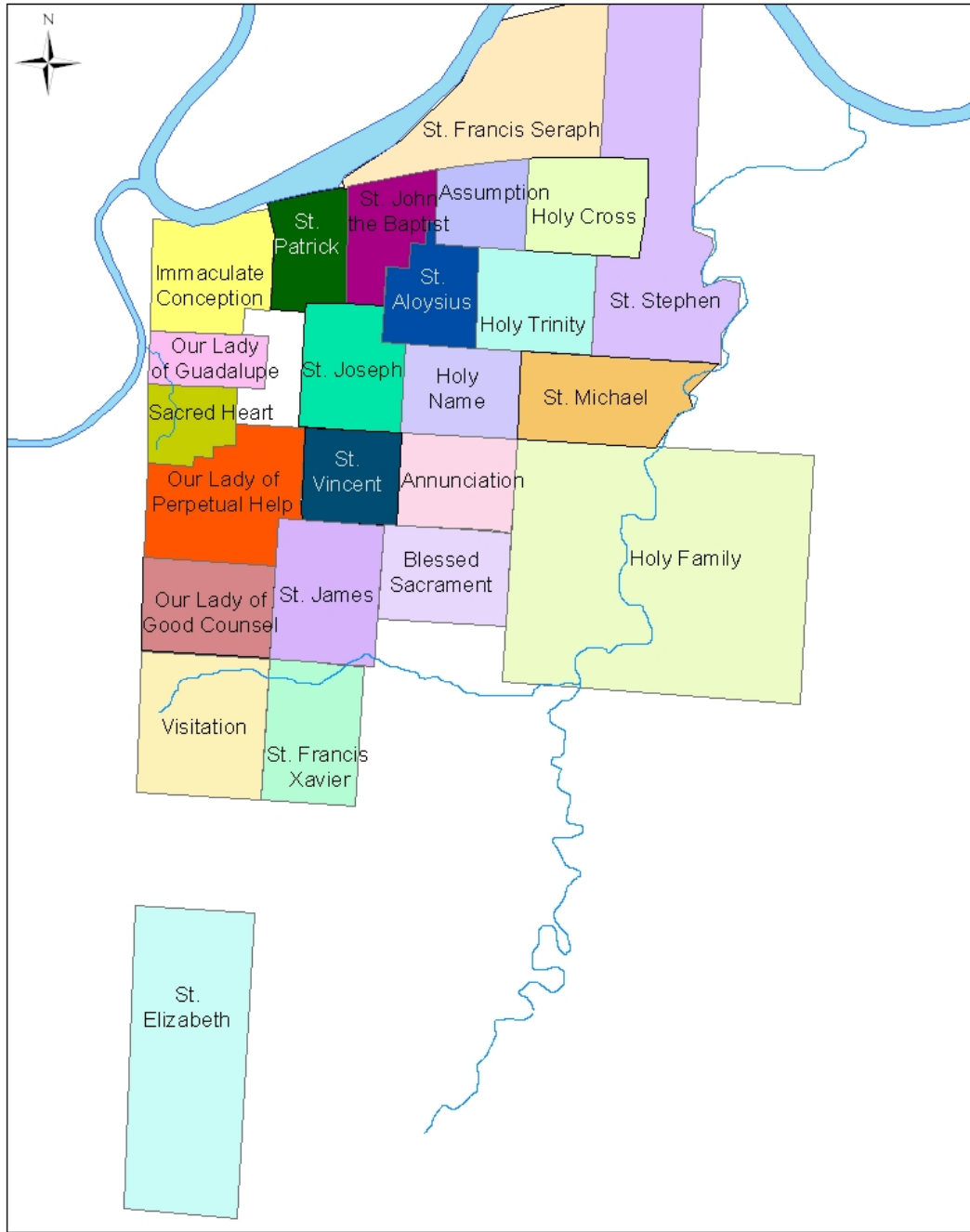
Map 31: Location of parish boundaries in 1914 (Coleman 1992)

1917 Churches



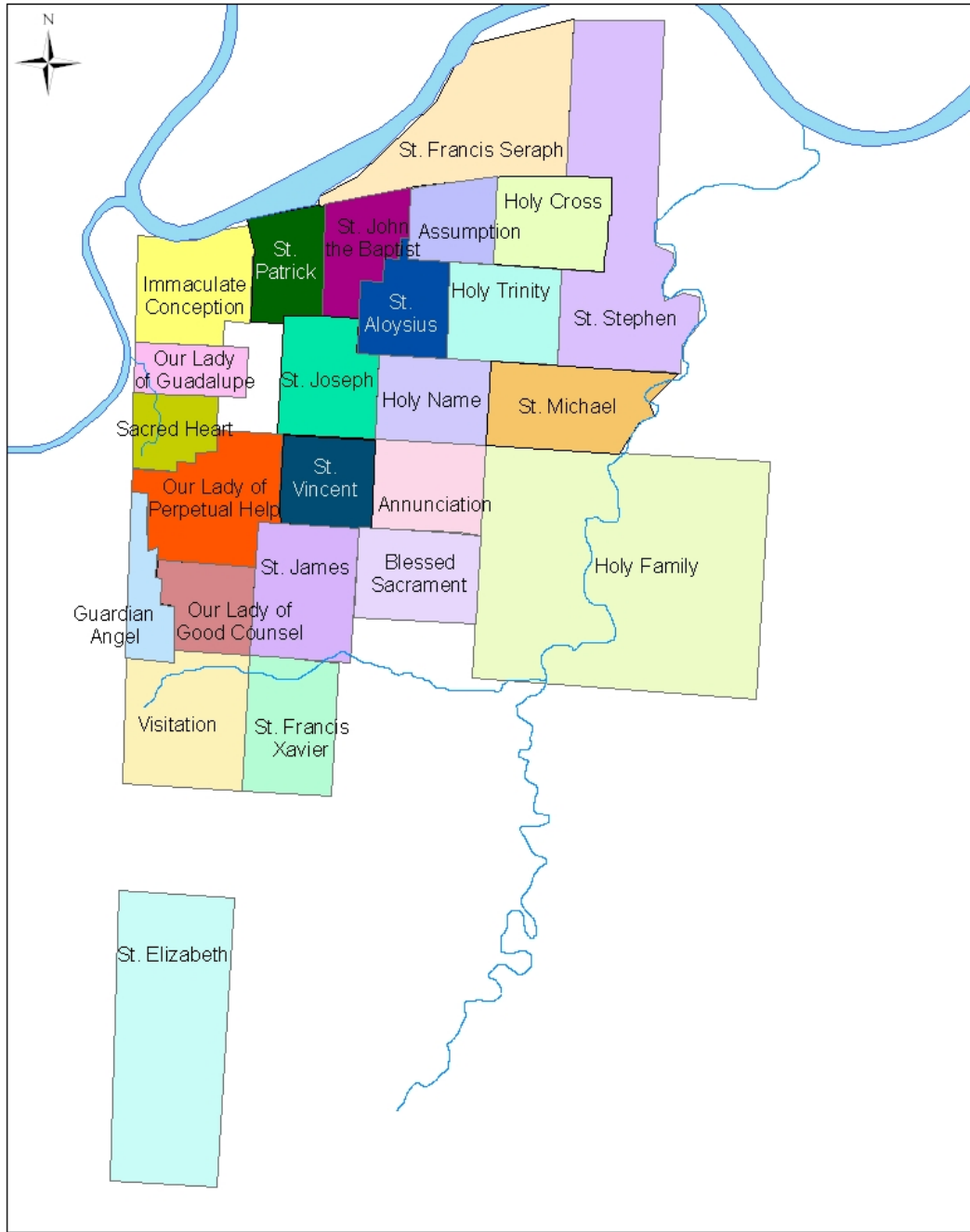
Map 32: Location of churches in 1917 (Coleman 1992)

1917 Parishes



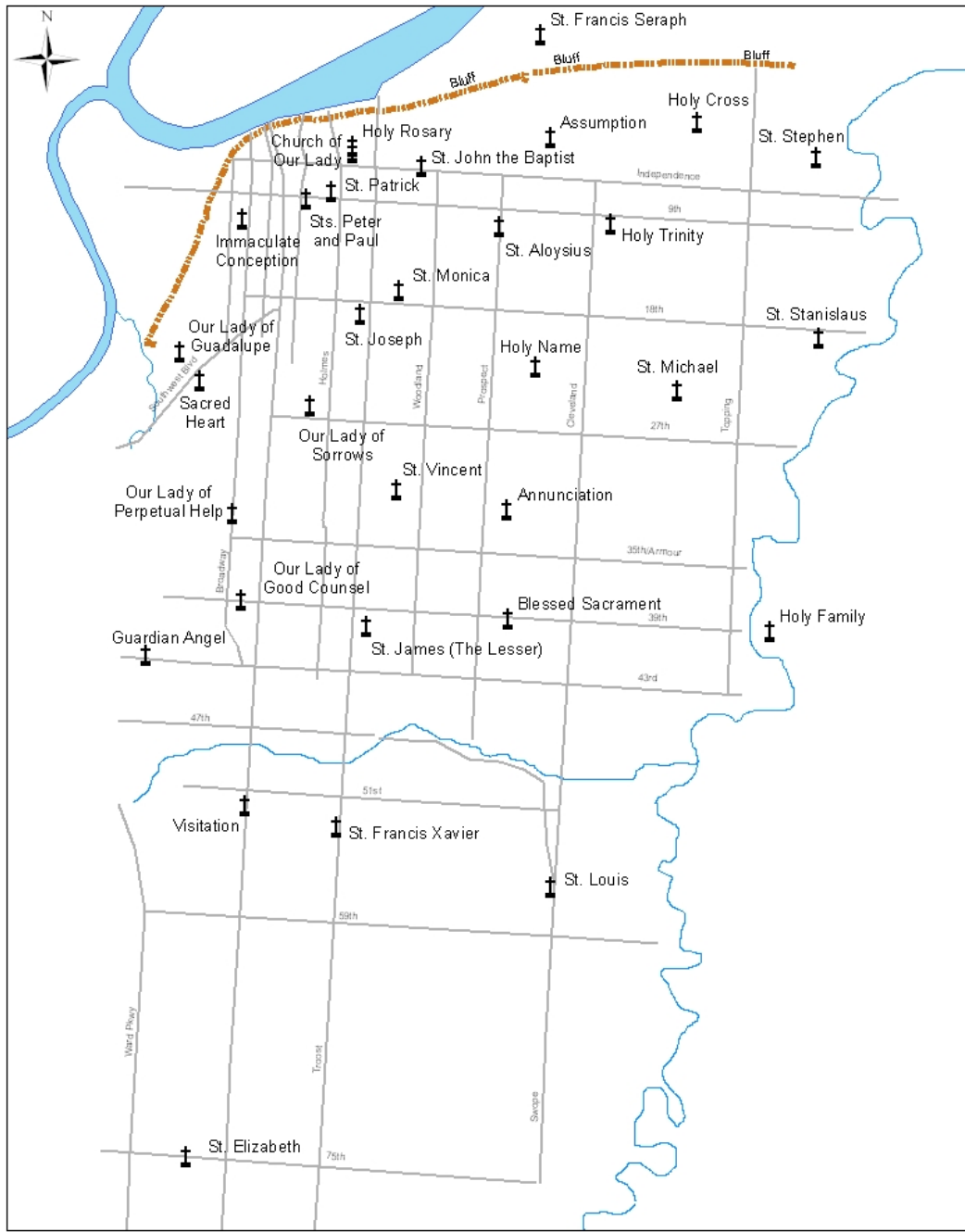
Map 33: Location of parish boundaries in 1917 (Coleman 1992)

