

Form 10-300  
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

(Type all entries complete applicable sections)

STATE: Michigan
COUNTY: Mackinac
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
St. Ignace Mission

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
St. Ignace Mission

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
State and Marquette Streets

CITY OR TOWN:  
St. Ignace

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
11th

STATE: Michigan      CODE: 26      COUNTY: Mackinac      CODE: 097

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Knights of Columbus (Columbian Knights); Mr. Richard Fenner, G.K.

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Spring Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
St. Ignace

STATE:  
Michigan

CODE:  
26

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Registry of Deeds, Mackinac County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Portage Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
St. Ignace

STATE:  
Michigan

CODE:  
26

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
None

DATE OF SURVEY:  
 Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
STATE:  
CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Michigan  
COUNTY: Mackinac  
ENTRY NUMBER:  
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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Marquette Mission was first located on Mackinac Island. Shortly after Father Marquette had assumed control he moved the site across the Straits of Mackinac to the northern peninsula of Michigan. The entire peninsula was then called St. Ignace. Very little is known of the very first structure built to house a place of worship but it is generally accepted that it must have been a cedar bark, Indian type structure. The first permanent chapel was a simple log cabin. Through archaeological excavations some idea of the dimensions of the structure have been determined.

Before leaving for Quebec Father Carheil burned this mission. With the destruction of the mission, the marker for the grave of Father Marquette was lost. Between 1705 and 1837 there was no mission at St. Ignace. Priests came down from Canada to serve the sacraments to those Frenchmen and Indians who remained in the area. It was not until 1837 that a new chapel was built at St. Ignace.

Located approximately one mile south of the original Marquette Mission site, this second mission is generally considered a continuation of the original mission at St. Ignace. An old photograph of the Second Mission clearly shows that only minor alterations have taken place. A one story structure, the mission was graced with a small porch. A wing was located on the northeast corner of the building. This section was most probably the pastor's residence. Atop its gabled roof was a small wooden steeple.

Some record of modifications and additions does exist. Reverend A. I. Rezek accounts that between 1882-85 John Cebul lengthened the church to the front. In 1889-90, Father H. J. Rousseau enlarged the sanctuary by removing the walls to the old residence. In 1904, use of this church was discontinued due to the completion of the St. Ignatius Loyola Church.

The second St. Ignace Mission is a simple building of one story height with a gabled roof, and wooden clapboard siding. A wooden cross has replaced the steeple which once set atop the church. Double doors open to the auditorium. At the rear of the building is a modest alter, doors located on either side of the alter lead outside. The church is used as a museum and is operated by the Knights of Columbus. Displays of recent archaeological findings at St. Ignace sit along the interior. One of the most interesting displays is the remains of a typical boat used during the period.

In 1954 the mission was moved from its location at State and Portage to the site of the first Marquette Mission. A small park owned by the city of St. Ignace sits adjacent the mission. The Marquette grave site is located in the southwest corner of the park.

(Continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |  |  |                                       |
|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century            |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1671-1904

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |                                       |   |  |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal     | <input type="checkbox"/> Education    | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric    | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi- | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic       | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry     | osophy  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture    | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention    | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape    | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art            | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce       | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature   | itarian   | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military     | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation   | <input type="checkbox"/> Music        | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation           | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Church, in numerous instances in New France, preceded the army, and in 1671, ten years before the erection of the first Fort Michilimackinac, Father Jacques Marquette helped to establish a mission in the Straits of Mackinac Region. He and another priest, Father Dablon, created a chapel on Mackinac Island, the first in that area. Various causes induced the mission builders to transplant the mission from the island to where the present site of St. Ignace is located, and it, along with the rise of a fort and the fur trade, increased French power and influence in northern Michigan.

Following the establishment of the mission at St. Ignace, the indomitable Pere Marquette roamed far and wide over the vast, unknown lands below the Great Lakes, but apparently never forgot the chapel at the Straits of Mackinac. When he died in 1675 near Ludington, Michigan, he expressed a desire to be buried at St. Ignace, but was first interred near Ludington. Subsequently, in 1677, Indian admirers exhumed his remains and carried them to the mission on the straits, where he was again buried; this time beneath the log chapel. A disastrous fire in 1705 levelled the chapel and the location was lost, until it was inadvertently discovered in 1877. Following the grave's discovery, a marble statue was built over the site.

