

# ST MONICA'S CATHOLIC CHURCH COMPLEX



St Monica's Church



Infants School (Former)



Parish Hall & Club Room  
(Former)



Girls School (Former)



818 Mt Alexander Road.JPG

## Location

818-822 MT ALEXANDER ROAD, and 9, 11, 15 & 17 ROBINSON STREET, MOONEE PONDS, MOONEE VALLEY CITY

## Municipality

MOONEE VALLEY CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1217

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO86

HO136

## Heritage Listing

## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

St Monica's Catholic Church Moonee Ponds is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register (H1217). The VHR statement of significance is as follows:

*St Monica's Catholic Church Moonee Ponds was designed by the architectural firm Payne & Dale and constructed by Simmie and Co in 1934 to seat a congregation of 1,200. It was built to replace a smaller church built on the same site in 1884 to a design by Reid & Barnes and demolished in 1934. The construction of the present church, described at the time as 'a modern version of the Spanish Gothic style, reminiscent of the Catalan School', was carried out in stages and initially incorporated the sanctuary of the earlier church.*

*The sanctuary was replaced in 1941 also to the design of Payne & Dale. In 1971 alterations were undertaken to reflect changes in the liturgy following Vatican II and included the removal of the altar rail and the extension of the sanctuary into the nave. The alterations were also supervised by TG Payne. The stained glass windows in the main body of the church are by Hardman of Birmingham and date from the 1940s and 1950s.*

*St Monica's Catholic Church Moonee Ponds is of architectural, social and historical importance to the State of Victoria.*

*St Monica's is of architectural importance for its high degree of creative accomplishment including its elaborate tracery and its soaring hall-church interior lit by spectacular stained glass. It is an important work of architects Payne and Dale who designed a number of buildings for the Catholic Church in this century. It is also important for its high degree of intactness.*

*St Monica's is historically and socially important as an ambitious example of the Catholic Church's policy to maintain building programmes during the Great Depression. It is of the largest suburban churches of the period and is important as the most impressive Catholic Church constructed in the western suburbs in the 20th century.*

Heritage Study/Consultant	Moonee Valley - Moonee Valley Heritage Overlay Places Review, David Helms Heritage Planning, 2012;
Construction dates	1891, 1918, 1925, 1934,
Architect/Designer	Payne & Dale,
Other Names	Review,
Hermes Number	162086
Property Number	

---

## Physical Description 1

St Monica's Catholic Church is a large church, which has been described as 'a modern version of the Spanish Gothic style, reminiscent of the Catalan School'. The building is faced in freestone and comprises a lofty nave flanked by tall aisles, a substantial Lady Chapel to the left, and vaulted eastern apse with elongated windows. The main facade incorporates a large traceried window framed by an arch and octagonal turrets placed above a

deeply-recessed porch. The building is notable for its elaborate window tracery and soaring hall-church lit by spectacular stained glass.

The church is setback from Mt Alexander Road behind a low freestone fence, which is of contemporary date to the church. Five mature Bhutan Cypress (*Cupressus torulosa*), four equally spaced across the frontage and one set back as part of an apparently deliberate planting scheme, are notable plantings that frame views of the church.

The church forms part of a complex of buildings that include, on this site, the former Parish Hall/School of 1891/1940, the former Girls School of 1925, and the former Infants School of 1918. All of these buildings face on to Robinson Street. On the north side of Robinson Street are the former Boys' School (1918/25) and Presbytery.

The former Parish Hall/School is a brick gabled building in the late Victorian Gothic style. As noted in the History, the original 1891 building was altered in 1941, which included the addition at the north end- this addition has Modern Gothic style windows and a plain stepped rendered parapet. It appears that the windows in the side elevations were also altered at that time. Later additions to the building include the flat-roofed verandah along the southern elevation and the entry porch on the north side.

The former Infants School is an Inter-war brick building, L-shaped in plan with classrooms opening onto a corridor, originally with a cloakroom at one end. It is constructed of brick with buttressed walls and has a gabled slate tiled roof with terracotta ridge capping and ventilators. The windows along the north elevation to Robinson Street are tall multi-paned timber sash set in pairs between the buttresses. There are high set windows in the south end.

The former Girls School at the corner of Crawford Street is a brick Inter-war building with a gabled slate tiled roof with terracotta ridge capping and finals, and half-timbering to the gable ends. The building is in good condition and has a moderate degree of external integrity when viewed from Crawford and Robinson Streets. The main visible change has been the replacement of all of the windows.

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*