

# Icons In The Old Adobe Mission

## Scottsdale, Arizona



Nicholas Rayder  
with  
Cruz Medina Jr.  
2023



I drew the picture on the cover in 2001 and gave renderings of it to friends joining the effort to 'Save the Mission'!

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## Dedication

I dedicate this book to José María Burruel who grew up with the Mission in his blood. He writes about it in his book, Mexicans In Scottsdale, (Arcadia Publishing 2007) and shares with us in freely told stories of how, as a child, he used to “run and play in the alley next to the Mission”...and during festivals, “how you could walk near the Mission and smell in the air the wonderful Mexican food sold at the small wooden stalls to raise money to build the Mission.” His love for the Mission, his dedication and efforts to ensure that the Mission be saved and restored are well known. His wonderful spirit lives in the Mission. At a public meeting in 2002 we individually petitioned for the Mission to be designated “historic”, then restored and celebrated as a “pearl of great price!” After the meeting, we introduced ourselves, then made a joint pledge that “there’s no turning back”. Together we would work diligently and with clear purpose, to restore the Old Adobe Mission.

Nicholas Rayder



# Acknowledgments

Foremost, thanks to the Mexicans who lived in Escatel (Scottsdale); and any participants from the Pima (Akimel O'odham), Maricopa (Piipaash) and Yaqui (Yoeme) tribes\*. In the 1930s many contributed five cents, ten cents or whatever they could afford for supplies, then labored diligently to construct the Mission.

To Fathers Gino and Alonzo (OFM) at the The Franciscan Renewal Center and to Sr. Vikki (OCSO) at the Santa Rita Abbey. They counseled me: “pray on the project, listen to your heart and walk in the steps of St. Francis...then, navigate the path, do as best you can, and restore that mission!”

To Anselm Bishoff, at the start of the restoration, offered strong vision and encouragement, then provided continued support throughout the process.

To JoAnn Handley and Francis Young at the Scottsdale Historical Society and to Don Messerve, Mayor Mary Manross, and the entire town council, for assuring that the Mission be designated ‘Historic’ there by guaranteeing that it not be destroyed or changed in design and appearance in any way!

To Irving Fleming, Director of the Scottsdale Symphony Orchestra, for maintaining the Mission to the best of his ability for 27 years, ensuring that the Mission remain intact and suitable to restore.

To José and Francis Burruel for their help writing a proposal in 2001 that was submitted to OLPH outlining the importance of restoring the Old Adobe Mission. And for their diligence in insisting that the Mission remain pristine as an honor to all past, present and future Mexican families and visitors seeking solace and spiritual meaning in their lives.

To Father Thomas Hever, who in 2001 became the new pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help (OLPH) with an overflowing plate of responsibilities—yet, found another clean plate for the Old Adobe Mission restoration project. To Deacon Jim Hoyt for his valued support and to Sister Alice Ruane for directing the Docents who continue spending countless hours welcoming visitors to the Mission and sharing its rich history.

To the Mission Committee who, in 2002, set in their hearts the goal of restoring the Mission—and then worked tirelessly to achieve that goal! - Big time!

Deacon Jim Hoyt  
Jen Donovan  
Ted McDonnell  
Bob Novascone

Nick Rayder  
Gary Underhill  
Jose' Burruel  
Francis Burruel

Erma Egurrola  
Carol Tucak  
Alvaro Corral  
Pat Underhill





## Acknowledgments (cont.)

To Gloria Argueso for her work in 2003 writing a proposal to the Arizona Historical Society—seeking a major grant (successful) for structural and interior repairs to save the Mission. And for her continued work with Jen Donovan and Johanna Warner helping to develop meaningful cultural programs at the Mission. To Rad Masinalli who holds the keys to the Mission and daily monitors and maintains the property to ensure the Mission is well cared for, providing a ‘still point in a turning world’ for ‘all who knock at the door.’ And for John Contugno who designed and gave us signs for the Mission at the start.

I was fortunate to have Jennifer Marquart refine the writing in this manuscript and offer direction and encouragement along the way. I received set-up help from Christian Sanft and editing from Dr. John Nicoles, Mike Rayder and Cheri McLaren. I am very thankful to Mike Mulcahy of Black Iron Creative for his competence in designing and producing the document, as well as for his patience incorporating my many revisions.

Additionally, let it be known that the initial funding received to repair and restore the Old Adobe Mission was generously provided by the Arizona State Parks Historic Preservation Heritage Fund.

To my family, I am blessed and thankful for my daughter, Tara Zoe Baker. Thank you for always sharing your sound advice in all things and reminding me to eat healthy: “No more ice cream, more veggies!” And for her husband, Chris, and my two grandsons, Rawley and Jake who brighten my life. Just wait and see the impact they all are making to our environment and society.



Finally, To my friend Cruz Medina. Working with you during your last few, precious, months of your life on earth was a joy and a privilege. Your contributions to this story gave it significant depth and meaning. To his family who fed me with wonderful Mexican food and showed such appreciation at seeing Cruz’s words and story being put to print, I thank you.

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\*Jacob Butler provided the accurate tribal names of Indian People living in the valley. Jacob is a friend, an incredible cultural artist and the Community Gardens Coordinator for the Cultural Resource Department of the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community.



# Introduction

In 1999, I was living in the historic ski town of Crested Butte, Colorado, which is known for its pristine beauty and deep powder. After over twenty years in the Butte, I was nearing sixty years of age and having some major health problems. I felt it was time to find a place to winter in a warmer climate, away from the magnificent, yet inconvenient blizzards that frequently tested my muscles' resolve for shoveling snow!

I decided to pack my car and embark on a pilgrimage through the southwest. My trip soon became a spiritual journey.

I visited churches and stayed in monasteries. I prayed and meditated along the way for comfort, direction, and solace. I had a remarkable two-month voyage that eventually led me to the desert, where this story begins.

With my interest and practice in art and painting, I decided to reside in the art-friendly town of Scottsdale, Arizona. I also had good friends from my childhood, Vincent, Debi, and Marie Agostino, who lived there. I would become a part time summer resident. I purchased a fixer-upper close to Old Town and frequently rode my bicycle throughout the area. One day, I happened to pass the Old Adobe Mission. I was surprised to find an adobe 'mission' in Scottsdale and was awestruck by the stunning simplicity of its lines and austere



quiet beauty of the building. It was closed and appeared to be in a rather dilapidated condition. I was confused by the sign above the front door that read: “The Scottsdale Symphony”

Little did I know that for the next ten years I would dedicate my time and energy to saving that Mission, striving to keep it from further deterioration and to restore it. I felt a clear, deep calling that my mission should be to save this “pearl of great price”, an important sacred place.

The larger story of my ten-year involvement with the Mission’s restoration—the highlights, frustrations, and politics—still needs to be written.

What follows is part of that story, how several important Mission icons were uncovered, and restored along with memories shared by Cruz Medina Jr., who served as an altar boy in the Mission in the 1940s.







# Our Lady of Guadalupe Painting

After the Scottsdale Symphony moved out of the Mission in 2003 to its new location at Grace Memorial Church, I had a chance to explore all parts of the Mission. The large room was in disarray, with wooden risers scattered around the floor. Because water had seeped up from the floor and soaked the carpeted room, it smelled moldy. The smaller rooms, rebuilt as offices and storage areas, were cluttered. The wooden partitions under the closed-in portico were falling apart. The wooden ceiling beams in the main room had termite streams hanging from them. The south adobe wall had extensive water damage behind the loosened wainscot paneling. Three large, seven-foot metal swamp coolers were installed in openings that once held stained-glass windows.





When I climbed the narrow steps to the balcony, I observed a large painting lying flat in the back southwest corner with trash and cardboard boxes piled around it. It was a large painting of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The canvas was stretched on a five-foot by ten-foot wood frame with a metal pipe attached across the top. Long, seventeen-foot wooden poles were attached to the metal pipe. These poles were used to hoist up and guide the painting during parades.



I felt it was essential to get the painting down from the balcony to a safe place. It was lying flat, and I was afraid the boxes stacked haphazardly around it could easily dislodge and tear the canvas. I managed to free it from the pile and balanced it on the short balcony wall.



I paused, took a breath, and looked at the large painting of Our Lady. The picture is beautiful and is one of the few original icons still left in the Mission. It was the centerpiece of parades honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe that began shortly after the Mission was built in 1933.

On Dec. 12, local Hispanics and other Catholics celebrate the Miracle of the Roses. This celebration originates from the appearance of the La Virgen de Guadalupe to Juan Diego in 1531. Historically, the painting is paraded through the streets and used as the centerpiece to celebrate the miracle of this appearance.

There is a photo of the painting attached to the front tower of the Mission, with the Mission decorated in roses made of colored crepe paper. I learned from one visitor, who marched in the parades as a child, that “during the celebration, a floodlight connected to a battery behind the painting

An artist (unknown) painting another portrayal of Our Lady



would light up 'Our Lady' periodically." The flashes of light would replicate the majestic appearance of Our Lady to Juan Diego.

Some old photos show parishioners of the Yaqui and Pima cultures participating with the Mexicans and Anglos in this celebration. The young drummers with feathered headdresses are Pima Indians from St. John's Indian school in Komatke, Arizona. From 1901 to 1938, the school was directed by three sisters of St. Joseph who traveled up from Tucson (see addendum A).



Those who pray to Our Lady are dedicated to Her and believe the promise she made. Juan Diego said Her exact words were, "I am your Mother full, of mercy and love for you, and those who love Me, trust in Me, and have recourse to Me, I will hear your complaints, and I will comfort your affliction and sufferings." This painting held a special place in the hearts of the families who built the Mission and lived in Eskatel.



