

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received **NOV 6 1984**

date entered **11 10**

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

1. Name

historic Church San José of Aibonito *(Historic Churches of Puerto Rico)*
and or common same

2. Location

street & number Emeterio Betances St. , Town Plaza not for publication

city, town Aibonito vicinity of

state Puerto Rico code 72 county Guayama code 0060

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Catholic Church, Diocese of Caguas

street & number Box 8698

city, town Caguas vicinity of state Puerto Rico 00903

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Supreme Court of Puerto Rico, Church Litigation Case #2, 1904

street & number Box 2392

city, town San Juan state Puerto Rico 00903

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Inventory of the Historic Churches
in Puerto Rico has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1984 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office

city, town San Juan state Puerto Rico

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The parish church San José of Aibonito is located in front of the town plaza, oriented on a north-south axis, with its entrance facing north. It is separated from its immediate surroundings by an iron grillwork fence.

The church was designed by State Architect Pedro Cobreros and was built between 1887 and 1897. The plan follows the basilica prototype of two aisles and a nave. It consists of six bays plus the apse and sacristies. The first bay comprises the vestibule and, on the left, stairs lead up to the choir loft and bell towers. The left tower still conserves its original construction of brick and wooden beams. The right tower holds a clock and its mechanism and is also made of brick masonry. The choir loft has an iron grillwork railing. A flat arch marks the transition from the vestibule into the main space. Arcades, of five arches each, resting on square pillars, divide the nave from the side aisles. A heavy cornice runs over the arches and markedly divides the arcade from the clerestory area. Five oculi with colored glass permit light entrance. The roof is made of concrete but still conserves the original wooden beams. The side aisles are roofed at a lower level than the main nave, to allow for the clerestory. The plan culminates in a square apse covered with a brick dome on pendentives. The sacristies are located at each side of the apse. The baroque style altar, over 86 years old, is made of wood and plaster. The floors of the church are covered with with colored cement tiles. The building conserves some of its original wooden doors in good condition. The windows are also made of wood. All openings for doors and windows are formed by pointed arches.

The facade is typical of Cobreros' style. It is subdivided into three sections vertically as well as horizontally by pilasters and cornices. The three vertical sections, two towers and the central body, reflect the interior nave and aisles. The main entrance is formed by a recessed pointed arch, and is trimmed with pilasters and moldings. On the second level, two pointed arched windows give light to the choir loft. The central section is crowned by a gable trimmed with a cornice and dentils. The towers, divided into three levels, have pointed arched windows. The upper section of the towers is decorated with dentils and a cornice. They are covered with a pyramidal roof, having a pinnacle at each corner. The side facades are modulated by pilasters reflecting interior bay organization. They have a door and five windows each. On the right side of the church, one of the windows was sealed-off in order to place a marble altar in the side aisle.

The church was recently restored and is in very good condition. A new parish house is attached to the rear of the building, enclosing its apse section.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1887-1897

Builder/Architect Pedro Cobreros

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The parish church San José of Aibonito is of architectural and historical significance. It is one of a group of five churches designed by State Architect Pedro Cobreros. He created an austere, yet noble style which played an important role in the history of religious architecture in Puerto Rico. Construction began in 1887 and was finished in 1897. The building retains most of its original construction and design elements such as the original brick masonry walls, towers, sacristies, interior arcades and dome. It also conserves some of its original doors and the original wooden roof beams. The traditional urban relationship between the plaza, city hall and church is maintained in Aibonito, following Spanish Crown ordinances at the time the town was founded.

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Marvel, Thomas S. and Maria Luisa Moreno, Architecture of Parish Churches in Puerto Rico, Editorial Universitaria, Rio Piedras, P.R., unpublished.
- Ortiz Díaz, Angel R., "Parroquia San José de Aibonito", Suplemento Especial, El Visitante de Puerto Rico, 19 de marzo de 1983.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1106 sq.mts.

Quadrangle name Barranquitas, PR

Quadrangle scale 1:20,000

UTM References

A

1	9	7	8	9	2	0	0	2	0	0	7	8	0	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

The church is bounded on the east and west by private properties, on the south by Vizcarrondo St. and on the north by Emeterio Betances St. and the town plaza. (see enclosed location plan).

