Dist. 16, Rep. Richard C. White

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries – complete applicable sections)

1. NAME

COMMON:
Ysleta Mission

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Mission de Corpus Christi de la Ysleta

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
US Highway 80

CITY OR TOWN:
Ysleta

STATE:
Texas

COUNTY:
El Paso

CODE:
048

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)
☐ District
☐ Building
☐ Site
☐ Structure
☐ Object

OWNERSHIP
☐ Public
☐ Private
☐ Both

PUBLIC ACQUISITION
☐ In Process
☐ Being Considered

STATUS
☒ Occupied
☐ Unoccupied
☐ Preservation work in progress

ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
☒ Yes:
☐ Restricted
☐ Unrestricted
☐ No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)
☐ Agricultural
☐ Commercial
☐ Educational
☐ Entertainment
☐ Government
☐ Industrial
☐ Military
☐ Museum
☐ Religious
☐ Scientific
☐ Park
☐ Other (Specify)
☐ Transportation

COMMENTS

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Diocese of El Paso, Catholic Church

STREET AND NUMBER:
1012 North Mesa

CITY OR TOWN:
El Paso

STATE:
Texas

CODE:
048

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
El Paso County Courthouse and Diocese of El Paso, Catholic Church, 1012 North Mesa

CITY OR TOWN:
El Paso

STATE:
Texas

CODE:
048

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY:
1936

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

(See continuation sheet #1)
The old Mission de Corpus Christi de la Ysleta, as it stands today, is primarily the result of the 1907 reconstruction after the nave, tower-belfry, and transepts were destroyed by fire. Parts of the original walls withstood the fire, and were utilized in the rebuilding (see attached photo of structure after 1907). Consequently, in its basic size and shape, the mission church is similar in appearance to the eighteenth century mission church as constructed in 1744.

The principal facade has a three-story tower with wooden, late Victorian style architectural decoration. The pre-1907 tower was, according to an 1880 photograph, wider, of burned brick, and four stories high with a masonry, bee-hive shaped dome. The entrance facade in the same photograph shows a round window above the door, no fanlight over the door, and two niches in the irregularly shaped gable.

The transept and sacristy have battered walls and a slightly irregular cruciform shape which shows a strong stylistic relationship with the eighteenth century Spanish Colonial architecture of the New Mexico mission field. This exterior rear portion of the mission church contrasts sharply with the 1907 reworking of the main facade.

Interior furnishings, including altars, ceiling rafters and their console supports, and all woodwork are executed in a late classical revival style which dates from the 1907 reconstruction.
6. (contd.)

Texas State Historical Survey
1962 State
Texas State Historical Survey Committee
108 W. 15th Street
Austin, Texas 78711
The Rio Grande Valley south of El Paso del Norte was, in the late seventeenth century, a part of the range lands of the Sumas and Manos Indians. The missionary interest in this land resulted from the forced settlement here in 1680-1682 of New Mexico Indians. A few Pueblo tribes, the Tiguas, Piro, Tano, and Jemez had maintained friendly relations with the Spanish during the revolt, and they, too, were forced to flee the northern Rio Grande Valley.

Ysleta del Sur, named after the original settlement in Ysleta, New Mexico, began as a refugee camp for primarily Tigua Indians. In 1681, 305 more Tiguas from upper Ysleta came to the camp after an abortive attempt to reconquer New Mexico in the same year. In 1684, the Tiguas were formally organized into the village of Sacramento de los Tiguas de Ysleta.

"The first church was made of logs, probably from cottonwood trees which virtually forested the valley at one time. The first priest was Fray Avalo Zavalete. A new mission of Corpus Christi de los Tiguas de Ysleta was officially bestowed upon Fray Joaquim de Hinojosa by newly appointed Governor Vargas in 1691" (Gerado Decorme, Short History of Ysleta Mission).

The Ysleta mission church was erected at its present site in 1744, on what was by then established farmlands (Binion, El Paso Landmarks, p.8). In 1760, Bishop Tamerón of Durango visited the mission and left this account: "Two leagues to the east of Senecú was the mission called Corpus Christi y San Antonio de la Ysleta, which also had a resident missionary. There were eighty-five families of Piro Indians with 491 persons (no Tiguas were mentioned), and eighteen Spanish families with one hundred and thirty-one persons" (Our Catholic Heritage, Volume III. p.235).