1918 Parishes



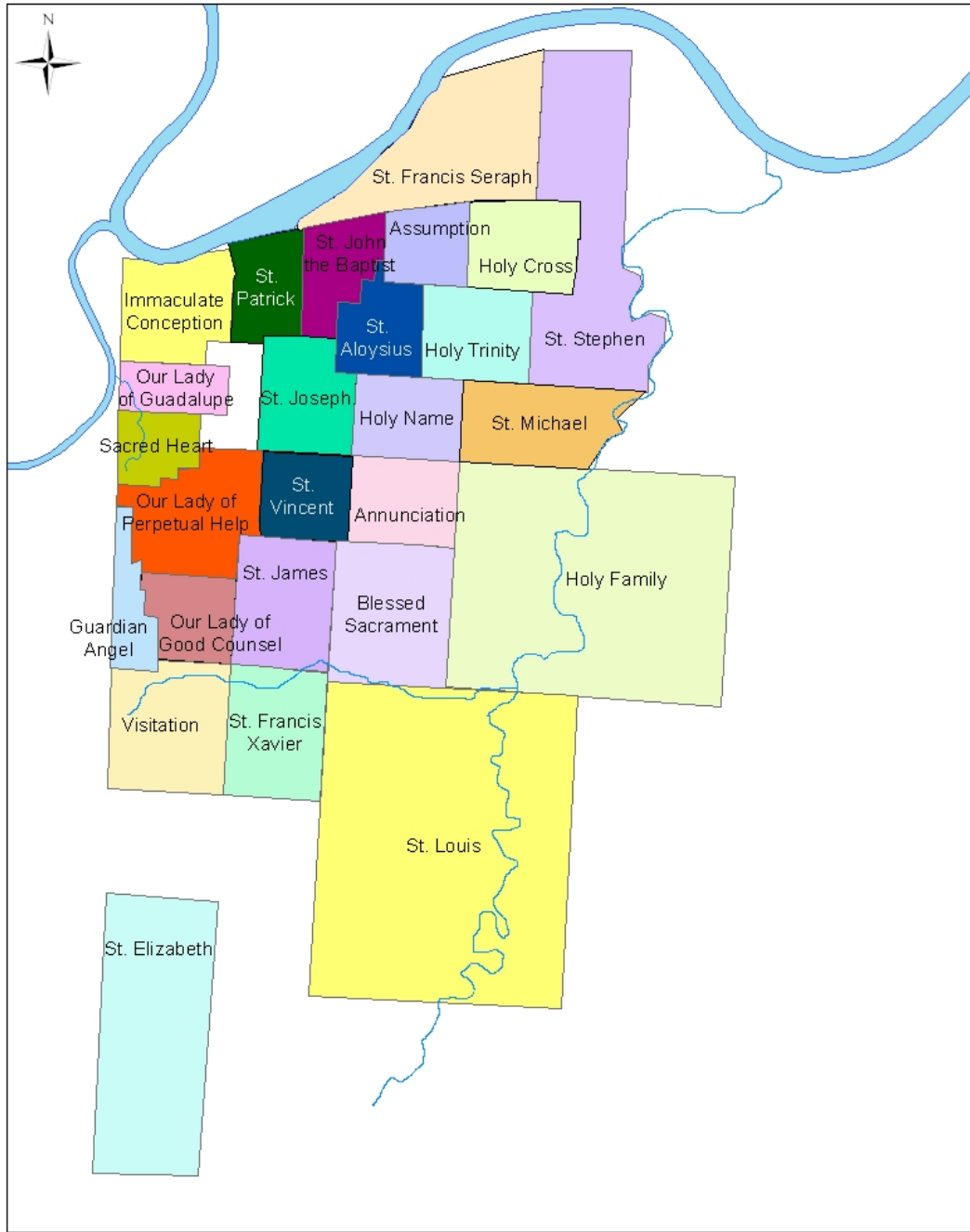
Map 34: Location of parish boundaries in 1918 (Coleman 1992)

1919 Churches



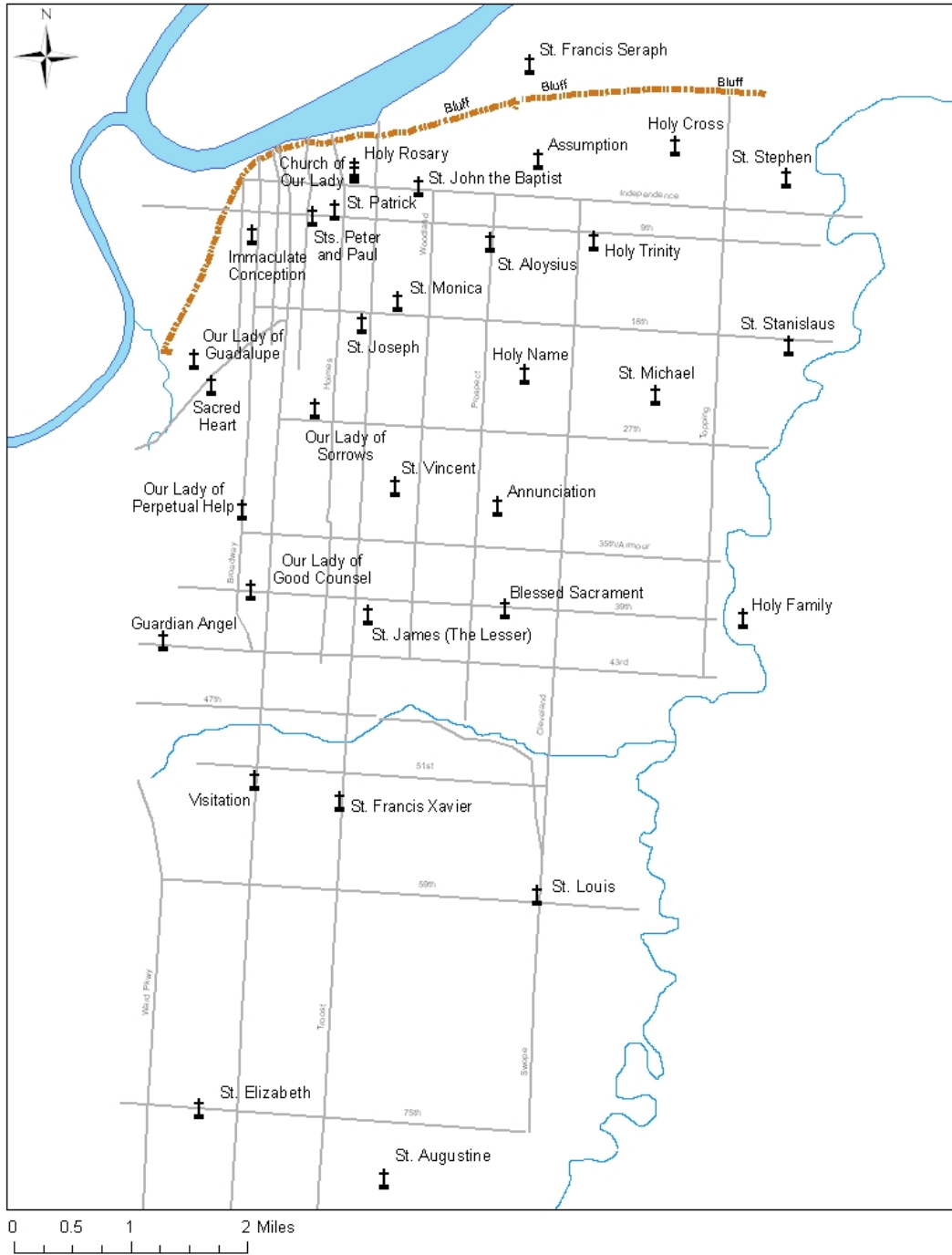
Map 35: Location of churches in 1919 (Coleman 1992)

1919 Parishes



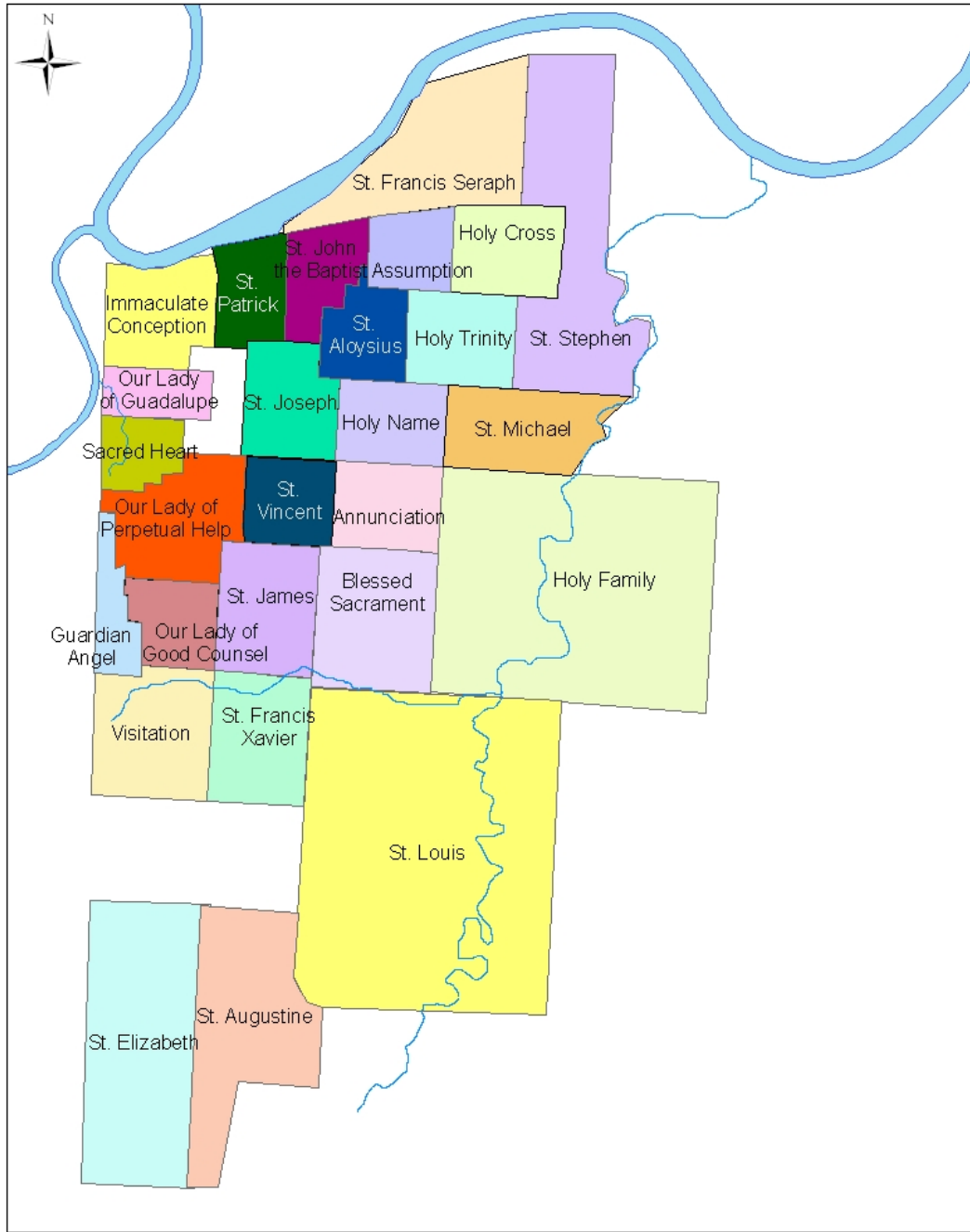
Map 36: Location of parish boundaries in 1919 (Coleman 1992)

1923 Churches



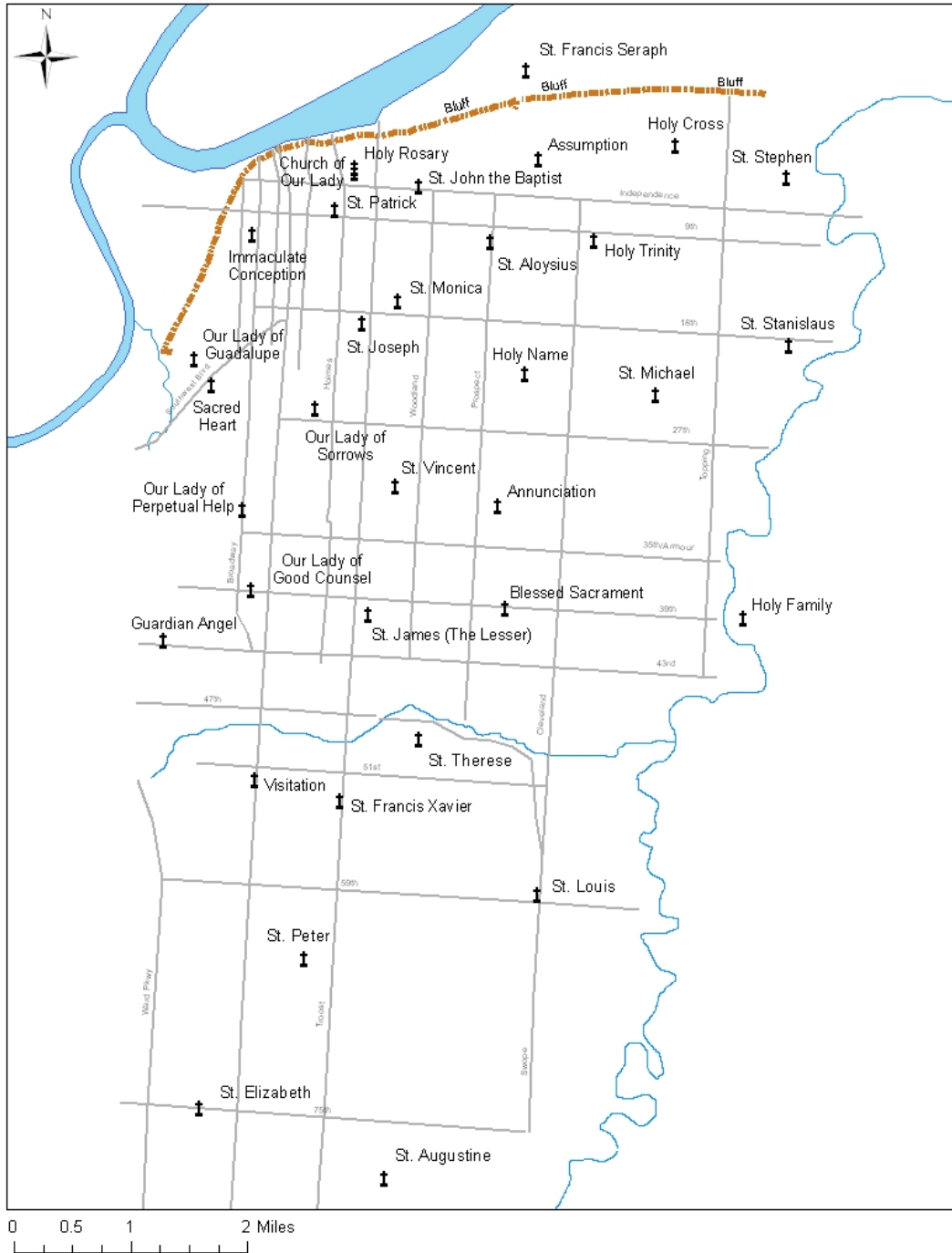
Map 37: Location of churches in 1923 (Coleman 1992)