By 2003, efforts to restore the Mission were in full swing:

- The Mission was declared 'historic' by the Scottsdale Historic Preservation Committee. The Town Council voted unanimously in support of the historic designation.
- In 2002, José Burruel and I wrote and submitted a plan for the Mission's restoration. The plan reasoned that the Mission was an important historical site, as the first Catholic Church in Scottsdale. Additionally, it stands as what scripture would call a "pearl of great price," and what Rainer Rilke would call a "still point in a turning world." The Mission is one of the few remaining examples of the Hispanic and other Native Cultures that existed in the area before Scottsdale's urbanization.
- A Restoration Committee was identified by Father Thomas Hever and charged to take the reins for the restoration.
- The building was inspected for its stability, was rid of asbestos, then major construction started to stabilize the tower and redesign the surrounding ground for water runoff.
- An architect, Don Ryden, was hired to design and supervise major construction needed to restore the Mission.
- Scattered fundraising had begun. A major grant written by Gloria Argueso was submitted and approved by the Arizona State Parks Historic Preservation Heritage Fund.
- The original stained-glass windows were found after 26 years and restored by Ron Olson, then reinstalled in the Mission.

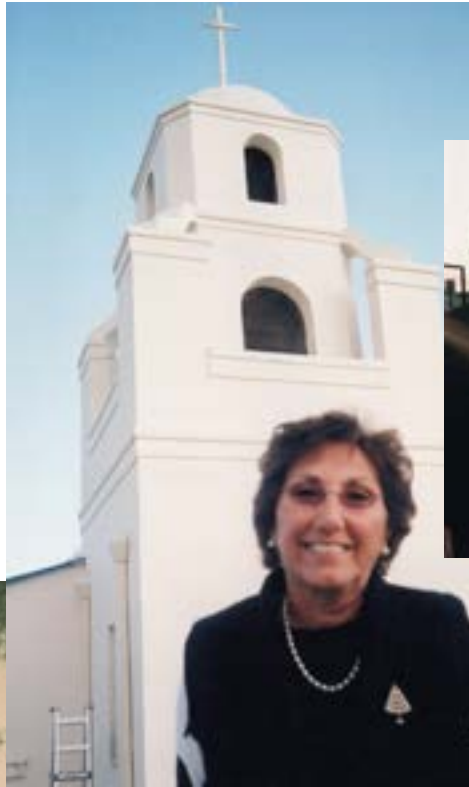
Restoration activities continued in earnest, and by 2004, the Old Adobe Mission Church came alive with a number of activities:

- Special masses and gatherings to dedicate the Mission were held honoring descendants of families who built the Mission.
- Weddings and Quinceañeras took place in the Mission.
- Weekly Taize Prayer sessions preceded Easter.
- A special ecumenical service was concelebrated.
- The Mission opened for visitors who marvel at its simplicity, peacefulness, and beauty, and at the painting of Our Lady hanging behind the simple altar.

In December 2007, a pageant of the Miracle of the Roses was once again performed in front of the Mission. Produced and directed by Johanna Warner and her team—the performance involved members of the original families who helped build the Mission. It was remarkable. The clouds parted from a continuing rainstorm. The sun filled the sky. The street in front of the Mission was blocked off, and bleachers were erected. A large audience marveled as the beautiful performance honoring La Virgen de Guadalupe was once again performed - forty two years after its first occurrence.

Thanks, Johanna and team for restoring the iconic pageant!



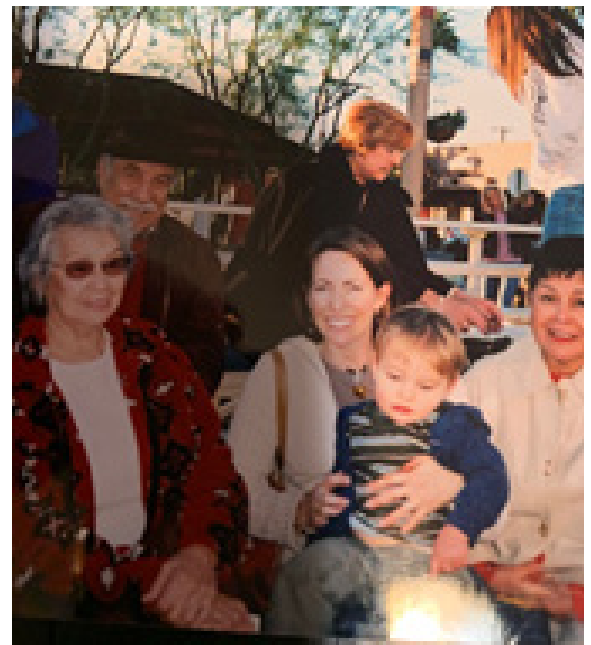


Father Hever with Mayor Mary Manross and her husband Larry



Johanna Warner

Gloria Argueso and Ana Gonzalez



Tara Baker holding Jake with Jose' Burruel, Rosemary Medina Vasquez and Delores Rangel



Father Mcquire at a meeting





# Damage to the Painting

During the Miracle of the Roses pageant in 2007, a brisk wind toppled the painting of Our Lady onto a metal pipe holding up the Mission sign, causing a large tear in the canvas.

Arrangements were made to repair the tear, which required the painting to be transported across town. It was strapped to the back of a pick-up truck then came loose, fell to the road and was run over by oncoming traffic. The wooden frame was demolished, tearing the canvas and breaking parts of the decorative frame. The canvas was retrieved from the roadway, folded into a bundle, and returned to Our Lady of Perpetual Help (OLPH) with several parts of the decorative frame.

We were sad and frustrated at the misfortune. A revered icon of the Mission, of its story and history, trusted to us for protection, had been destroyed!

I looked at the pile of canvas and wondered if it could ever be salvaged. There were several large cuts in the canvas, and flakes of paint came off when it was handled and moved. I said a prayer asking for help to repair the painting and pledged to try. I called my friend Steve Hochhaus, owner of Portfolio Picture Framing.

I cleared out my garage and carefully unfolded the canvas onto a large sheet on the floor. I asked Steve to take a look at the canvas to tell me if it could be saved and advise me on steps needed to restore it, if indeed it could be saved.

Not only did Steve guide me on the repair process, but he also gave me special 'silkened' canvas to patch the tears. I followed his directions, repaired the canvas, and touched up the black border on the painting. I did not touch up any part of the figure of Our Lady; I wasn't experienced at restoring paintings.





Steve also told me about a special conditioner to roll on the painting to preserve it and brighten the original colors. The liquid is “retouch varnish.” It is essential to condition the painting every two or three years, especially if it is in contact with the air and not protected behind glass.



When Steve came back to see the repaired canvas, he was pleased with my work, as was Sister Alice. Steve understood the painting's sacred nature and, without hesitation, offered to stretch the canvas and attach it onto a wooden frame, free as a contribution to the Mission!

Steve took the canvas to his shop and started working.



Building a frame then stretching and mounting such a large old canvas onto it is a delicate and time-consuming process. Steve made the project a top priority.

The extensive amount of time and skill Steve and his son, Barrett, spent stretching and mounting the painting was considerable. The result was amazing—it was a blessing, and one of the mini-miracles. They were proud of their efforts and ability to contribute to the Mission.









# Returning Our Lady Back To The Mission

Portfolio Framing is located several blocks from the Mission. Instead of finding a truck with a bed large enough to hold the painting and risking another truck ride as disastrous as the first, I thought a safer way to get the painting back to the Mission was to organize a parade and carry it! The word went out, and the response was immediate. A group of us met at Portfolio Framing and had a wonderful, joyous parade marching Our Lady back to Her home.

On the way, we took a short rest stop in the park and talked about the significance of the painting





The feelings we had on our adventure to get the painting back to the Mission were profound. The short procession pulled us together as a group.

We leaned the painting against the wall and kept the plastic covering on it for protection. We all wanted our picture taken with Our Lady to celebrate Her glorious return to the Mission!









# Reattaching The Decorative Border

When the painting was run over by traffic, several pieces of the decorative border framing the painting were also damaged. Luckily, the pieces were also collected from the roadway. The damage to the canvas and its stretching onto a new frame reduced the size of the painting. We wondered if we had enough of the original decorative border to attach around the front.

I asked my neighbor, Larry Tebelak, an architect, pro golfer, and backyard carpenter, to help secure the border to the painting. When Larry and I pieced the parts of the border that were still in good shape onto the painting, we had exactly enough border to complete the project. I mean exactly enough. It was another mini-miracle!

The painting of Our Lady of Guadalupe was in an automobile accident, received considerable damage, was repaired, and was again paraded through the streets of Scottsdale by a dedicated group of Her devotees back to Her home in The Old Adobe Mission.







# Finding The Altar

After the Scottsdale Symphony moved out of the Mission, I also explored the space in the back of the Mission, under the addition behind the east wall. It was dark, musty, and overgrown with weeds, most likely caused from a leak in the roof.

There in the back, I noticed a large bulky object. I reached through the weeds and felt something solid. I pulled away some of the tall grass and saw the back of a rather large 8-foot by 4-foot block of plaster. I knelt, extending my arm around the object, and felt what seemed to be a round pillar. I managed to clear the corner and could peek behind the object. I realized that it was the Mission's altar! Wow and double wow! What good fortune.

I pulled most of the weeds and tried to move it. It wouldn't budge.

There was no way that I could move it by myself. I went to Anselm Bishoff, who lives just north of the Mission, told him of my find, and asked if he could send some of his workers to help free the altar and move it into the church.



