

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC San Diego Mission Church

AND/OR COMMON

San Diego Mission Church

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Mission Road, 5 miles east of San Diego

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

San Diego

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

40th

STATE

California

VICINITY OF  
CODE

06

COUNTY

San Diego

CODE

073

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Roman Catholic Church, Diocese of San Diego

STREET &amp; NUMBER

10818 San Diego Mission Road

CITY, TOWN

San Diego

STATE

California 92108

VICINITY OF

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. San Diego County Registry of Deeds

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

San Diego

STATE

California

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Historic American Buildings Survey (24 sheets, 10 photos)

DATE

1936

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress/Annex-Division of Prints and Photographs

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

## 7 DESCRIPTION

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

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The present brick and adobe church, planned by Father Jose Bernardo Sanchez, was erected in 1808-1813. The facade is without flanking bell towers, and its soft-textured whitewashed brick is broken only by coarse moldings surrounding door and window, with a curved parapet at the top. The dominant architectural feature is a four-story campanario or belfry standing almost free of the side wall of the church. Restored on the basis of a sketch made by Major Churchill during the Mexican War, it has a rough base, tapered silhouette, and tiered arches for the five bells.

The timber-roofed nave is typical of most simple type of mission churches. The plan is a long, narrow rectangle, 26 by 159 feet, with no transepts or distinctive architectural features, other than a low chancel rail, between the nave and sanctuary. The floor is of red tiles and the pews were installed in 1931. The thick walls are unbroken except by a door at the right, leading to the patio, and the high windows, with their splayed reveals and plank shutters. The original roof timbers, over 30 feet long, were brought from the inland mountains 60 miles distant. To the left of the front entrance is a small baptistry, and over the entrance the customary choir loft.

In 1931, when thorough restoration was begun, the front wall, the front buttress wings, the base of the campanario, the baptistry arch, and a small part of the sidewalls were still standing. The remainder of the church is a reconstruction. The heavy wooden lintels of the doorways are also of original timbers, but the doors themselves and all other woodwork are handcarved redwood duplicates of the originals. The restoration of 1931 is perhaps unauthentic in details, but in general feeling it gives a good picture of the simpler type of mission architecture.

Little remains of the monastic buildings at San Diego, but a typical arcaded corridor has been restored, with its tiled floor, beamed ceiling, and row of simple arches resting on square piers. Adobe ruins reveal the location and extent of the original patio, and a fine stone dam three miles above the mission indicates the highly developed irrigation system that the mission employed during the days of its prosperity.

Buildings included in the mission complex are the church, friar's cell, mission school, mission museum. A small visitors center has been built but it does not add to the national significance of the landmark.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

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

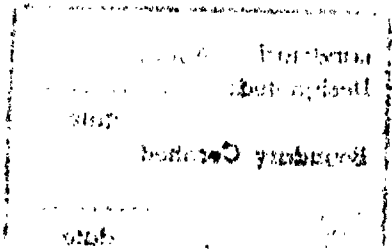
SPECIFIC DATES                      1769    1808-13    BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

San Diego Mission Church, built in 1808-1813, is an excellent example of the simpler type of architecture utilized in most California mission churches.

## HISTORY

San Diego de Alcalá Mission, founded by Father Junipero Serra, July 16, 1769, on Presidio Hill in San Diego, was the first of the 21 California missions. In 1774, Serra moved the mission 6 miles to its present location, both to free his Indian neophytes from the adverse influence of the San Diego presidial garrison and to obtain a location affording more water for agricultural purposes. The first wooden church, erected at the new site in 1774, and other mission buildings were burned during the great Indian uprisings of 1774. The second church, an adobe building with thatched roof, was built in 1777 and this was replaced by an even larger adobe church in 1780. The construction of the fourth and existing church was started in 1808 and completed in 1813. The mission was secularized by the Mexican Government in 1834 and the church soon became a roofless ruin, which was sold in 1846. The U.S. Army then occupied the mission for the next 15 years and some repairs were made to the church. In 1862, the United States Government returned the mission buildings and 22 acres of land to the Catholic Church. For some 20 years after 1887 the mission was used as an Indian school and in 1924 a children's home for boys was established at the site. Restoration of the church began in 1930-31 and on February 2, 1941, the restored structure was rededicated as a parish church.



# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Baer, Kurt, Architecture of the California Missions, 1958.  
 Berger, John A. The Franciscan Missions of California, Garden City, New York, 1948.  
 Morrison, Hugh. Early American Architecture, New York 1952.  
 Newcomb, Rexford. The Old Mission Churches and Historic Houses of California, Philadelphia, 1925.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY c 4.5

UTM REFERENCES

A	11	490050	36127210	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of San Diego Mission is drawn to include the structures of the restored complex which include the church and a small part of the monastic system, bounded by San Diego Mission Road on the southwest, the exterior walls and fence on the southeast continued in a line to intersect with Mission San Diego Road, a chain link fence on the northeast and the exterior walls of the restored complex on the northwest, continuing this line to intersect with Mission San Diego Road.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Boundary determined by Patricia Heintzelman, Architectural Historian, Landmark Review Project, original form prepared by Charles Snell, 1968.

ORGANIZATION	DATE
<u>Historic Sites Survey</u>	
STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
<u>1100 L Street NW</u>	
CITY OR TOWN	STATE
<u>Washington, D.C.</u>	

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL      STATE     

LOCAL Landmark Designated APRIL 15, 1970  
 (Public Law 89-665)  
 date  
 Boundary Certified:  
*George Finney*  
April 17, 1978  
 DATE

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

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

## FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DATE

11/24/78

((NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS))