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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic Name: St. Joseph's Church and Cemetery  
Other Names/Site Number: 5CN.816  
Name of related multiple property listing: n/a

## 2. Location

Street & Number: 19895 County Road 8  
City or town: Capulin State: CO County: Conejos  
Not for Publication:  Vicinity:

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:  
 national  state  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:  A  B  C  D

Ally K. Norton 10 October 2018  
Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date  
History Colorado  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  
Signature of commenting official: Date  
Title: State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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**4. National Park Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other, explain:

*Barbara Wyatt*

*12-31-18*

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property** (Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public – Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public – State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public – Federal

**Category of Property** (Check only one box.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Building(s)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	District
<input type="checkbox"/>	Site
<input type="checkbox"/>	Structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	Object

**Number of Resources within Property** (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Non-contributing	
1	0	Buildings
1	0	Sites
1	0	Structures
0	1	Objects
3	1	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: None

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions** (Enter categories from instructions.):

- Religion/religious facility
- Religious/church-related residence
- Funerary/cemetery

**Current Functions** (Enter categories from instructions.):

- Religion/religious facility
- Religious/church-related residence
- Funerary/cemetery
- Domestic/single dwelling

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## 7. Description

**Architectural Classification** (Enter categories from instructions.):

Gothic Revival

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE/sandstone, CONCRETE

walls: STONE/sandstone, CONCRETE, STUCCO

roof: ASPHALT

other: BRICK

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

### Summary Paragraph

St. Joseph's Church, a historic Catholic religious facility, is located in the small, isolated, unincorporated rural community of Capulin on the western edge of the San Luis Valley in Colorado.<sup>1</sup> This high desert valley lying between the Sangre de Cristo Mountains on the east and the San Juan Range on the west was a focus of early Hispano settlement efforts beginning in the 1830s. Capulin, founded ca. 1868 at an altitude of 7,834', is fifteen miles northwest of Antonito and eighteen miles southwest of Alamosa in north-central Conejos County. St. Joseph's encompasses a sandstone Gothic Revival-style church built in 1912-13 and later chapel, rectory, and convent additions completed between 1913 and ca. 1940s. A ca. 1878 cemetery south of the building, originally associated with an earlier church, is also included within the nominated area, as is a historic irrigation ditch along the eastern edge. The church steeple is visible from some distance in the surrounding valley and when approaching the town from the east on Colorado Highway 15. Directly east of the church stands the only other Capulin building of comparable scale: the former Capulin Public School, whose history is intimately connected with the religious institution. Dwellings are found to the north, east, and southeast, with open fields to the south and west. The building and associated resources retain a high level of historic integrity.<sup>2</sup>

### Narrative Description

St. Joseph's Church is a substantial stone and concrete block building composed of several interconnected components completed in a series of construction projects beginning in 1912. The building occupies an irregularly-shaped 3.4-acre parcel of land lying southwest of the intersection of Colorado Highway 15 and County Road 8, within Capulin. The roughly L-shaped building extends 176' north-south and 167' east-west; its current appearance reflects a half-century of growth. St. Joseph's evolved from its founding under the Jesuits as a mission of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church (5CN.489) in Conejos, expanded under its administration by Theatine fathers in the 1930s, gained a resident priest in 1939, and housed Benedictine sisters who taught in the public school from 1939-65. The church includes the following components: a one-story sandstone church with a three-story tower

<sup>1</sup> In 2010 the population of Capulin totaled two hundred.

<sup>2</sup> Information on years of construction of building components and interior features was obtained from church histories, a 1960 fire insurance map, and aerial photographs. In some cases construction years are expressed as a range of years.

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(1912-13); one-story stone and ornamental concrete block chapel to north (ca. 1913-17 and 1933-34); two-story 1933-34 ornamental concrete block rectory (used as a convent 1939-ca. 1940s) to the north; one-and-a-half-story garage on the rear (west) of the church (1933-34); a two-story concrete block convent (now used as a church office/apartment, ca. 1940s) to the southwest; and additional small rear additions (ca. 1940s to post-1960).

Given the semi-arid climate, establishing an expansive green lawn surrounding the church was an unrealistic proposition. The angle of intersection of the church and the chapel-rectory wings provided an opportunity to create a small, partially enclosed landscaped courtyard. Bordered by a hedge on the east and a wood fence and row of elm trees on the north, the courtyard is planted in grass, and contains a few shrubs planted along the exterior of the building. Two large elm shade trees stand in the courtyard near the church. A concrete sidewalk extends from the front entrance of the church, along the north wall, and turns to the north, passing in front of the chapel and the east wall of the rectory. In front of the rectory a branch proceeds east to encircle the large planter with a statue of St. Joseph (1987) centrally located in the courtyard; the other branch of the sidewalk turns west, passing in front of the north rectory entrance. A small dog house lies next to the fence northwest of the rectory. Small swaths of grass also are found in front of the church and on its south side, where a juniper tree stands at the southeast corner and two aspen trees are planted near the entrances to the church and office building. There is also grass lawn in front of the north entrance to the rectory. Small patches of grass are found behind some of the facilities, and a shrub grows on the west side of the chapel wing. The remainder of the area surrounding the church is xeriscaped with gravel and is used for parking.

An ornamental wrought iron fence parallels the concrete public sidewalk on the east and borders the Ramona Ditch, an 1874 irrigation structure. Two concrete crossings over the ditch (ca. 2006-11) provide access to the church property. The irregular parcel shape, with an arm extending north to the state highway, may have been to guarantee access to the church without crossing the ditch. The ditch extends north-south, flanked by grass strips, with a row of cottonwood trees to its west. Old St. Joseph's Cemetery (ca. 1878) occupies 1.2 acres in the southern part of the parcel. The cemetery is enclosed on the north with a wood picket fence containing two open entrances marked by wood gates and with woven wire fence and chainlink fence on the other three sides. The included Sketch Map shows the nominated area and photograph locations, while Figure 9 depicts the building construction sequence. All resources except the 1987 stone planter are evaluated as contributing.

***St. Joseph's Church, Resource 1, 1912-13, ca. 1913-17, 1933-34, ca. 1940s, and post-1960, building, contributing, photographs 1 through 21***

ORIGINAL CHURCH. The original 1912-13 church (approximately 129' x 47') is composed of an east-west one-story front gabled-roof component with a slightly projecting three-story front entrance tower, frame belfry, and steeple. There is a projecting concrete collar foundation along parts of the building. Two slightly projecting courses of stone along the base of the building create a water table, and the walls above also are composed of locally quarried rock-faced buff color sandstone ashlar masonry. Window and door openings display Gothic arches with smooth keystones and rock-faced stone lintels and sills. The doors are replacements with no lights. The roof has overhanging boxed eaves and is clad with asphalt composition shingles.

*Front (East Wall).* A central projecting three-story entrance tower and belfry, visible for miles in the flat countryside, dominates the front of the church. The first story and choir loft level of the tower are stone, while the belfry is frame. The tower has short corner buttresses with tapered tops. The tower's first story contains a Gothic-arch entrance with a large keystone incised with a cross. Double doors (replacements; faux nine-panel) are surmounted by a stained-glass transom with tracery. The doors

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open onto a raised concrete stoop and stairs with metal railings. Centered above the entrance on the second story is a Gothic-arch stained-glass window illuminating the choir loft. The third-story wood belfry is framed by molded cornices and clad with wood fishscale shingles. Each wall of the belfry contains a Gothic-arch opening filled with wood louvers and a solid wood transom panel. The soaring pyramidal steeple clad with fishscale wood shingles terminates in a large metal cross; each corner of the tower roof is ornamented with a miniature steeple with a projecting cross.<sup>3</sup> The bays flanking the entrance tower each feature a central Gothic-arch stained-glass window. At the outer corners are buttresses projecting above the roof and crowned by stone crosses; the corners of the buttresses are tooled. A cornerstone with tooled edges at the base of the northeast pier bears the inscription "A.D. 1912" and an incised cross in each corner.

*South Wall.* From the east end, the south wall contains five evenly spaced Gothic-arch stained-glass windows. Farther west is an entrance containing a nonhistoric door with nine faux-panels surmounted by a Gothic-arch stained-glass transom that faces a sloping concrete ramp with a metal railing. The entrance is centered below a wide cross-gable. The gable face is clad with wood fishscale shingles and contains a tripartite window opening with a center Gothic-arch window, which is boarded up and flanked by rectangular windows that are boarded up and have small metal louver panels. One stained-glass window is west of the entrance. The 1940s two-story convent (discussed below) is attached at the southwest corner of the original church.

*Rear (West Wall).* Only the upper portion of the original rear of the church is visible. The buff stone gable face of the church is unfenestrated. A tall, projecting, central blonde brick chimney divides the wall. Additions to the rear wall of the church are discussed below.

*North Wall.* The chapel wing intersects the north wall of the stone church at the west end. The north wall of the stone church contains an entrance just east of the point of intersection, which has a nonhistoric door with nine faux-panels and a Gothic-arch stained-glass transom. Farther east are five Gothic-arch stained-glass windows.

*Interior.* The double door main entrance opens into a shallow vestibule illuminated by the stained-glass transom. The walls and ceilings of the church interior are plastered. Flanking the vestibule on the south is a small room with a plate glass window facing the nave which is used for hearing confessions. On the north is a partially enclosed wood staircase with a solid beadboard balustrade that leads to the choir loft. The loft features a varnished wood balustrade with decoratively shaped and pierced slats and moldings on the west. Illumination is provided by a single stained-glass window. Access to the loft is controlled by a beadboard door at the bottom of the stairs.

The choir loft is supported on the main floor by two square wood columns at the central entrance to the nave. Angel statues holding holy water fonts (installed in 1924) in front of the columns flank the entrance to the nave. The single-nave church consists of one large open room covered by a barrel vaulted ceiling. Engaged columns along the walls support wide arched ribs of the ceiling, which are tapered toward the center to create pointed arches that mimic that of the chancel. Two rows of metal chandeliers with multiple glass shades are suspended from the ceiling. Between the columns on the walls are stained-glass windows. Twenty rows of oak pews flank the central aisle, and additional seating is provided by upholstered wood benches placed along the walls adjacent to the north and south aisles.

The chancel at the west end of the church has a pointed arch entrance and is semi-circular in plan. An elaborate 1924 Italian-made altar is the focal point of the elevated chancel. Angel statues stand on

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<sup>3</sup> The top portion of the tower is somewhat similar to those of San Felipe de Neri Church in Albuquerque (NRIS 69000140), a 1793 building whose towers date to the mid- to late nineteenth century.

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pedestals on each side of the altar, as do Gothic-arch stained-glass windows on the rear wall. There are doors flanking the altar area. Gothic-arch niches are north and south of the altar and contain statuary. Exit doors with stained-glass transoms are aligned across from each other on the north and south walls of the church east of the chancel. Features of the church with high artistic values are described in more detail below.