I already had several meetings with Anselm, owner of Bishoff's and Shades of the West, about the Mission and my intent to restore it. He was very excited that there was finally an effort to restore the mission and offered a financial gift to fund the project. This was the first donation we received. Anselm sent over four strong Mexican workers who were as surprised as I was to see the altar and who were excited to help move this sacred part of the Mission.



They looked at the altar and, without a second thought, went ahead and picked it up. I was shocked. It must have weighed close to 900 pounds. I was afraid they would injure themselves. It was large and bulky, and they had to manipulate it out a narrow back door and then move it around on the sidewalk to the front of the Mission. If it dropped, I thought it might split into pieces, or that part of it would break off. I had the men put the altar down and suggested that they get some skids to place it on and roll it, which we did.

When the altar was moved outside into the light, we couldn't believe how beautiful it was, especially with the raised sculptured scene of the Last Supper. We wanted our picture taken standing behind this lovely find.

The base of the altar was rough and damaged. It had a thin brown plastic base molding partially glued to it that broke off during the move. Every other part of the altar seemed in good condition. It was however, dusty and soiled with grass stains. I liked the faux art technique that made the altar look like it was chiseled out of marble.





The men guided the altar up the sidewalk, around the corner, and into the Mission. On the way, several people saw the altar and wanted to know what was happening. We told them, “we just found the Mission’s altar and are returning it to its rightful place as part of a restoration project.” They wanted to help and seemed as excited as we were, watching our simple procession.

The altar was placed on the East wall below the painting of Our Lady of Guadalupe and cleaned. Steve, at Portfolio Framing, told us not to use any detergent, but “just clean it with clear water and a clean cotton cloth.”



The Mission seemed to be coming alive with a shared, common spirit. The scene of the painting with the altar in front made a simple statement of peace and serenity in the large empty room.

One of the Restoration Committee members learned of a set of old wooden church pews that were salvaged from the old St. Rose of Lima Chapel in Phoenix. The benches were old but in good shape and seemed to reflect the period the Mission was built. They were graciously donated to the Mission and nicely filled the space.



Each of us working on the restoration couldn’t believe the simple beauty taking place in the Mission. And it was slowly becoming a must-see destination for visitors to Old Town Scottsdale. The Old Adobe Mission was being transformed into a “still point in a turning world,” using the poet Rilke’s words.

One day, soon after the altar was in place, I was visiting the Mission. I witnessed a person drilling holes in the altar base, then bolting on a new piece of baseboard he had coated with Liquid Nails to adhere it.

He was asked by a member of the Restoration Committee to fix the altar base with new molding to improve its look. I paused and asked him to stop what he was doing. I thanked him for his effort, then explained that our objective was to restore the Mission and icons in it, not to change it with a new, perceived look. He had already bolted a large piece of the new molding to the bottom of the altar. I helped him remove it, then thanked him again for his time and interest in helping, and took another deep breath. If the new molding, coated with Liquid Nails and then bolted in place, had more time to harden, we would have never been able to remove it.



The baseboard he was installing was larger than the altar's base and was incompatible with the altar's design and style.

It's in our nature to want to improve things, especially something as important and beautiful as the altar. At this time we didn't have a person designated to review, and approve, any change to the Mission. Our goal was to keep to our pledge of "restoration not renovation." We had a written contract, signed by the diocese, regarding our funding from the Arizona State Parks Historical Preservation Heritage Fund. This document specifically contracted us to "restore and rehabilitate the historic building and site but not to change or renovate it."

Yet, some renovation was necessary, and the City of Scottsdale graciously contributed. They ran pipes across part of the ceiling to install a fire protection system required for safety. We had to upgrade the electrical system and install lighting, with heating and cooling equipment. Those changes were unavoidable. (See Addendum B for the Arizona Historical Society's rules



for restoration of historic buildings outlined in the document: The Secretary Of The Interiors Standards For Rehabilitation).

From old photographs, it was clear that the bottom of the altar was plain, without molding.

To restore the altar's base, a friend and I first removed the Liquid Nails adhesive that remained. We then sanded the surface and carefully applied a coat of white patching plaster. As were many other Hispanic people who worked and helped with the restoration, my friend was deeply honored to be asked to help. He felt, like others, that he was working on the special altar for a sacred church. The base still needed to be painted in faux art to look like marble.



As if by providence (or was it just another 'mini-miracle?') the following weekend—I mean the immediate following weekend—right after we had cleaned and plastered the base of the



altar (the patching plaster wasn't even dry), I was invited to my friends Terry and Jan Johnson's party to celebrate the remodel of their home.

It was beyond coincidence - one part of the remodel was a bathroom that was professionally decorated with faux art. And the artist was there! Her name was Kim, and her faux art was beautiful. I told her about the altar in the Mission and that we needed someone with her talent to paint the base to make it look like marble. Without hesitation, she offered to help. She came to the Mission the following weekend and 'marbled' the base. It looked incredible! We tried to compensate her for her work, but she was insistent and said "My work is a donation to the Mission."



Jen and Jack Donovan renewing their marriage vows

The altar emerged from the weeds, had the base repaired and 'marbled' with faux art, and sat in the Mission under Our Lady of Guadalupe during the restoration's early years.

Finding and restoring these two important icons, the painting of Our Lady and the altar, was a significant start in restoring the Mission. We continued on our

way, inspired and excited about what may come next.



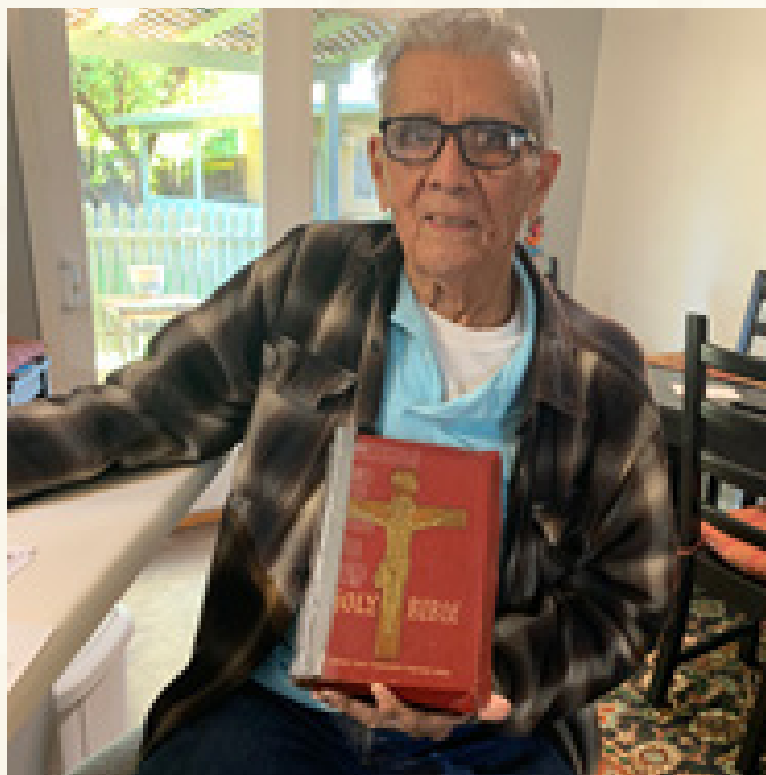
Father Maquire was proud of our work.





The celebrations increased



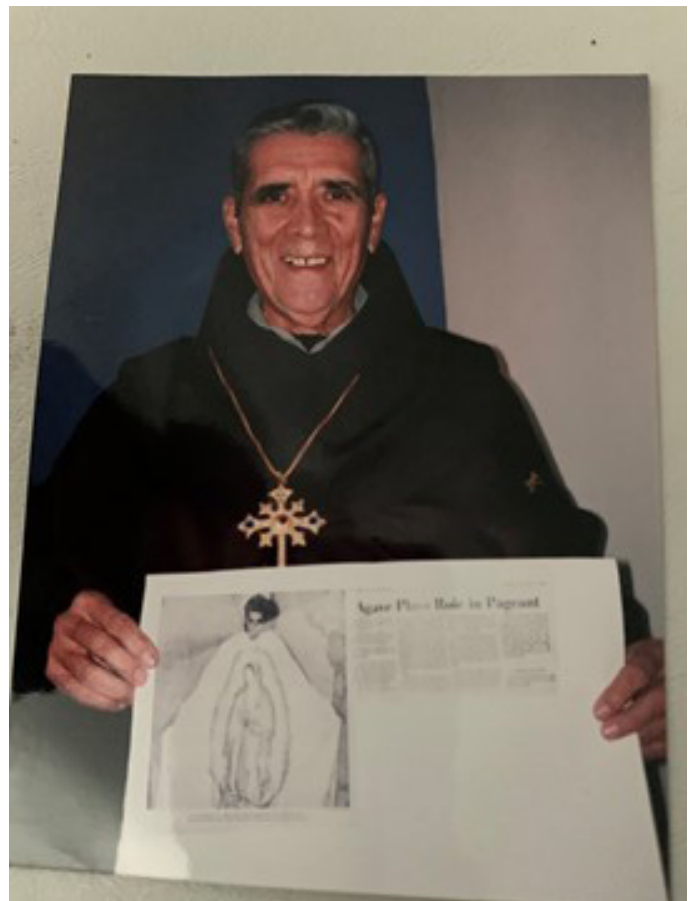


# The Original Altar

I learned that my friend, Cruz Medina Jr., who is now 85, in addition to playing the Bishop at a recent Miracle of the Roses pageant, was an altar boy in the Mission when he was ten years old. He played Juan Diego in the Roses pageant back in 1954. What a find—and a long-time thespian!