1923 Parishes



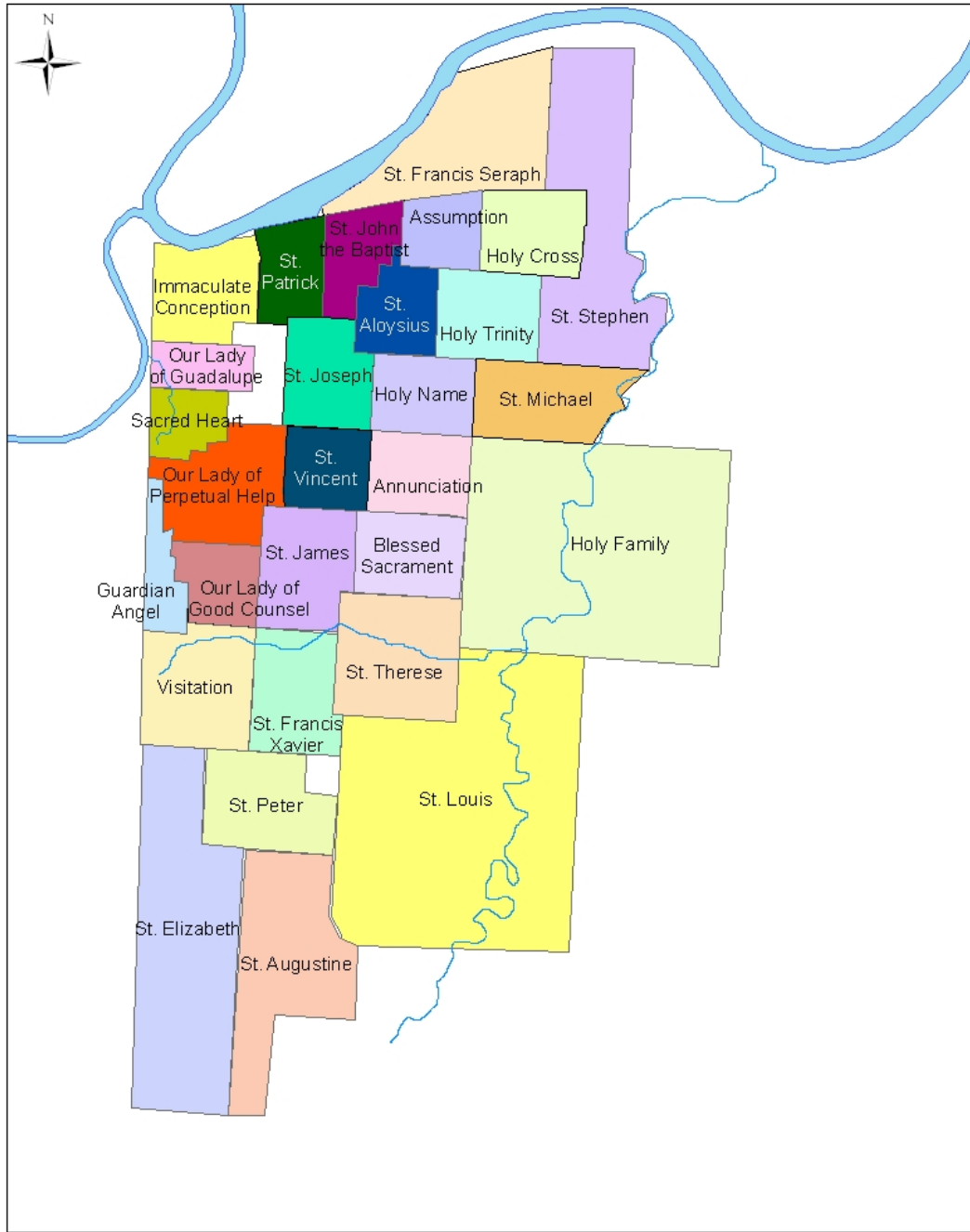
Map 38: Location of parish boundaries in 1923 (Coleman 1992)

1925 Churches



Map 39 Location of churches in 1925 (Coleman 1992)

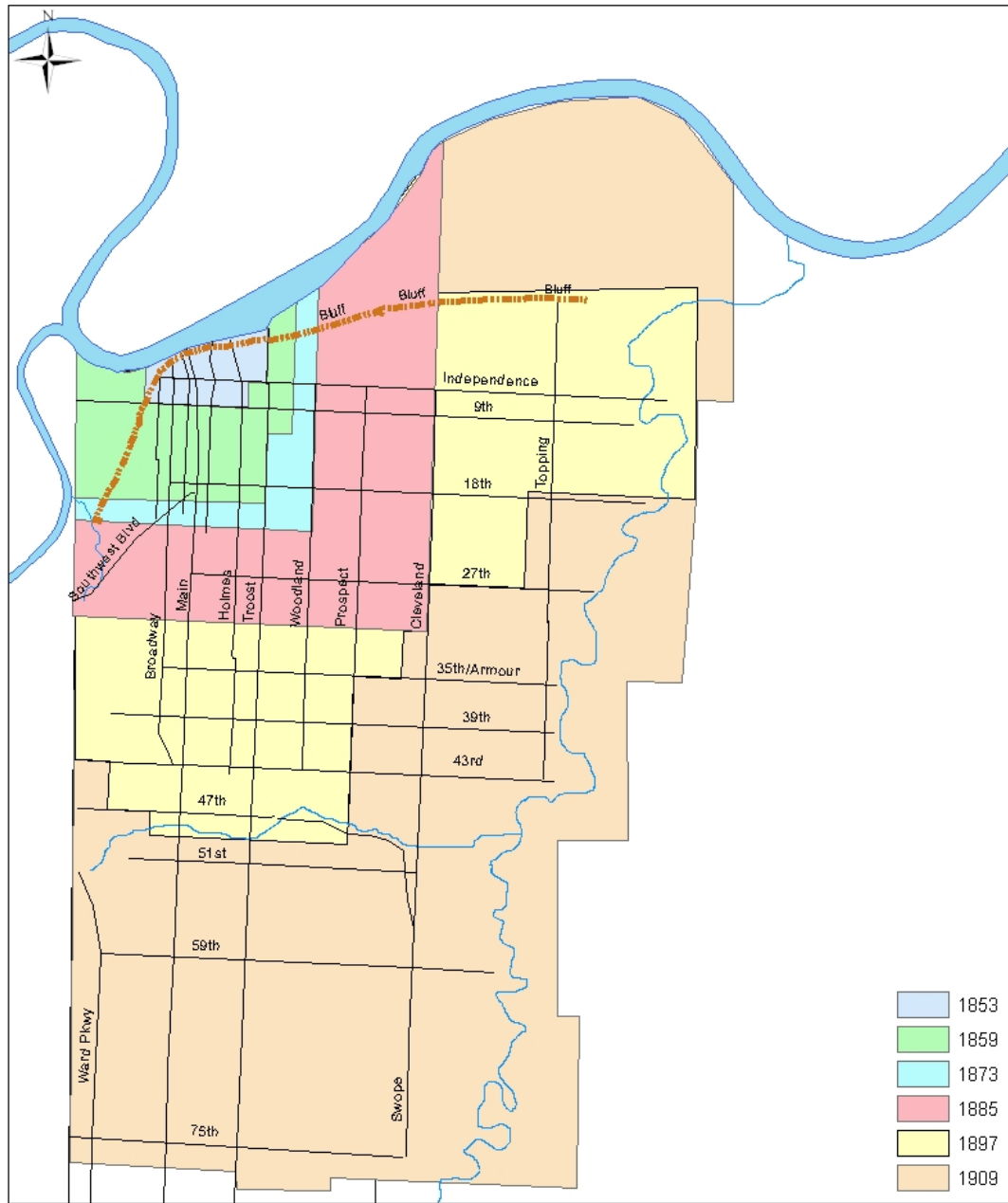
1925 Parishes



Map 40: Location of parish boundaries in 1925 (Coleman 1992)