Stained Glass. Stained glass scholar Virginia C. Raguin observed "Traditionally, stained glass is used as an architectural medium and, as such, it is integral to the fabric of a building, not only, or always, a work of art, but also a screen letting in and modifying the light and keeping out the elements."<sup>4</sup> The original St. Joseph's stone church contains seventeen narrow, Gothic-arch stained-glass windows: two on the first story of the east wall; one in the choir loft; five on the north wall of the sanctuary and six on the south wall; and two figural windows flanking the altar. The windows do not identify the fabricating studio and are not dated. It would appear that the windows of the original church probably date to 1912-13, as photographs of the dedication in 1913 show stained-glass windows present in the south wall of the nave and the front; the north wall is not pictured. In contrast to the stained-glass windows at Our Lady of Guadalupe in Conejos, the St. Joseph's windows are narrower and only two display figural images.

The two figural windows in the chancel were installed in 1927. The window north of the altar depicts a priest and altar boy before an altar and bears the Latin phrase "Introibo ad altare Dei" (Go to the altar of God). It was commissioned by the men of the parish (Comisión de Señores). The women and girls of the church donated the window south of the altar showing St. Cajetan with the infant Jesus.

All of the remaining stained-glass windows are of the same design, with non-figural ecclesiastical imagery and design motifs conveying messages of Christianity through the use of symbols and colors.<sup>5</sup> The central image of each window depicts paired pointed-arch church windows with light yellow panes of glass. There are small diamond-shaped colored glass insets with concave sides at the center of every four pale yellow panes. The paired windows are framed with bands of green that flow into stylized foliate ornament at the tops of the windows; green symbolizes concepts such as vegetation and new life. Rising from the center of the foliate ornament is a stylized blue flower at the top of the window; the color blue is associated with the Virgin Mary, grace, mercy, and heavenly love. At the base of the windows is a red lectern, also outlined by green foliate ornament, holding a ribbon that records the name of the person or family who donated the entire window. Bordering these images is a wide band of geometric pieces of stained glass, whose violet color connotes a variety of meanings, such as royalty, God, love, humility, truth, and suffering. A narrower band of red enframes the entire image (red is color of martyrs and symbolic of Christ's death). The windows are set in wood frames, with small plaques containing names centered on the bottom rails. Windows were sponsored by individuals or families with Spanish surnames reflecting the composition of the parish, including Maestas, Gallegos, Ribera, Valdez, Rivera, Medina, Gonzales, Quintana, and Martinez.

In regard to the St. Joseph's windows, Professor Raguin concludes that the St. Joseph "windows were made by American firms, even at a time that there was considerable amount of imported of German and French glass especially for Catholic churches. Both churches [the other one being Our Lady of Guadalupe in Conejos, Colorado] use opalescent glass, but in a simple, machine-rolled type".<sup>6</sup> She notes that the survival of "an intact program of glass from this time is always important."

<sup>4</sup> Virginia C. Raguin, *Stained Glass: From Its Origins to the Present* (New York: Henry N. Abrams, Inc., 2003), 32.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, Beaumont Stained Glass, Beaumont, Texas, [www.beaumontstainedglass.com](http://www.beaumontstainedglass.com), accessed 22 July 2018.

<sup>6</sup> Virginia C. Raguin, Medford, Massachusetts, email to Thomas H. Simmons, 6 February 2018. Images of selected windows from St. Joseph's and Our Lady of Guadalupe in Conejos were emailed to Professor Raguin. Professor Raguin opined that "the images you sent give me that impression that both sets of windows were produced by the same studio. It

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Professor Raguin observes that firms in large cities such as St. Louis, Cincinnati, and St. Louis made windows for clients across the Midwest and Far West, but she did not recognize identifying marks for any known firm on the windows. Watkins Stained Glass Studio in Denver, the state's leading fabricator in the historic period, could not confirm that they produced the St. Joseph windows.

Altar. In 1924 the church acquired an altar fabricated in Italy (altar no. 1659) for \$1,300. The Gothic-style wood altar is topped with a cross, with elements decorated with faux-marbling. The altar includes a center statue of St. Joseph holding the infant Jesus. A bas relief of the Last Supper (date unknown) decorates the lower front of the altar, which rests on a stepped base.<sup>7</sup>

Statuary. In 1913 the church received a statue of San José holding the baby Jesus (displayed in a niche in the altar) and statues of the Madonna and child and the Sacred Heart of Jesus (in Gothic-arch niches north and south of the chancel). Other statuary within the church includes two large angel fonts on pedestals flanking the entrance to the nave that were added in 1924. In 1929 two angel statues were installed flanking the altar. An "Agonizing Christ" crucifix (a *bulto*), donated by *hermanos* of the Confraternidad de Nuestro Padre Jesús Nazareno (the *penitentes*) in 1931, hangs on the south wall south of the chancel with "INRI" at the top of the cross.<sup>8</sup>

Paintings and Other Art. A large 1918 oil painting ("Our Lady of Purity") by R. Cianella of Naples depicting the Madonna and Child hangs in an elaborate frame on the north wall north of the chancel. Bas relief plaques of the Stations of the Cross are hung between the stained-glass windows in the nave. Older paintings of the Stations of the Cross are displayed on the curving walls of the chancel.

NORTH ADDITIONS. Attached to the original church are a ca. 1913-17 stone chapel and a 1933-34 rock-faced ornamental concrete block chapel addition and rectory. The rectory was converted to a convent in 1939 when Benedictine sisters arrived to teach in the local school; it reverted to rectory use when the south convent addition was completed in the 1940s. These components are described in counter-clockwise order starting at the junction with the original stone church.

Chapel and Chapel Addition. The south portion of the addition is composed of a ca. 1913-17 gable-roof rock-faced sandstone chapel (approximately 25' x 16') with a stone foundation that intersects the 1913 stone church near its west end. This section of the chapel features the same stonework and entrance and window design as the original church. The east wall contains an entrance with a flush wood door surmounted by a Gothic-arch stained-glass transom and sheltered by a gable-roof hood with brackets. Concrete steps access the door. North of the entrance is one Gothic-arch stained-glass wood window.

Adjoining the stone section on the north is the one-story 1933-34 chapel addition (approximately 25' x 32'). Although similar in design, the later chapel addition displays a raised concrete foundation and gray rock-faced ornamental concrete block walls. The section holds at its south end a flush wood door with a gable-roof hood with brackets and a stained-glass transom. The entrance faces a concrete pedestrian ramp with metal railings. To the north are three Gothic-arched stained-glass wood windows with concrete keystones and smooth concrete sills.

The rear (west wall) of the ornamental concrete block chapel addition steps in south of the rectory and contains four Gothic-arch stained-glass windows. Farther south is the west wall of the stone

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was quite common for a diocese to develop a tradition of patronage." She observed that the figural window of St. Cajetan (founder of the Theatines) followed that order's 1920 takeover of the church.

<sup>7</sup> St. Joseph Parish, *100 Year, 1912-2012, Anniversary Jubilee, St. Joseph Church, Capulin Colorado and Our Lady of Immaculate Conception Church, Romeo, Colorado* (Alamosa, Colorado: Papers of Distinction, ca. 2012), 6.

<sup>8</sup> St. Joseph Parish, *100 Year, 1912-2012, 7-9*; Parroquia de Conejos, *El Reino de Dios a La Parroquia de Conejos en Sus Bodas de Diamante* (Antonito, Colorado: Parroquia de Conejos, 1934), 24-25. INRI stands for the Latin phrase "Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum," meaning Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.

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chapel, which holds one Gothic-arch stained-glass window. The remainder of the chapel wall is hidden by a post-1960 shed-roof garage addition (described below). The roof of the chapel and chapel addition is clad with asphalt composition shingles.

The chapel interior contains nine stained-glass windows: three in the stone part (which employ the same design as in the nave) and six in the ornamental concrete block section (which follow a slightly different pattern) (compare Photographs 20 and 21).<sup>9</sup> Donors for these windows included Hispano individuals and families and the following groups: Miembros del Coro (Choir Members), Unión Católica (Catholic Union), and Knights of Columbus, Council 5512.

Rectory. A two-story ornamental concrete block rectory component (approximately 49' x 35') is stepped forward from the east wall of the chapel and the basement level holds a two-light window, a three-light window, and three boarded-up window openings. The corners of the building feature ornamental concrete block angle buttresses with curved tops. The building has a hipped roof with widely overhanging eaves, asphalt composition shingles, and a short red brick chimney on the north roof slope. All windows are one-over-one-light vinyl replacements and display concrete sills; unless otherwise noted, the building's first-story has drop-arch window openings with slightly projecting ornamental concrete block keystones and stucco transoms, while the second-story has flat-headed windows.<sup>10</sup>

The narrow south wall adjacent to the chapel has one window on each story. The east wall (front) features three bays; the off-center slightly projecting center bay has a curvilinear parapet rising above the eave line. The south bay holds a drop arch entrance at its south end that contains a three-paneled wood door with a rectangular light and a stucco transom and is sheltered by a gable-roof hood with overhanging eaves, exposed rafters, and knee braces. The door opens onto a concrete stoop and steps with metal railings. To the north on the first story are two windows, while the second story holds three windows. The first story of the center bay contains one flat-headed window, while the second story features a drop-arch window with a stucco spandrel panel.<sup>11</sup> The north bay holds two windows on the first story and two windows on the second story.

The basement level of the north wall contains two boarded up windows. The first story has three windows to the east and a pedestrian door with a gable-roof hood that opens onto a concrete stoop and stairs with metal railings at the west end. The second story displays three windows.

The basement level on the rear (west wall) displays one window toward the north filled with glass blocks and, toward the south, a concrete ramp accessing a basement garage below grade. The garage entrance has three two-panel wood doors with four lights. The ramp has poured concrete side walls with two courses of concrete blocks at the top. The first story has five windows: two north of a flush wood door with a rectangular light with a gable-roof hood and three windows to the south; the southmost window is the same width as the ones on the east and north walls, while the remaining four are narrower. The windows are smaller than the original openings and the Gothic-arch transoms have been covered with stucco. The second story contains four windows of varying sizes. The projecting narrow south wall of the rectory contains a window on the first story and one on the second story.

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<sup>9</sup> The stained glass windows in the 1933-34 section have a wider outside border executed in amber glass. The base containing the donor name also uses an amber glass, rather than red.

<sup>10</sup> James S. Curl, *A Dictionary of Architecture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 28. A "drop arch" is similar to a Gothic arch but not as narrow. Curl defines this element as "a pointed arch with its centres on the springing-line and with the span longer than the radius."

<sup>11</sup> The original type of windows is unknown. It is believed the stuccoing of transoms and other modifications occurred in the recent past when the current windows were installed.



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REAR ADDITIONS. Covering the rear wall of the original church are three later additions (approximately 51' x 31'). A ca. 1933-34 one-and-half-story front-gabled ornamental concrete block garage projects outward near the center and has an overhead fiberglass garage door (ca. 1960s), a Gothic-arch window on the gable face (a single-hung four-light and transom window with tracery in the transom and clear glass), and overhanging eaves with exposed rafter tails. A ca. 1940s one-story L-shaped shed-roof concrete block addition abutting the convent on the south displays a one-over-one-light window and a flush door. A pre-1960 one-story stucco shed-roof garage addition to the north wall of the garage has an overhead fiberglass garage door. A later addition that abuts the north wall of the pre-1960 garage has a shed roof, concrete block walls, a filled-in garage entrance on the west and a six-light wood window and plate glass window on the north. The roof of all of the additions are clad with asphalt composition shingles.

