

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH 0669580

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAY 23 1978

DATE ENTERED

NOV 29 1978

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

St. Mary's Church

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

231 N. 3rd Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Phoenix

VICINITY OF

1

STATE

Arizona

CODE

85004

COUNTY

Maricopa

CODE

013

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix

STREET & NUMBER

400 E. Monroe

CITY, TOWN

Phoenix

VICINITY OF Arizona

STATE

85004

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Maricopa County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Phoenix

STATE

Arizona

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

St. Mary's Church stands in the transitional area between old downtown Phoenix and the residential section. The business district declined steadily after about 1960 but in recent years a determined effort has been made to revitalize it. A large civic center was built across the street (south) from the church. Historic preservation plays a part in the revitalization as the city has purchased the nearby Rosson House (NR) block and the old Monroe School (NR) is being considered for an arts center.

The church dominates the block, which includes an attached friary, St. Mary's Elementary School and playground, church and diocesan offices, and parking lot.

The exterior of St. Mary's Church is Mission Revival with some Romanesque features. The cruciform plan building has a raised basement and a symmetrical two-tower facade with buttresses.

The towers are square for three stories and octagonal for the smaller fourth stories which are supported by buttresses and topped by domes and lanterns. Third floor openings are louvered.

A hooded rose window is surmounted by a curvilinear parapet and flanked by a smaller circular window in each tower. All openings are rounded and most have label mouldings. The raised porch with double stairway has a Romanesque balustrade with arches from square columns. A matching balustrade decorates the area between the entry and the rose window. There is a primary entry flanked by two secondary doors, each with segmented arch.

The exterior wall finish is cream-colored stucco over brick. The red-tiled cross-gable roof is faced with curvilinear parapets & a domed, stained-glass skylight with lantern illuminates the transept crossing. There is another domed skylight over the octagonal apse.

On the east side, there is a pent roof over the main level confessionals. Eaves are marked by open joists and window bays are punctuated by buttresses. The corner between the apse and the east transept is occupied by a one-story vestry area. In the rear of the church, a double cloistered portico runs the width of the building and provides access to the rectory, the basement, and the vestries. There is also an entrance for the choir and the altar boys.

The large basement (144' x 60'), which served as a church for several years, has been remodeled with some pseudo-Pueblo detailing. The altar area is a stage and the confessionals along the east side all are storage rooms. The meeting room seats 800. The church proper seats 1100.

The interior of the church is Romanesque. Four-part circular vaults spring from round columns with ornate capitals. Side aisle capitals blend into the walls. Stations of the Cross in relief are placed in niches between the second level windows on the sides. Four confessionals with elaborately carved frames line the east wall of the nave.

The pipe organ, in a gallery on the south end of the nave, flanks the rose window. Fanlights over doors leading from the narthex to the nave are stained glass. Similar fanlights decorate the doorways between the vestry and the chancel.

Transept altars are dedicated to the Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Conception. Stained glass windows in the east transept depict the life of St. Joseph. The upper windows in the nave show the life of Mary and the lower ones show various saints. All stained glass was done by Emil Frei Art Glass Company of St. Louis. The Stations of the Cross, cast in high relief on gold background, were made by Andrew Kaletta Company of St. Louis. The woodwork and pews, all of oak, were made by Theodore Kuntz of Cleveland.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

St. Mary's, Description, Cont.

The high altar shows a scene from the last supper, with the crucifixion flanked by figures of St. Francis and St. Pascal. The chancel floor is black and white. The baptismal font sits just to the left of the altar in the east transept and the pulpit is just to the right of the altar in the west transept. Originally, the baptistry was in a small room in the southeast corner but this is now a counseling room. The four confessionals are no longer used and will probably be made into shrines.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Community Development
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1902-1913

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

St. Mary's Church serves the oldest Catholic parish in the Salt River Valley and the only one in Phoenix until 1928. The parish and the church are integral to the development of the city of Phoenix. The building is the largest, earliest, and most impressive Mission Revival structure in Arizona.