I asked Cruz to describe the altar he served at when he was ten years old. He said, “It was simple and made of wood. It was about seven feet wide by three feet deep, and about three feet tall. It was positioned against the east wall.” He went on to explain that “it was sort of raised on top of two platforms, each level the size of a step... the altar boys would kneel on the lower step, and the priest would be on the upper platform in front of the altar.”

He also explained that “there was a small table on the floor to the right of the altar called the credence table that held little glass dispensers called cruets for the wine and water, a brass serving paten used during communion, and a small towel for the priest to dry his hands.” When I asked him to describe more about the top of the altar, he recalled: “Toward the back of the altar were three beeswax candles on the





left side of the tabernacle containing the host, and three on the right side.” He said, “I would light only two at a regular mass, and all six at a high mass.”

He went on: “The tabernacle was small and round with a domed top and a small door with a keyhole in front. Behind it was a bronze cross about two or three feet tall. The cross had the figure of Jesus on it and seemed to be made of rounded, shiny, brass pipe. On the top of the altar, right in front of where the priest would stand, there was also an indentation about five-inch square and about two inches deep that held a sacred relic”.

Cruz continued: “During communion, the front railing, where people would kneel to receive the blessed host, was covered with a white linen cloth. Also, the aisle in front of the altar running to the entry was surfaced with blueish slate. Emilio Coral and several others went to Mummy Mountain and trucked and installed the slate in the Mission.” Today, a sample of that slate is displayed under the stairs that lead to the choir loft.

From Cruz’s description and with his guidance, I sketched the altar and how it might have looked on the platforms he described. I also drew the statues of Mary and Joseph that Cruz said “stood on the left and right side of the altar against the wall.” I finished by drawing an altar rail that he said “was very simple”, adding the linen cloth that he draped over the railing during communion.

He said the sketch was “pretty close to what it looked like.” He then remembered that on the altar in front of a candle at each end, there was a plaque with a prayer on it. “The prayer on the right was always said by the priest at the end of the mass. It was The Last Gospel. In the beginning was the word, and the word was God...”



Cruz Medina Jr.  
pointing to a  
picture of  
his parents.



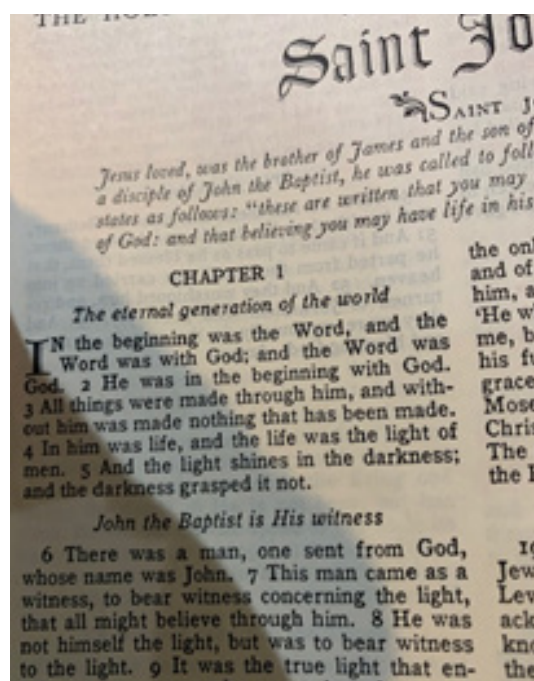


I was pretty excited that we now had a sketch of what the original altar might have looked like.

Several days later, to my surprise, Cruz called me and said he was looking through his old Bible and found a picture of how the altar really looked! He brought me the book and, sure enough, in a section of the Bible were pictures showing the basic Catholic altar's design and function. Cruz's recollection was right on. The sketch from which he dictated from memory was remarkably accurate.

The altar is called the "Altar of Sacrifice" and has deep spiritual meaning in the Catholic church. It stands as a symbol of Christ Himself and is commemorative of the table at which Christ, at the Last Supper, offered the first mass.

The Bible goes on to describe various characteristics of the Altar of Sacrifice and tells about "a small compartment cut into the top of all Catholic altars that holds a sacred relic." That was also recollected by Cruz and was in the top of the altar we found in the weeds in the Mission. Unfortunately, the small space containing the relic was inadvertently filled in during the redesign of the altar.



## Cruz Medina Jr.'s Walk Through The Mission

After our meeting discussing Cruz's description of the original altar, he suggested we tour the Mission and see "what more I can remember."

The Mission was closed during the beginning of 2020 because of the epidemic, but Rad Masinalli was there almost every day to check on it, spiff up the grounds, and take care of anything that needed to be taken care of.

We set up a time, and I asked Cruz to help me bring the original poles that were used to hoist the painting of Our Lady of Guadalupe during the processions. I was storing them in my garage as there wasn't a place in the Mission to keep them during the construction, I did not want them lost.

There were a couple of two-inch-wide round wooden poles, each about 15 feet in length. Two of the poles were shorter. At the top of two poles, a cut was made to attach a two-inch pipe that held the painting.

The poles were attached to the iron pipe that was attached to the five-foot by eight-foot painting of Our Lady of Guadalupe. As I mentioned, the painting and poles were in a pile with cardboard boxes left by the Scottsdale Symphony when they moved out of the Mission.

I wanted the poles returned and displayed in the Mission, possibly next to the painting with pictures of the men holding them in the Miracle of Roses parade. Now more than seventy years old, the poles were used initially in the 1950s and are icons in and of themselves.

As we continued our walk, Cruz pointed to a small hole in the ceiling in the sacristy and said excitedly, "That's where the rope came down from the bell tower... that I would ring before each mass!" He then demonstrated with his motions how "I had to initially pull the rope—let it up at the right time so the bell clapper could return... then pull it again with a subtle force so the clapper would hit once, then release and hit the other side enabling the bell to go ding dong! If you didn't release it, or time it right, it would only ring once." Cruz explained.



“Ring the bell, pulling the rope, was something everyone looked forward to... everyone wanted to ring the bell — mostly the boys.”

Cruz then related how when no one was around, he and his friends would climb the bell tower and try to catch pigeons. “There were bats there too... The bats would hang upside down outside in the portico.” He said that the bell “seemed huge”... It may have been the school bell that’s now on display in the Little Red School House that was loaned to the Mission.

The bell that is now in the tower is one that my brother, Edward, gave to me when I was summering in Colorado. On his previous visit to the Mission, Ed was aware that there was no bell in the Mission’s tower. When he returned to his home in Colorado, Ed saw a bell at one of the many garage sales he haunts. Ed is sort of a “King of Detritus.” In his case, resalable junk and especially discarded metal. By the way, he sells his metal objects with a “lifetime guarantee!”



I knew the bell Ed gave me was meant for a school, not a church or mission. I almost refused to cart it to Arizona. Then, when viewing objects in the museum at the Little Red School House, I realized that the bell lent to the Mission was the actual school bell used by the School, not a costly church bell. Ed sold the bell to Scott Fisher. Scott is an old friend and long-time shop keeper in Crested Butte. When I told him about the Mission and the need for a school bell, like the one he bought from Ed, without hesitation, he offered it as a gift to the Mission. A docent, skilled in carpentry, hung the bell in the tower and attached a rope. The rope weaves through the ceiling and drops down into the little room under the staircase. Go pull the rope and enjoy the sound! Thanks, Ed and Scott!

When Cruz and I returned to the main room, Cruz pointed up to the South wall about seven feet high above the stained glass windows and said, “that’s where the Stations of the Cross were hung. They were a little higher than the windows and hung around both sides of the room.”

There were originally 14 Stations of the Cross.

Cruz also remembered that there “was one kerosene heater on the south side, on the floor about halfway back against the wall. It was used to heat the church when it was cold.”

When we were at my house, I went to my computer and searched for pictures of ‘old antique kerosene heaters’ on the internet. There were hundreds of them for sale! I scrolled down, and Cruz said, “Stop!” He pointed to one and said, “That looks like it. It’s something like that.”

Cruz continued, “It had a pipe in the back that went right through the wall to vent it. We used to go to the Chinese store J. Chew at the corner of Main and Brown to buy kerosene, “I think it was 10¢ or 15¢ a gallon.” He continued, “Later on, when the Mission became a parish, about 1949, I think, a large natural gas heater about two feet by four feet was installed which hung in front of the balcony.”

Cruz remembered that, “There was a foot-pedal squeeze organ in the balcony for the choir to use during mass. It didn’t have a tall back and was real simple.” As with finding the heater, I searched the internet for ‘old antique foot-pedaled organs,’ found a slew of them, then scrolled down. Cruz punched my shoulder and said, “It sort of looked like this one.” I told him not to punch so hard on the next search. We laughed, then I made a copy of the organ he pointed to.





During another visit, we were walking up to the altar, and Cruz looked at the pews in the Mission and said, “they are not the ones I remember.” He felt that the large single pew displayed against the Mission’s wall was more like the original pews but wasn’t stained that color. He remembered that the original benches were about twelve feet long and that there was a row of them on each side of the aisle leading to the altar.

Cruz said he knew well what the pews were like because: “Sometimes when I was at mass, and bored I would bite and chew the top of the pew in front of me. I was 8 or 9 at the time, and I would put my two front teeth on top of the pew and pull back like a beaver!”

I said, “I guess you weren’t fed very well on Sunday morning!” We laughed again.