"This was on the banks of the river, about five leagues east of Guadalupe (Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de El Paso, in Juarez). Its church was an exact replica of that at Senecú, being six varas (approximately 33.3 inches = 1 vara) long and five and a half wide, with a transept that measured nine varas" (Ibid).
9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES
DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY

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<tr>
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<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
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LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES
DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES

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<td>106° 19' 08&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2 acres

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

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Wayne Bell, Project Director
Gary Hume, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION
Texas State Historical Survey Committee
DATE 6-14-72

STREET AND NUMBER:
108 W. 15th Street

CITY OR TOWN: Austin

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE: Texas
CODE: 048

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☐

Name ______________________
Title State Liaison Officer
Date June 29, 1972

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

Chief, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

Date 7/31/72

ATTEST:

Date 7/19/72
Ysleta, along with Socorro and San Elizario, was originally on the west bank of the Rio Grande. However, on January 12, 1849, a major flood changed the course of the river and cut a new channel which placed the three valley towns on the east or Texas side of the international boundary. Accounts of the effect of the periodic flooding of the Rio Grande are obscure; however, it would appear that such flooding must have damaged the mission.

In 1907, most of the church was destroyed by fire. In an effort to rid the belfry-tower of bats, a sexton placed several buckets of sulphur and other chemicals in the tower overnight. The chemicals ignited during the night and destroyed most of the structure. Only the sacristy remained unscathed. A few of the relics, including the old mission bell and a statue of Christ which had been brought from Spain, were saved. The church was rebuilt almost immediately, utilizing the original sacristy and the remaining walls.

The mission at Ysleta was founded by Franciscans, was later secularized and, since 1881, has been administered by the Jesuit Order. During the mission's long history, it has been named Mission de Corpus Christi de la Ysleta, Mission de San Antonio de la Ysleta, Mission de Nuestra Señora de Monte Carmelo, and Iglesia del Carmen.

The mission, while founded later than the New Mexico missions, is unique in that it has continuously served the Tigua Indian community from its establishment in 1682 to the present. On the west side of the mission plaza is the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo community building, which according to records was established between 1682 and 1690. The headquarters for the Tigua Indian Community also adjoins the mission plaza.

The Tiguas are a displaced branch of the Tiwa-speaking Pueblo Indians of central New Mexico. The Tiwa's strong, ingrained spirit of survival and retention of ancient culture could not be better illustrated than by the Tiguas, who still exist today as an intact group of Indians with many families of pure Indian strain living in the small community of Ysleta in the city of El Paso.

The Tiguas live in almost complete withdrawal from modern day civilization, and continue to practice their ancient customs. Each year they faithfully perform their Indian ritual dancing in the plaza in front of the Ysleta Mission church which their forebearers constructed, as wards of the missionaries nearly three hundred years ago. The Indians continue to maintain the tribal civil organization including the office of "casique" or
8. (contd. 2) chief of the Tiguas, given to them under Spanish authority. Their dances, Indian chants and few remaining words of the Tigua language identify their unique cultural heritage.

Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, 1962.
The attached National Register Inventory-Nomination form is being returned to your office for clarification of the information indicated below.

1. Name.

2. Location.

3. Classification.

4. Owner of Property.

5. Location of Legal Description.

6. Representation in Existing Surveys.

7. Description.

8. Statement of Significance.


   a. Longitude and Latitude Coordinates.
   b. Acreage.

11. Form Prepared By.

12. Certification.

Photographic Coverage.

Map Coverage.

Other.

Clarification or correction of the above items must be made prior to the initiation of our professional review. Correction of these technical errors does not necessarily insure that the nomination will then satisfy National Register criteria in full.

Thank you for your attention to the above items checked.

SIGNED: P. Muller
Receiving Entry

Entry 1: AUG 1
Annual Edition Entry

Registry Entry 9-5-72

Card 1 CARD 1 AUG 1972

Working Number 13-28-71-4

Sent back 3/21/72

1880 photo: clarify "altered/unaltered"

Mullen says: emphasize religious + social aspects as

more imp than

Architecture. Paul C. White
NPS Number July 31, 1972
Title: Ybor City, Florida
Loc. Main altar

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
## PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

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<td>AND/OR HISTORIC: Corpus Christi de la Ysleta</td>
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Main altar
Title: Ysleta Mission

cc. El Paso City Parks (South) Main facade from the plaza.
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<td>(South) main facade from the plaza</td>
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NPS Number: July 31, 1972
Title: Ysleta Mission
Loc. El Paso City, Texas
West Side

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

1. NAME
   COMMON: Ysleta Mission
   AND/OR HISTORIC: Corpus Christi de la Ysleta

2. LOCATION
   STREET AND NUMBER: US highway 80
   CITY OR TOWN: Ysleta
   STATE: Texas
   CODE: 048
   COUNTY: El Paso
   CODE: 141

3. PHOTO REFERENCE
   PHOTO CREDIT: Texas State Historical Survey Committee
   DATE OF PHOTO: Fall, 1971
   NEGATIVE FILED AT: Texas State Historical Survey Committee
                        108 W. 15th Street, Austin, Texas 78771

4. IDENTIFICATION
   DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.
   West facade
PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
1. NAME

COMMON: Ysleta Mission
AND/OR HISTORIC: Corpus Christi de la Ysleta

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
US highway 80
CITY OR TOWN:
Ysleta
STATE: Texas

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Texas State Historical Survey Committee
DATE OF PHOTO: Fall, 1971
NEGATIVE FILED AT: Texas State Historical Survey Committee
108 W. 15th Street, Austin, Texas 78711

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

East facade showing transept
NPS Number: July 31, 1972

Title: Ysleta Mission


"Ruined walls of the Mission, while it was being rebuilt, services were held in the sanctuary which was the only part of the building that damaged by the 1907 fire."