Anglo settlement in the Valley began in 1867-1868 and by 1870 Catholic services were being held in the home of Jesus L. Otero at what is now the corner of Washington and First Avenue in the heart of the business district. In 1880-1881, a small shingle-roofed adobe church was constructed under the direction of Father Edward Gerard of the Florence parish. Gerard, the first priest for St. Mary's, was a Breton. He became a Monsignor and in 1931 attended the Golden Jubilee of the parish.

In 1882, the Phoenix congregation received its first resident priest, Father Joseph Bloise. He was joined in 1891 by Father P. Timmermans, who later became vicar general of the diocese of Tucson.

A school was established in 1892 by the Sisters of Mercy. Separate primary classes were held for non-English-speaking Mexican children until they were able to join the regular classes. As the Sisters of Mercy became more involved in hospital work, they relinquished the school responsibilities to the Sisters of the Precious Blood, who have run the school since 1903.

In 1896, the parish came under the direction of Franciscan Fathers of the Sacred Heart Province of St. Louis, Missouri. The priest most intimately associated with the development of the parish and the building of St. Mary's Church was Father Novatus Benzing, who served in Phoenix off and on for 32 years. When he arrived in 1896, there were only 15 families in the parish. The priests lived in the two-room brick house behind the church and there was a little barn for their two horses. The town fire station was where the school flagpole is now. The old fire bell is still in use. It signals religious exercises and meals for the convent.

Under Father Novatus' energetic direction, a building program began in 1897. The adobe church received a new ceiling, communion railing, floor, carpet, organ, sacristy, and two altars. The front was plastered and the building was painted inside and out.

Brother Adrian of the St. Louis Province was sent out to draw plans for a monastery and a new church. The church did not materialize, but the monastery was constructed at a cost of \$10,000. A two-story brick school for the Mexican children was built on the corner of Monroe and 3rd Street. The previous building at the corner of Van Buren and 4th Street was inadequate. The second floor of the school was called St. Anthony's Hall and was used for meetings and entertainments by the English-speaking Catholics. In 1899, a new convent was constructed at the corner of 4th Street and Monroe.

By the turn of the Century, the adobe church, which seated 400, was too small and again in need of repairs. Father Novatus sketched an idea for a larger church and consulted with Bro. Leonard Darscheid of St. Louis, who added a number of features, including the design for the baptismal font, to what at that point was a gothic plan. The sketches were then given to

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1/3

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 2	4 0 0 7 0 0	3 7 0 1 5 5 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The National Register nomination includes only the church building which occupies all of Lot 8, the West 1/2 of Lot 6, the East 1/4 of Lot 10, part of the Southwest corner of Lot 5, the South edge of Lot 7, and part of the Southeast corner of Lot 9 in Block 4 Phoenix Townsite.

The front stairway begins 75' East of the Southwest corner of the block and 110' West of the Southeast corner of the block.

The building is 160' long (N-S) and 90' wide (E-W).

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

<u>Marjorie H. Wilson</u>	<u>Historian</u>
ORGANIZATION	DATE
<u>Arizona State Parks Board</u>	<u>April 17, 1978</u>
STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
<u>1688 West Adams</u>	<u>(602) 271-4174</u>
CITY OR TOWN	STATE
<u>Phoenix</u>	<u>Arizona 85007</u>

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Dorothy A. Hall

TITLE

DATE 5-17-78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

<i>[Signature]</i>	DATE <u>11/29/78</u>
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	CLERK OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
ATTEST: <u>Bill Teborich</u>	DATE <u>Nov 28, 1978</u>
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	

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CONTINUATION SHEET St. Mary's Church ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

the architects, R.A. Gray and George Gallagher. The contractor was W.J. Ripley.