Cruz wanted to visit the Catholic church in Guadalupe to see if they had the original Mission pews. One Sunday, we drove to Guadalupe. If you go, you’ll see two beautiful white churches behind a large field. The larger church is Catholic, and the smaller one, The Temple of the Yaqui (El Temple De Los Yaquis). We waited for the church to open for a Sunday mass, and Cruz noticed that the pews in Guadalupe were nothing like the long pews in the Mission. The Yaqui Temple has a dirt floor to admonish the Yaqui parishioners to ‘walk and pray close to the earth.’ The large field in front is where the Yaqui hold their Holy Week Service and celebration. There are special Yaqui dances and a complete re-creation of Christ’s last days on earth which includes burning an effigy of Judas, the apostle who betrayed Jesus with a kiss.

Thanks to Cruz Medina Jr., we now know about the original altar, how the Mission was heated, where the music came from, and more importantly, who to blame for climbing the tower and terrorizing the pigeons! Also, we will be able to verify one of the original Mission pews if we find teeth marks on the top of it!





# Finding The Stained Glass Windows

Once, on a visit to the Mission in 2003, Irving Fleming, the director of the Scottsdale Symphony (who used the Mission for 27 years from 1976 to 2003), was showing me around. He pointed to the recording equipment and files he used as director of the Symphony.

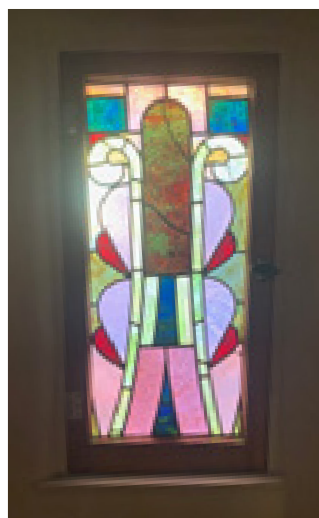
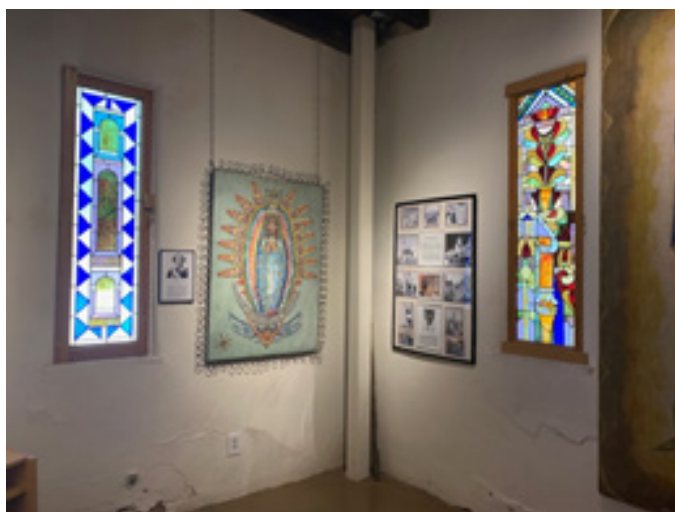
He then explained that when he moved into the Mission in 1976, he had all three double-pane stained glass windows in the south wall removed to allow for the installation of three very large swamp coolers. “The entire portico on the north side of the Mission was also walled off from the street, and two more double-pane stained glass windows were removed from the north wall to allow us to build offices for my staff.”



I asked him what happened to the stained glass windows? He hesitated then, in a very low voice, said: “The windows were taken to someplace in Phoenix...I had someone come and pick them up, but I forgot who...or where they were taken.” I thought his reaction to my question was unusual. From that point, our interaction seemed strained. I didn’t follow-up on his hesitation or seeming uneasiness about the windows.

Irving knew of my interest in the Mission but wasn’t sure of my intent. When he first learned that I was a grant writer and project developer (in education and with social justice programs), he asked if I would be interested in working for the Symphony to help them get grant money. I didn’t want to get involved with the Symphony, so I directed the conversation back to our discussion of the Mission.

During our walk-through, I noticed five smaller stained glass windows in the Mission, two in the sacristy (the room below the tower), one in the loft (not shown), and one in the confessional. There was also a smaller window with Bernabé Herrera’s name in lettering in the downstairs room facing the street.



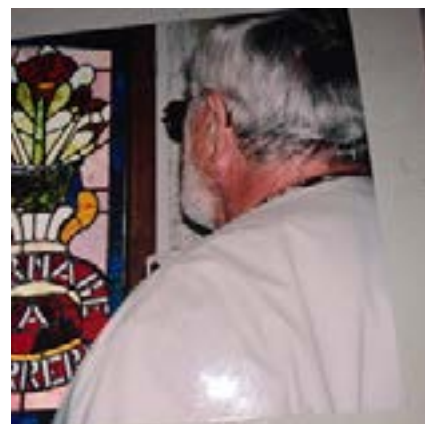


The five smaller windows still in the Mission were beautifully constructed and designed! As I left the Mission, I wondered if the original windows still existed? How incredible it would be if they could be found! The only clue that I had is that they were somewhere in Phoenix.

I went home and began making phone calls. Using the Yellow Pages, I started calling glass companies in the Phoenix area. At first I contacted companies with the most prominent ads, because they would have been the ones in business the longest and might work with stained glass. The first company I called only did storefronts, office glass, or windows for large building projects. On only the second call I made, the person who answered seemed enthusiastically interested in the Mission and my desire to find the original stain glass windows. She had lived in the Valley for some time and said, “You have to call Ron Olson, he’s the person who does stained glass...I think he repaired the windows in the Cathedral downtown... call me back if you have a problem finding him.” I thanked her, and quickly looked up his name.



He was listed and even answered the phone the first time I called! I asked if he was Mr. Ron Olson, “who works with stained glass windows.” A bit hesitantly, he said, “Yees.” I introduced myself and asked if he knew about “the stain glass windows removed from the old Mission church in downtown Scottsdale... a long time ago — like around 1975?” He asked, “Who is this?” He seemed hesitant to give me any information.



I was puzzled at his response and again tried to convince him that my request was sincere and that, “I was representing an OLPH church committee to restore the old Mission.” I gave him the name of Father Hever, who he could call to confirm my intent.

Again, there was a long pause. Then, he told me: “Old stain glass windows taken from churches are in high demand.” “There is a black market for them... some people are searching them out and just collecting them from any source and selling them at high prices to developers.” Ron seemed especially concerned at the practice and didn’t want them exploited. Our conversation continued. He then asked me, “Really, is this a joke?” He later told me

that he “thought I was one of his friends who knew about the windows and was playing a joke on him.” I told him that my request was sincere and repeated that I was committed to locating the old windows. If located our desire is to replace them onto the Mission where they belong! Again, I repeated that he could call Father Hever to confirm who I was and provided him his phone number. There was another pause. I wasn’t sure what to expect next, but I felt I had to be patient and followed up with this development.



In retrospect, I think Ron was taking a deep breath— relieved that someone would contact him about those windows. Then he blurted out, “I’ve been waiting for this call for 26 years! Yes, I have the windows! Yes, they’re here! Don’t worry, they’re safe. I have them stored in the back of my shop.”

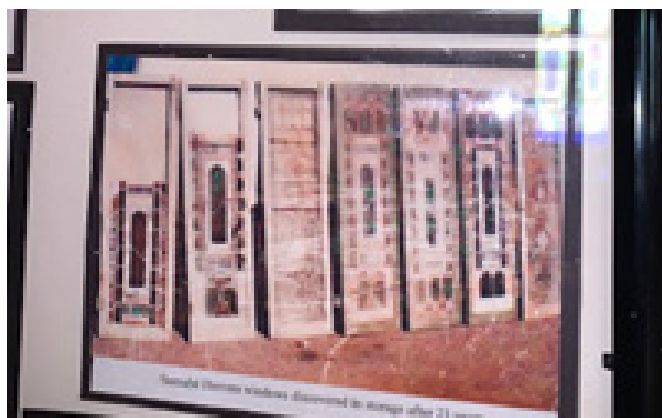
He was just as excited as I was. I couldn’t believe it. Another miracle had presented itself! My heart jumped, and I took a deep breath. I was ecstatic! I quickly asked Mr. Olson if I could come to see them. He said he would have to get them out of storage, and that some of them were broken and in bad shape, but I could come by the next day. I hung up in a state of ecstasy. My next call was to the Burruels and Father Hever to tell them that I had found the stained glass windows. I still was in disbelief of our fortune. I said a prayer of thanksgiving, and all through the night, I wondered what the windows would look like and what condition they were in.



Early the following day, I drove to Ron's shop. It was a hard-to-find, rather small, unassuming building on the outskirts of downtown Phoenix. I met Ron and his co-worker. Ron quickly showed me around his shop. Then, looking proud, he walked me over and pointed to several of the Mission windows he had lined up against a wall. As expected they weren't in the best of shape. Part of the frames were missing glass, and not all were there.



I took a picture of the windows to show the others on the Committee. I then focused on their simple beauty. I also hugged Ron and repeatedly thanked him for saving those important relics. I was glowing inside, and I believe Ron noticed and shared my feelings.



Ron and I proceeded to have a good talk that lasted over an hour. He showed me windows he had restored from other churches and told some of the history of the glass used in the Mission windows. He had a deep reverence for old stained glass windows used in churches and was proud of his commitment to saving, and restoring them. What a find! Not only to locate the windows, but also to find someone of Ron's personal character and someone who had the ability to restore them.

Before leaving Ron's shop, Ron said that he would be happy (and I believe proud) to repair the windows and, as a reference, he mentioned that he repaired all the windows in the Catholic Cathedral in Phoenix.