SOUTHWEST ADDITION. The ca. 1940s two-story southwest addition (approximately 39' x 36') is attached at its northeast corner to the southwest corner of the original church. The building has a concrete foundation with a basement, smooth concrete block walls, and flat-headed one-over-one-light vinyl replacement windows with narrow concrete block sills. The roughly square building has a hipped roof with flared, overhanging eaves and asphalt composition roofing shingles. Built as a convent ca. 1940s, it became the parish office (first story) and an apartment (second story) after Benedictine sisters departed in 1965.

The front (east wall) of the south addition has a large basement window at the south end. At the north end the first story has an entrance sheltered by a gable-roof hood with knee braces; the flat-headed entrance has a replacement door with an oval light. Accessing the entrance are concrete stairs with a metal railing. The stairs abut the south wall of the church. Above the entrance is a window on the second story. South of the entrance bay on the first story are two sets of paired windows and two single windows on the second story.

At the east end of the south wall, the basement level contains a ramp with poured concrete walls leading to double flush metal doors that project just above grade. Near the west end of the basement level is a window well with a three-light window (one light is boarded-up). The first story of the south wall contains a center window flanked by small horizontal two-light vinyl sliding windows. The second story has three windows.

The rear (west wall) has two basement windows with window wells, one partially boarded up. At the south end the first story contains a flush wood door with a four-light upper part and a gable-roof hood and knee braces; the entrance is accessed by concrete stairs with metal railings. North of the entrance is a short two-part vinyl sliding window followed by paired full-size windows. The second story contains (from south to north) a full-size window, a short two-part vinyl sliding window, and two full-size windows (the north one is plate glass).

The first story of the north wall is covered by the attached ca. 1940s shed-roof concrete-block addition. The north wall has a single central window on the second story.

ALTERATIONS. The church tower and steeple were rebuilt in 1928 after a windstorm blew the original one off. All of the additions to the original church occurred within the period of significance, with the possible exception of a small shed-roof garage on the rear, which is not shown on a 1960 fire insurance map. Doors in the original church were replaced, as well as the front concrete stoop and railings, by 2012. Windows and doors in the two-story rectory to the north and the two-story convent to the south are nonhistoric replacements (installed by 2012). In some instances the windows used are shorter than the original ones and the remaining portions of the window openings, including Gothic-arch transoms, have been filled in with stucco; this occurred in the recent past when the vinyl replacement windows were installed. A brick chimney on the south slope of the original roof church is

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no longer present (date of removal unknown). The door hoods do not appear in historic photographs and were added after 1933-34.

***Old St. Joseph's Cemetery, Resource 2, ca. 1878, site, contributing, photographs 22 through 31***

The St. Joseph Parish history reports the cemetery was established after the first church was built in 1878. The adobe church was located in the northwest corner of the present burial ground. A 1996 article about Conejos County cemeteries reported that in St. Joseph's Cemetery, "The earliest headstone is Atencio, no first name, with a date of 1899," while a list of interments on the Find A Grave website documents the earliest marked gravestones with dates of 1861 and 1904.<sup>12</sup> The latter source noted "there are many unmarked graves and a number of tombstones that are too weathered to be readable."<sup>13</sup> The list of interments counted eighty-three marked graves, all for persons with Hispano surnames or Hispano heritage. A third tabulation of graves performed in the 1980s by Grace Bagwell found seventy-four marked graves.<sup>14</sup> Fieldwork completed for this nomination in October 2017 noted several unmarked areas of soil subsidence, suggesting the strong possibility that the cemetery contains unmarked graves. The cemetery is still active, but burials dropped substantially after a new St. Joseph's Cemetery opened in about 1935 a short distance east of town.

Photographer and landscape historian Robert Adams concludes that burial grounds like St. Joseph's express "both an acceptance of nature and a faith that extends beyond it. The initial impression most [Colorado Hispano] cemeteries give is of stony dryness. Sage, cactus, rabbit bush, and yucca are likely to be the only green. Burials are attended with flowers and decorations, but there is no attempt made permanently to change the landscape into an eastern garden."<sup>15</sup> This description aptly applies to Old St. Joseph's Cemetery.

The cemetery occupies about 1.2 acres at the southern end of the church parcel. The site is roughly rectangular (about 300' east-west x 184' north-south) with a notch at the southwest corner to avoid an irrigation ditch (outside the nomination boundary). The cemetery ground is unirrigated, with most of the area barren earth covered with small rocks. There are scattered clumps of grass, with more in the eastern part of the cemetery, as well as prickly pear cactus, tumbleweeds, and anthills within the grounds. One small tree stands near the northeast corner, and a lilac shrub occupies a spot in the southwest corner. Artificial flowers decorate several graves. Near the center of the plot is a wood saddle-notched cross and a metal flagpole.

Along the north side of the cemetery is a wood picket fence with an undulating design; the peaks are posts decorated with representations of Paschal candles.<sup>16</sup> There are two open entrances marked by simple wood gates with arched wood crosspieces on the east and west; the crosspieces bear the lettering "St. Joseph Cemetery." Chainlink and woven wire fences on mostly metal poles enclose the remaining sides of the burial ground.

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<sup>12</sup> Fran Huffman and Irene Scidmore, "Cemeteries in Alamosa County and Conejos County," 28 *San Luis Valley Historian* (1996): 27; Saint Joseph Church Old Cemetery, Capulin, Colorado, general information and list of interments, Find A Grave website, [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com). The 1861 gravestone may be a memorial without a burial, or it could mark a burial relocated from another location.

<sup>13</sup> Saint Joseph Church Old Cemetery, Capulin, Find A Grave website, [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com).

<sup>14</sup> Grace Bagwell, Church Capulin Cemetery, marked graves, 1980s, on file with Front Range Research Associates, Inc., Denver, Colorado.

<sup>15</sup> Robert Adams, *The Architecture and Art of Early Hispanic Colorado* (Niwot, Colorado: University Press of Colorado, 1974), 47-48.

<sup>16</sup> Paschal candles, representing Christ as the light of the world, are lighted from Holy Saturday before Easter Sunday through Ascension Thursday.

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Graves are generally aligned in north-south rows with markers facing east. There appear to be at least twelve or thirteen rows, but unmarked graves make this difficult to determine with certainty. The density of graves is higher in the east and west ends of the cemetery, with fewer marked graves in the center. There is only one fenced grave enclosure, a wood picket type with rails and square posts adjacent to the south fenceline, slightly east of center. Some grave plots are marked with borders of concrete, timbers, or stones.

The grave monuments represent a variety of eras, materials, designs, styles, and sizes. Marker types include crosses, tablets, obelisks, slant, pedestal, bevel, military, and one faux bois, as well as free-form shapes. Markers composed of concrete are the most numerous, followed by stone, including sandstone, granite, and marble. There are a few metal markers, as well as one constructed of ceramic blocks and bricks. The grounds contain a handful of wood markers; it is likely that many of the unmarked graves had wood markers that deteriorated over time. Many monuments display professional designs and craftsmanship, but no maker's marks were noted. Numerous monuments appear to be homemade and have unique designs. Military monuments mark the graves of Civil War and World War II veterans.

Iconography predominantly reflects Catholic religious themes. More than two dozen graves display crosses, crucifixion images, angels, or praying hands. Several monuments have niches for religious statuary. Two children's gravestones (one dedicated to two children) are topped by sculptural lambs. Many gravemarkers have no inscribed ornament; some display floral and foliate designs. One marble monument has a band of Gothic-style ornament, and another displays a small inset oval photographic image of the deceased.

The information contained on many markers is limited to the name of the deceased and their dates of birth and death. Numerous markers employ the Spanish words *nacio* and *murio* (or n. and m.) to indicate birth and death dates. Epitaphs inscribed in Spanish are often simple, such as *padre* (father), *en memoria de* (in memory of), and *descanse en paz* (rest in peace). Those in English include such sentiments as: "he was beloved by God and man," "beloved mother," "in loving memory," "ascend my son thy father's kingdom share," and "gone fishin'." One 1924 tombstone with a metal plaque indicates the person interred was from Capulin. All of the identified surnames in the cemetery indicate Hispano heritage.<sup>17</sup>

*Alterations.* A 1960 aerial photograph shows a small shed at the northwest corner of the cemetery; it is no longer extant. The burial ground did not appear to be irrigated in that image, and no trees or shrubs are visible. Principal changes to the resource result from deterioration, including fallen, broken, or missing grave markers. Some monuments appear to have suffered vandalism, for example the two with sculptural lambs. The north boundary had what appears to be a fence in 1960, but it is not known if it is the current fence.<sup>18</sup>

***Ramona Ditch, Resource 3, 1874, structure, contributing, photograph 32***

The Ramona Ditch flows north to south parallel to County Road 8 inside the eastern edge of the church parcel.<sup>19</sup> The ditch is flanked by expanses of grass bordered by a row of cottonwood trees on the west and a wrought iron fence on the east next to the public sidewalk. The earthen ditch is about 3' to 4' wide and 1 ½' deep and is lined on the bottom with smooth flat stones. The ditch diverts water from the Alamosa River some 0.3 miles to the northwest.

<sup>17</sup> Members of the Girard family interred in the cemetery are descendants of a man, born in France in 1838, who married a Hispano woman born in New Mexico.

<sup>18</sup> Aerial photograph, number GS-VBBI 2-103, 30 April 1960, Colorado School of Mines, Golden, Colorado.

<sup>19</sup> Only real property, not water rights (per 36 CFR 60.6), is the subject of this nomination.

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The appropriation of water for the ditch first occurred on 20 April 1874. When water rights were adjudicated in the water district in 1888, claimants to water rights in the ditch (which received priority number 26) were mostly Hispano: Rosario Duran, Albino Martinez, Ramona Quintana, John M. Cunliff, and Flavio A. Garcia.<sup>20</sup> The church was not a claimant and does not use ditch water.

*Alterations.* The current concrete driveway crossings over the ditch were added at two points ca. 2006-11, but there are no apparent alterations to the ditch itself.<sup>21</sup>

***St. Joseph Planter, Resource 4, 1987, object, noncontributing, photograph 33***

This circular stone planter has three stepped mortared sandstone rubble tiers and is approximately 12' in diameter. A marble statue of St. Joseph stands at the top of the planter on a concrete base. Deprato Studios of Chicago and New York fabricated the statue ca. 1988-89.<sup>22</sup> The planter is located east of the current rectory and north of the original church in a landscaped area enclosed by a hedge. A wide concrete sidewalk encircles the planter.

*Alterations.* The statue, which dates to ca. 1988-89, was added shortly after construction of the planter. There are no apparent alterations. The resource is assessed as noncontributing since it was built after the end of the period of significance.