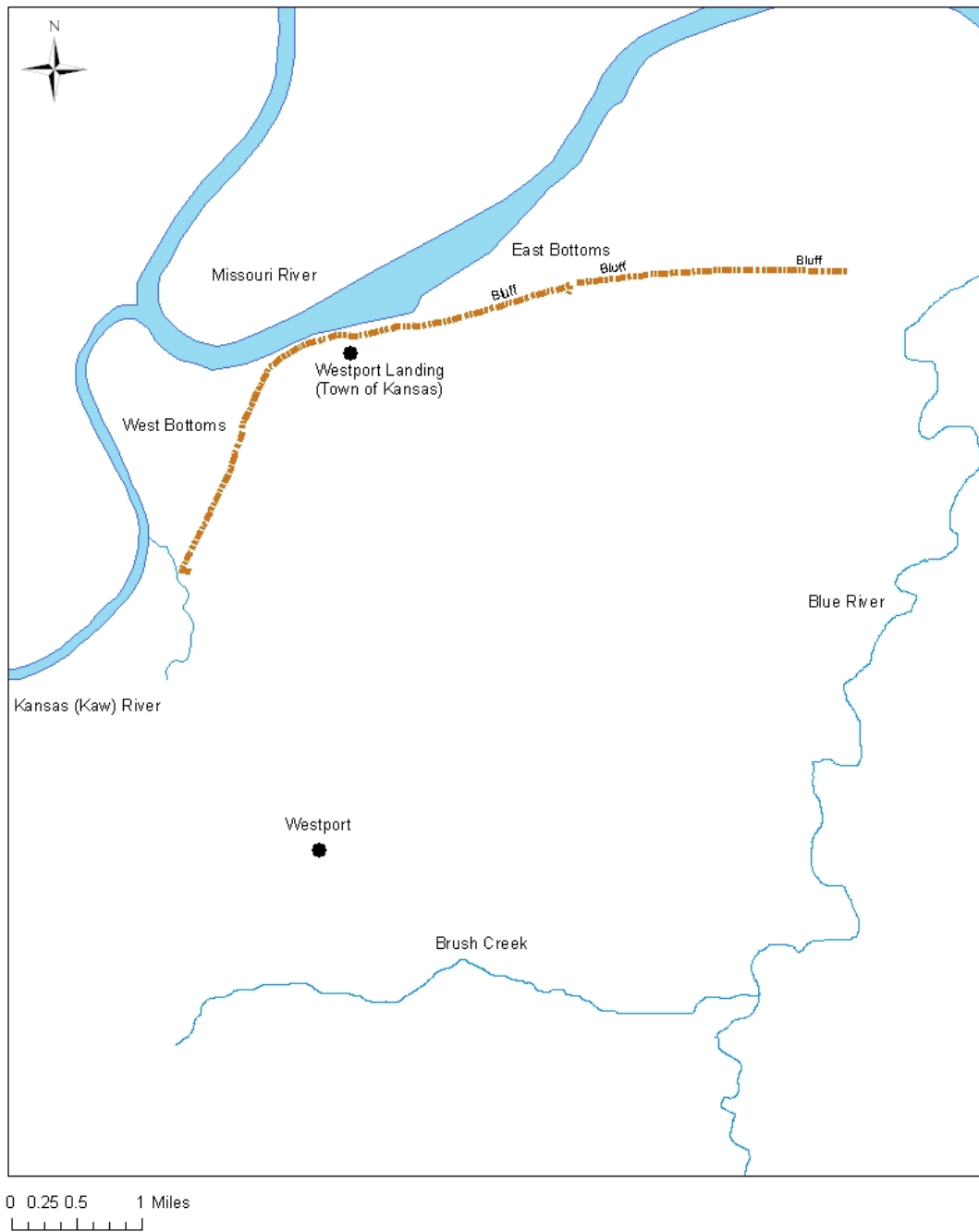
Appendix 2: Other Maps

City Limits



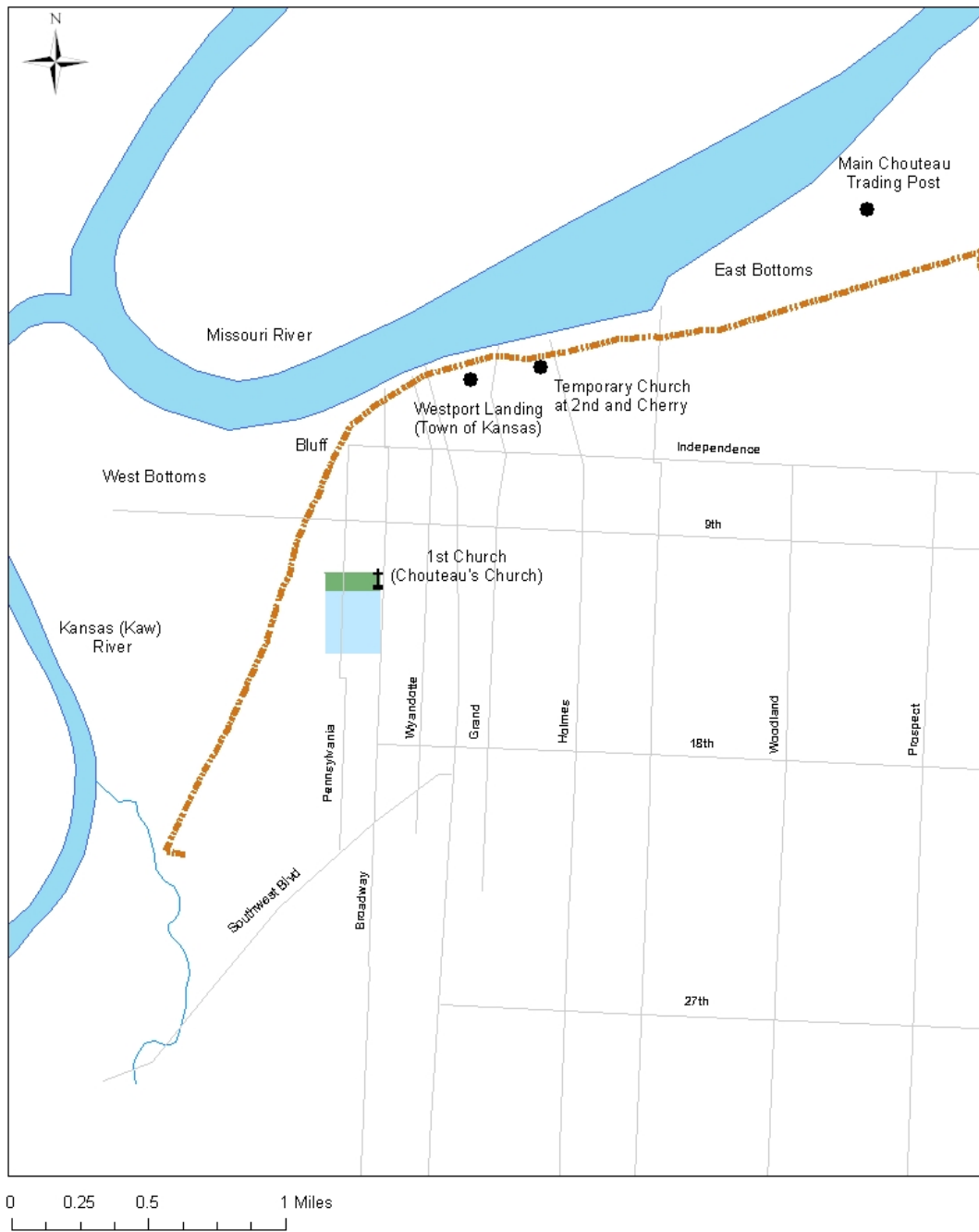
Map 41: City limits

Kansas City Region

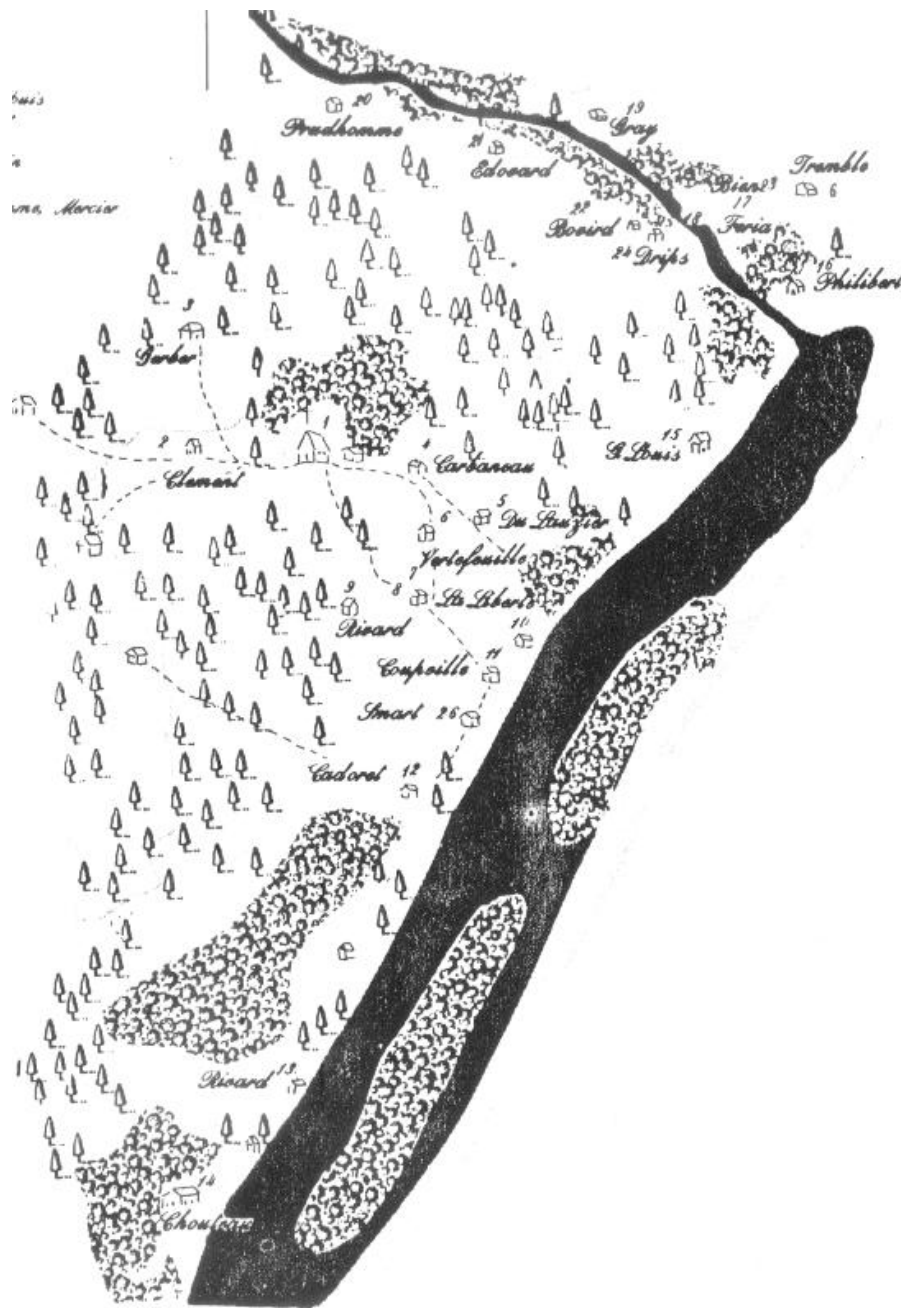


Map 42: Map of region showing general features.

Kansas City Region



Map 43: Map of region showing terrain features, the main Chouteau trading post and the first church property (Original forty acres in blue, ten acres not sold in green).



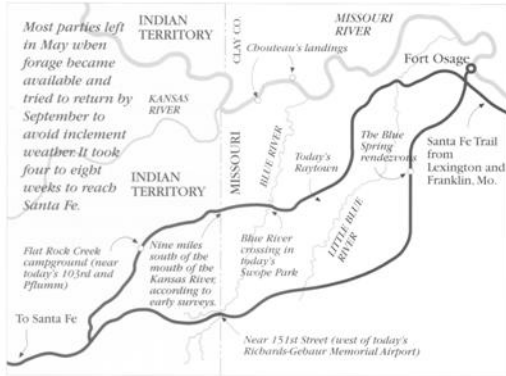
Map 44: A sketch of the French farmers along the Missouri River created by Fr. Point in 1840. The Missouri River is on the right edge, Turkey Creek flows into the Missouri along the top edge. The church is numbered one at the center of the sketch, and the Chouteau post is numbered fourteen at the bottom.¹ (Coleman 1992, xxi)

¹ Fr. Donnelly comments on the reliability of this sketch: “I have never found any traces of [Fr. Point’s] mission services here, and for his civil engineering and map drawing, his imagination and not the scene before him, nor his training in that science, supplied the sketch” (Dalton 1986, 103).

— Active route — Older route — Other roads

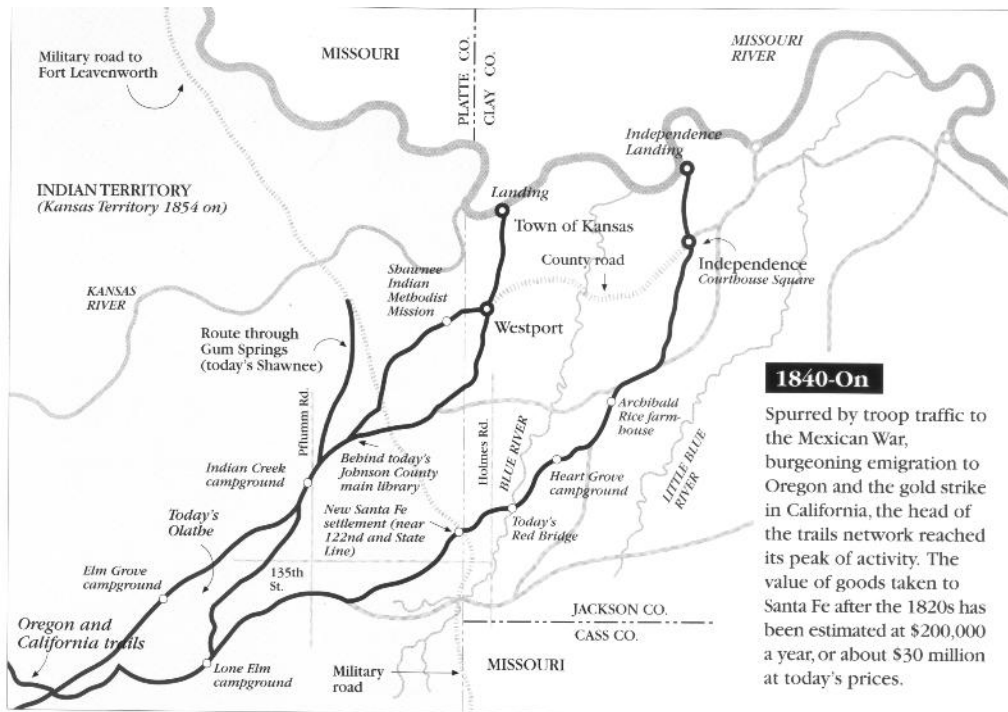
1821-1827

Coming in by land from central Missouri or disembarking from boats at Fort Osage, the trail's earliest travelers took one of two routes, depending on the season and the depth of the rivers. Traders followed the treeless ridgelines and sought to minimize stream crossings.