Ron and I became fast friends. I think he realized how incredibly happy I was to find the windows and how committed I was to have them restored and returned to the Mission. I had deep interest and appreciation for his dedication and skills! After this first rather long meeting with Ron, I concluded that he was a special gift and a prince of a guy!

In our conversation, he told me that he "received a call, in 1975, to come pick up and restore the Mission windows." He went to the Mission and found them stacked haphazardly, tossed in a pile in the middle of the floor with platform raisers leaning on them. He said he was "very upset with how they were being mishandled", and with their "poor condition."



He was asked to keep them, and payment would soon follow to have them restored. He called the Symphony several times over the next few years but never received a response, or much less, payment to start working on the windows. He waited patiently, wondering what was going on. He felt, in the back of his mind, that someone, someday, would get in touch with him. So, he kept the windows safe, stored in the back of his shop—for 26 years!

Everyone on the Committee and others working on the Mission's restoration project were thrilled at the discovery and in disbelief that they had been located.

Ron sent a proposal outlining the steps to restore the windows and the extensive work that would be necessary. The amount he would charge was \$8,545.81. We were surprised at the low cost he quoted (with no 26-year storage fee!) This time, we assured him he would receive his full payment. (See a copy of his invoice in the addendum). Thanks to Hong and Anselm Bishop's generous donation to the Mission, we had the money to pay Ron. We accepted the generous proposal. Ron was elated and went right to work. His wish finally came true, and so did ours!

First, Ron drew a pattern for each window on large sheets of construction paper. Then, each piece of glass was removed from the frames, soaked in a vinegar bath, and cleaned meticulously by hand. The frames were then reconstructed using new wood and were re-lined with patterns of lead. Each piece of glass was then soldered in place, following the patterns drawn on the paper. Two complete windows had to be almost totally reconstructed with old glass Ron had in his shop, and with other pieces he bought from glassmakers he knew in Tucson. He told me that the same type of glass used by Bernabé Herrera to build the original Mission's windows was being used in church windows in Tucson. Ron added that the glass was initially purchased and shipped from a supplier in Chicago.





Tragically and sadly Ron had a mild heart attack when he started working on the Mission windows. I was deeply concerned first, for his health, then that he wouldn't be able to finish the restoration. We all prayed for his speedy recovery. At this time I left for my Colorado summer. About a week after I returned, at the end of October 2005, Sister Alice, who at that time was coordinating the restoration project, called me and said: "Ron completed his work and is bringing all the restored windows!" Several of us anxiously waited for Ron's truck at the Mission. When he arrived, Pat and Gary Underhill and sister Alice proudly held up one of the restored windows! The joy in the group was electric! High fives and hugs for Ron all around!

As soon as we could, we hired workers to install the windows, with Ron's supervision. We all watched, with a sense of inner pride, as workers prepared the window openings and carefully installed the original stained glass windows back where they belong!



During the installation of the windows, Ron continuously spoke of the fine artistic talent and stain glass skill of Bernabé Herrera. At times he would point to special parts of Bernabé's work and highlight specific details displayed in the design or the uniqueness of the glass he chose.

Father Hever was impressed with Ron's work and the windows' beauty that he asked Ron if he would remove and refurbish all the five windows that had remained in the Mission!

Finding the windows and seeing the fine restoration done by Ron Olson, then having them installed in the empty openings was a real tipping



Father Hever, Ron Olson with Anselm and Hong Bishoff

point for all of us on the Committee. He could see the beauty of the windows, the quality and progress the restoration was taking. I felt that Father Tom took it upon himself to make sure the restoration would continue in high gear, and especially that all the windows would be restored.

I'm grateful for Father Tom, for Anselm and Hong Bishoff, whose generous contribution paid for Ron Olson's incredible work—and especially for Ron!

### Bernabé Herrera's Neighbor

There's more story to tell about the windows. The Mission windows were designed and built by Bernabé A. Herrera in the 1930s. He was a tinsmith and a self-taught stained glass artist who lived on Main Street close to the Mission.



I had already met Cruz Medina Jr. who served as an altar boy and could tell how the original altar looked. To my surprise, I learned recently that, Cruz Medina, born in 1935, also grew up on Main Street next door to Bernabé Herrera! Can you believe that?

Cruz, who was also in a catechism class taught by Bernabé, used to go next store and watch Mr. Herrera build the Mission's stained glass windows in his small garage. He watched "BA," as he was called, "first lay out an artistic design he drew on paper onto a large flat table, then outline the design with lead drawn from a large spool hanging from the ceiling. He would then insert the pieces of glass into the lead. Using a little brush, with the bristles held in a tin stem he designed, he would dab flux onto the lead, then solder the piece of colored glass in place." Cruz said that Bernabé used an old gasoline blow torch that had to be pumped. It had a soldering iron attached to a hook on top so the hot flame could heat the iron.

The workshop was small but accommodated a barber chair. It seems that the talented stained glass artist was not only a tinsmith (who built the little tin brush to apply flux) and a catechism teacher, but also cut hair in his small barber shop in his garage.

I remember one day in the Mission, Ron Olson was there speaking about the fine design work by Bernabé Herrera. He would point to special techniques used in the windows, where the glass came from, and where similar glass could be seen in Tucson churches.

Bernabé Herrera gave the Mission a wonderful gift, and what a wonderful gift Ron Olson was to us!

We all loved Ron's restoration work, and we all came to love him!







# The Crosses On The Old Adobe Mission

The cross extending on top of a church or a mission is the defining symbol of Christianity, elevating the building toward heaven. The cross on top of a building marks it as sacred. Many people frequently make 'the sign of the cross' to show reverence to God, for protection, for a special event, and frequently during competition—like entering a soccer game and certainly after scoring a goal!

The traditional Christian cross has the horizontal portion that is one-third the length of the vertical portion. This horizontal piece is attached one-third of the way down the vertical.



This picture, taken in the late 1950s, shows the Mission decorated for a special celebration, 'The Miracle of the Roses.' The cross on the tower appears dis-proportionally tall.

From the various pictures taken over time, there are several different-sized crosses, with different proportions, installed on top of the Mission dome. Each cross was made of wood and painted white—the smaller horizontal piece a 2x4, nailed to a vertical 4x4.

There were two situations when the cross became controversial—one about an early protest, and the second, more recently, an issue of 'restoration versus renovation.'

The Old Adobe Mission was originally the first Our lady of Perpetual Help Church. In 1956, the size of the Our lady of Perpetual Help congregation increased dramatically and a new larger building was built on church property at Miller and Second Street. This temporary building was named Maguire Hall to recognize the good Father for his service to God and his parishioners. Eventually the current OLPH church was constructed at the corner of Miller and First street and was even larger.

Since the Mission was deconsecrated, instead of attending church in the larger Maguire Hall, many of the Hispanic families from the barrio began attending mass at St. Daniel's. St. Daniel's was a short distance away, and most of the masses were in Spanish. Despite the larger attendance elsewhere, the Mission maintained its esteemed position as a sacred place. I can remember, in the early 2000's, when an older Mexican woman would visit the empty Mission regularly and unassumingly place a bouquet of red roses on the altar, say a prayer, and quietly walk out of the Mission.

In the 1950s, the abandoned Mission was used by the Boy Scouts for their meetings, then subsequently taken over by The Knights of Columbus in 1975. It was during this time that someone cut down the cross on the dome in protest of the Mission being misused and disrespected by the Knights. It seems they had built a bar in the portico and supplied the bar with kegs of beer tapped and stored in the sacristy!

Irving Fleming mentioned the bar in a summary document he submitted to OLPH when he left the Mission in 2003. He was seeking financial compensation for the repairs and maintenance preformed during the Symphony's twenty-seven-year occupancy. Evidently, the Mission was 'rented' to the Symphony for \$1.00 per year in return for the Symphony being a custodian for the Mission—making necessary repairs and preserving the property. Irving wrote that one of the first tasks they had was to thoroughly clean the building. He mentioned that beer was stored in the sacristy and served at a bar located in the portico area He wrote: "The smell was intense throughout the Mission because a large part of the floor was soaked with beer."

I asked Cruz Medina Jr. if he knew about the protest, and he confirmed it was true. Three or four men who helped build the Mission and whose families attended mass there were displeased and saddened because the sacristy, where the priest would change into religious garments, was being used to store beer for a bar. Evidently numerous parishioners felt that The Knights of Columbus were 'turning the Mission into a beer hall' and that this was slanderous and disrespectful. Around 1998, in protest, a few men climbed onto the roof, to the dome, and cut down the cross. I surmise that the cross was left inside the Mission as a visual symbol of the protest.

In 2000 I took pictures of the Mission and could see the cross was very weathered and needed a fresh coat of paint.

A short time after 2000, instead of painting the 'weathered' cross, it was replaced with a new cross that is on the dome today. The old weathered cross was stowed in the small storage room behind the altar.

I assume this weathered cross, now mounted and displayed in the Mission, was the cross cut down in this protest. It was simply constructed from a 2x4 board nailed to a larger 4x4 post. The weather had worn off most of the white paint. The size and proportions of the cross 'looked good'.

I found the old cross discarded in a pile in the storage room when I was going through the Mission in 2004.

I felt it was an essential icon, So I leaned it up against the wall next to the altar.

When I would revisit the Mission, I would find it discarded in the back storage room. I would consistently place the cross next to the altar and later find it moved once again to the storage room. I wasn't sure who was moving it, but I made a plea that the old historic symbol was an icon and an important part of the Mission's history that should be displayed and revered.





