

4-12-2002

## Miami's Marian Mosaic: Immigrant Devotion to the Virgin

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## Miami's Marian Mosaic : Immigrant Devotion to the Virgin

Roniel Vallejo



N.S. de la Caridad del Cobre

*To my biological mother, Vivian Vallejo and my spiritual mother, the Virgin  
Mary*

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to give thanks to my mother as well as the rest of my family, who went out of their way to take me to the churches. And also to Yusimit and Samuel Martinez, who helped me scan the photos and print many pages without charging me. A special thanks to the Department of Religious Studies, who have guided me throughout the years as an undergraduate student. I would also like to express my sincere thanks to Dr. Terry Rey, who helped me brainstorm as well as provided the title for this project.

I also enjoyed the talks and answers that I received from all the people that I interviewed, without which I would not be able to write about Marian devotion in Miami. Thank you for the rich and colorful responses. Specifically, I want to thank Father Sosa, Rogelio Zelada, Bishop Wenski, Dr. Mahler, Dr. Rey, as well as several others who went out of their way to answer my questions. To those that I have not mentioned, please forgive me, for I am grateful nonetheless.

## INTRODUCTION

This project tries to understand the nature of Marian devotion in Miami, Florida as it pertains to several immigrant groups. These immigrant groups are: Haitians, Mexicans, Cubans, Nicaraguans, Colombians, and several others. Marian devotion is so diverse that within each ethnic group there are many varying beliefs about the Virgin. But just as there are diverse answers, there are answers that blend with others. This means that Marian devotion is in a sense, a personal devotion. No one can place a finger or precisely pinpoint what this devotion is or means. At times, many people that I tried to interview were very reluctant to respond to my simple question: "What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?" Although at first this may seem like a simple question when one starts to ponder and truly think about it, one becomes either lost or enlightened.

Throughout the research, I encountered several people who really could not answer this question. They looked at me and were in total shock because no one has ever asked them this question. I made it clear that I am a student at FIU but this still did not matter to them. They were still trying to grasp and understand the question. In several ethnic communities I felt that I was intruding because I was asking questions and taking pictures. But even if I explained who I was, this still did not matter. Some of my interviewees responded to my question by asking others. So in a sense they were answering a question

with another question. It seemed to me that some interviewees were trying to ignore the question or really did not understand what type of response I wanted.

To be honest, I wanted a response from the heart. A response that seems vague can come from the heart but this at times was a bit dubious. Many of the interviewee's answered the question with traditional orthodox teaching of the Catholic Church. This gave me a sense that I was some type of Catholic cleric that was checking to see if the parishioners knew their Mariology and they wanted to please me. I also encountered many who attended church just for the sake of having an ethnic identity not a religious one. Although some combined their ethnic and religious identity as being the same thing. Others just attended church for the feeling that they have of "belonging" to their ethnic group.

This project is organized into eight chapters. The beginning provides a background to Mary. Then the following sections deal with Marian devotion in Miami, and the different religious structures such as churches, shrines, and the main cathedral. The four main sites that I attended were: Notre-Dame d'Haiti Catholic Church, St. Anne Missions (Mexican Missions in Homestead), Our Lady of Charity Shrine, and St. Mary's Cathedral. Each chapter has other divisions as well. For example, the chapter on St. Mary's Cathedral details the religious service, the actual observation, interpretation, interviews, and pictures

of the structure itself. Moreover, a description of news articles that highlight Marian feast days in Miami is also undertaken. There is also an appendix that contains all the interviews that were made throughout the course of this project as well as other information that will be useful in deciphering Marian devotion in Miami. Finally, a brief conclusion follows that tries to theorize at the true essence of Miami's Marian Mosaic.

This study is theoretically oriented by Thomas Tweed's theory of the role of symbols in immigrant religion. According to Tweed, Our Lady of Charity allows, Cuban exiles to acquire a sense of a translocative and transtemporal identity; translocative in the sense that the religious symbol of the Virgin Mary functions in locating an ethnic group in imagining that they are back in their homeland (all this is psychological). And a transtemporal religious symbol of religious site allows the ethnic group to temporarily transcend time and space in order to acquire a sense of belonging back in their native country. In other words, the symbols of Mary and the places of worship, allow ethnic groups to maintain their cultural and religious heritage.

Therefore, the role of the Virgin Mary works in providing a sense of nationalism among each ethnic group. In regards to each specific Marian manifestation that the respective ethnic group adores and associates with the homeland, this central theoretical paradigm shows how immigrants use religion to attain a sense of



identity and belonging through the religious symbol of the Virgin Mary. Moreover, the identity, and culture of immigrant groups is enhanced through the symbol of the Virgin because it reminds them of who they are, what they are, where they are from, and where are they going.

