

THEME (XX): Architecture  
 (XV) Westward Expansion; Military and Indian Affairs

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

## 1 NAME

HISTORIC Cataldo Mission

AND/OR COMMON

Coeur d'Alene Mission of the Sacred Heart

## 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER U.S. Interstate 90 (1 mile west of Cataldo, Idaho)

CITY, TOWN 22 miles east of Coeur d'Alene

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
 CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Idaho

— VICINITY OF

CODE  
 16

1st

COUNTY  
 Kootenai

CODE  
 035

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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 checked="" 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 Administered by the Idaho State Parks and Recreation Department

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Boise

— VICINITY OF

STATE

Idaho

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, Kootenai County Courthouse  
 REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Coeur d'Alene

STATE

Idaho

## 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE

1963

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

Division of Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

# 7 DESCRIPTION

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

---

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Father Anthony Ravalli, a Jesuit priest born in Ferrara, Italy was called upon to design the Coeur d'Alene Mission of the Sacred Heart. At the time, Father Ravalli was stationed at St. Mary's Mission, Montana (built in Stevensville in 1841). Construction on the Sacred Heart Mission began after 1850.

He and another Jesuit, Brother Huybrechts, assisted by a group of Coeur d'Alenes, completed the chapel structure using only a broad-axe, auger, some rope and pulleys, a pen-knife, and an improvised whipsaw. Father Ravalli and Brother Huybrechts together executed the hand carved interior details, and using only available natural and Indian materials and simple supplies sent to the mission, such as patterned fabric and tin containers, they decorated the chapel in a manner imitating what they had seen in the East and in Europe.

Begun after 1850, ready for use late in 1853, and completed later, the character of the structure and its remote setting on a hill overlooking the Coeur d'Alene River and valley, with a mountain backdrop, is impressive indeed. The rectangular, gable-roofed church is undistinguished by any particular style on the east, south and west facades, except for the deep-set windows in the thick wattle and daub filled walls. However, the front portico is Greek Revival, in modified Tuscan order, and the cornice has triglyphs above each of the six columns. The pediment is modified Baroque in style, with four wooden urns on the steps, surmounted by a cross. The sunburst in the center, around a bulls-eye window, is Italinat, probably derived from the symbol for San Bernardino, often seen on Italian churches where he preached.

Overall, the church is 91'-10" long, including the porch, 40'-8" wide, with a height of 52'-2" above grade. The rock foundation, approximately four feet thick, was originally set with mud, but masonry mortar has been added in subsequent repairs.

In the frame, huge wood uprights support the large rafters, with timbers of about 18 to 22 inches square in size, and 24 feet in length. Horizontal beams are mortised into the uprights. Holes were drilled in the uprights and willow saplings were interlaced between them. Around the saplings, wild grass was closely woven and mud was spread over the entire surface. Wooden pegs were used exclusively throughout. In one of the rear rooms off the main altar, the original adobe wall construction is visible. In 1865 Father Caruana lined the exterior walls with clapboard, now painted yellow with white trim. Rafters ten to twelve inches square, resting on the upright timbers form the roof structure. The joints are all mortised, tenoned and pinned. The original roof was probably of hand-split wood shakes.

(Continued)

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input 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 chapel construction c. 1850-53 architect: Father Anthony Ravalli  
 Jesuit Mission 1846-76 BUILDER/ARCHITECT builder: two Jesuit brothers &

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Coeur d'Alene Indians

Built after 1850 by Jesuit missionaries and Coeur d'Alene Indians, this log and adobe church with remarkable Baroque and Greek Revival details is comparable in historical and architectural import with major early mission churches erected in Alaska, California, and Hawaii during the colonial period. Cataldo Mission Church is the oldest surviving mission church in the Pacific Northwest and also the oldest extant structure in Idaho.

## HISTORY

In 1834 Protestant missionaries from the United States began founding missions among the Indians of the Pacific Northwest. The first of these, Willamette Mission, was established by John and Daniel Lee, acting as agents of the Methodist Missionary Society, in Marion County, Oregon, in October 1834. The first in Washington, Waiilatpu Mission, was founded by the Reverend Marcus and Mrs. Narcissa Whitman in 1836 near Walla Walla. The first mission in Idaho, Lapwai Mission, in Nez Perce County, was also established in 1836 by the Reverend and Mrs. Henry H. Spalding. All of these early and subsequent mission structures, except for the buildings at Waiilatpu Mission in Washington were built of logs. At Waiilatpu, Whitman used sundried adobe bricks in 1836-37 to build his one-and-one half story residence, thus making the first use of adobe as a building material in the Pacific Northwest.