Shortly after, a docent, skilled in carpentry, the same person who hooked up the bell in the tower, made a base for the cross so it could stand on its own and displayed it next to the altar.

I soon forgot about the issue of someone removing the cross. It was June and getting hot—I needed to move to Colorado to escape the heat.

I returned in September 2005 and was surprised when I looked at the tower. The wooden cross had been replaced. A large, dark metal cross was on the dome! It was obviously too large in proportion to the Mission's

dome—about three or four times the size of the original cross. It didn't fit!

Some of us took issue with the large metal cross. We argued that it didn't fit and was inconsistent with the restoration! It was soon replaced with a close replica of the original cross!

Before I left again for the summer, I thought there was a unity of purpose among the group working to “restore, not renovate” the Mission. Having the altar improved with new molding, and now a new, metal out-sized cross on the tower made it clear—there was no quality control in our restoration process. The next fall, when I returned to the Mission from Colorado, I saw carpenters finishing their work installing oak doors in every doorway in the Mission. The doors' design couldn't be further from a ‘mission





door!' They belong in a high-end modern house. The original doors in the Mission were made of wood planks—simple and functional.

I reasoned again that in their respect and love of the Mission, people wanted what was best for Her. The large metal cross would stand harsh weather and it could be seen from a greater distance. The oak doors matched the doors in the main church and office complex.





# The Simons' Ashes

One day, when Cruz and I were walking around the Mission, I asked him if he knew about the burial of cremated ashes on the property. He was surprised to learn that Alex and Bella Simons' ashes were buried in the front corner of the Mission. I told him what I had learned about the burial.

Alex and Bella Simons were Jewish members of the Symphony and generous financial contributors. They were close friends of Irving Fleming and even helped him with personal financial needs. Alex Simons was also president of the Scottsdale Symphony and served on its board of directors. He died in 2001. His wife, Bella, died a year later.

Someone put their urns in a cardboard box and placed it in front of Anselm Bischoff's store, just north of the Mission. Since it had rained during the night, the cardboard box became soggy. Anselm saw the box in the morning, examined the contents, and realized it contained the Simons' ashes. He told me, "I didn't know where the box came from...who



placed it in front of my store...and I didn't know what to do with the ashes". I knew the Simons had a close association with Irving Fleming and the Scottsdale Symphony, so I brought the box containing the ashes to the Mission."

Subsequently, Irving Fleming buried the ashes in the front yard of the Mission, just inside the wall in the southwest. Irving arranged to have a plaque made to designate the grave site.

The plaque was designed and made of bronze by Doug Covert, a local artist. Covert worked with the family and enhanced the plaque with the Star of David in a desert sunset theme. Irving also had a small iron fence (now missing) placed around the plaque.



When I was visiting the Mission in 2003, Irving showed me the grave site and reverently spoke of the Simons. He explained that they were his good friends as well as supporters of the Symphony. He then said, very seriously, "I thought about raising money for the Symphony by selling grave sites for others who passed on."

Irving had been receiving letters to vacate the property for several years. The idea of using the mission grounds to bury ashes was extremely inappropriate and resulted in Irving being told, in no uncertain terms, to find another location for the Symphony.

With the Symphony vacating the Mission, the question was raised of what to do with the Simons' burial plot. Some wanted the ashes immediately "dug-up and removed," and "taken off the property!" Others, myself included, felt that the burial site containing the ashes was sacred and should remain—let them rest in peace. The burial had become part of the Mission's history. Because the Simons were Jewish, with a Star of David on their plaque—the burial of two Jewish people on the Mission property was an ecumenical event. Jesus was a Jew.

It was unsettling, as was a related and disturbing incident that occurred later.



One day, walking around the front yard, I noticed that someone had covered the Simons' plaque with gravel and stones. I would wipe it clean only to find it covered up again upon returning the next day. This occurred several times, and I had to let my concern be known. Covering a gravestone, no matter what the religious affiliation, was disrespectful and an act of prejudice.

At our next group meeting, I addressed the issue, matter of factly. I said, "I am really disturbed that someone keeps covering the Simons' grave plaque. That is a sacred spot. The remains of two Jewish people are buried there." After that meeting, the Simons' plaque remained unobstructed and respected.

Just recently, I mentioned the story about the Simons' ashes to a Jewish friend. He jumped with joy to learn of Jews buried without the land being officially consecrated by a Rabbi. He wanted to know the exact location so his Rabbi could visit and officially bless and hold a ceremony to consecrate the ground. I thought that such a ceremony and honor was long overdue!

There was another quandary that repeatedly surfaced that was related to the Simons' burial. When we talked about the original Yaqui and Indian families role there were several negative comments. "No, no Yaqui helped build the Mission." Or, "They really kept to themselves." And, "Natives weren't ever part of the Mission."

The discussion often became heated. José Burruel, who grew up near the Mission, had to end the argument with a rather formal statement: "Well, you know, I grew up here in the barrio, and our family prayed in the Mission...and my mother is Yaqui!"

It is shortsighted to think that the Yaqui, Pima, or members of other Native tribes that live in the valley, were not part of the Mission's history. The various native tribes played a significant and valued part in the Mission's history—sometimes leading a parade, rhythmically beating a drum, or guiding 'Our Lady of Guadalupe' float up the street!



# Stories And Mini-Miracles

There were other stories and mini-miracles that surfaced as we worked to restore the Mission. Some stories were a bit far-fetched and laughable, others possibly true.

I heard a story from a elder who lived in the Eskatel barrio about a rather inebriated man. “This man was dragging a heavy, iron post with a box at the top, up Brown Street to Cavaliere’s blacksmith shop.” The man asked Mr. Cavaliere if he could open the metal box at the top of the post. Surprised, Mr. Cavaliere told the man, in no uncertain terms: “No I won’t open that box—you’re dragging the poor box that belongs up the street in the Mission!” I learned from Mr. Cavaliere’s son that he thought his father “did donate a metal poor box to the mission!”

And then there was the incident where one of the docents was shopping and found a clock with a picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe on its face (actual clock pictured). She purchased the clock, thinking it would help the docents keep track of their duty times, because of the picture on the clock face. She brought the clock to the Mission and asked her husband to “hang it by the confessional.” Her husband asked, “What time should I set it to?” She said, “12:45.” He responded, “No, not what the clock is already set at—what time is it now that I should set on the clock?” She said, “12:45!” The time already on the clock was the exact time of the day!



Working with Cruz Medina Jr. was my personal ‘mini-miracle.’ He and I had been bouncing around Scottsdale for some time before we finally met. I asked for his help in producing this document, to which he jumped to the task. His additions gave the writing more depth and accuracy. We had some good laughs as we worked to document some facts and insights about icons at the Old Adobe Mission. Thanks, Cruz, and be well!



# Ending Comments

From Cruz Medina Jr.

I remember at Christmas, going to Midnight Mass at the Mission with my mother. We called it 'La Misa de Gallo' (The Mass of the Rooster) because it was so early in the morning and the roosters were crowing. After mass we would always have menudo (tripe soup). What wonderful memories, I cherish. It would be nice if the Mission looked like it was back then!



From Nick Rayder:

How is it that in our attempt to improve things, to make them, “up-to-date”, and polished, to put them in our image—we often dilute their true essence?

A friend of mine told me about growing up in the '40s in a remote part of Colorado on a sheep ranch in the shadow of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. A beautiful quiet community where many Anglo and Mexican people worked hard and lived in harmony, enjoying each other's culture. The old Catholic church in the community was built of wood and held rather tattered but beautiful simple hand-carved wood statues of several Saints. The building was quaint and simple in structure, and when you were inside, she said, “you felt a sense of inner peace and spirituality.”

With time, the town's economy and population increased. The small old, wooden Catholic church could not accommodate the parishioners. Leaders in the church felt that a new building was needed. The old Catholic church, built in the 1930s, in Center, Colorado was destroyed and replaced with a new, larger church. The old church was a part of that community's true essence and can never be replaced.

The Benedictine Sanctuary of Perpetual Adoration, built in Tucson in 1941, was sold for \$5.9 million dollars. The Order of St. Benedict nuns lived, prayed and worked in the monastery for 80 years.



A beautiful, majestic, sacred spot on the earth is being replaced with a convoluted site of apartments, offices and commercial space. Parts of the monastery will be integrated into the development, but the beauty and simplicity of the grounds and majesty of the monastery, itself, was lost! My friend, Halsy Taylor, along with many long-time devotees, tried tirelessly to preserve the monastery to no avail.

Saving historic and sacred buildings and stories that come with them is like saving part of our true selves—evidence and memories of our short life on this planet—touchstones that we can give to our progeny. Memories that make up our soul and any wisdom that we can contribute. They allow all who come after us to touch a part of our cultural history—part of their essence and soul imprinted on the earth!

So too, with the Old Adobe Mission in Scottsdale. It was built in the 1930s by Mexicans, Yaquis, and other Christians to honor their God and their special Saint, Our Lady of Guadalupe. They collected what meager donations they had to buy supplies—then put their backs to labor, making thousands of adobe bricks for the building.

My wish, and my sincere prayer, is that the Old Adobe Mission, at the corner of Brown and First in Scottsdale, will continue to be honored as a ‘pearl of great price’ open to all who knock at its door.

As Thomas Merton admonishes: “Let there always be quiet, dark churches in which people can take refuge. Places where people can kneel in silence. Houses of God, filled with His silent presence. There, even when they don’t know how to pray, at least they can be still and breathe easily. Let there be a place somewhere in which you can breathe naturally, quietly, and not have to take your breath in continuous short gasps. A place where your mind can be idle, and forget its concerns, descend into silence, and worship the Father in secret.”