---

TITLE: Ysleta Mission, Photo of ruined walls damaged by the 1907 fire

PICTURE NO. 71-361

in the UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
INSTITUTE OF TEXAN CULTURES
P. O. BOX 1226
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78206

BEFORE PUBLISHING THIS PHOTOGRAPH

OBIAK COLLECTION FROM
Chefax Gallery Collection
El Paso Public Library, El Paso, Texas

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
Date: approximately 1908

View from the west (3)

Caption in Calleros' The Mother Mission states:

"Ruined walls of the Mission. While it was being rebuilt, services were held in the Society, which was the only part of the building not damaged by the 1907 fire."
1. NAME
   COMMON: Ysleta Mission
   AND/OR HISTORIC: Mission de Corpus Christi de la Ysleta

2. LOCATION
   STREET AND NUMBER: US Highway 80
   CITY OR TOWN: Ysleta
   STATE: Texas
   CODE 048

3. PHOTO REFERENCE
   PHOTO CREDIT: Cleofas Calleros Collection
   DATE OF PHOTO: 1908
   NEGATIVE FILED AT: El Paso Public Library
   El Paso, Texas

4. IDENTIFICATION
   CAPTION IN CALLEROS' The Mother Mission states: "Ruined walls of the Mission. While it was being rebuilt, services were held in the Sacristy which was the only part of the building not damaged by the 1907 fire."
Earliest available photograph of the Mission, taken about 1880.
NPS. Number: July 31, 1972

Title: Ysleta Mission

Loc: El Paso Co, Texas

The brick beehive sixths beehive-like dome; main facade
1. NAME

COMMON: Ysleta Mission
AND/OR HISTORIC: Corpus Christi de la Ysleta

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: US Highway 80
CITY OR TOWN: Ysleta
STATE: Texas

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Cleofas Calleros Collection
DATE OF PHOTO: About 1880
NEGATIVE FILED AT: El Paso Public Library

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC:
The brick belfry with beehive-like dome was constructed between 1860 and 1880. South or main facade.
Xerox of 1880 photo of Ysleta Mission
(original unavailable for reproduction)

The brick belfry with biomorphic-like dome
was constructed between 1860 and 1880.
NPS Number: July 31, 1972
Title: Ysleta Mission
Loc. El Paso Co., Texas
About 1860, South or main facade

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

1. NAME
COMMON: Ysleta Mission
AND/OR HISTORIC: Corpus Christi de la Ysleta

2. LOCATION
STREET AND NUMBER:
US highway 80
CITY OR TOWN:
Ysleta
STATE:
Texas
COUNTY:
El Paso

3. PHOTO REFERENCE
PHOTO CREDIT: Cleofas Calleros Collection
DATE OF PHOTO: Drawing made about 1860
NEGATIVE FILED AT: El Paso Public Library
El Paso, Texas

4. IDENTIFICATION
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.
Ysleta Mission about 1860. South or main facade.
**1. NAME**

**COMMON:** Ysleta Mission  
**AND/OR HISTORIC:** Corpus Christi de la Ysleta

---

**2. LOCATION**

**STREET AND NUMBER:** US highway 80  
**CITY OR TOWN:** Ysleta  
**STATE:** Texas

**3. MAP REFERENCE**

**SOURCE:** United States Department of the Interior Geol. Survey  
**SCALE:** 1:24000  
**DATE:** 1955, 1967 (photorevised)

**STATE CODE:** Texas 048  
**COUNTY CODE:** El Paso 141

---

**4. REQUIREMENTS**

**TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS**  
1. Property boundaries where required.  
2. North arrow.  
3. Latitude and longitude reference.

**Texas Map Reference #3106-424**  
**Ysleta, Texas**
## ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

### STATE  **TEXAS**

**Date Entered**  **JUL 3 1 1972**

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### Also Notified

- Hon. John G. Tower
- Hon. Lloyd M. Bentsen, Jr.
- Hon. Richard C. White
- Hon. Eligio de la Garza
- Director, Southwest Region

### State Liaison Officer

Mr. Truett Latimer  
Executive Director  
Texas State Historical Survey Committee  
P. O. Box 12276, Capitol Station  
Austin, Texas 78711  

\[ HR \]  
NRowland:bc  8-1-72