1828-1839

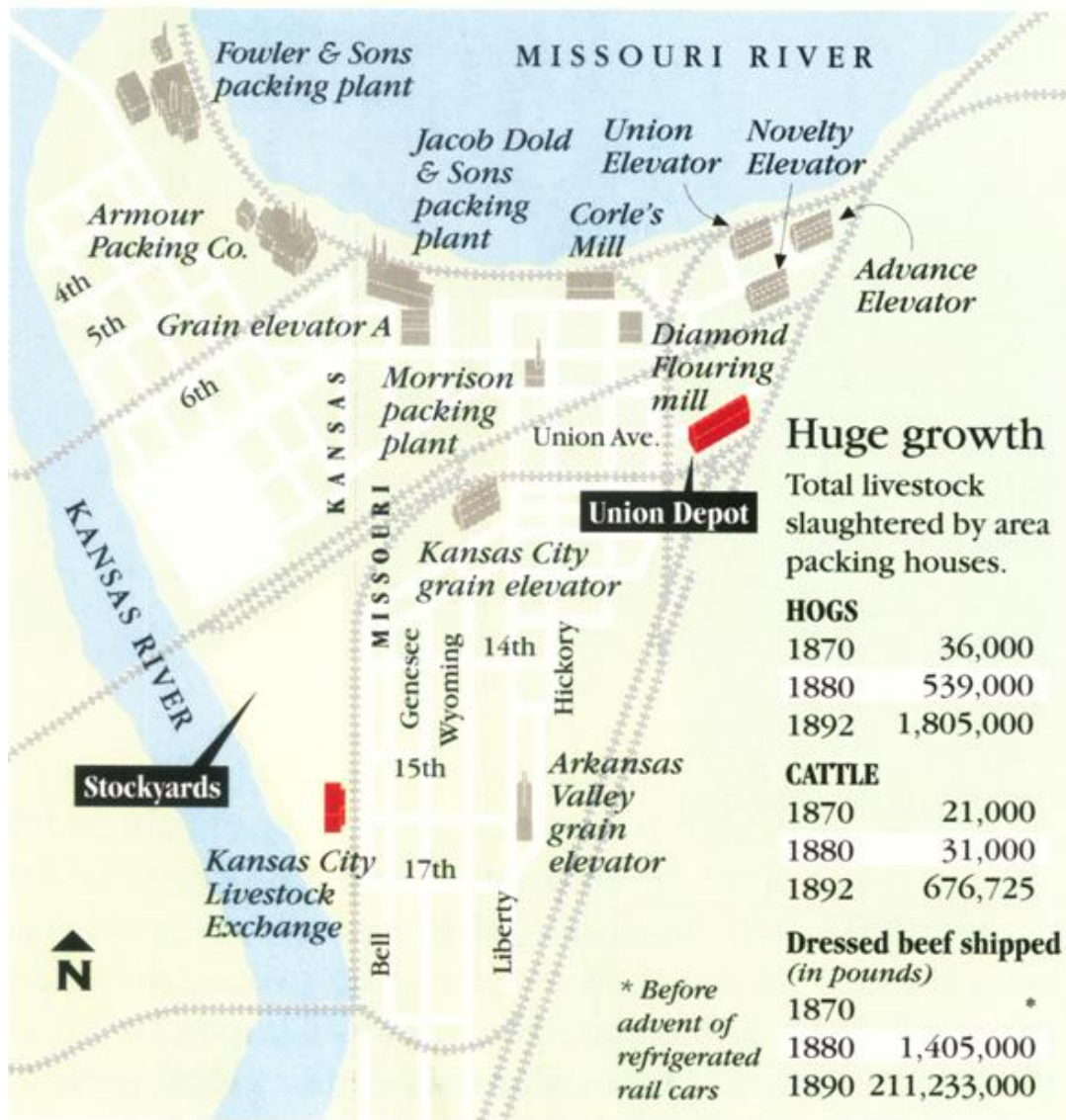
With the establishment of Independence, traders could float farther up the Missouri and reduce overland travel. The founding of Westport and its river landing in the mid-1830s further eased the journey, removing the need to cross the Blue River. The area also had ample pasture and water for stock.



1840-On

Spurred by troop traffic to the Mexican War, burgeoning emigration to Oregon and the gold strike in California, the head of the trails network reached its peak of activity. The value of goods taken to Santa Fe after the 1820s has been estimated at \$200,000 a year, or about \$30 million at today's prices.

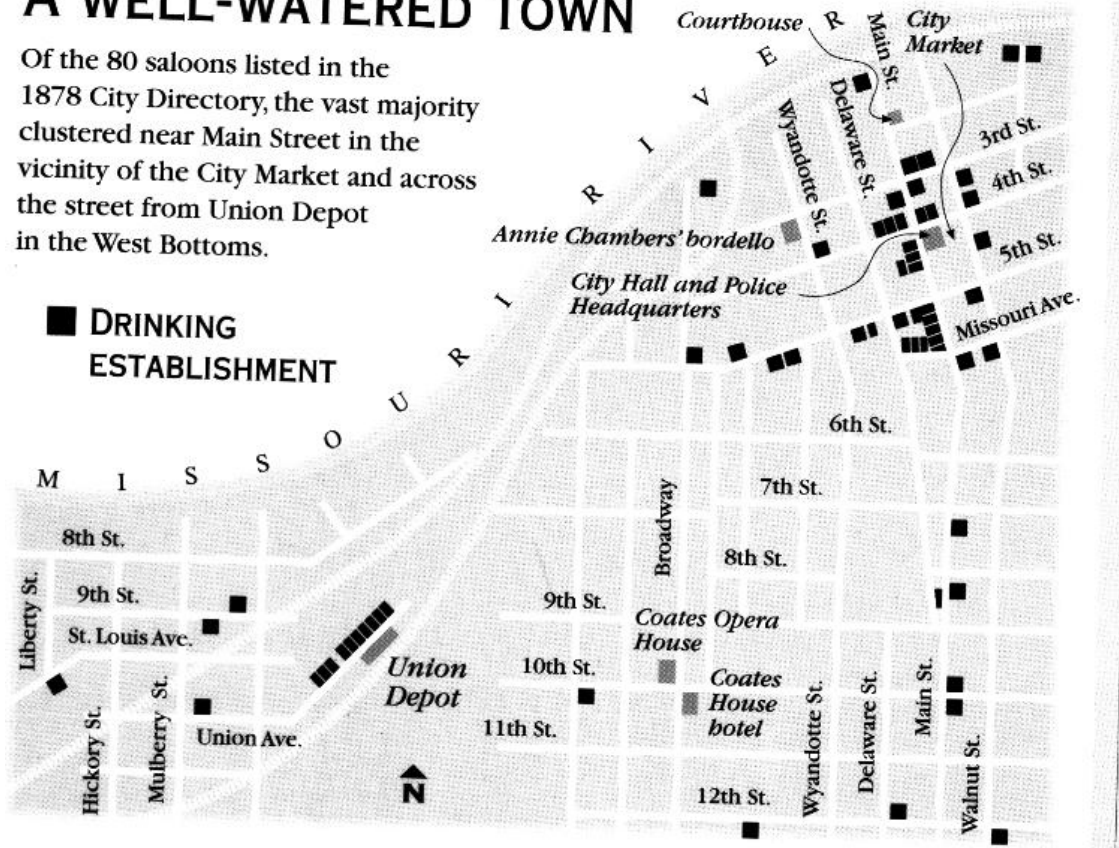
Map 45: Maps indicating the routes of the overland trails, as well as the location of Westport, the Chouteau landing and the Town of Kansas (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 32-33).



Map 46: The industries of West Bottoms in the mid 1880s (Montgomery and Kasper and 1999, 108).

A WELL-WATERED TOWN

Of the 80 saloons listed in the 1878 City Directory, the vast majority clustered near Main Street in the vicinity of the City Market and across the street from Union Depot in the West Bottoms.



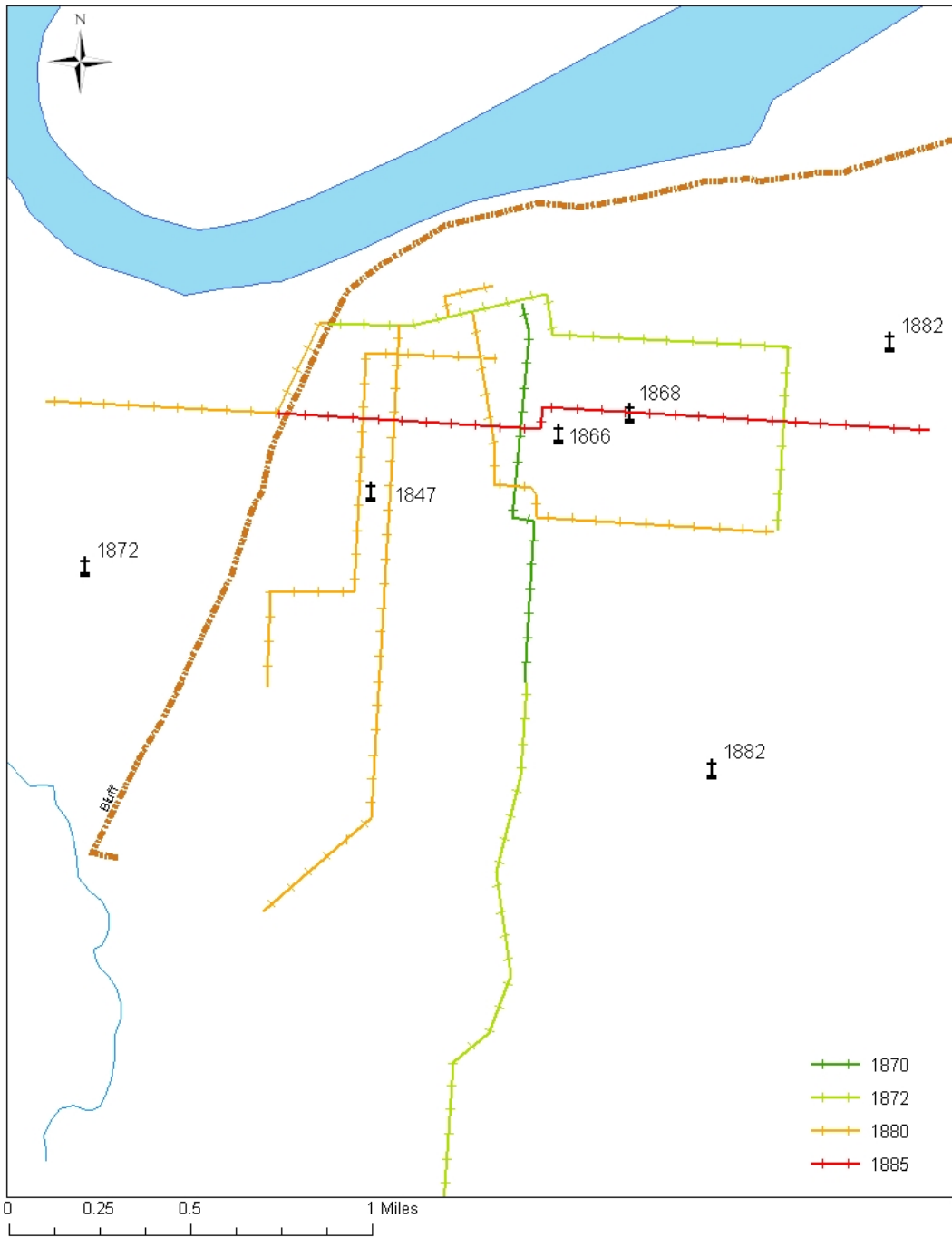
Map 47: Drinking establishments in 1878 (Montgomery and Kasper 1999, 92).