The old church was torn down and a new one built on the same site. The basement of the church was completed and dedicated February 11, 1903 by Henry Granjon, Bishop of Tucson. The first furrow in the excavation was made by the city street department and the department continued to help until the work was done. The old adobe church had seated 400; the new one had room for 800. Father Novatus was determined to have the church free of debt on completion, so the main sanctuary was not constructed until 10 years later. In the meantime, several items intended for the church were acquired. In 1910, Brother Eugene Obert built the altar, pulpit, confessional, pedestal, and sacristy chests. That same year Mrs. Mary Dunlap donated the Pieta and Mrs. Pieta Baggiora donated a baptismal font. All of these items are in the church today. Construction of the church proper began in 1913. By January 1st of the following year, the roof was on and in May the stained glass windows arrived. The original gothic plan had been replaced by a Mission Revival exterior and a Romanesque interior. During construction, Father Novatus continued to offer suggestions. The front porch was one of the alterations he proposed. The building was completed the last day of 1914 and the dedication was held in a heavy rain and Arizona Governor George W.P. Hunt was among those attending the ceremony. The basement continued to be used for worship services for many years until the population of the parish declined.

In January of 1916, the parish was entrusted to the Franciscan Province of Santa Barbara* and the following year St. Mary's opened Arizona's first parochial high school. The year 1918 was noteworthy in Arizona, as elsewhere, for the influenza epidemic, which caused the church to be closed from October 7th to December 8th and the school to be closed from October 7th to January 27th. In 1925, a new school building was constructed.

The pipe organ, which has 1337 pipes in 22 ranks, was built in 1921 by the Estey Organ Corporation of Brattleboro, Vermont and is the oldest organ in Phoenix. It is one of the early electrically powered organs and still uses the original electric blower, which is placed in the east tower. The organ had tubular pneumatic console, ventil windchests, and pneumatic valves. The electrical connection between the console and the windchests is believed to be one of the first such systems made by the company.

An echo organ was located behind the altar but was removed when the interior of the church was renovated in 1958. At the same time, the console was rebuilt and some of the echo organ pipes were used to replace worn pipes in the main organ on the balcony. The original tubular action was replaced by a modern electrical system. Other repairs and modernization are being done as needed and as funds are available.

The original 1888 church bell cracked in September of 1932. Parishioners responded to an appeal for donations and on December 24th, four new bells were blessed. Stukstede Brothers of St. Louis cast the bells, the largest of which weighed 1888 pounds and was dedicated to the Sacred Heart. The remaining bells weighed 841, 583, and 233 pounds and were dedicated respectively to the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph, and St. Francis.

* Father Novatus became Provincial of Santa Barbara in June of 1928.

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CONTINUATION SHEET St. Mary's Church ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

The first Catholic newspaper in Arizona was published by St. Mary's from 1924 to 1929 when it became the diocesan newspaper and changed its name from The Catholic Observer to The Arizona Observer.

Aside from cosmetic alterations to the basement interior, there have been very few changes in the church building. The role of the church in the community, however, has altered greatly. Through most of its history, St. Mary's played a key role as mother church to all the other Catholic congregations in the Valley.

The once-large parish was broken up several times to create new parishes as population increased and the metropolitan area expanded. In addition, St. Mary's established nine missions which later became parishes: Tempe (see NR nomination for Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church), Mesa, Wickenburg, Glendale, Buckeye, Guadalupe, Litchfield, Avondale, and Tolleson.

As the commercial area of Phoenix expanded and people moved to the suburbs, the number of parishioners shrank drastically. Attendance now comes largely from tourists and winter visitors. However, the grade school is still thriving and the church is active in the revitalization of downtown Phoenix. Several concerts are presented each year in the church and dramatic productions are presented in the school. The church itself is a great attraction for amateur photographers and tourists who come to the Civic Plaza across the street and the NR Rosson House nearby.

The Diocese of Phoenix is now preparing to petition the Vatican for designation of the church as a minor basilica because of its historic importance to the community and to the Valley. In preparation for the application, the interior is being repainted and the original finish of the oak pews is being restored. The altar will be moved out a little more but there will be no structural changes.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

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