History

In the winter of 1670 Father Claude Dablon established the first mission on the Straits of Mackinac located then on Mackinac Island. In probably a simple cedar bark, Indian type dwelling, Father Dablon commenced the arduous task of bringing Christianity into the region of the old French Northwest. In the subsequent year, 1671, Father Marquette, with the assistance of his Huron followers, opened another mission on Mackinac Island at the site of the original Dablon mission, which had evidently been lost the preceding year. Yet, by the fall of 1671, Father Marquette had decided to relocate his mission on the northern peninsula of Michigan then called St. Ignace.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Kellogg, Louis P., The French Regime in Wisconsin and the Northwest, Volume I of Wisconsin History Series (Madison 1925).  
Michilimackinac, Compiled by the Michilimackinac Historical Society and Published by the Mackinac County Chamber of Commerce, 1958.  
 Rezek, Rev. Antoine Ivan, History of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie and Marquette (Chicago: M.A. Donahue and Co.) 1907.  
 Stone, Lyle M., Archaeological Investigation of the Marquette Mission Site, Reports in Mackinac History and Archaeology 1972.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	UTM			LATITUDE		LONGITUDE
NW	16.675100	5082040		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NE				°	'	"
SE						
SW						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **less than one acre**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Joseph Scott Mendinghall, Historian**

ORGANIZATION: **Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service**      DATE: **5/7/75**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**1100 L Street NW.**

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington**      STATE: **D.C. 20240**      CODE: **11**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

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

National  State  Local

Name: **Landmark Designated: Oct 9 1960**      date

Title: **Boundary Certified**      date

Date: **March 7, 1979**

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

*Lowery*  
 Keeper of the National Register

Date: **4/24/79**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS

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Michigan	
COUNTY	
Mackinac	
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St. Ignace Mission

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

4. Owner of Property (cont'd)

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Portions of the property are owned by the city of St Ignace as well as the University of Michigan at Detroit.

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(Number all entries)

8. Significance

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At this location Father Marquette spent more than two years serving the sacraments to the natives and those Frenchmen who inhabited the area. Then in May of 1673 he and Louis Jolliet left St. Ignace to journey through the northern section of the Mississippi Drainage System. It was ~~on~~ this expedition that Marquette died enroute back from this trip south. He was buried near Ludington, Michigan. It had been an expressed desire of Father Marquette to be buried at his beloved mission at St. Ignace. It was not until the spring of 1677 that the remains of Father Marquette were exhumed by faithful followers and carried by canoe to the mission at St. Ignace. There "Marquette's body was cleaned, the skeleton disarticulated and placed in a small burch box."<sup>1</sup> Internment was beneath the chapel.

In 1705 the Marquette Mission was burned by Father Carheil before he left the area to return to Quebec. With the destruction of the mission not only was the chapel lost but also the marker to the grave site of Father Marquette. Over a century of practically uneventful years passed before the construction of the second mission at St. Ignace. Contact was maintained, however, between the French missionaries in Canada and the Indians and French at St. Ignace.

In 1837 a second mission was built at St. Ignace approximately one mile south of the old Marquette Mission site. The second mission was basically a continuation of the Marquette Mission and throughout its history is referred to as the Second Mission at St. Ignace. The first services were held in 1838.

Father Edward Jacker, conducting excavations at the site considered to be the location of the first mission, uncovered fragments of bones which after investigation were acknowledged to be human. Other fragments were discovered in the dig and Father Jacker concluded that "his findings represented the remains of Father Marquette beyond any positive doubt."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Lyle Stone, Archaeological Investigation of the Marquette Mission Site, Reports in Mackinac History and Archaeology 1972.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

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ADDENDUM:

The purpose of archaeological research at the Marquette Mission Site was to seek evidence as a basis for evaluating the historical-archaeological significance and potential of the Marquette Park area. It was felt that information of this nature would be critical to any historical development plans anticipated by the Michilimackinac Historical Society.

Because field work could only be conducted on a test excavation basis due to time limitations, the research project was designed to conduct intensive testing in the area of the presumed mission in order to recover as much information as possible relating to the archaeological status of the mission.

After an excavation strategy was chosen, specific excavation techniques were designed to implement and to maximize this strategy. A grid system was adopted which permitted excavations to cross section the supposed mission walls at right angles. The grid system was established on an approximate magnetic north-south, east-west basis, with the position of datum placed in the approximate center of the mission. The grid was defined by north-south and east-west lines which intersected at right angles every 10 feet. Vertical excavation units were also adopted to a specific excavation strategy. After the sod zone was removed, excavations were conducted to the extent possible in terms of existing stratigraphic units.

All test units were excavated to a below surface depth of approximately 3 feet, 6 inches to 4 feet. Vertical control was maintained by below surface measurements from the test unit corners and sides.

All excavation units were backfilled and resodded on the last day of the project. Site relocation was facilitated by the location of excavation unit corner posts and the zero north-south, east-west datum post which were left in place at ground level. Permanent nearby land marks are also provided on the site map as a basis for exact grid relocation.

The information derived from the excavations demonstrated three distinct occupation periods. Although conclusive evidence was not provided to demonstrate the presence of Marquette's mission at the site, it may be said that the site supported an occupation which would have been approximately contemporary with this mission period.

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Verbal Boundary Description (See Site Map)

The Marquette Mission Site sits at the corner of Marquette and States Streets. The property is approximately 300 feet from the Lake Huron water line at East Moran Bay.

Beginning at the intersection of State and Marquette Streets proceed west along the northern curb of Marquette Street approximately 180', more or less, to a point, thence north 180', more or less, to a point, thence west 135', more or less, to a point, thence north 100', more or less, to a point, thence east 156', more or less, to the west curb of State Street, thence south along the west curb of State Street to the point of origin.