Neighborhoods and Sections



Map 48 (Brown and Dorsett 1978, O'Neill 2000)

Streetcars-1885



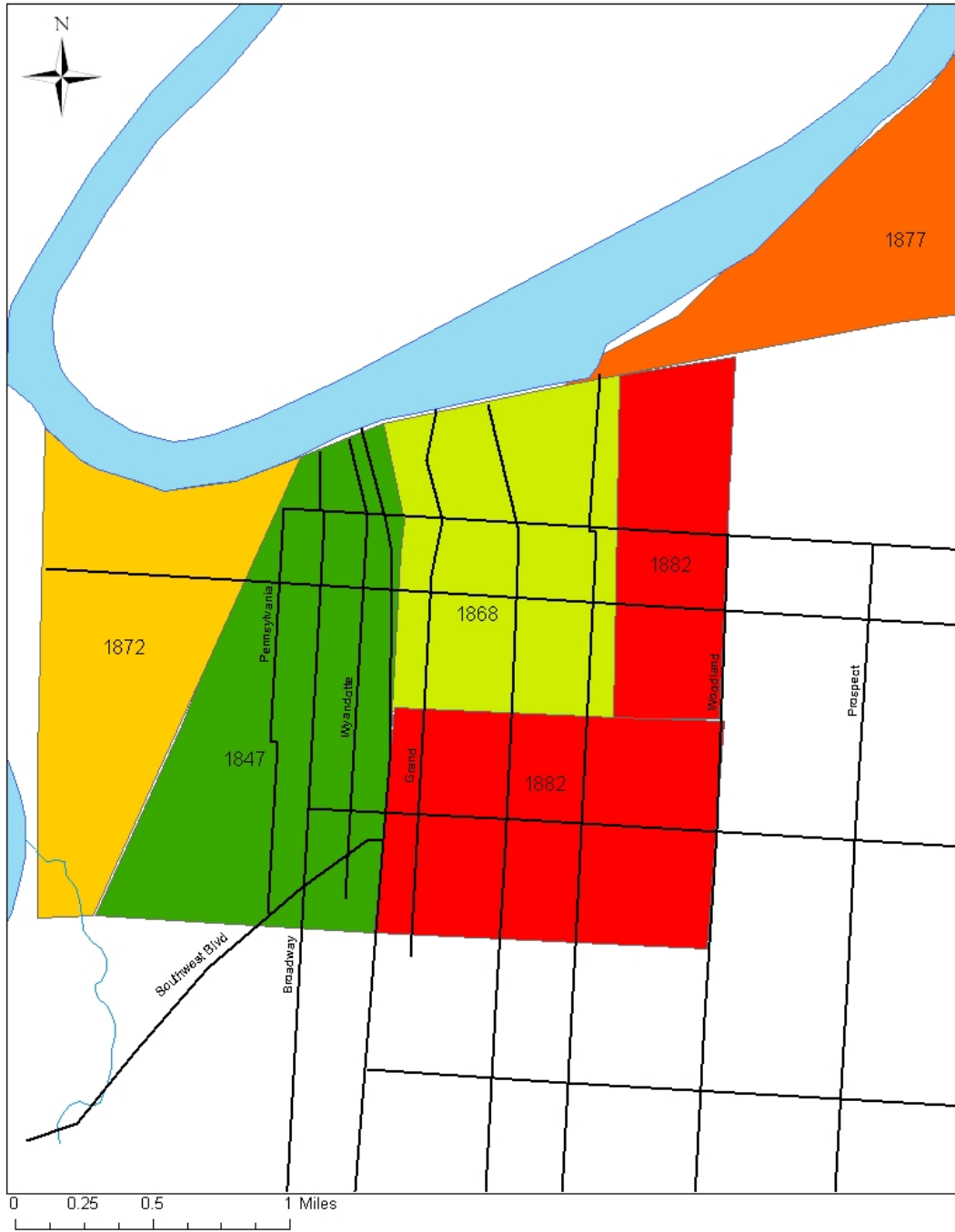
Map 49: Streetcars color-coded based on year line built (Dodd 2002)

Irish Neighborhoods and Parade Route



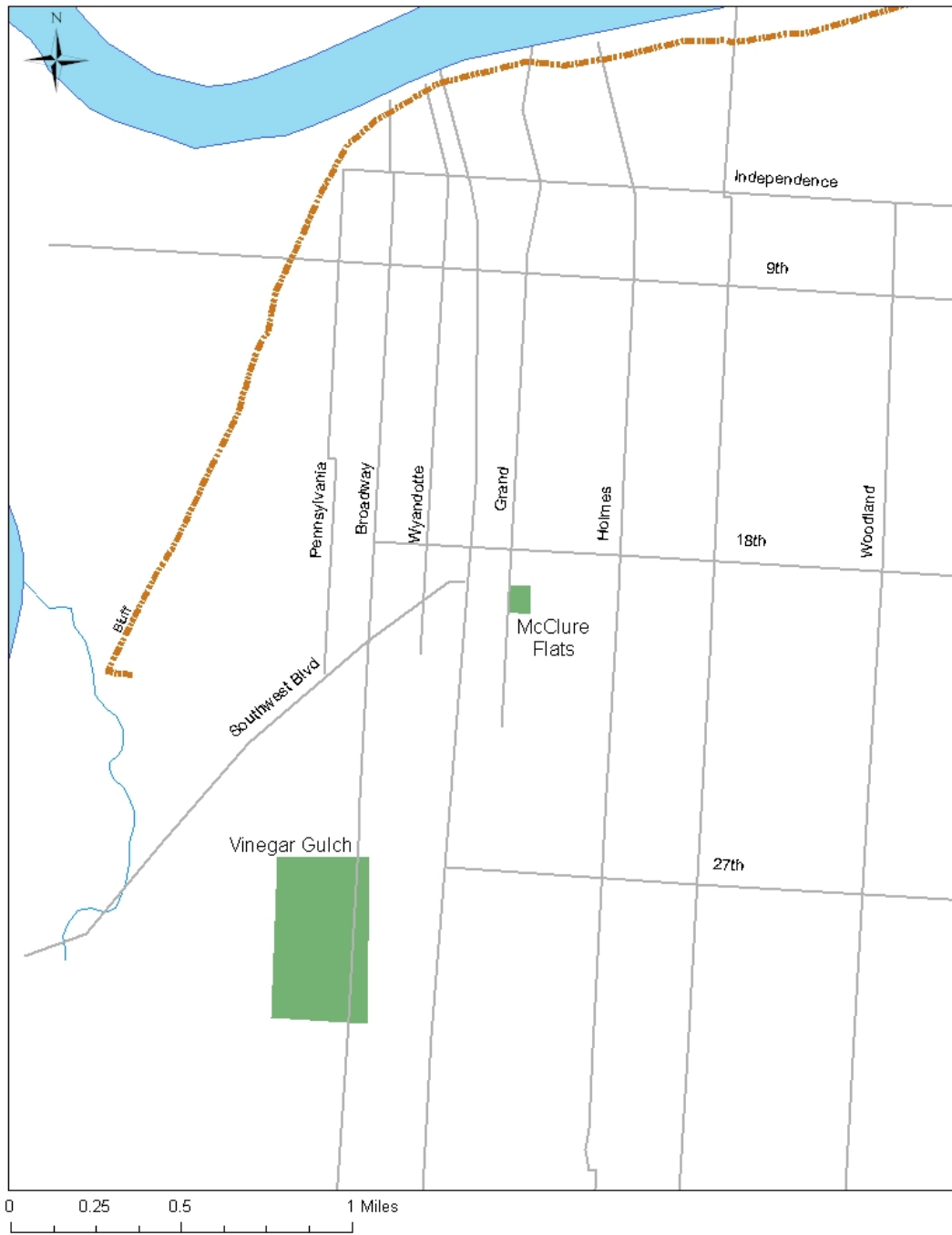
Map 50: Irish neighborhoods with year first mentioned in records, also route of St. Patrick's Day parade in 1885 (Brown and Dorsett 1978, Doering and Marra 1992, Coleman 1992, and O'Neill 2000)

Year Parish Established



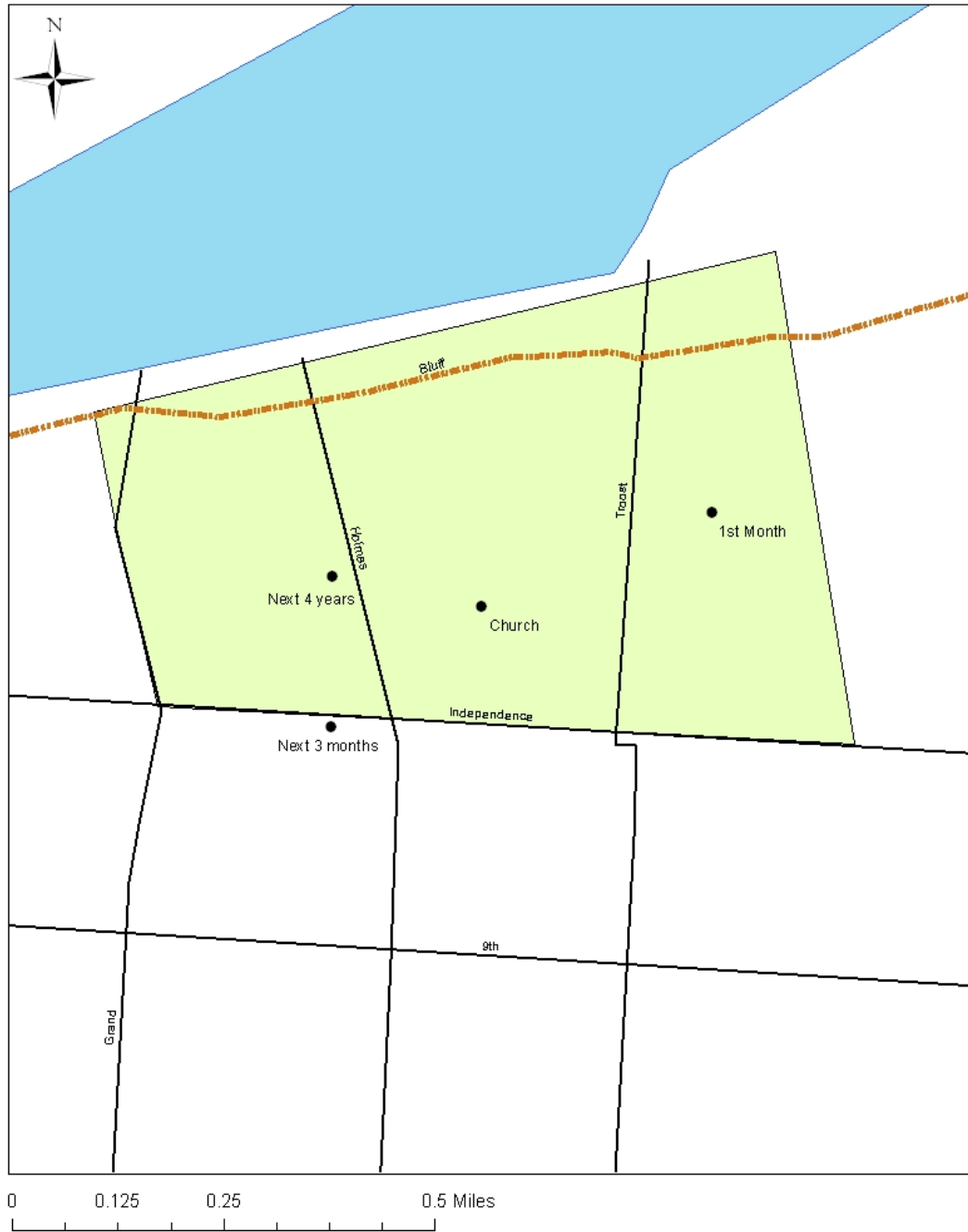
Map 51: Showing what year each parish was established based on 1885 boundaries (Coleman 1992)

New Irish Neighborhoods



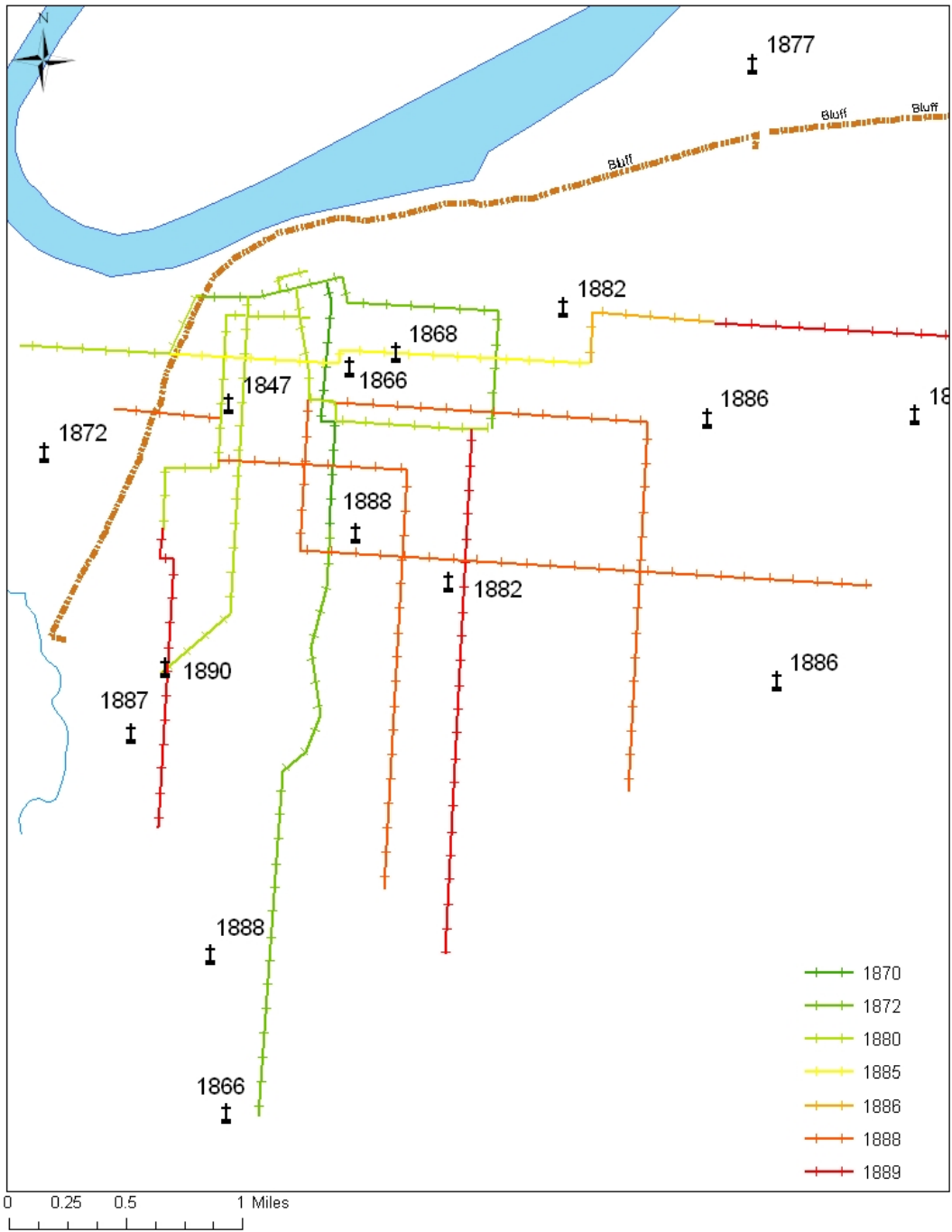
Map 52: Irish neighborhoods established 1886-1892

