

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  
Royal Presidio Chapel

AND/OR COMMON  
Royal Presidio Chapel

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
South Side of Church Street, opposite Figueroa Street  NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN  
Monterey  VICINITY OF \_\_\_\_\_ CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 012

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE  
California 06 Monterey 053

**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	<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 type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" 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  
The Roman Catholic Diocese of Monterey

STREET & NUMBER  
550 Church Street

CITY, TOWN STATE  
Monterey \_\_\_\_\_ VICINITY OF \_\_\_\_\_ California

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. County Recorder's Office

STREET & NUMBER  
240 Church Street

CITY, TOWN STATE  
Salinas \_\_\_\_\_

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN STATE

## 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 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 first presidio chapel, erected in 1770, had walls composed of logs standing on end (palisade construction), with their interstices filled with twigs and plastered over with mud. The roof, which was supported by a row of wooden beams, was composed of layers of sticks, branches, and leaves that were topped with earth. This rude building was replaced in 1773 by an adobe chapel, which was used until it was destroyed by fire in 1789.

Construction of the present Royal Presidio Chapel began in 1791 and was completed in 1795. Plans for the building were prepared by the Academy of San Carlos in Mexico City and the work was performed by Indians, under the supervision of Manuel Ruiz, a Mexican master stonemason. The classic facade of the chapel is the most elaborate and ornate of all of the Spanish-constructed churches in California. It consists of a circular-headed doorway flanked by Roman Doric pilasters, a pair on either side, the walls between which are relieved by niches with florid, semicircular heads and ornate corbels. The pilasters carry a Doric entablature, which in turn carries four pedestals, the central two of which, flanking the segmental window above the door, carry other pilasters that ascend the wall to the second cornice, which bears a shell-headed niche at the very top of the curved, pedimented gable. This upper niche, framed by appropriate pilasters and a segmental pediment, contains a representation of Our Lady of Guadalupe. As completed in 1795, the one-and-a-half-story building was 120 feet long and 30 feet wide, rectangular in shape and built on the basilica plan. The walls were constructed of native sandstone that was quarried near Carmel and the floor was of tile. A square two-story bell tower with a flat roof rose from the ground at the northeast corner and the chapel roof was of the low-arched type and covered with tile. The interior was quite plain and simple, and whitewashed walls being decorated only with a few pictures and images of saints. The original altar and pulpit were located in the south end of the building. After 1840 the chapel served as a parish church of the town of Monterey.

In 1858 the chapel was enlarged by 30 feet and transepts were added at the southern end. Pointed arch Gothic windows with stained glass were also added at this time in the side walls of the church. In 1893 the original flat roof of the bell tower was also replaced by the present peaked pyramid roof and crosses were added to the church.

In spite of these additions, the facade and stone side walls are basically intact and form an excellent example of early Spanish California architecture. Still an active church, the Royal Presidio Church is in excellent condition and is open to visitors. It is the last of the Presidio Chapels remaining in California.

# 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 checked="" 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 (Spanish)	<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      1794

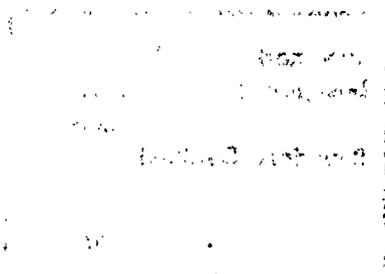
BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Erected in 1794-95 as the State church of Spanish California, the Royal Presidio Chapel of San Carlos de Borromeo de Monterey is the only remaining presidio chapel in California, and also the only 18th century Spanish survival in the present city of Monterey.

### History

The Presidio of Monterey was founded on June 3, 1770, as the second of the four presidios established by the Spanish in California. The first buildings were rude log huts surrounded by a stockade. In 1776 Monterey was designated the capital of Spanish California and the log fort was rebuilt of stone. By 1778 the square-shaped fort was enclosed by a stone wall that measured 110 yards on a side and was 12 feet high and 4 feet thick. Inside were 10 one-story adobe houses, each 21 by 24 feet, one, one-story adobe barracks, 136 by 18 feet, and an adobe chapel. The adobe buildings were rebuilt again in 1789 and 1818, following large fires. By 1841, however, the stone walls and all of the presidio buildings, except the Royal Presidio Chapel, had been razed, and their materials utilized in constructing new houses in the town of Monterey.





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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 2

Today, the side of the chapel on the south side of the Church Street opposite Figuero Street is part of a compound of buildings operated by the parish, consisting of church offices east of the chapel and rectory west of the chapel. Neither of these twentieth-century structures contributes to the national significance of the last of the remaining Royal Presidio Chapels in America.

The entire property is surrounded by a wooden fence. At a point on the fence on the southern side of Church Street, approximately 200' from the intersection of Church Street and Figuero Street, proceed in a southerly direction approximately 180' to a point; thence, in an easterly direction approximately 100' to a point; thence north 180' to a point on the fence; thence west along the fence to the point of origin.