Be well, in Peace and Grace  
Nicholas Rayder

*In memory, celebration and prayer*

**José María Burruel**

February 28, 1925 - October 11, 2021

**Cruz Medina Jr.**

April 2, 1935 - October 15, 2021

**Ron Bell**

October 31, 1946 - September 5, 2022

**Gary Underhill**

May 13, 1934 - January 27, 2023







# Addenda

## A. St. John's Indian School Komatke, Arizona

In 1901, two Sisters of St. Joseph, Sister Barbara and Sister Anna de Sales, set out for what was then St. John's Indian Mission at Komatke. They left Tucson traveling by train northward toward Phoenix; however, they found that the railroad trestle over the Gila River had torn away on the trip. The damage was done by a flood caused by heavy rains the night before. As their train couldn't continue, they realized that their only means of reaching the train on the other side was to cross the unstable remnant of the bridge on a handcar. The Sisters and several passengers decided to take the risk. The bridge held up, and with great relief, the Sisters continued their journey.

A third Sister assigned to St. John's was Sister Mary Joseph, who awaited the travelers in Phoenix. The subsequent journey of seventeen miles to the southwest began two days later. They traveled by buggy through the desert heat with the horse plodding slowly along, and on reaching Komatke, they found little to lift their spirits. A small building with a dirt floor was to be their convent, and the only other building was a church that had to serve as a school during the week.

The Mission offered very little even in terms of necessities. Despite the dreary outlook, the Sisters took up their work with a brave heart. In the early days of St. John's, life was primitive. Cooking was done out-of-doors in big pots. When dormitories were added, the children slept on the floor. On wash day, they were obliged to wrap themselves in blankets while their clothes were washed along the river banks and hung on bushes to dry. Water at the Mission was mostly undrinkable because of its salt content until they could dig a well deep enough to reach good water. \$2,000 was sent for this purpose by a priest from the Catholic Indian

Bureau who had visited the Mission and who had been given a drink of the unpalatable water.

The Sisters worked hard together, sharing and supporting each other. They mended the children's clothes on Saturdays while one of the Sisters read from spiritual books. This was followed by prayers for the deceased members of the congregation. Thus, the spirit of the little community flourished despite the difficulties of the Mission. At Christmas, although they had little to celebrate with, they found ways to make little presents for each other. One such simple gift was a decorated bottle containing salt and soda to wash their teeth.

During the priest's absence, the Sisters held funerals and devotional services. Mother Anna de Sales, with one of the natives as interpreter, read the Gospel using the lessons learned from it to instruct the Indians in the essentials of Christian living. The natives found difficulty in becoming accustomed to a different lifestyle. So it was that a native man selected from donations sent to the Mission what he considered proper attire for a funeral. To the surprise of Sisters, he appeared in church, enthusiastically clad in a red union suit.

The Pima Indians were impoverished as they depending on the rains to irrigate their crops. They had no government support, and when the rains failed to come, they provided meat and flour for themselves by selling firewood.

Besides teaching, the Sisters worked in the laundry, kitchen, and other areas throughout the Mission. On one occasion, Sister Irene, who had charge of the dining room, reported that the tables had been turned over and the dishes scattered on the floor. This had happened about three or four times, although she had carefully locked the doors and windows. On inquiring, the Sisters found that other strange things had been happening. The children told Sister Euphrasia about hearing noises at night. On going to the cellar one evening, Sister St. Brigid encountered a tall, dark figure, who bent down, blew out her lantern, and then laughed a strange and satanic laugh.

As a result of these stories, Mother Anna de Sales told Sister Irene to scatter ashes on the dining room floor to see if dogs might have caused the havoc. The following day the room was in disarray, but there were no tracks in the ashes. The priest was away, but the Sisters started special prayers and had the children pray.

When the mission priest, Father Justin, returned, he heard the details. Immediately he and another priest started a severe fast, staying in the room and saying the prayers of exorcism. After a time, a small snake was seen, which crawled from the room and mysteriously disappeared. The struggle with the powers of darkness left the Sisters shaken, but things returned to normal after the exorcism. Sister St. Brigid worked in the kitchen, cooking

and watching the little ones as she helped them learn English. The other Sisters continued their regular work, which, besides the academic courses, including sewing, fancy work, and instruction in music and orchestral training.

As buildings were added, dormitories, a laundry, dining room, and kitchen there was more room for additional boys and girls. The number ultimately reached three hundred. The first cow was paid for by Sister St. Brigid's sister Mary so that the children could have milk. The older girls were taught how to cook. Four girls worked in the kitchen at a time, keeping the fires burning, watching the pots, and making butter. Beans were a prominent part of their diet. Meat was scarce. When they could have it, it had to be cooked immediately, as there was no refrigeration.

The Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of the Precious Blood in Phoenix brought supplies when they could. Saint Boniface Indian School in Banning sent dried apricots, prunes, and peaches, which, when washed and cooked, provided what fruit they had. Women from Phoenix brought them food and helped with the annual fiesta, at which meals were prepared for over six hundred people. There were many friends among those who came.

The Sisters of St. Joseph continued at St. John's until 1938. Their work covered thirty-seven years of growth and struggle. A long time has elapsed since our Sisters served at the various Indian Schools and Missions: at San Xavier, Tucson; at St. Anthony's, San Diego; at Fort Yuma Government School, California; at St. Boniface; Banning; and at St. John's, Komatke.

In memory, we honor and bless those Sisters who lived with and loved the Indians they cared for and who worked so long and so hard in difficulties and privations to serve them. They put their hands to strong things in their youth and active years, and when that time came to a close, they carried those they had served always in their hearts.

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For more information on the presence of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet in Arizona contact the Director of the Carondelet Consolidated Archives, 6400 Minnesota Avenue, Saint Louis, Missouri 63111; Office; 314.678.0320; [archivist@csjcarondelet.org](mailto:archivist@csjcarondelet.org)

## B. Rehab Standards Sec. of Interior - Rennovate vs Restoration

*N Raydor - From Meeting with Historic Preservation group -*

### THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are ten basic principles created to help preserve the distinctive character of a historic building and its site, while allowing for reasonable change to meet new needs.

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.





THE GLASS WORKS  
*Professional Designers & Craftsmen*

May 1 st 2003

Mr. Nick Rayder  
3611 No. Kellaroma  
Scottsdale, Ariz. 85251

Re: Stained Glass Restoration  
Our Lady of Perpetual Help  
Scottsdale, Ariz.

Dear Nick,

At last, these wonderful old windows get to go home!

These are some of the things that need to be done to do this..

- # 1 A good scrubbing
- #2 Remove each from its frame, and make a rubbing and duplicate..
- # 3 Refine the rubbing of each window, and duplicate.
- # 4 Dissassemble each and number each piece.
- # 5 Soak the glass in a vinegar solution, to remove the years of buildup of polution.
- #6 Rebuild each, with attention to duplicating the original colors and placement.
- # 7 Glaze each with Glazing compound to weather-proof.
- # 8 Detail each and reinstall in frames. Frames to be stripped of old green paint.
- # 9 Detail each to final finish.

It goes without saying that there are many steps between each of the above.

All of the above, according to the rules of the Nat'l Stained Glass Assoc.

There are ( 9 ) nine windows, and two designs-- A floral and a Geometric..

Upon confirmation of \$ 8545.81, a 50% deposit would be in order, with the balance at completion.

*Respectfully Submitted*

2055 N. 16th Street • Phoenix, AZ 85006 • 602 253-7683

*Ron Olson*

D. Letter from Bernabe Herrera's Daughter



M. C. C.  
405-3351 Cawthra Rd  
Mississauga ON L5A 4N5

Dec 5-08

Dear Jose + Frances

I'm writing re - the window that was turned so it faces the inside of the church - (the one with my father's name on it) It was always facing the st. - I know because even after I moved to Canada - my husband and I came to Phx every Jan. and we went to Scottsdale. We couldn't go in the church because it was locked. But we saw the window - with my dad's name - we could read clearly - it was not facing the inside of the church.

Who ever was in charge and approved the window to be turned inside did not know or had been in Scottsdale when the church was built.

If as they say they are restoring the mission. What are they doing? Restoring as it "should" be or as it was? I don't think turning the window so it faces inside is restoring the mission as it "was" The window with my father's name never offended anyone - so please if it offends some one now - - - well the window was facing the outside - so please. It should be turned back the way it was.

As for the stations of the cross I do not know when they came to our church - I do remember seeing the stations of the cross during lent - but it was later - as you know we only had a priest who came from Tempe once a week on Sundays to say Mass. Every thing else that went on - (Offering flowers to our Lady in May - Novenas, Rosaries - during Mass - Teaching you guys the lessons - & ~~at~~ as youth - was done by my father so Jose I hope I haven't upset anyone by my letter re the window - but it was facing the outside with my dad's name - really easy to read -

I hope you can do something about this.  
Mary Cuthara (ni Herrera)

## Postscript

Many people were involved in saving and restoring the Old Adobe Mission. I was proud to have played a small part. I would appreciate receiving any corrections you have to this book, or comments and stories you have about the Mission.

Send them to my email [nikorayder@yahoo.com](mailto:nikorayder@yahoo.com) or call me at 480-540-8878.

Be well.





# Icons In The Old Adobe Mission

Scottsdale, Arizona

Nicholas Rayder PhD  
[www.nicholasrayder.com](http://www.nicholasrayder.com)