The Roman Catholic church began its missionary efforts in the Pacific Northwest in 1838, when Cowitz, or St. Francis Mission was established near Toledo, Washington. Father Pierre Jean De Smet, a Jesuit priest, first visited the Idaho Indians in July 1840. In 1842 Father Nicholas Point chose a site for Cataldo Mission among the Coeur d'Alene Indians on the St. Joe River. Recurrent floods of the St. Joe, however, forced the choice of a new location. The second site for the Mission of the Sacred Heart was chosen by Father DeSmet himself. In 1846 Father Joseph Joset, who had assisted Father Point at the first mission, erected a temporary chapel of bark on the second site, a low hill situated near the Coeur d'Alene River.

(Continued)

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(SEE CONTINUATION SHEET)

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 22.88 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 1	5 4 8 7 9 0	5 2 6 6 4 0 0	B	1 1	5 4 8 6 0 0	5 2 6 5 8 3 0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	1 1	5 4 7 7 9 0	5 2 6 5 8 3 0	D	1 1	5 4 8 5 3 0	5 2 6 6 4 0 0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

(SEE CONTINUATION SHEET)

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 Blanche Higgins Schroer, Landmark Review Project; W. C. Everhart 1958, Charles W. Snell 1967

ORGANIZATION

Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service

DATE

5/19/76

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street NW.

TELEPHONE

202-523-5464

CITY OR TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C. 20240

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

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

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

9/30/83

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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On the interior, the entrance to the rectangular nave is at the north end and the main altar is located in the apse at the south, which is flanked by two smaller side altars. The side altars each have small rooms behind them. The floor, which may not have been installed until the 1860s, is made of large hand-hewn planks, and since the Indian congregation preferred to sit on the floor, pews were not built during the missionary period.

The walls are paneled up to the horizontal tie beam and paneling was probably added in 1865 when the exterior was clapboarded. The large flat ceiling consists of nine large and eight small wood panels, each of a different design. These were carved by Brother Huybrechts, who also carved the frames for the stations of the cross.

The main altar is attributed to Father Ravalli. The hand-carved wood, held together without the use of nails, was painted in shades of green to simulate marble. The walls of the sanctuary are covered with patterned cloth, sections of which are original fabric, and the ceilings of the side altars are of cloth stretched over a decorative wood framework.

The half dome ceiling above the main altar is decorated in hand carved and painted wood in imitation Greek Revival style. A band of Greek key pattern fretwork marks the base of the dome, above the fabric-covered walls. The panels of fabric are cut into segments by vertical column-like white panels (pilasters). In place of a capital are rectangular raised, carved blocks with a primitive geometric design in red and white. Those on the two pilasters flanking the main altar appear to be a grapevine design, an early Christian iconographic symbol.

Above the band of fretwork are white panels trimmed in gold, alternately horizontal and vertical. The half-dome ceiling, which is painted white, is coffered, after a typical Renaissance style, and trimmed green and gold. Directly above the main altar is a painting of Christ and the Sacred Heart against a red fabric background. This is suspended from a semicircular iron crown which is decorated with candleholders and a fleur de lis motif worked in tin, (probably created from tin cans sent to the mission). The two white statues resting on pedestals on both sides of the main altar were carved by Father Ravalli from solid blocks of wood. Some of the paintings in the church were brought from Europe by the Jesuit Order, while others were executed by Father Ravalli.

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The most valuable source of historical information on the appearance of the Sacred Heart Mission is a rather detailed drawing from ca. 1860 by a Father Gilmore, a visitor from St. Louis. The sketch is an aerial view, and its accuracy has been corroborated by other period literature and drawings. (A copy of the drawing and its translated legend is attached.) It depicts a complex which includes the church, a parsonage, parsonage barn, and a long multiple-unit structure oriented parallel to the church about 1/2 way between the church and parsonage, which Gilmore identified in the legend as containing a cabin for brothers, cabin for travelers, a kitchen, and a repair shop. Archeological research uncovered some fragmentary wood remains in this area, but further investigation is needed to document the extent and exact nature of the remains.