**Integrity**

St. Joseph's Church and Cemetery retains a high level of historic integrity. The resource remains in its original location, thereby possessing excellent integrity of location. The church and cemetery also retain excellent integrity of association, continuing to serve as a religious facility, burial ground, and rectory for this predominantly Hispano community. The resource possesses a high level of integrity of design, reflecting the growth and evolution of a church facility to meet changing needs of the parish. Only one small rear addition was constructed after the end of the period of significance, and the principal alterations consist of door and window replacements in the rectory and convent sections. The resource maintains excellent integrity of materials, with sandstone used for the original church and ornamental concrete block and concrete block employed for later additions. The resource displays excellent integrity of workmanship as evidenced in the skilled stonework of the original church and additional masonry skill in the construction of the 1933-34 ornamental concrete block addition. Original artistic workmanship is seen in the stained glass and other ornament on the interior of the church and chapel. The setting of the church and cemetery retains a very high level of integrity, including the immediate grounds and the surrounding community of Capulin, with open agricultural lands to the south and southwest, the former public school to the east, and dwellings to the northwest and east. St. Joseph Church and Cemetery possess excellent integrity of feeling as a small Catholic parish church in a predominantly Hispano area of the San Luis Valley.

<sup>20</sup> District Court, 7<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, Colorado, In the Matter of the Petition of L.D. Eskridge et al for the Adjudication of the Priorities of Right to the Use of Water for Irrigation in Water District No. 21, 11 July 1888.

<sup>21</sup> The estimated construction date is based on Google Earth images. The present crossings replaced earlier ones (date unknown).

<sup>22</sup> Leanne Alvizu, Deprato Rigali Studios, Chicago, Illinois, email to Thomas H. Simmons, 30 November 2017.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria** (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

<b>X</b>	<b>A</b>	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
	<b>B</b>	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<b>X</b>	<b>C</b>	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
	<b>D</b>	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history

**Criteria Considerations:**

<b>X</b>	<b>A</b>	Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
	<b>B</b>	Removed from its original location
	<b>C</b>	A birthplace or grave
	<b>D</b>	A cemetery
	<b>E</b>	A reconstructed building, object, or structure
	<b>F</b>	A commemorative property
	<b>G</b>	Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions.):

- Ethnic Heritage/Hispano
- Social History
- Architecture
- Art

**Period of Significance:** ca. 1878-1968

**Significant Dates:** 1920, 1933-34, 1939, 1941, ca. 1940s

**Significant Person** (Complete only if Criterion B is marked above): N/A

**Cultural Affiliation** (only if criterion D is marked above): N/A

**Architect/Builder (last name, first name):**

- Duran, Justo (Monte Vista)
- Maestas, Senno (Capulin)
- Medina, Eugene (Taos, New Mexico)

**Period of Significance (justification):**

The period of significance for Architecture is 1913 through ca. 1940s, beginning with the erection of the original church and ending with completion of the convent on the south. The period of significance for Art is ca. 1913 through ca. 1931, corresponding to the installation of interior ornamentation in the original church portion and chapel. The period of significance for Ethnic Heritage/Hispano and Social History is ca. 1878 to 1968, extending from the establishment of the cemetery to a time fifty years before the present, in keeping with National Register guidelines.

Significant dates include: 1920, priests from the Congregation of Clerics Regular (Theatines) take over administration of the church from the Jesuits; 1933-34, construction of rectory to north; 1939, St. Joseph's becomes an independent parish, receives a resident priest, and the Benedictine

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Sisters arrive to teach school; 1941, Capulin becomes part of the Pueblo Diocese; and ca. 1940s, southern convent addition is constructed.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary):** Criteria Consideration A. The property is owned by a religious institution and is an active church. The property is being nominated for its architectural, social, artistic, and ethnic heritage significance and therefore meets the burden of Criteria Consideration A.

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

St. Joseph's Church and Cemetery in Capulin is significant under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Hispano, for its construction by and service to a Hispano congregation, and in the area of Social History, as the site of community celebrations and other events. The church is further significant under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, as an example of a Gothic Revival-style church expanded over three decades to meet the changing needs and functions of its parish, and in the area of Art, for its extensive incorporation of stained-glass windows and other decorative elements in the interior. The level of significance for all areas is local. The period of significance extends from the creation of the cemetery ca. 1878 to 1968, a time fifty years before the present, in keeping with National Register guidelines. The church complex retains a high level of historic integrity, with all but one small addition to the building occurring within the period of significance.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

**Criterion A.** St. Joseph's Church is significant in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Hispano for its association with its overwhelmingly Hispano parish. Beginning in the late 1840s-early 1850s, Hispanos from northern New Mexico began the Euro-American settlement of the San Luis Valley of present-day Colorado. These early *pobladores* (settlers) brought with them traditions developed over two centuries of Spanish and Mexican control of the Southwest. This "cultural impress" on the new territory included the Spanish language; adobe brick as the most common building material; village or plaza settlement patterns; communal irrigation systems (*acequias*); dome-shaped outdoor ovens (*hornos*); corner fireplaces; other traditional methods of agriculture and foodways; and folk arts, including rug weaving, *santos*, *bultos*, *retablos*, and other religious iconography.<sup>23</sup> In religion the newcomers were overwhelmingly Roman Catholic, and they soon raised village churches and brought Spanish and religious-inspired place names to the land.<sup>24</sup> The Capulin area was settled in the 1860s and an initial Catholic church built in 1878. Members of the church led the movement to build the present church in 1912-13 and contributed money, time, and labor toward its construction. Skilled Hispano craftsmen from Colorado and New Mexico cut and laid the stone for the walls and tower. The church is further significant in the area of Social History as a focus of community events for the people of Capulin and the surrounding area of northern Conejos County. The religious life of the church played an important role in the broader community, with St. Joseph's serving as the site of weddings, funerals, christenings, seasonal feasts, and other events. The church complex also housed Benedictine sisters who staffed the local public school for nearly thirty years.

**Criterion C.** St. Joseph's Church is significant in the area of Architecture, as a well preserved example of an early-twentieth century Gothic Revival-style Catholic church. The church displays

<sup>23</sup> Richard L. Nostrand, *The Hispano Homeland* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992), 7-11 and 217. *Santos* and *bultos* are three-dimensional wood carvings of religious figures, such as saints, and *retablos* (often placed behind the altar) are depictions of religious figures on wood panels

<sup>24</sup> Nostrand, *The Hispano Homeland*, 217-23.

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pointed Gothic-arch windows and entrances, rock-faced sandstone walls, stone buttresses, and a square tower with shingled belfry and multiple crosses. Although an architect could not be identified, a church history documents individuals involved in the original stone work: stonemasons Senno Maestas of Capulin and Eugene Maestas of Taos, New Mexico, and stonemason Justo Duran of Monte Vista, Colorado.

The church is significant in the area of Art for its extensive display of highly artistic interior ornament, including historic stained-glass windows in the original church and chapel. Seventeen Gothic-arch stained-glass windows illuminate the chancel, choir loft, and the north and south walls of the nave, all identifying the name of the Hispano individual, family, or organization donating funds for the window's installation. The chapel features nine similar stained-glass windows in its east and west walls. A number of stained-glass door transoms are also present. The chancel contains an elaborate Gothic altar, imported from Italy in 1924. Other paintings, statues, and artistic works reflecting religious themes ornament the interior.

### **Developmental History/Additional Historic Context Information**

#### **Early Settlement of Capulin**

Capulin is located within the boundary of the 1833 Conejos Land Grant, established by the Mexican government. The nearly 2.5 million-acre grant included all of today's Conejos and Rio Grande counties and parts of Alamosa and Saguache counties. Early attempts by Hispano settlers from northern New Mexico to permanently occupy the grant, a requirement of the document, were thwarted by physical conflict with Native American who opposed such settlements. In 1842 claimants successfully reapplied to Mexican authorities for the land. Settlement efforts in the 1840s had not succeeded when the Mexican War (1846-48) intervened. The 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo transferred jurisdiction of the area to the United States but provided for recognition and protection of pre-existing grants. The creation of Fort Massachusetts a mile west of present-day Fort Garland in 1852 secured military protection for would-be settlers, and in 1854 *pobladores* led by José Maria Jacquez established Guadalupe on the Conejos River. Settlement continued in the second half of the nineteenth century, with more Hispano Americans pushing north along both sides of the San Luis Valley. The arrival of the Denver & Rio Grande Railway in the late 1870s saw an influx of Anglo American settlers and creation of such railroad towns as Alamosa (1878) and Antonito (1880).

Settlement reached the Capulin area along the Alamosa River in the 1860s.<sup>25</sup> According to a 1934 history of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, significant numbers of *pobladores* in the Capulin vicinity first came in 1868 by ox cart from northern New Mexico. The initial group of settlers included Juan and Fermín Gómez and Tomás and Santiago Sánchez. In 1870 greater numbers arrived in the area: Juan Ignacio, Victor, Diego and Pedro Jose Cleto González; José M. Crescencio; José María Valdez; and Bernardino and Hilario Valdez. The following year Francisco Muñiz, Sebastián Ortiz, Hipólito Romero, José León Ribera, Ramón and Antonio Martín, and Romualdo and Antonio Valdez took up residence.<sup>26</sup>

The name Capulin acknowledged the chokecherry shrubs (*capulin*) abundant in the area. The local economy was based on agriculture, with efforts focused on raising cattle, sheep, and hay in the river bottomlands. Settlers also constructed irrigation systems, including the 1874 Ramona Ditch. The community received a post office in 1881, and in 1890 the census counted 411 persons in the Capulin precinct, which was larger than the immediate town. The community, formally platted in 1909,

<sup>25</sup> Nostrand, *The Hispano Homeland*, 85.

<sup>26</sup> Parroquia de Conejos, *El Reino de Dios a La Parroquia de Conejos en Sus Bodas de Diamante* (Antonito, Colorado: n.p., Junio 1934), 22.

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never incorporated as a municipality. By the 1910s Capulin possessed a chapter of the Sociedad Protección Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos (SPMDTU), a Hispano fraternal, insurance, and civil rights group.

### Initial Church Activity and the Jesuits

The early Hispano settlers of Capulin overwhelmingly adhered to the Catholic Church. Prior to erection of a chapel in the community, residents attended religious services in Conejos (fifteen miles south) or secured a priest to conduct mass in private homes. The Capulin area was initially within the jurisdiction of the Diocese of Santa Fe, created in 1853 under Bishop Jean P. Lamy. In June 1857 Bishop Lamy recognized Our Lady of Guadalupe in Conejos as the first parish in what would become Colorado and appointed N.S. Montano as the first resident priest. The parish embraced a large area of the San Luis Valley including Capulin (see Figure 1). The Vatican removed Colorado from the supervision of the Diocese of Santa Fe in 1868, creating the Vicariate Apostolic of Colorado and Utah under Bishop Joseph P. Machebeuf in Denver.<sup>27</sup> The vicariate became the Diocese of Denver in 1887.<sup>28</sup>

### Arrival of the Jesuits

Political upheavals in Italy resulted in suppression of the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) and expulsion of its priests. Approximately four hundred Neapolitan Jesuits responded to requests from Catholic bishops in California and New Mexico to serve as clergy in America. In 1868 the Jesuits established a base in Albuquerque, New Mexico. In August 1871 Bishop Machebeuf of Denver requested that the Jesuits accept responsibility for the Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish. Priests of the order assumed care of the Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish from 1871 to 1920.