Italians



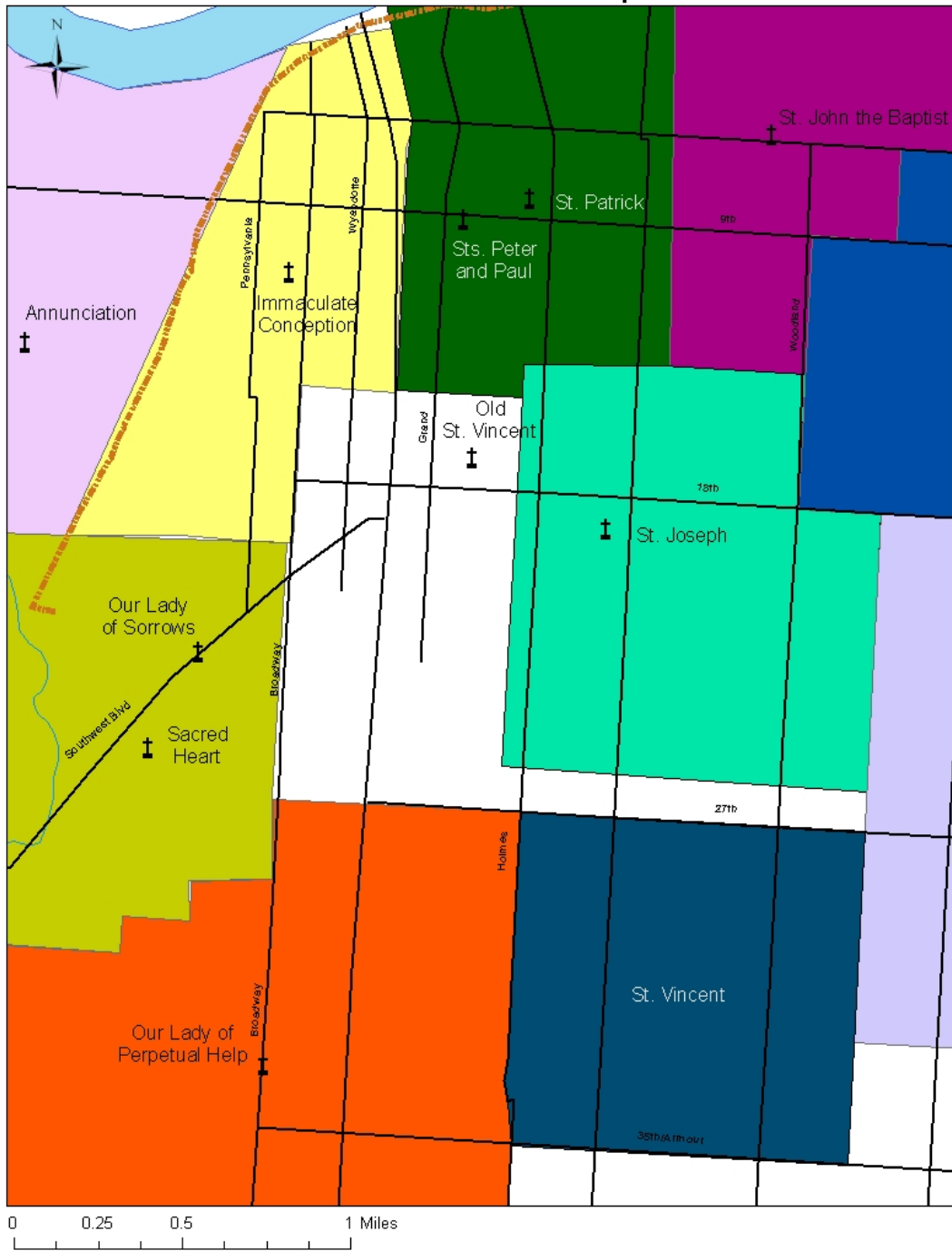
Map 53: Location of Italian neighborhood and locations used for Mass (Coleman 1992, Bongino 1991)

Streetcars-1892



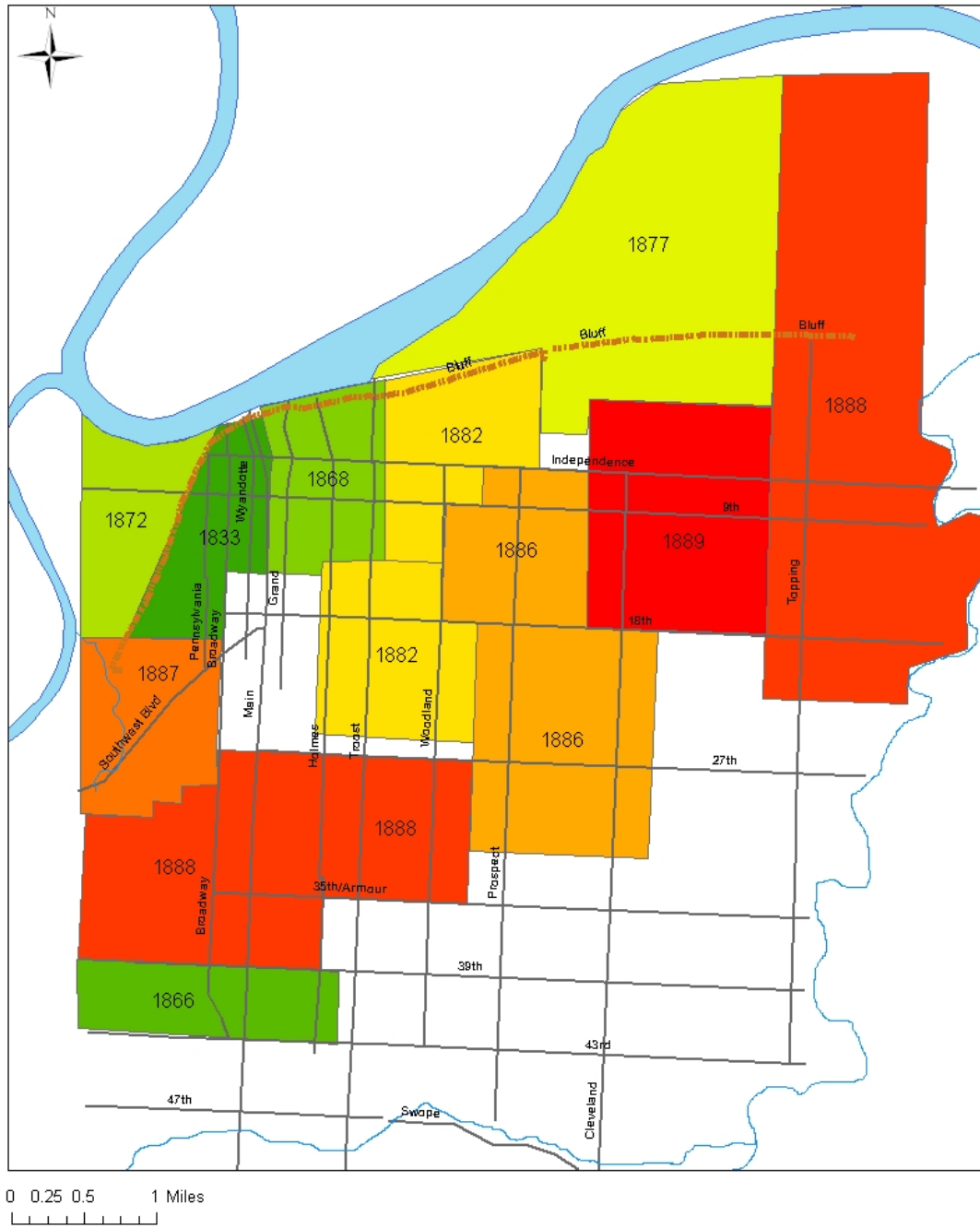
Map 54: Streetcar lines in 1892 and churches with year built (Dodd 2002, Coleman 1992)

St. Vincent Gap

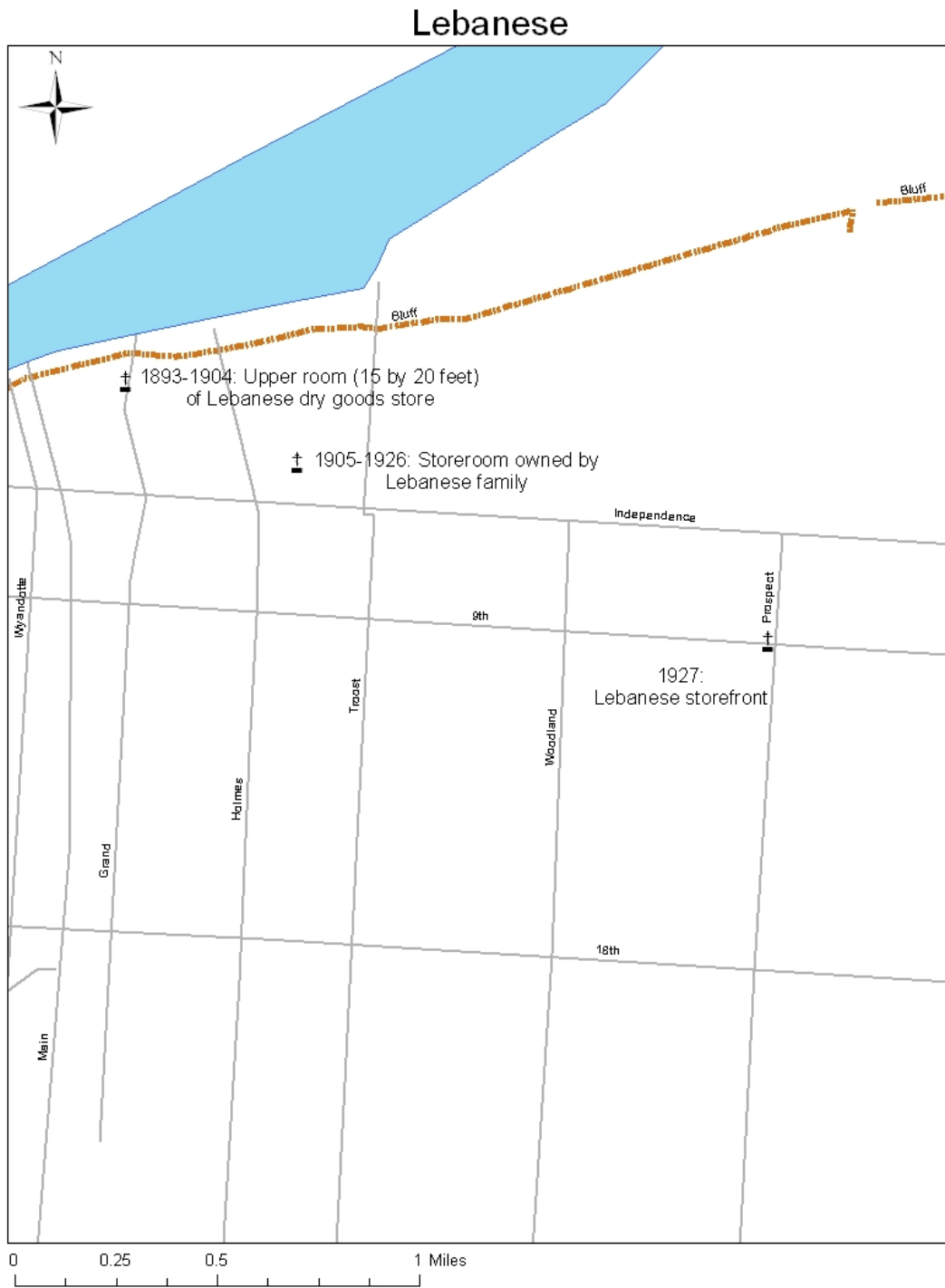


Map 55: Gap created by relocation of St. Vincent in 1890 (Coleman 1992)