Other structures present in the Gilmore drawing, and not investigated archeologically, included a blacksmith and harness shop, a horsepowered grist mill, various Coeur d'Alene Indian dwellings, in the form of mat lodges, tepis, and log cabins, and a Coeur d'Alene cemetery. An estimated 300 Indians once occupied the camp, which was located north of the church on the slope of the mission knoll in early sketches. This aboriginal occupation site was confirmed in a 1963 archeological survey.

In the post-missionary (post-1877) period, the present parish house was built ca. 1895 and was used as caretakers residence until the new house was built. There was a 20th century well house or water tank once located behind the parish house, to the east of the church, and removed sometime after 1930, possibly at the same time as the parish house was moved east of its original location. There were perhaps two other large barns, according to 1920s photographs, one located on the north slope of the mission knoll, the other on the bank of the Coeur d'Alene River slough northwest of the church.

RESTORATION (1973-1975)

As of September 1975, the four-phase restoration program was essentially complete. In 1973-75 preliminary archeology and stabilization was undertaken. Dr. Roderick Sprague, of the University of Idaho, supervised this initial archeological investigation, a 15 day project (site archeological designation 10 KA 45) to evaluate archeological potential and provide the architectural historians with information about foundation construction and stability.

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David Rice, an archeologist from the University of Idaho, has directed an extensive project to delineate the sites of some of the major buildings in the mission complex, in order to protect these areas as the site is developed. In 1974 and 1975, teams located the walls of the early parsonage (gone by 1890), the foundation of a parsonage barn, and a circular wooden structure not mentioned in historic sources, and possibly used during construction of the present church. Artifacts recovered during the early test excavations included 19 of Native American manufacture and an assemblage of typical late 19th and early 20th century artifacts of Euroamerican manufacture.

The restoration program of the mission church itself, under the direction of senior restoration architect Geoffrey W. Fairfax, FAIA, of Honolulu, Hawaii, and Gerron S. Hite, began with foundation repair and exterior painting, and interior restoration of the ceiling and fabricwork, including restoration of original paper and paintings by professionals in New York and San Francisco.

On the exterior, the 1928 clapboarding was removed, wall studding was replaced, then plywood and building paper were added, then newly fabricated clapboard siding was placed over the original wattle and daub within the thick walls. The roof was covered with hand-made cedar shakes. Much of the original fabric of the porch was replaced. The adze-finished timber steps, plank flooring and rusticated porch siding were copied from fragments or pictures of the originals. Sections of the original mud-packed foundation were repaired with concrete. Four of the six wood bases to the porch columns were replaced and the two remaining originals were repaired.

On the interior insulation was added to the walls, and under the roof and main floor. The wall paneling was repaired and replaced in sections, and the windows were reinstalled. Throughout the interior, the old material and decorations were repaired and restored where possible, and missing pieces were fabricated where necessary, copying the original fabric, wood-carving or metalwork.

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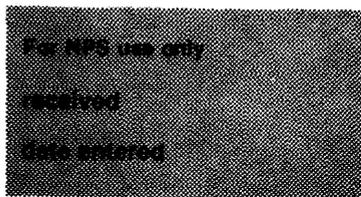
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The 1895 two-story white clapboarded parish house, located only a short distance to the east of the church, is in poor condition and the debris and rundown outbuildings around it, as well as the new caretaker's house, a modern rectangular building, unfortunately also constructed on the same hill as the church, significantly detract from the historic character of the mission complex site.

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After 1850, Father Anthony Ravalli, an Italian-born priest, began construction on the present church—a feat that required much skill, patience, and ingenuity. Apart from several broadaxes, an auger, some rope and pulleys, and a pocket knife, there were no tools nor any draft animals to haul building materials. For workmen, Father Ravalli had two Brothers and a band of untrained Indians.

He drew plans for a church, in a style reminiscent of churches that he might have seen on the East Coast and in Europe, to be 90 feet by 40 feet, and 30 feet in height. The Indians sawed huge pine trees with an improvised whipsaw; they planed and shaped timbers with a broadaxe. Crude trucks were made in which the Indians were harnessed and, in this fashion, rocks for the foundation and logs for the structure were moved to the site. As nails were unavailable, holes were drilled by auger and wooden pins fitted in to join the uprights and rafters. Mud from the river was spread over the wattle and daub to make walls nearly a foot thick. Each of the six large columns supporting the front porch were cut from single pine trees; the statues were carved from logs. Indian dyes and objects improvised from mission supplies were used in the decoration of the interior, whose altars, statues, ceiling details, and paintings were the handiwork of Father Ravalli and Brother Huybrechts.

