



St. Joseph Apache Mission Restoration Project

Illustrated Progress Report for November 2002 through April 2003



This winter the repointing of another section of the apse was completed, along with the backside of the arch above the sanctuary.



The Restoration Crew

Walter, Tommy, Mary, Bro. David, Anthony, Bro. Peter



Bro. David and restoration-trainee Anthony began work in the southeast alcove.



Restoration-trainee Walter and Tommy bring in the newly prepared lime putty for the mortar. The hydrated lime is being donated by the Chemical Lime Company.



Besides repointing the stonework above the arch, the sheet metal and stucco cover that hides the steel I-beam arch support is limewashed to match the color of the mortar.



The circa 1930s sanctuary lamps and crucifix are being cleaned and repaired.



Bishop Ramirez leads the applause for artist Oliver Enjady as the new painting of San Juan Diego is dedicated.

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*Progress Report
November 2002 - April 2003*

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"The people of the St. Joseph Apache Mission Restoration Project are working to preserve this sacred architectural treasure that stands as a bridge between cultures, between the past and the future, between heaven and earth. It is through the process of preserving this landmark that we strive to honor our ancestors, empower our contemporaries and inspire our children." (St. Joseph Apache Mission Restoration Project Mission Statement)

As time goes by we are continually inspired by the generosity and the commitment of so many people to the restoration project. The people who contribute to this project come from all walks of life, from the wealthy to the poor, from all faiths, from people who are interested in seeing this Veterans Memorial last forever, to those who worship here each week. We are so very grateful for the charitable foundations that have suffered from the slow economy yet still offer support. A special thanks to our faithful "Restoration Stewards" who send in a donation each month. It is evident that we will have to rely more on private donations this coming fiscal year as we have seen funding cutbacks from foundation grants. This as a challenge that can be met.

In February we completed our third year of full time work on the restoration project. Often we wonder where the time goes. Sometimes we do not really realize just how much has been accomplished until a visitor remarks at what amazing progress we have made since their last visit. Currently we are funded by seven foundations, thirty-eight donors who have contributed over \$1,000.00 each, six Parishes (one from Belgium!), four religious orders, and hundreds of individuals who donate as they are able. Many local businesses have donated prizes, supplies or services. The Mescalero Apache Tribe continues to help with heavy equipment, and Mescalero Apache Telecom, Inc. has donated high-speed internet service, which we use for grant research and communications. This makes our office more efficient and helps to keep our overhead costs down.

All of this support has permitted us to hire two Apache students as restoration trainees. Anthony is a college student who works with us three days a week. Walter works with us every afternoon through the "School to Work" program at the Mescalero high school. We will be able to keep two students on as trainees full time through the coming summer. Anthony and Walter are proud to be making a contribution to the restoration work, and appreciate the skills they are learning.

This was a hectic fall and winter for us. Harry Vasile, our Project Foreman, took a job with the Mescalero School District and it was decided that the natural replacement should be Tommy Spottedbird. In March Tommy celebrated three years of sobriety, three years working on the restoration and his third

wedding anniversary. Tommy is a Kiowa man from Oklahoma; he earned an art degree from Haskell Junior College and served in the United States Marine Corps. But Tommy had a drinking problem that lasted over 30 years and although he went through many rehabilitation programs, he found it difficult to stop drinking until he came to Mescalero. Here he was finally able to make the commitment to turn his life around. Tommy entered the rehabilitation program run by the Mescalero Tribe. He also met his wife to be, Hazel Botella, a Mescalero Tribal member. After completing the rehab program Tommy came to work on the restoration project in March of 2000. He started as a trainee, then advanced to mason and project safety officer. Soon after starting with the restoration project he married Hazel. Tommy is a great asset to this project; he has “walked the walk” so to speak and can relate to our young trainees. They respect him and listen to his advise. “I enjoy my work, especially with the young people” Tommy says, “by sharing my life choices with them I hope that it will help them to make better choices in their own lives”. Tommy is vital to the progress we are making and to the quality of work being accomplished. He is an excellent example of our project goal, “Restoring the building and rebuilding lives”.

During the fall and winter the crew worked on the interior southeast wall of the apse, behind the sanctuary of the church. They were able to finish repointing the backside of the arch above the sanctuary as well as a section of the apse wall. When the new trainee (Anthony) started, he began work in the southeast alcove under the watchful eye of Brother David Paz, OFM.

Our bats have returned, though far fewer in number than last year. We still have openings where the bats manage to find a way in. We will continue to work on this as we move the repointing work around the Mission.