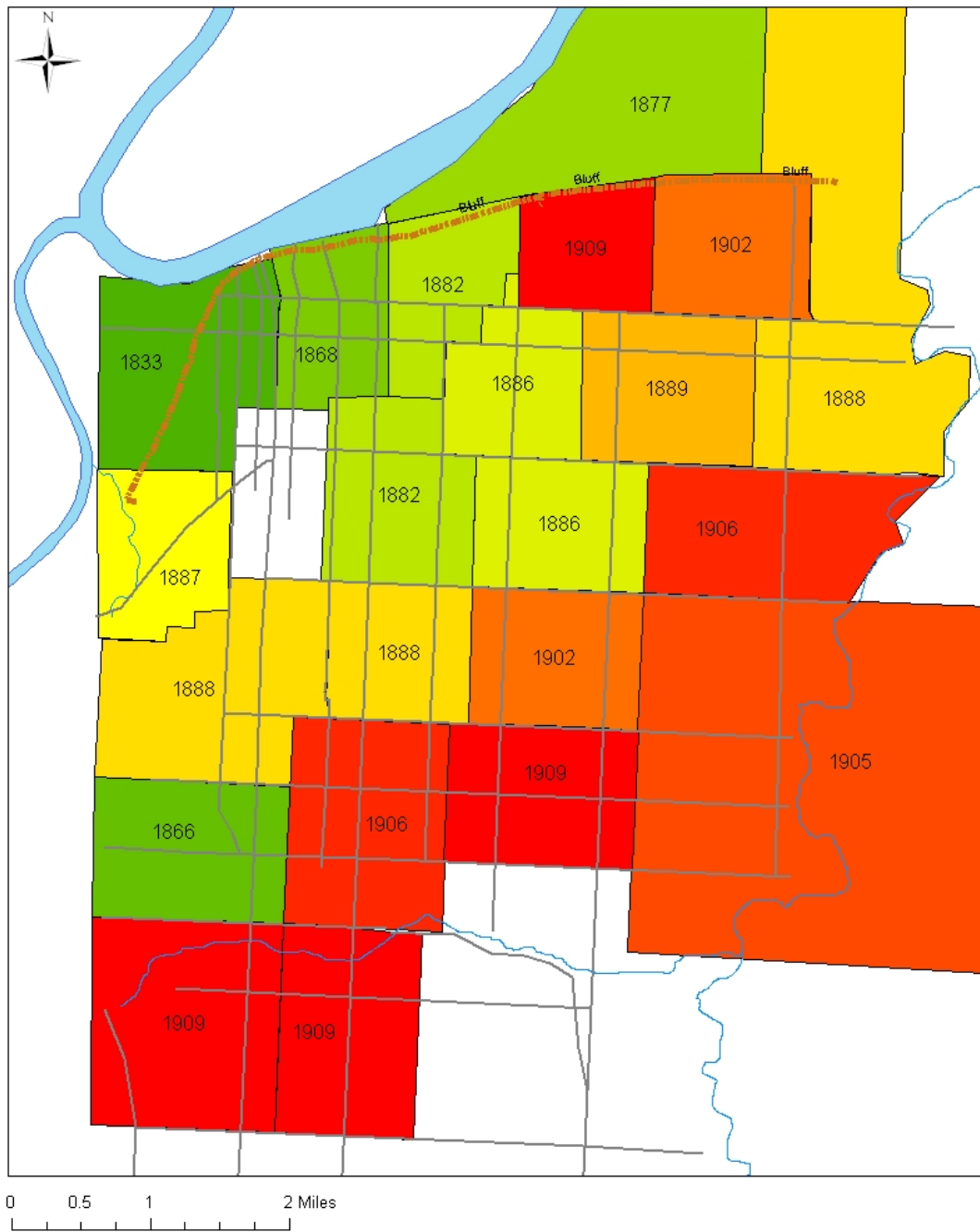
Year Parish Established



Map 56: Showing what year each parish was established based on 1890 boundaries (Coleman 1992)

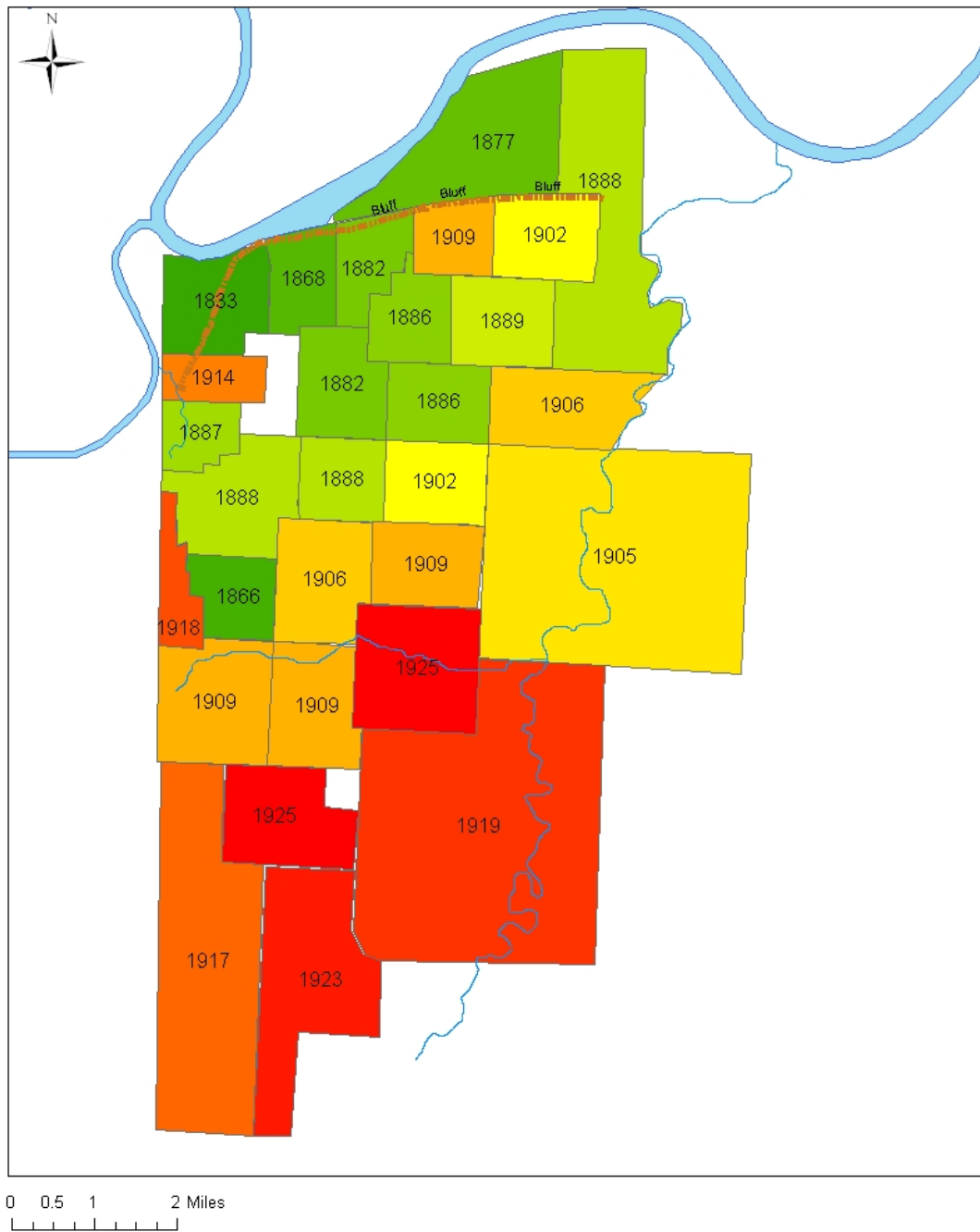


Year Parish Established



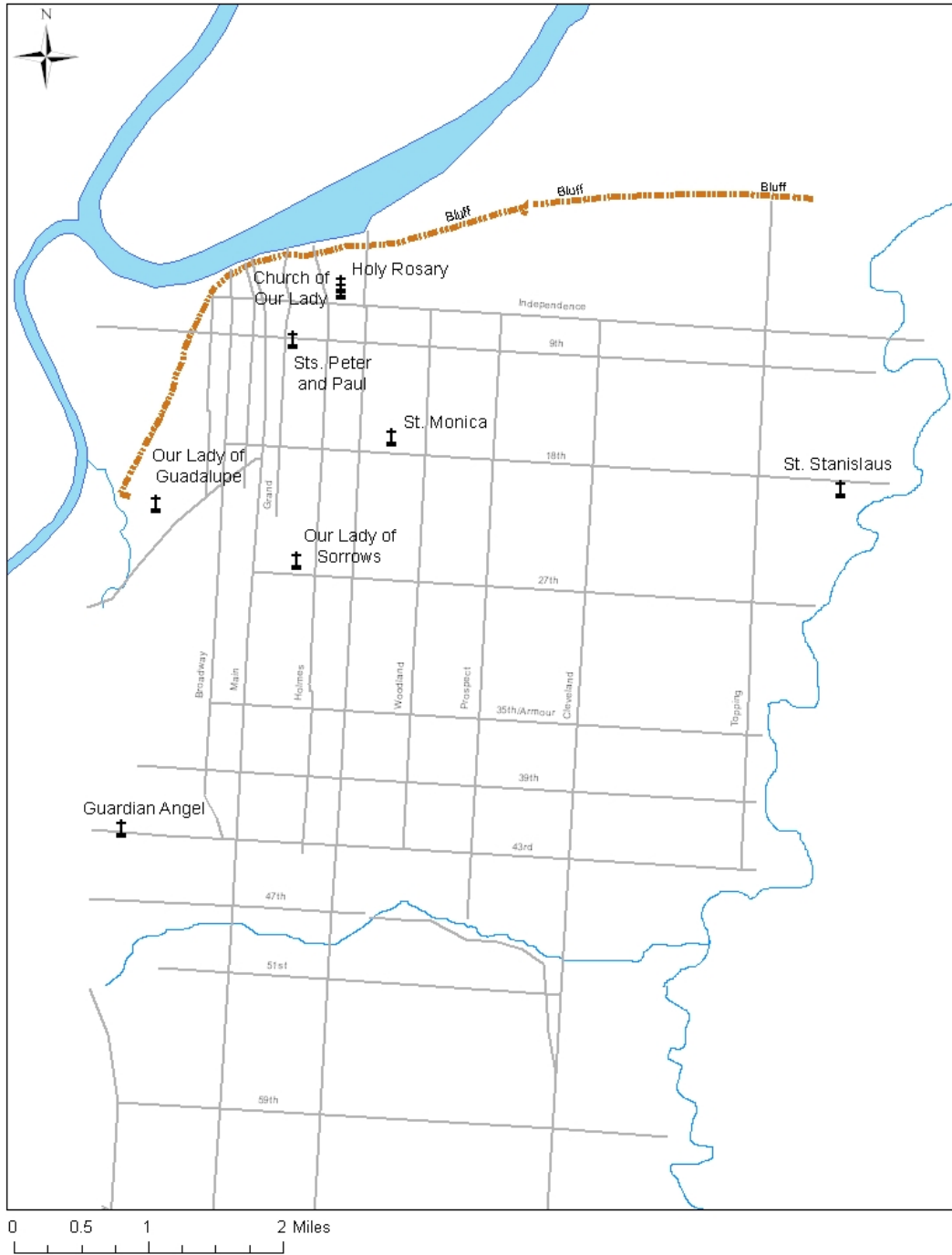
Map 58: Year parish established using 1912 boundaries (Coleman 1992)

Year Parish Established



Map 59: Year parish established using 1925 boundaries (Coleman 1992)

National Parishes



Map 60: Location national parishes in 1920 (Coleman 1992)

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