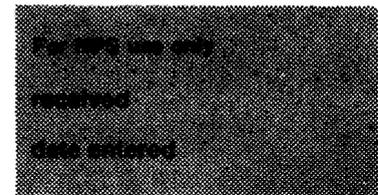
Located only one-eighth mile from the old Yellowstone Trail, the mission occupied a key position as an established camp for groups of settlers and military expeditions in the Pacific Northwest. Father Joset, Vice President of the Jesuit Missions of the Northwest, made the Coeur d'Alene Mission his headquarters. After the Indian war of 1858, Father Joset decided to close the mission, but reconsidered at the urging of Lieutenant John Mullen, who was then directing the construction of the Mullen Road which passed right by the Cataldo Mission and which was to link Fort Benton at the head of the navigation of the Missouri River with Wallnea on the Columbia River. Road crews then used the Jesuit mission as a base camp and later travellers on the Mullen Road, completed in 1862, used the mission as an overnight stop.

Historical sketches of the mission (c. 1860) by Father Gilmore and others, show a complex of as many as a dozen structures plus an Indian camp. Father Cataldo, in whose honor the nearby town was named, visited the Coeur d'Alene Indians in 1865, and made the Sacred Heart Mission his headquarters when he became the superior of all the Rocky Mountain Missions in 1877.

The Jesuits maintained this mission near Cataldo from 1846 until 1877, during which time the Jesuits apparently became quite influential in the Coeur d'Alene community, especially in teaching farming techniques to the tribe members who had been nomadic buffalo hunters. Perhaps as many as several hundred Coeur d'Alenes settled around the Mission and became farmers. Although some Coeur d'Alenes did join the Indian force against Colonel Steptoe in 1858, the missionaries' efforts are usually partially credited for the tribe's refusal to join Chief Joseph during the Nez Perce War of 1877.

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In 1873 the United States Government excluded the Cataldo mission site from the reservation boundaries to which the Indians were restricted. But this exclusion came because mission ownership was Jesuit, not Indian, and the reservation boundary came to their mission site. The Jesuit superior Father Alexander Diomedé joined the Indian migration to DeSmet Idaho and built a new Sacred Heart Mission on the Coeur d'Alene reservation there. Coeur d'Alene Indian resettlement around DeSmet was unrelated to reservation boundaries, which were not changed to exclude that area for 14 more years. They transferred to a superior agricultural site.

The old mission near Cataldo has been used little since the departure of the Indians. The building was restored, after years of near abandonment, in 1928 by the Diocese of Boise and local efforts. The site of an annual pilgrimage of the Coeur d'Alene tribe on the Feast of the Assumption, August 15, the church was used for religious services on only that one day each year, and was open to the public upon request. As Idaho's first major bicentennial project, the Coeur d'Alene mission has undergone archeological investigation and extensive restoration since 1973, and will be operated as a museum.

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William N. Beschoff, The Jesuits in Old Oregon (Caldwell, Idaho).

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Yesterdays (Summer, 1958) Vol. II, No. 2, 20-27.

The Idaho Encyclopedia (Caldwell, Idaho, 1938).

George Fielder and Roderick Sprague, "Test Excavations at the Coeur d'Alene  
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National Register Grants-in-Aid office, September 1975.

"The Sacred Heart Mission," Historic American Buildings Survey Report,  
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As specified in the accompanying legal description (A) and plat map (B), prepared in a 1971 survey of Tax No. 1461, Part of Tax No. 944, Pioneer Educational Society, Cataldo Mission Property, the national historic landmark boundaries enclose 22.88 acres. This includes the sites of the Cataldo Mission church, two old cemeteries associated with the mission, a considerable area around the mission which contains no other historic structures but considerable archeological remains since the church was once the center of a settlement of as many as 300 Coeur d'Alene Indians in addition to the Jesuit community (as seen on the enclosed copy of a ca. 1860 drawing by Gilmore).