In November Mary Serna, our Restoration Project Administrator, attended a workshop for people doing development work for a wide variety of projects throughout the Santa Barbara Province of Franciscan Friars (the Western US). “The other projects are on a much grander scale”, according to Mary, “we have the smallest amount to raise. But no matter how many millions of dollars needed for a project, the challenge and obstacles are the same”. This workshop was a great way to collaborate with other people and institutions; Mary learned much that will be helpful.

The restoration crew participated in our yearly first aid and CPR training and certification in March. In April Tommy Spottedbird and Brother David Paz attended a day at the Stone Foundation “Stonework Symposium 2003” in Santa Fe. This was the second time a symposium sponsored by the Stone Foundation was held in New Mexico. The Stone Foundation is a three-year-old organization of masons and all those people interested in the art of working with stone. Several well-known authorities from a cross section of working masons in the US and the UK gave presentations. This opportunity to meet other working masons was very helpful for both Tommy and Brother David. Of particular interest was the session on stone walling given by Dan Snow, author of “In the Company of Stone.” Some useful tips were picked up as we prepare to resume work on the dry stone retaining wall we are building at the bottom of the hill in front of the Mission.

While the scaffolding was up Brother Peter removed the crucifix and lights from the sanctuary so that they can be cleaned and repaired, and the electrical brought up to code. The plan is to have them all back in place by Mother’s Day.

We are now offering a “Restoration Steward” program for donors who wish to make a monthly pledge to support our restoration project. This program could be a key to our continuing success in these economic times. Much of our grant funding from charitable foundations has been cut back for the upcoming fiscal year. The particulars of this program are still being worked out.

Schola Cantorum, a choral group from the St. Francis of Assisi Cathedral in Santa Fe, gave a concert in the Mission to help raise funds for the restoration project. Those attending the concert donated \$1,243.00. This is the second concert the group has done here. *Schola Cantorum* is directed by Dr. Billy Turney. The group primarily sings at the St. Francis of Assisi Cathedral in Santa Fe, but find they are traveling more and more singing for Liturgy on Feast Days at many northern places such as Jemez Pueblo, Sile, Pena Blanca, La Bajada and San Ysidro. We are very grateful for the group’s interest in our project and the help they give to ensure that the Mission doors remain open.

An unexpected source of income has been the group tours that we started offering last year. They have become so popular that we have had one almost each week this year. We have seen the benefit, not only monetarily, but in the fact that it is another way to get the word out to the public just how important this project is, how much history we have here, and what still needs to be accomplished.

On April 6, 2003 history was once again made at St. Joseph Apache Mission. Ricardo Ramirez, the Bishop of Las Cruces, dedicated and blessed a painting of San Juan Diego. Juan Diego is the first indigenous person of North America to be canonized as a Saint. This is the first dedication of a painting of him in Southern New Mexico, if not the entire State. It is most fitting that the painting, done by local Mescalero artist Oliver Enjady, has a home here in the Mission. We are working on proposals to obtain a grant to help us clean and restore all of the artwork at the Mission.

As of April 18, 2003, we have raised \$477,641.00. Of that amount, 36% came from private foundation grants, 52% from private donations, and 12% from fundraising events and interest income. Currently we are being funded by grants from: the Frank J. Lewis Foundation, the Stockman Family Foundation, the William R. & Virginia Hayden Foundation, the Max & Victoria Dreyfus Foundation, and the Robert E. & Evelyn McKee Foundation, the John & Katherine Naudin Foundation and the Burkitt Foundation Perpetual Fund, through the El Paso Community Foundation. Sizable private donations have been received this fiscal year from: Cecil L. Russell, Paul & Carmen Brusuelas, Jim & Katherine Vasile, Angel & Gail Gonzalez, Jesus & Rosario Ontiveros, John Knott, Barrett & Patty Covington, the Franciscan Friars of St. Barbara, the Parish of the Church of the Risen Savior, the parish of St. Malachy and the parish of Temse, Belgium. As of April 18, 2002, the balance in the restoration fund was \$73,255.74.

Currently, there are five people on the restoration crew working with Brother Peter: two masons, two student trainees, and a project administrator. (Labor and training, incidentally, account for 88% of our expenses this fiscal year and 71% over all.) We are continuing to work hard to locate grants, conduct fundraisers and obtain other donations in order to sustain this worthwhile project.

Thank you for working with us to ensure that St. Joseph Apache Mission will continue to serve and inspire so many. We stop once in awhile in awe at what we have accomplished and what still needs to be done to keep this historic landmark, Veteran’s Memorial, and faith-filled church open for future generations.