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries N/A

state	code	county	code
<u>N/A</u>			

state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marisa Gómez, Arch. and Ester Cardona, Arch.

organization Investigaciones Bonaire, Inc.

date July 1984

street & number Tetuan 103

telephone (809) 724-4997

city or town Old San Juan

state Puerto Rico 00901

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

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date October 30, 1984

For NPS use only

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

Patrick Andrews

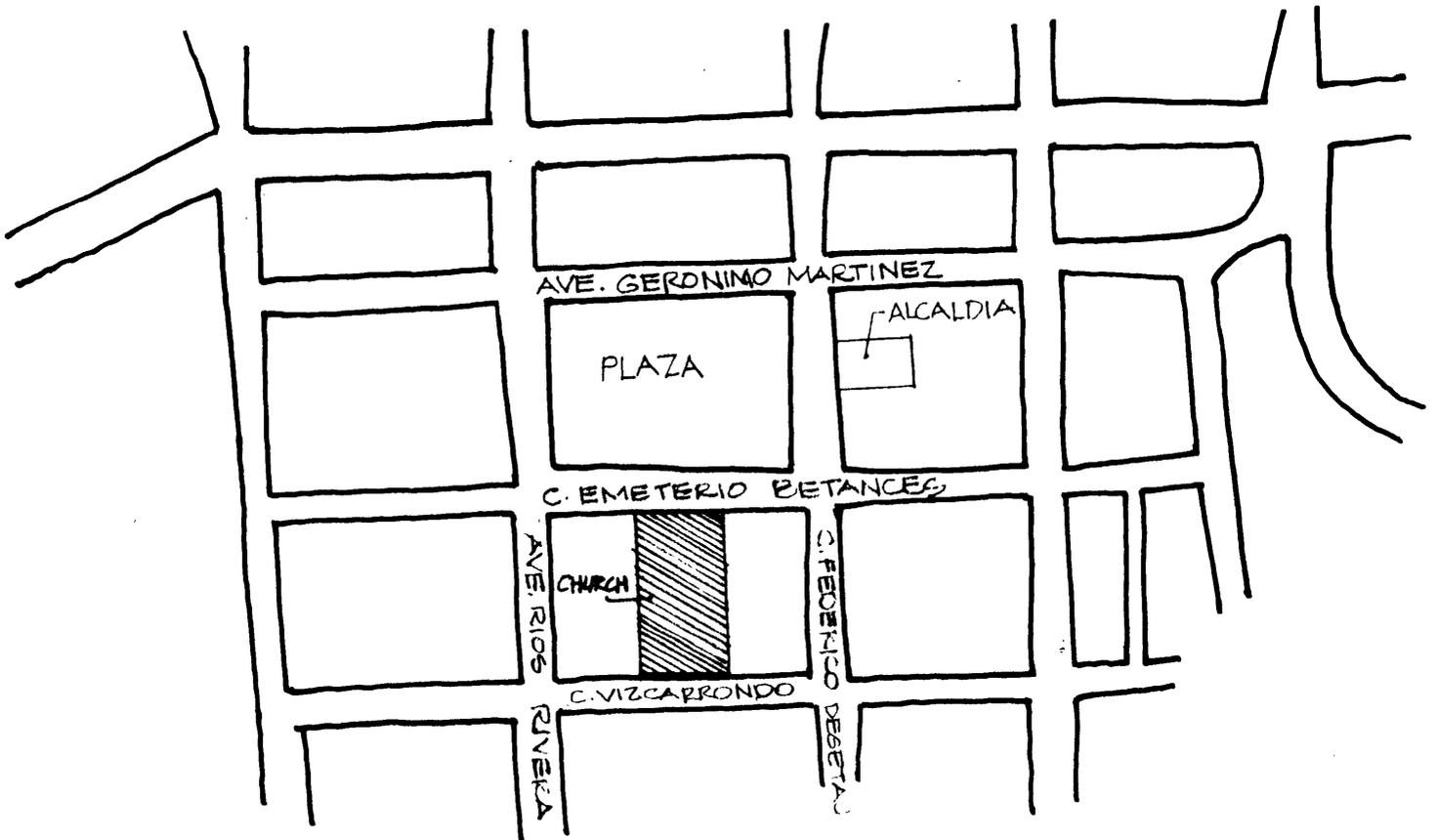
date 12/10/84

for/ Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration



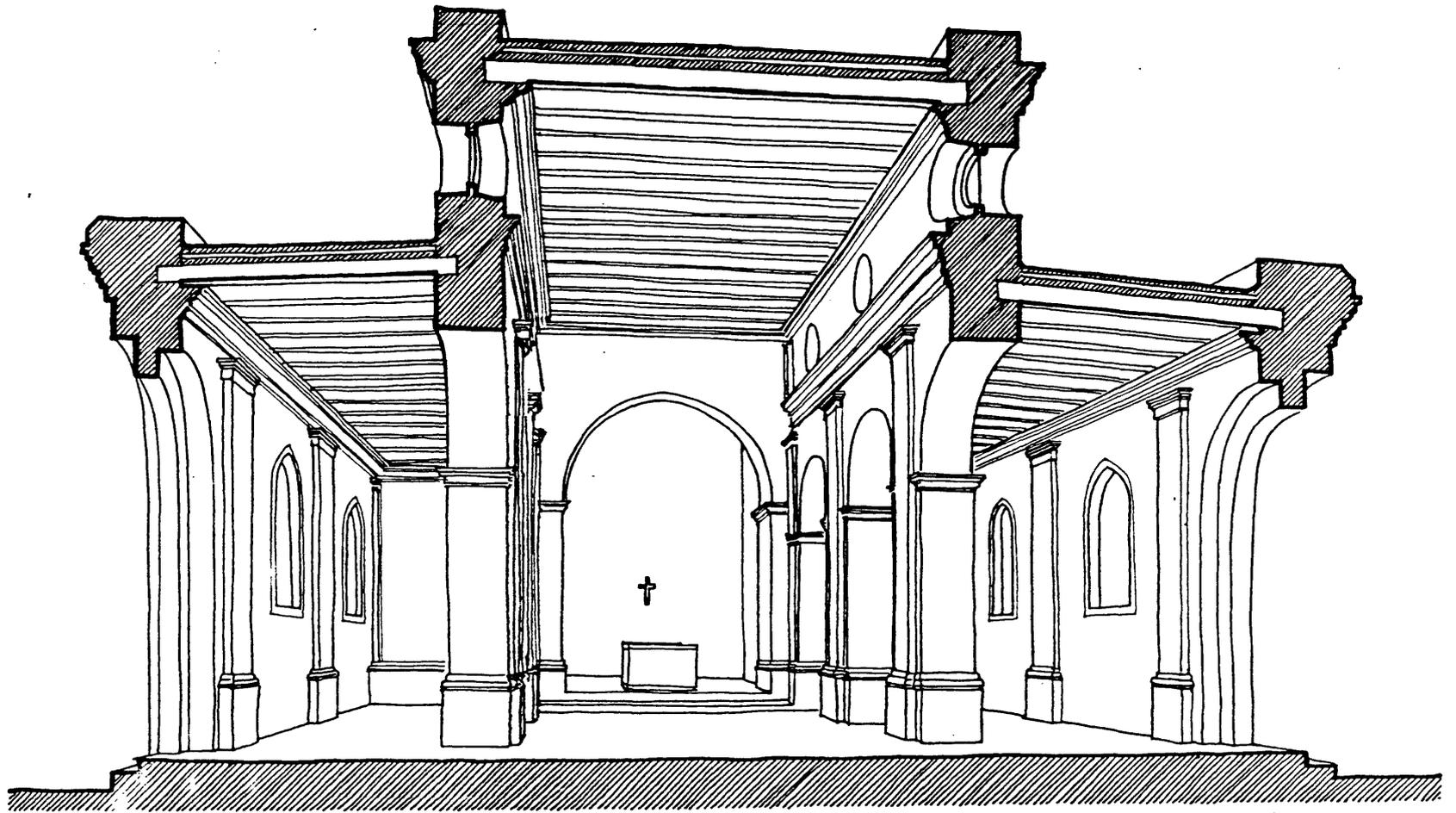
town: **AIBONITO**

scale: 1:2000



INVESTIGACIONES BONAIRE INC.

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Church San José of Aibonito

Drawing by Arch. Thomas S. Marvel.