Marian devotion in Miami is vast because it is present in people who are from different ethnic backgrounds, who know different languages, and who maintain different beliefs regarding Mary. These ethnicities are: Haitians, Mexicans, Cubans, Nicaraguans, Colombians, and many others who from throughout Latin America; most of them are immigrants, who have come to the United States of America in search of a better life. Immigrant devotion to the Virgin is usually concentrated on the Marian apparition that occurred in the homeland. Each ethnic group has its own version or unique vision of the Virgin. Although many Catholic theologians argue that even though Mary "appears" in all parts of the world and takes on various forms, nonetheless, she is the same person: Mary. But the point here is that these visible forms of the Virgin Mary bring faith and devotion to its people.

On one level, faith and devotion mean the same thing to the immigrants whom I interviewed and talked to regarding Mary. They have faith that Mary may help them in any dire situation, and at the same time they are fiercely devoted to her. Therefore I cannot make a clear distinction between having faith and having devotion when both of them become one for immigrant devotees of the Virgin Mary in Miami.

The four places of worship that I attended for this research are: Notre Dame d'Haiti Catholic Church, St. Anne Missions Catholic Church, St. Mary's Cathedral, and Our Lady of Charity

Shrine. The first one is a church, the second one is a Mexican mission, the third is the cathedral in Miami, and the last is a shrine.

In Notre Dame d'Haiti the main language is Haitian Creole. The congregants who know English are the second and the third generation Haitians. The first generation at times understood me but could not answer back in English. This language barrier on my behalf, did not allow me to get information from the first generation of Haitian immigrants. Either way, it was running quite late for them so a translation from their offspring would not have been appropriate. Nevertheless, the interviews that I obtained allowed me to understand some aspects of the second and third generations' view of Mary.

In the Mexican mission, the Mexican immigrants were a bit shy. Here the language barrier did not exist because I know Spanish. Moreover, there was a bit of insecurity from the Mexican immigrants that I encountered. I was surprised to see second and third generation Mexicans running away from me, but this will be explained in the St. Anne section of this project. I was surprised to know that a few Mexicans that I interviewed had no idea of who Mary was! This was truly shocking because it seemed that they attend mass merely because everyone in their community is doing it. I am not trying to offend anyone, but why attend church if one has absolutely no idea of who or what the Virgin Mary is? One man had no idea about Mary because I tried

to probe and see if he was just trying to ignore me but in reality he did not know. He fits the "unchurched" category that Thomas Tweed talks about in his text, Our Lady of the Exile.

The cathedral in Miami was an experience that allowed me to understand Marian devotion in more detail. This detail shows that St. Mary's Cathedral is the epicenter which all immigrants become one and thus are able to become "Americanized." This by no means forces the immigrants to abandon their previous selves, but allows them to integrate into American culture and society through the use of language, culture, and other things that are important in the US. Again, whether immigrants learn English or not it is up to them; it is their autonomous choice. Of course attending mass at the cathedral the language barrier will exist. Because the mass is conducted in English so if the immigrant chooses not to learn English then the mass will not be understood. Although some times there are masses conducted in Spanish and French but this is on special occasions. The Eucharist transcends any language but the message of the mass will not be understood and thus the immigrant will walk away less fulfilled.

The shrine of Caridad del Cobre is the epicenter for Cuban Catholics living in Miami. The shrine is on Biscayne Bay and this reminds Cuban Catholics of their connection to their homeland. Because Cuba is surrounded by water, the shrine allows immigrants to metaphorically connect with their homeland. The

language barrier did not exist here. The atmosphere is one of unity because this is the shrine for Cuban exiles to gather and share memories, tragedies, and hopes. Moreover, the image of Our Lady of Charity is a constant reminder of how she appeared in Cuba. This is like Our Lady of Perpetual Help's and Our Lady of Guadalupe's meaning to Haitians and Mexicans respectively. These are the visible images of Mary that allows them to connect with her and their homeland as well as showing faith and devotion to her.

In order to continue with the research on Marian devotion in Miami, I should first give a brief synopsis on background information regarding Mary. If one picks up any version of the New Testament, one will see that it contains little information regarding the mother of Jesus. In The Thousand Faces of the Virgin Mary, George H. Tavard analyzes the figure of Mary from a broad ecumenical perspective. He shows how little information there is in the New Testament regarding Miriam of Nazareth (as she would have been called in her lifetime). He also shows how Mary is seen from different points of view. These range so broadly as to include all the world religions. His argument is that Mary not only pertains to Christianity but to all the major religions of the world as well.

Tavard also examines the two dogmas that have been designated to Mary. These two are: the Immaculate Conception of Mary and the Assumption of Mary. "The Immaculate Conception of

the Theotokos was defined in 1854 by Pius IX and her Assumption by Pius XII in 1950"(190). Theotokos just means the "Bearer of God." Tvard does not like these dogmas because he feels that they create disorder within Christianity. But can a dogma ever please everybody? The Immaculate Conception states that the Virgin was conceived immaculately (without original sin). The dogma of the Assumption states that Mary was taken into heaven in body and soul. Many Christian feminists would later criticize these dogmas because they believe they perpetuate oppression against women. This will be discussed later. Tvard concludes that the two dogmas need to be rewritten from an ecumenical perspective (200). He says this will take time but it will ultimately be for the good of Christianity as a whole.

