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ST. MARY SCHOOL IN FOND DU LAC LISTED IN NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Fond Du Lac, Wis. - The Wisconsin Historical Society has announced the listing of the St. Mary School in the city of Fond du Lac, Fond du Lac County, in the National Register of Historic Places. National Register designation provides access to certain benefits, including qualification for grants and for rehabilitation income tax credits, while it does not restrict private property owners in the use of their property.

The St. Mary School Building, designed by the local Fond du Lac architectural firm of Frank Stepnoski and Sons and built in 1948-1949, is a distinctive and exemplary early modern school building designed in the Contemporary architectural style. Before World War II, Fond du Lac school buildings, whether public or private, elaborate or simple, were designed in historical styles.

The St. Mary School, built by St. Mary's Parish, is an early post-war example of modernism used for a school building in the city. Its rectilinear form, flat roof, horizontal bands of windows, and use of non-historic, abstracted decoration, as well as modern interior elements, exemplify modern schools being built after World War II. Within the local context of Fond du Lac, the St. Mary School Building is the earliest of this wave of modern educational construction.

This school is also significant for its history as a laboratory school devoted to teacher education. This is where student teachers from Marian College, a local Roman Catholic school of higher learning, could receive their necessary teaching experience guided by experienced professionals. As such, the school is a significant local building exemplifying the important twentieth-century themes of education professionalization and teacher education.

The register is the official national list of historic properties in America deemed worthy of preservation and is maintained by the National Park

Service in the U.S. Department of the Interior. The Wisconsin Historical Society administers the program within Wisconsin. It includes sites, buildings, structures, objects and districts that are significant in national, state or local history, architecture, archaeology, engineering or culture.

To learn more about the State and National Register programs in Wisconsin, visit www.wisconsinhistory.org.

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