Jesuit priests did not arrive in Capulin until 1878, as a mission of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Conejos. The first church in Capulin, an adobe building located near the northwest corner of the current cemetery, was constructed at the direction of Father F. Diamore, S.J., and blessed by Bishop Joseph P. Machebeuf of Denver on 15 December 1878 (see Figure 2).<sup>29</sup> A 2012 history of the church credits José Maria Romero, first *mayordomo* of the church, for naming it after St. Joseph, his patron saint.<sup>30</sup> Following erection of the church, "the cemetery was established next to the church so that the deceased would be buried near sacred ground."<sup>31</sup> In November 1887 Carmelita Lucero de Trujillo provided Bishop Nicholas Matz of Denver with a deed to the church and cemetery grounds for \$10. The area corresponds to most of the present-day parcel and includes the portion extending north to what is now Colorado Highway 15.<sup>32</sup> The number of parishioners increased, and the adobe church

<sup>27</sup> Utah was removed from the Vicariate in 1871 and assigned to San Francisco.

<sup>28</sup> Thomas J. Noel, *Colorado Catholicism and the Archdiocese of Denver, 1857-1989* (Niwot, Colorado: University Press of Colorado, 1989), 12 and 42. The Vatican recognized Denver as an archdiocese in 1941.

<sup>29</sup> Some sources list the priest's name as G. Diamare.

<sup>30</sup> Marianne L. Stoller, and Thomas J. Steele, S.J., eds., *Diary of the Jesuit Residence of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, Conejos, Colorado, December 1871-December 1875* (Colorado Springs: Colorado College, 1982), 23. Church *mayordomos* were typically a married couple who volunteered to take charge of the physical care of a church (cleaning, repairs, fuel) and sponsoring the parish's major feast day. Stoller and Steele explain "The responsibility rotates yearly around a community to the most pious and responsible families; it is considered an honor."

<sup>31</sup> St. Joseph Parish, *100 Year 1912-2012, Anniversary Jubilee, St. Joseph Church, Capulin, Colorado and Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Church, Romeo, Colorado* (Alamosa, Colorado: Papers of Distinction, ca. 2012), 2.

<sup>32</sup> Carmelita Lucero de Trujillo to Bishop Joseph Matz, deed, 19 November 1887. The inclusion of the narrow strip of land in the sale may have been to provide access to the church from the road to the north without having to cross over the Ramona Ditch. The church now has two concrete crossings of the ditch along its eastern edge, but access may have been more problematic in the early years. The measurements in the deed do not appear to include the southern part of the cemetery.



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was enlarged in 1888, with a crossing added to form a cruciform plan. Bishop Machebeuf blessed the expanded building on 15 December 1888.<sup>33</sup>

### Construction of the Current Church

Parishioners decided to erect a new church on 15 April 1912. In 1910 the Capulin precinct had a population of 953 persons. The congregation established a church commission to raise funds and oversee planning and construction. The composition of the commission reflects the predominately Hispano nature of the community: José de Jesús Martínez, president; Andrés Romero, treasurer; Romualdo Ortiz, secretary; and J. Luis Rivera, Félix Rivera, Macario Maestas, J.D.L. Márquez, Acisclo González, J.D. Muñoz, A. A. Muñiz, Hilarío Valdez, Vicente Gallegos and Juan M. Gallegos, committee members. A 1934 history of the parish credits Romualdo Ortiz as being the "soul" of the effort.<sup>34</sup>

The architect for the church is not known, although the sophistication of the design suggests there was one.<sup>35</sup> Construction on the building began in the spring of 1912, with Father E.E. Vigil laying the cornerstone on 15 May 1912 and Father Behiels blessing it on 6 July 1912. Sandstone for the walls came from the Hot Creek (La Aguita) Quarry ten miles west of town. Stonemasons Senno Maestas of Capulin and Eugene Medina of Taos, New Mexico, cut the rock at the quarry using wire saws cooled by water. Members of the church commission donated wagons and labor to bring stone from the quarry to Capulin. Some wealthier parishioners hired teams. Juan I. Medina recalled being engaged by Elario Valdez to transport wagons of stone for the project. An average of five or six wagons hauled stone daily during the summer of 1912. Justo Durán of Monte Vista, Colorado, served as stonemason for erecting the church walls. Durán (1871-1938) was born in Del Norte, and he listed his occupation in census returns variously as stonemason (1910), stone cutter (1920), and bricklayer (1930). Eugene Medina cut and donated the two stone crosses at the northeast and southeast corners of the church front.<sup>36</sup>

Bishop Nicholas C. Matz of the Denver Diocese dedicated St. Joseph's Church on 3 July 1913 while on a visit to the San Luis Valley (see Figures 3 and 4). The *Denver Catholic Register* reported the church cost \$20,000 and observed: "The Spanish people of Capulin are to be congratulated on their beautiful church. It is built of white stone, is 40 by 40 feet [sic], and finished in the most approved style. Fully 2,000 people were at the dedication, and the confirmation class was the second largest in the valley."<sup>37</sup> The dimensions of the church were actually about 130' x 40'; the photographs of the dedication show the current full east-west length of the church. A 1934 history of the parish reported the church could seat nine hundred persons and placed the total cost at \$35,000.<sup>38</sup>

The 1913 dedication photographs do not show the stone chapel addition to the north (see Figure 4). An undated history of the church alludes to a four or five year initial construction period, suggesting

<sup>33</sup> Parroquia de Conejos, *El Reino de Dios a La Parroquia de Conejos*, 22.

<sup>34</sup> Parroquia de Conejos, *El Reino de Dios a La Parroquia de Conejos*, 22.

<sup>35</sup> Historical accounts do not identify an architect, and no construction drawings were located in the parish or at the Denver Archdiocese or the Pueblo Diocese. The *Denver Catholic Register*, *Southern Colorado Register*, and other online Colorado and New Mexico newspapers do not list a designer.

<sup>36</sup> St. Joseph Parish, *100 Year 1912-2012*, 3-4; "History of St. Joseph's Church," attachment to Virginia Simmons, St. Joseph's Church, Capulin, Conejos, Colorado, 5CN.816, Historic Building Inventory Record Form, August 1991/November 1992, in the files of History Colorado, Denver, Colorado; U.S. Census, Census of Population, manuscript returns, Colorado, 1900-1940.

<sup>37</sup> *Denver Catholic Register*, 10 July 1913, 6.

<sup>38</sup> Parroquia de Conejos, *El Reino de Dios a La Parroquia de*, 24-25.

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the chapel may have been completed about 1917. Meeting notes of the church commission from April 1916 indicate construction was still ongoing on the sacristy at the rear of the church.<sup>39</sup>

In 1917 St. Joseph's included 156 parishioners affiliated with the People's Eucharistic League, a group promoted by Bishop Matz in 1913 to worship the Holy Eucharist. An article in the *Denver Catholic Register* discussed the Capulin church, whose Eucharistic League membership was larger than that of some Denver parishes: "At Capulin there is no resident priest, but the people are so devoted to the Blessed sacrament that by special permission the Holy Eucharist is reserved in their church constantly, although mass is said only twice a month and on great feasts. The people congregate every Sunday for public prayers and there is not an hour of each day someone is not praying before the Divine Presence."<sup>40</sup>

### Arrival of the Theatines

In August 1919 the Jesuit Southwest Mission (Colorado and New Mexico) was severed from the Province of Naples and its components split among American provinces. The Colorado Jesuits were attached to the Missouri Province. Churches administered by Jesuit priests immediately were transferred to other orders or to diocesan clergy.<sup>41</sup> In October 1920 the Congregation of Clerics Regular of the Divine Providence (or Theatines) assumed control of the Our Lady of Guadalupe parish and St. Joseph's Church. Founded by Gaetano dei Conti di Tiene (later canonized as St. Cajetan) and others in Italy in 1524, the Theatine order sought "to recall the clergy to an edifying life and the laity to the practice of virtue."<sup>42</sup> The Theatines established foreign missions and grew quickly with about 1,400 priest by 1700. The order declined with the suppression of religious orders in Italy, and by 2014 the number of Theatine priests had dropped to about 140. The U.S. headquarters of the Theatines is in Durango, Colorado.<sup>43</sup> The religious order established additional mission churches in Conejos and Costilla counties and operated St. Joseph's until at least 1972.

Father John Bonet and José Alaverda were the first Theatine priests assigned to the Capulin area. The Theatines undertook a campaign to improve St. Joseph's Church and enrich its interior ornament during the 1920s, when pews were installed. A large Gothic Italian-made altar was placed in the church in 1924 at a cost of \$1,300. In 1927 the church commission authorized the addition of electric lights and a steam heating plant. Rumaldo Ortiz donated the two holy water fonts (held by angels) at the entrance to the church. The members of the choir donated the two angel statues flanking the altar. José Luis Rivera, described as "one of the most generous donors to St. Joseph's Parish," donated the 1918 "Our Lady of Purity" oil painting by Neapolitan artist R. Ciannella to the church.<sup>44</sup> The improvement campaign was disrupted in 1928 when major damage to the church occurred. The upper portion of the church tower was blown off and destroyed by a wind burst. The top was rebuilt following a new design (compare Figures 3 and 5).<sup>45</sup>

### Expansion of the Church

The congregation's desire to have a resident priest resulted in construction of a large rectory addition to the north in the 1930s (see Figure 5). The architect for this section of the church is not known. Built

<sup>39</sup> "History of St. Joseph's Church." The stone chapel addition is shown in a 1934 photograph of the church (see Figure 5).

<sup>40</sup> *Denver Catholic Register*, 13 December 1917, 4.

<sup>41</sup> Gerald McKeivitt, *Brokers of Culture: Italian Jesuits in the American West, 1848-1919* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 305; *Woodstock Letters* 48 (1919): 429-433.

<sup>42</sup> "Theatines," Catholic Encyclopedia, [www.newadvent.org](http://www.newadvent.org), accessed 12 July 2018.

<sup>43</sup> "Theatines," Catholic Encyclopedia; The Theatine Fathers, Province of Our Lady of Purity, Durango, Colorado, [www.theatinesusa.com](http://www.theatinesusa.com), accessed 11 February 2018. In Colorado the Theatines presently operate St. Andrew Avellino Seminary in Denver and staff churches in Antonito, Ignacio, Cortez, Durango, Pueblo, San Luis, and Denver.

<sup>44</sup> St. Joseph Parish, *100 Year 1912-2012*, 6-7.

<sup>45</sup> Dennis Lopez, Capulin, Colorado, email to Thomas H. Simmons, 28 March 2018.

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of gray rock-faced ornamental concrete block, the rectory construction began in August 1933 and also included expansion of the ca. 1913-17 chapel and a one-and-a-half-story garage (also executed in ornamental concrete block) attached to the rear of the church. The rectory and chapel addition were enclosed but not complete by 1934.<sup>46</sup> The ongoing Depression and lack of funds may have delayed its completion for several years. The upstairs of the rectory remained unfinished in 1939 (see below).