The boundary also encloses the 1890 parish house, located just east of the chapel, and a modern caretaker's house, northeast of the chapel, which do not contribute to the national significance of the landmark. Described specifically in the legal boundary survey statement, the boundary is an eight-sided figure, with its northern side along the old road which passed the mission, and is approximately 1500 by 800 feet at its widest points.

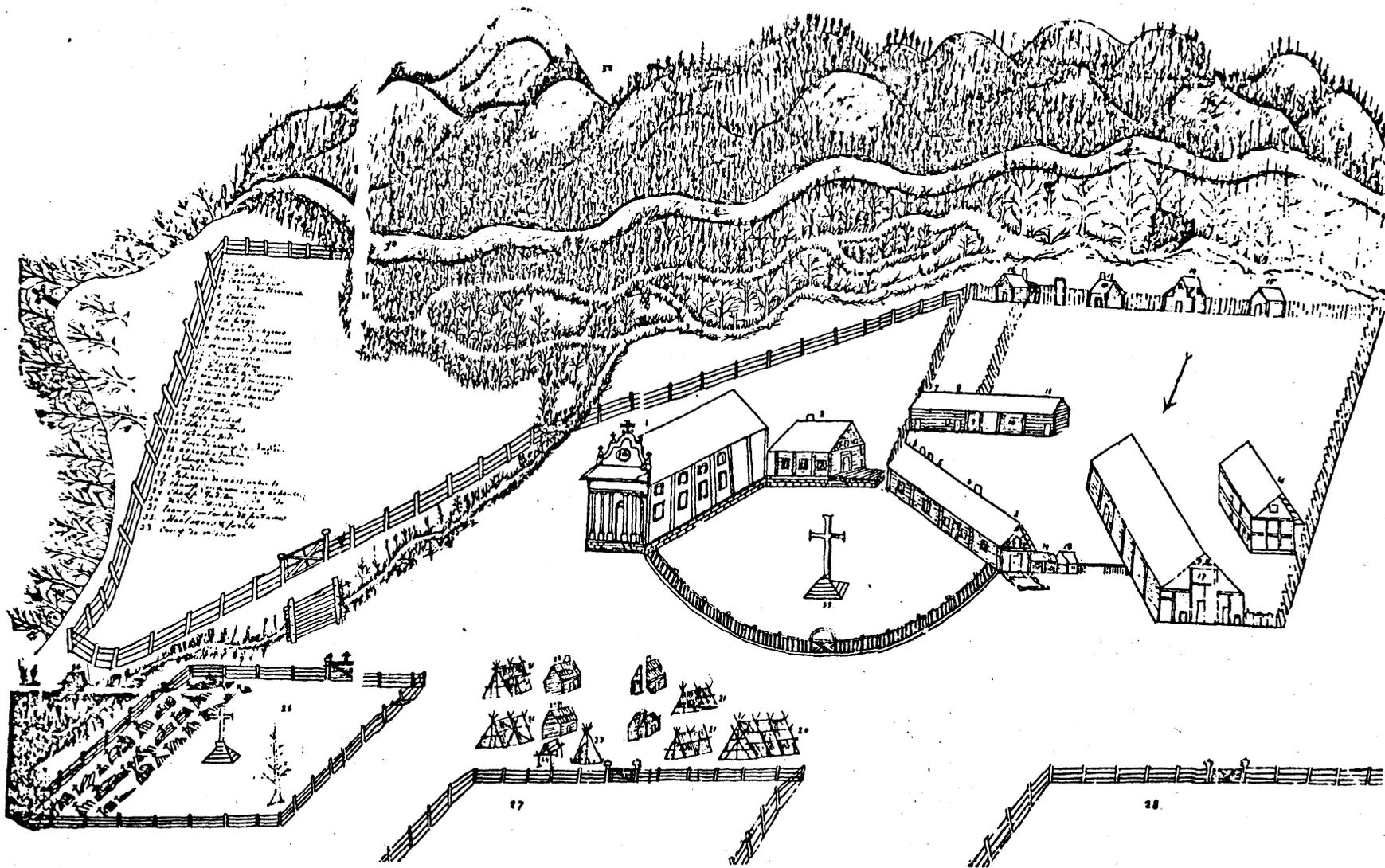


Fig. 5.--Sketch of mission by Fr. Gilmore ca. 1860. Legend translation on page 41.