A 1934 history of the parish stated that St. Joseph's membership included 1,092 persons in 208 families. These numbers suggest St. Joseph's drew worshippers from beyond the immediate Capulin area. In about 1935 a new St. Joseph's Cemetery was established 0.6 miles east of Capulin on the north side of Colorado Highway 15. Parishioner José Luis Rivera provided funds for a statuary installation there.<sup>47</sup> The old cemetery south of the church, while still active, received fewer interments after the new burial ground opened.<sup>48</sup>

In 1939 St. Joseph's became an independent parish. Father Peter Ribas was appointed resident pastor and occupied the rectory.<sup>49</sup> Upon his arrival in Capulin, Father Ribas was dismayed at the status of the local public school, which only operated two or three months a year due to limited finances available in this poor region of the state. Father Ribas communicated the situation to Father John Ordinas, Superior of the Theatines in Colorado, who offered to operate the public school, staffing it with Catholic sisters who would be paid \$75 a month by the school board. The school board accepted this proposal, and Father Ordinas contacted the Benedictine Sisters of Atchison, Kansas, who agreed to send teachers. On 20 September 1939 five Benedictine sisters arrived in Capulin. Father Ribas gave up the rectory to the sisters and took up residence in the upper floor of the garage at the rear of the church. Upon moving into the former rectory the sisters discovered that

it had never been completed and the entire upstairs was still one room with the rafters in plain sight. Undismayed, the sisters went to work. They put up newspapers for shades, unpacked the sheets to make up the beds, used brown paper for spreads, and swept out some of the dirt and rubbish that had collected in the used parts of the large two-story adobe [sic] house. There was no stove for cooking, and the nearest water was two or three blocks away in the public well. In a diary kept by one of the original band, a sister noted that nothing bothered them as much as the size and number of flies and mosquitos "and other sundry animals" that flew in the open windows and cracks in the wall.<sup>50</sup>

Classes began in the existing school in October with ninety-two students enrolled. By the end of the school year, 186 students were attending the eight-grade school. In 1940 the school district applied for and received a grant to erect a new school in Capulin from the federal Works Projects Administration, a Depression-era New Deal agency. Designed by Denver architect John K. Monroe, Sr., the two-story adobe school with brick veneer was completed by December 1941.<sup>51</sup> The expanded

<sup>46</sup> *Denver Catholic Register*, 10 August 1933, 1; Parroquia de Conejos, *El Reino de Dios a La Parroquia de Conejos*, 25; John K. Monroe, Jr., Delta, Colorado, interview by Thomas H. Simmons, 9 April 2018. John K. Monroe, Jr. reported his father designed the school in Capulin but had no role in the design of St. Joseph's.

<sup>47</sup> St. Joseph Parish, *100 Year 1912-2012*, 6-7.

<sup>48</sup> Huffman and Scidmore, "Cemeteries in Alamosa County and Conejos County," 27.

<sup>49</sup> William H. Jones, *The History of Catholic Education in the State of Colorado* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1955), 355-56.

<sup>50</sup> Jones, *The History of Catholic Education in the State of Colorado*, 356; Sister Alice Marie Hays, OSB, *A Song in the Pines: The History of Benet Hill Community* (Erie, Pennsylvania, ca. 1975), 20. The reference to adobe suggests that the ornamental concrete blocks may be installed over an adobe core, though this has not been confirmed through other sources.

<sup>51</sup> Capulin School District 13, Capulin, Colorado, Capulin School, Work Project #4494, records of the Work Projects

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school permitted the sisters to add a new grade each year, with the first high school class graduated in 1944.

### Parish Activities

Southern Colorado, including Conejos County and the St. Joseph Parish, became part of the Diocese of Pueblo in November 1941, with Joseph C. Willging as its bishop. The parish constructed a new two-story convent addition for the Benedictine sisters attached to the southwest corner of the original church, most likely in the 1940s.<sup>52</sup> The rectory then reverted to its original function. Theatine Fathers continued to staff the parish. Father Peter Ribas served St. Joseph's until 1945. Later priests included: Miguel Mas (1945-48); Bernard Rotger (1948-51); Andrew Bonet (1951-57); and Bart Nadal (1955-60).<sup>53</sup>

The Benedictine sisters continued to operate the Capulin public school in the postwar era. In June 1953 the acting Colorado Education Commissioner, concerned with the issue of the separation of church and state, ordered state funds withheld from Capulin and three other San Luis Valley school districts employing Catholic sisters. Within weeks Colorado attorney General Duke Dunbar advised the department to rescind the order, and in 1956 Republican State Representative S.T. "Ted" Parsons praised the Benedictine sisters of Antonito and Capulin as the "greatest asset" the San Luis Valley ever had.<sup>54</sup>

The church has a rich history of active parish groups, including the Catholic Union and the Daughters of Mary (see Figure 6, 7, and 8). In November 1963 efforts to organize a parish chapter of the Knights of Columbus began. Chapter No. 5512 was formally recognized in February 1964 with twenty-five members. Most of the initial officers were Hispanos, including Adelmo Medina, grand knight; Max Lara, deputy grand knight; Victor Barela, recorder; and Ben Valdez, treasurer.<sup>55</sup>

### Recent Decades in the Parish

In the early 1960s renewed questions were raised over the constitutionality of permitting Catholic sisters to teach in public schools in the San Luis Valley. A lawsuit was threatened in 1962 by Protestants and Other Americans United for the Separation of Church and State against the Antonito schools. The group alleged that Catholic symbols were present in the school and that Catholic doctrines were taught in the classroom.<sup>56</sup> Perhaps as result of this controversy, the Benedictine Sisters ceased teaching in Capulin and departed in 1965.<sup>57</sup>

The Theatines administered the church until at least 1972. Turnover of priests in the late twentieth century was fairly high, with most serving in the parish less than four years. Clerics with longer tenures included Fathers Ralph Lopez (1967-71) and Peter Verd (1967-72). St. Joseph's was served by priests from the Missionary Servants of Most Holy Trinity during the 1980-95 period. Fathers Canisius Hayes (1980-88), Joel S. Bladt (1982-87), and Rudy Bruenig (1988-95) had the longest periods of service in Capulin. In 2004, the fathers of the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity

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Administration, 1940-41, in the files of Stephen Hart Library and Research Center, History Colorado, Denver, Colorado; Monroe, Jr., interview.

<sup>52</sup> Dennis Lopez, Capulin, Colorado, email to Thomas H. Simmons, 28 March 2018. The exact construction year of the two-story concrete block convent is unknown; it dates between the 1939 arrival of the sisters and the early 1950s. Parishioner Dennis Lopez recalls the convent was present when he started attending school in Capulin in the early 1950s.

<sup>53</sup> "History of St. Joseph's Parish."

<sup>54</sup> Patrick C. Stauter and Howard L. Delaney, *The Willging Years* (Chicago: Adams Press, 1986), 285 and 308.

<sup>55</sup> *Southern Colorado Register* (Pueblo, Colorado), 6 March 1964, 3.

<sup>56</sup> *The Monitor* (San Francisco, California), 23 November 1962, 18.

<sup>57</sup> Hays, *A Song in the Pines*, 21.

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(S.O.L.T.) assumed administration of the parish. Father Anthony Blount remained at the parish from 2004 to 2010.

In 2010 the U.S. Census reported that the Capulin area had a population of two hundred persons, but St. Joseph's parish impacts a much broader area with greater numbers of people.<sup>58</sup> In 2017 missions in the parish included Our Lady of the Valley Church, La Jara; St. Theresa Church in Manassa; Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, Romeo; and St. Anthony Church, Los Sauces.<sup>59</sup> St. Joseph's offers mass four days a week, and confessions are heard on Sunday. The predominantly Hispano parish continues to treasure its stone and stained glass, century-old house of worship.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Capulin is unincorporated. The figure is for the Census Designated Place of Capulin, which includes territory beyond the built-up area of the town.

<sup>59</sup> St. Joseph Parish, Diocese of Pueblo website, [www.dioceseofpueblo.org](http://www.dioceseofpueblo.org).

<sup>60</sup> St. Joseph Parish, flyer, volume 16, number 42, 15 October 2017.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical Resources

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Raguin, Virginia Chieffo. *Stained Glass: From Its Origins to the Present*. New York: Henry N. Abrams, 2003.

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Stoller, Marianne L. "Grants of Desperation, Lands of Speculation: Mexican Period Land Grants in Colorado." In *Spanish & Mexican Land Grants in New Mexico and Colorado*, edited by John R. and Christine M. Van Ness, 22-39. Manhattan, Kansas: AG Press, 1980.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** 5CN.816

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### 10. Geographical Data

**Acreeage of Property:** 3.4

#### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 37.282033                      Longitude: -106.111612

#### UTM Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Zone: 13                      Easting: 401458                      Northing: 4126739

#### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The nominated area is coterminous with the Conejos County Assessor parcel containing the property (number 571917100902), which is located in the Northeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter, of Section 17, Township 35 North, Range 8 East, New Mexico Principal Meridian, as shown on the attached sketch map.

#### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The selected boundary contains all of the resources historically associated with St. Joseph's Church.

### 11. Form Prepared By<sup>61</sup>

name/title: Thomas H. Simmons and R. Laurie Simmons, Architectural Historians

organization: Front Range Research Associates, Inc.

street & number: 3635 West 46<sup>th</sup> Avenue

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telephone: 303-477-7597

with contributions by

name/title: Dana EchoHawk, Cultural Historian

organization: N/A

street & number: P.O. Box 353

city or town: Louisville                      state: CO                      zip code: 80027

e-mail: dana.echohawk@gmail.com

telephone: 303-579-2462

date: 1 May 2018 (revised)

#### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

<sup>61</sup> Funded by Underrepresented Communities Grant from NPS to History Colorado. This material is based upon work assisted by a grant from the Historic Preservation Fund, National Park Service, Department of the Interior. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect views of the Department of the Interior.



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- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

**Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Photo Log**

Name of Property: St. Joseph's Church

City or Vicinity: Capulin

County: Conejos

State: Colorado

Name of Photographer: Thomas H. Simmons

Date of Photographs: As indicated

1 of 33, Overview of church from County Road 8. View west.

2 of 33, Front of church. View west.

3 of 33, Church belfry detail. View northwest.

4 of 33, Front and north wall of the church. View southwest.

5 of 33, Detail of church stonework (north wall). View south.

6 of 33, East wall of chapel (stone to south and ornamental concrete block to north). View west-southwest.

7 of 33, Landscaped area north of church with St. Joseph planter to left. View south-southeast.

8 of 33, Front (east) wall of rectory. View northwest.

9 of 33, Front and north walls of rectory. View southwest.

10 of 33, Rear (west) wall of rectory. View east.

11 of 33, West wall of chapel (left) and rear additions. View southeast.

12 of 33, Rear and south walls of convent at right with rectory in distance to left and additions at the center. View northeast.

13 of 33, Front (east) and south walls of convent. View northwest.

14 of 33, Convent (left) and church (right). View northwest.

15 of 33, Front and south wall of church with convent to left. View west-northwest.

16 of 33, Interior, nave with chancel at end. View west-northwest.

17 of 33, Interior, nave with choir loft at end. View east-northeast.

18 of 33, Interior, altar with figural stained-glass windows. View southwest.

19 of 33, Interior, stairs to choir loft and choir loft balustrade. View northeast.

20 of 33, Interior, example of older stained glass in nave (north wall). View north.

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- 21 of 33, Interior, example of stained glass in north part of chapel (east wall). View east.
- 22 of 33, Cemetery, west gate. View southeast.
- 23 of 33, Overview along south fenceline from southwest corner. View east-northeast.
- 24 of 33, Overview of the center portion from south fenceline. View north-northwest.
- 25 of 33, Overview of east end of the cemetery from the southeast corner. View north-northwest.
- 26 of 33, Wood picket grave enclosure near south fenceline. View southwest.
- 27 of 33, Cluster of gravestones near north fence. View northwest.
- 28 of 33, Marble tablet marker, 1899. View northwest.
- 29 of 33, Tinted concrete marker with cross, 1936. View northwest.
- 30 of 33, Gray granite tablet marker, 1938. View northwest.
- 31 of 33, White marble military marker, no date. View northwest.
- 32 of 33, Ramona Ditch, wrought iron fence, and line of trees. View north.
- 33 of 33, St. Joseph planter with rectory to left. View northwest.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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## List of Maps and Historic Figures

Location Map

Sketch Map

Historic Figures

1 of 9, This 1934 map shows the location of Capulin in north-central Conejos County and other missions operated by the Theatine Fathers in southern Colorado and New Mexico. A cross in a circle indicates the location of a mission. Courtesy of *El Reino de Dios a La Parroquia de Conejos en Sus Bodas de Diamante* (1934), 13.

2 of 9, This ca. 1912 photograph of a wedding party shows the 1878 adobe church at Capulin in the background with the current church under construction at the upper right. Courtesy of *100 Year, 1912-2012 Anniversary Jubilee* (2012), 2.

3 of 9, Bishop Nicholas Matz of the Diocese of Denver blessed the church on 3 July 1913 (view north-northwest). Note that the tower featured a different top at that time. Courtesy of *100 Year, 1912-2012 Anniversary Jubilee* (2012), 5.

4 of 9, This view west shows the front (east wall) of the church at the 3 July 1913 blessing. Note the different tower design, presence of stained glass, and the absence of the one-story stone section to the north (right). Courtesy of *100 Year, 1912-2012 Anniversary Jubilee* (2012), 5.

5 of 9, By 1934 the church displayed its current tower (1928), as well as north additions: the one-story stone chapel (ca. 1913-17) and the ornamental concrete block chapel expansion (one-story) and rectory (two-story) (both 1933-34). The view in the photograph is to the west-southwest. Courtesy of *El Reino de Dios a La Parroquia de Conejos en Sus Bodas de Diamante* (1934), 22.

6 of 9, Members of the Catholic Union pose in this view, possibly in the street east of the church. Courtesy of *El Reino de Dios a La Parroquia de Conejos en Sus Bodas de Diamante* (1934), 23.

7 of 9, Members of the church's Hijas de Maria (Daughters of Mary) pose in front of the church. Courtesy of *El Reino de Dios a La Parroquia de Conejos en Sus Bodas de Diamante* (1934), 24.

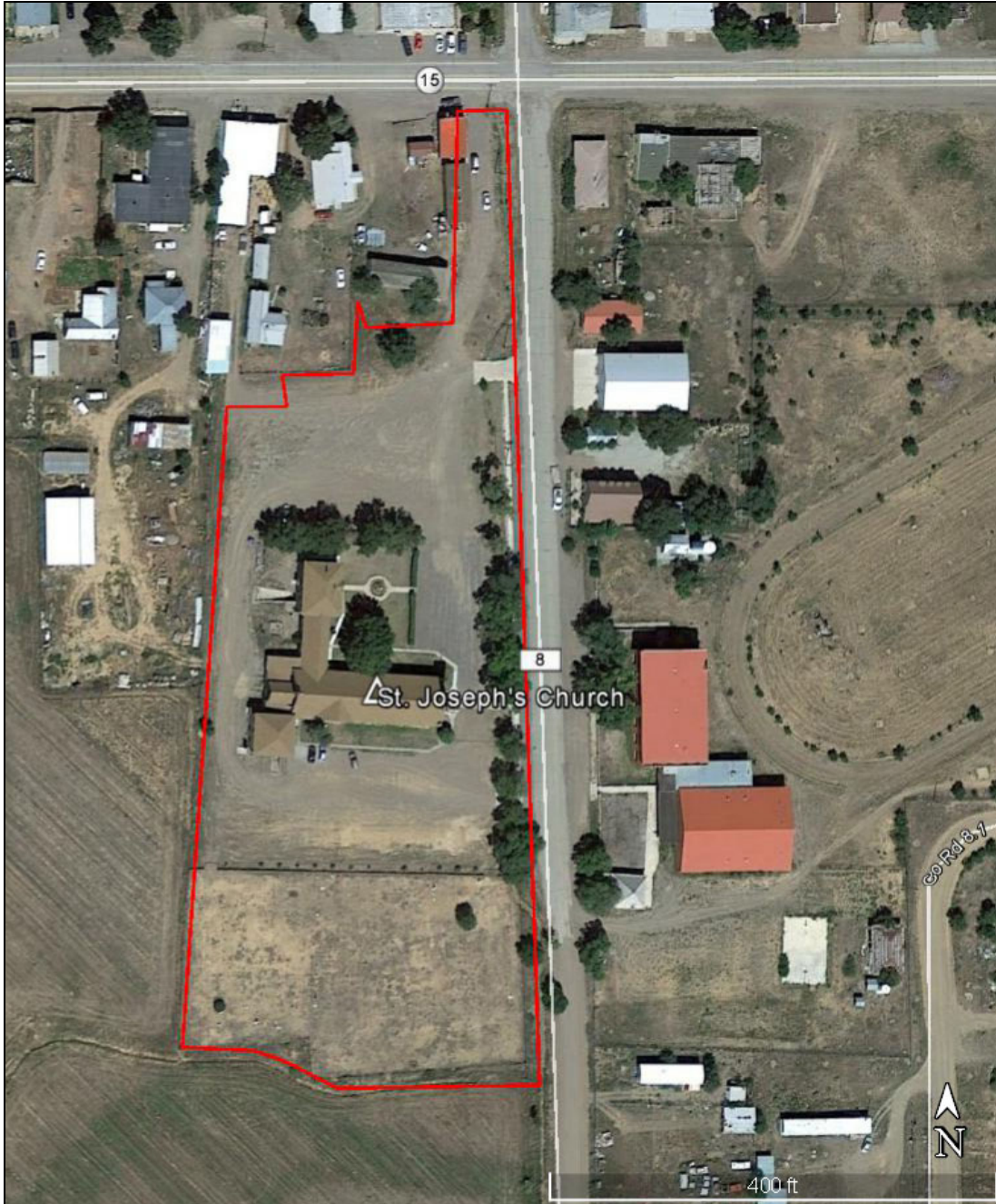
8 of 9, A group stands in front of the altar in this ca. 1961-62 view of the commissioning of new mayordomos for the upcoming year. Courtesy of *100 Year, 1912-2012 Anniversary Jubilee* (2012), 8.

9 of 9, By 1960 St. Joseph's Church had attained its present form with the exception of another small garage addition abutting the west wall of the chapel and the north wall of the north garage. Extract (annotated by nomination preparers) of Capulin, Colorado, fire insurance map, Mountain States Inspection Bureau, n.p., 14 October 1960. Courtesy of Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado.

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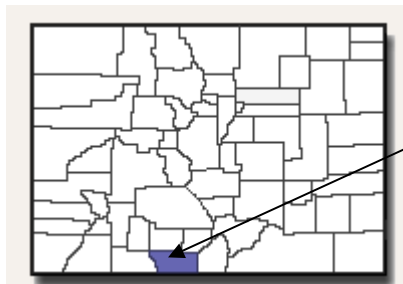
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### Location Map



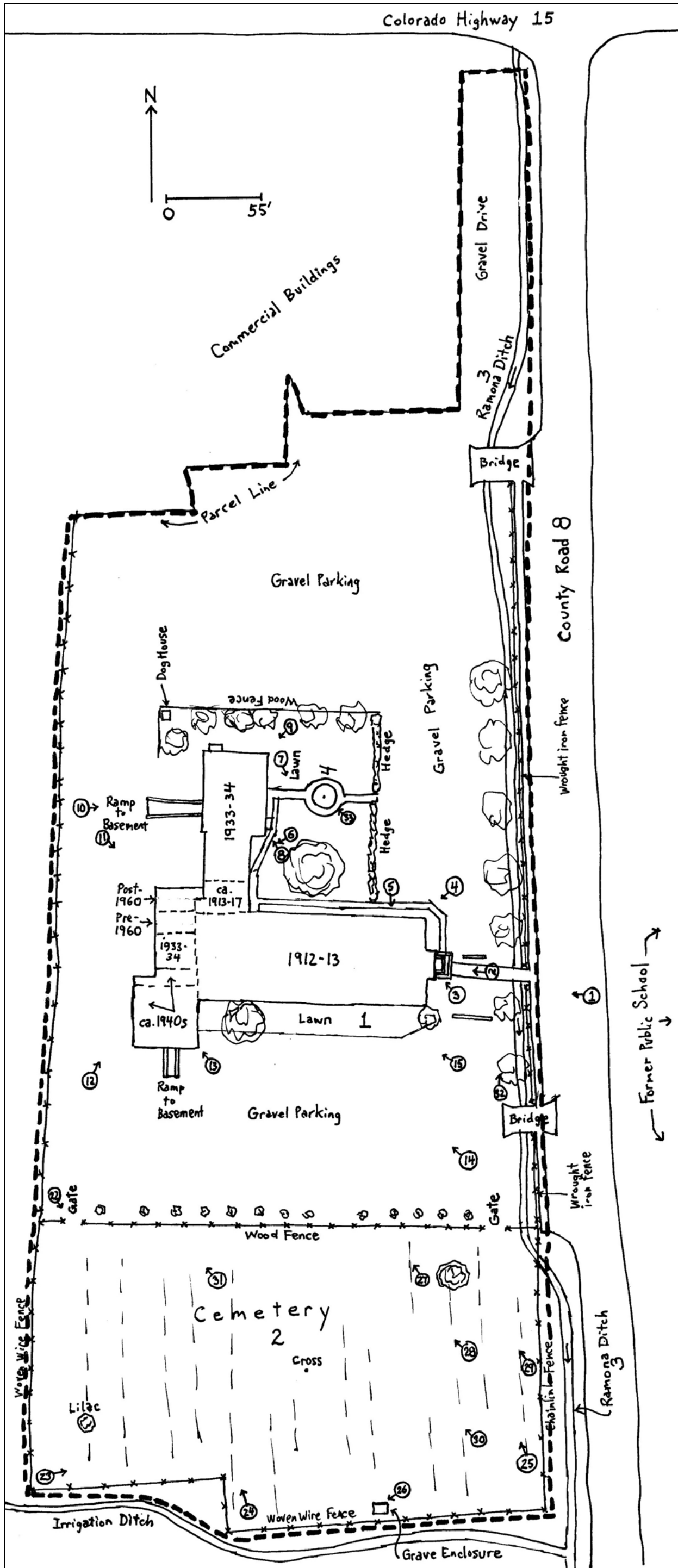
The labeled point indicates the location of the nominated resource, which has the following coordinates:

Latitude: 37.282033, Longitude: -106.111612, Image Date: 8 September 2016



State Perspective:  
St. Joseph's Church

Sketch Map



The heavy dashed line indicates the nominated area boundary. Numbers beside buildings are resource numbers. Numbers in circles show photograph locations and camera directions.



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Figure 1.



Figure 2. This ca. 1912 photograph of a wedding party shows the 1878 adobe church at Capulin in the background with the current church under construction at the upper right. Courtesy of *100 Year, 1912-2012 Anniversary Jubilee* (2012), 2.



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Figure 3. Bishop Nicholas Matz of the Diocese of Denver blessed the church on 3 July 1913 (view north-northwest). Note that the tower featured a different top at that time. Courtesy of *100 Year, 1912-2012 Anniversary Jubilee* (2012), 5.



Figure 4. This view west shows the front (east wall) of the church at the 3 July 1913 blessing. Note the different tower design, presence of stained glass, and the absence of the one-story stone section to the north (right). Courtesy of *100 Year, 1912-2012 Anniversary Jubilee* (2012), 5.



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Figure 5. By 1934 the church displayed its current tower (1928), as well as north additions: the one-story stone chapel (ca. 1913-17) and the ornamental concrete block chapel expansion (one-story) and rectory (two-story) (both 1933-34). The view in the photograph is to the west-southwest. Courtesy of *El Reino de Dios a La Parroquia de Conejos en Sus Bodas de Diamante* (1934), 22.

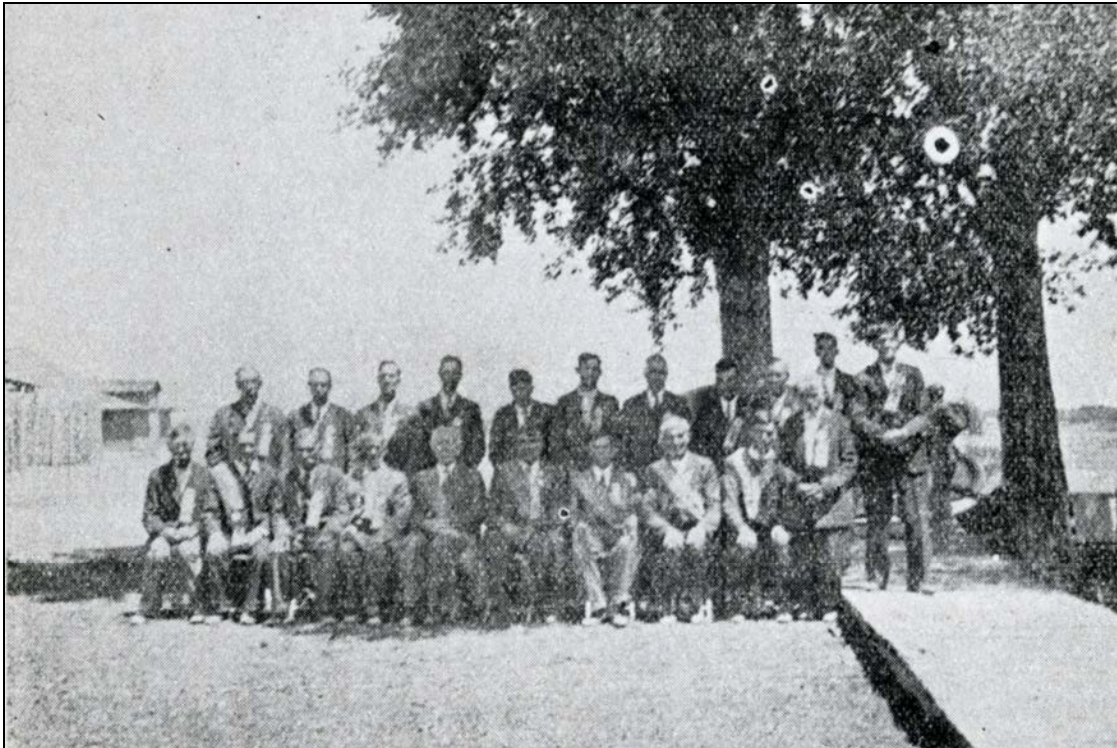


Figure 6. Members of the Catholic Union pose in this view, possibly in the street east of the church. Courtesy of *El Reino de Dios a La Parroquia de Conejos en Sus Bodas de Diamante* (1934), 23.



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Figure 7. Members of the church's Hijas de Maria (Daughters of Mary) pose in front of the church. Courtesy of *El Reino de Dios a La Parroquia de Conejos en Sus Bodas de Diamante* (1934), 24.



Figure 8. A group stands in front of the altar in this ca. 1961-62 view of the commissioning of new mayordomos for the upcoming year. Courtesy of *100 Year, 1912-2012 Anniversary Jubilee* (2012), 8.

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Name of Property

County and State

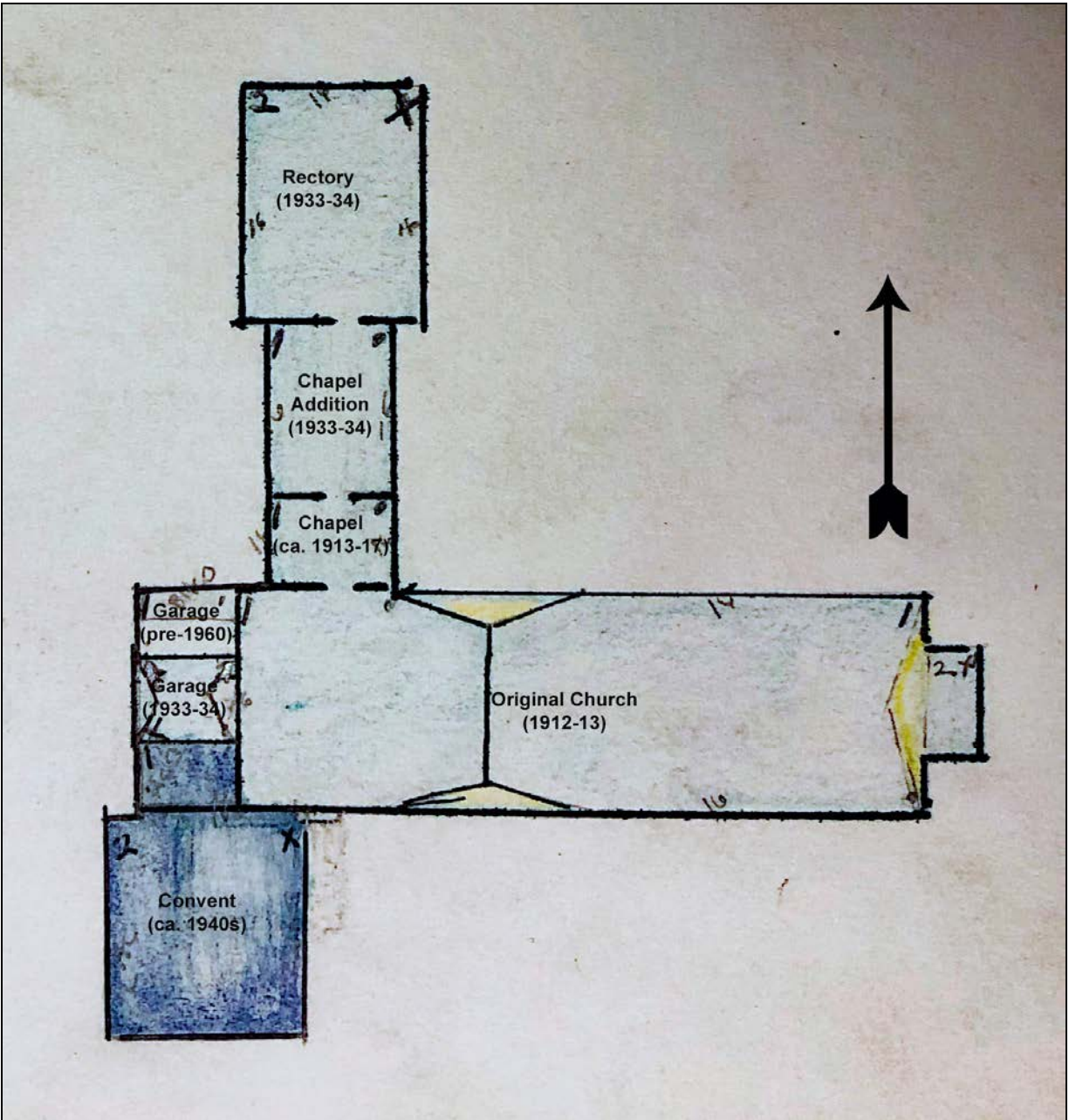


Figure 9. By 1960 St. Joseph's Church had attained its present form with the exception of another small garage addition abutting the west wall of the chapel and the north wall of the north garage. Extract (annotated by nomination preparers) of Capulin, Colorado, fire insurance map, Mountain States Inspection Bureau, n.p., 14 October 1960. Courtesy of Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado.





















































Asisto y Obnovento  
Donales





A Horacio Valdez  
Sus Padres



















JOSE A.  
ATENCIO  
NACIO 1892  
MURIO 1979





PAUBLITA ABILA  
NACIO JUNIO 26  
1880. MURIO  
ENERO 26 1936



CELINA  
MEDINA  
1895  1958



LEANDRO  
MARTINEZ  
VICES  
IND. CO.  
MARTINE







1987



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 11/16/2018      Date of Pending List: 12/10/2018      Date of 16th Day: 12/26/2018      Date of 45th Day: 12/31/2018      Date of Weekly List: 2/1/2019

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

- |                                       |  |   |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal       | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL            | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Photo   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver       | <input type="checkbox"/> National        | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other        | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP             | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
|                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG             |   |

Accept       Return       Reject      12/31/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Barbara Wyatt      Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2252      Date \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



# HISTORY Colorado

November 15, 2018

Dr. Julie H. Ernstein  
Acting Chief, NR and NHL Programs  
National Register of Historic Places  
Mail Stop 7228  
1849 C St, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240



Dear Dr. Ernstein:

We are pleased to submit for your review the enclosed National Register of Historic Places nomination for St. Joseph's Church and Cemetery (5CN.816) in Conejos County, Colorado. This nomination is one of four funded by an Underrepresented Communities Grant from NPS to History Colorado in order to increase the number of nominations for historic properties associated with Hispano/Latino History and Culture in Colorado.

The Colorado Historic Preservation Review Board reviewed the nomination at its meeting on September 21, 2018. The board voted unanimously to recommend to the State Historic Preservation Officer that the property met the criteria for listing in the National Register.

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination St. Joseph's Church and Cemetery to the National Register of Historic Places.

We look forward to the formal listing of this property. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone at 303-866-4683 or by email at [erika.warzel@state.co.us](mailto:erika.warzel@state.co.us).

Sincerely,

Erika Warzel  
National and State Register Coordinator  
(303) 866-4683  
[erika.warzel@state.co.us](mailto:erika.warzel@state.co.us)

Enclosures

CDs (2)  
Signature Page