When Vatican II came along, there "was no urgent reason ... to formulate a doctrine on the Virgin Mary"(202). Tvard wants to maintain peace between the Catholic, Eastern, and Protestant worlds. But many Catholics wanted the pope to make a third dogma. This dogma would state that Mary is part of the redemption of Jesus. Her third title would be "Co-Redemptrix" but this never went through. Tvard is quite glad that it did not go through because he argues it would have caused further separation within the Christian world. In Our Lady of Class Struggle, Terry Rey says:

Vatican II, then, is clear in removing Mary from a holy pedestal, where she intermingles with the trinity in

activity and potency, ultimately placing her in the Church with the rest of a suffering humanity in need of God's grace through Christ for redemption. (104)

This is definitely true because Vatican II wanted to limit any talks or issues regarding Mary. Of course this did not please Catholics who pursue their popular devotions of Mary.

Tavard wants to have a Marian image that would encompass a need to heal the earth (258). He proposes the image of Mary as being Gaia, or the Earth. He feels that this would help all Christians unite, as well as the followers of other world religions. I feel that Tavard does not want to offend others, but even if one is to over generalize in this manner, many people will still not accept Mary. He ends his text with an unfinished conclusion, a reflection of how in ecumenical circles it will always be very difficult to come up with just one image or just one meaning. World religions are not monolithic, political systems are not monolithic, and mostly everything else is not monolithic. So if he wants to come up with a monolithic image of Mary or a monolithic meaning for Mary that will become accepted by mostly everyone it will be a very difficult job to carry forth. I am not saying that such a task is impossible, but that such a task will be very difficult to eventually accomplish.

### **Feminist Commentary on Mary**

Christian feminists have shown that the image of Mary is itself a construct of the patriarchal mind. Mary, the

doctrines and dogmas about her, and the customary forms of Marian devotion are thought to reinforce patriarchy by offering women a temporary solace from systemic oppression in male-dominated societies and churches. (Tavard 253)

This means that the image of Mary is kept by the hierarchy of the Catholic Church in order to perpetuate oppression against women.

Maurice Hamington has very similar ideas. In the text, Hail Mary?: The Struggle for Ultimate Womanhood in Catholicism

Hamington argues that there are many forms of oppression that the church uses in order to control women. He states that the "Marian tradition is a complex weaving of theological logic, medieval Christian devotion, psychology, sexual morality, and politics. However, little in the Marian tradition is based on 'facts' known about the life of Mary"(10). This is true because the New Testament has hardly any information regarding Mary. And apart from this all the other writings came a few centuries after her "death." Hamington is well aware of the numerous goddesses of the Greek and Roman times. But he is certain that "Mary replaced pagan goddesses, but she never gained their status"(13). This means that Mary replaced the pagan goddesses but she never actually gained their status, which would be to officially worship her.

Hamington argues that the papacy wants to promote his conservative and sexist agenda (23). He also states that the ongoing struggle to control Mary is a complicated one. "The Cult



of Mary is not a monolithic collection of images, despite hierarchical efforts to reify them"(31). This forces Hamington to break down the Catholic Church into three sections:

Hierarchical Catholicism, Popular Catholicism, and Theological Catholicism. He even breaks down Theological Catholicism into three sections: Conservative, Moderate/Reformist, and Radical.

Feminist theologians seek to reinterpret and clarify Mariology, not as a historical or ecclesial exercise but because it has implications for issues that affect real women's lives. Mary's imagery has an impact upon sexual relations, familial power, and church leadership. (33)

This is significant because some feminists want to find a way to save Mary from all the patriarchal elements while others have given up on her. Hamington's text is filled with really good stuff regarding feminism and Mary's future role. But one final thing is that Hamington states that sociologist Andrew Greeley finds the Church's traditional "position of limiting Mary's role to be a self-destructive error, and he argues that the future survival of the Catholic Church depends upon allowing Mary to evolve into the feminine manifestation of God"(35). This is crucial if the church is to continue existing. Hamington supports the feminist view and at times the radical view. Only time will tell how Mary will evolve in order to combine all experiences of women as being valid, truthful, and genuine. This will eventually lead to liberation for all humans.

In Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary, Marina Warner goes through great pains to articulate and describe the Cult of the Virgin in its multifaceted forms. Her text has a lot of information on the Virgin but Warner makes it clear that this work is a "private journey"(xxi). What I particularly found interesting in her text was the way that she organized her book. She shows the five aspects of Mary as being: a Virgin, a Queen, a Bride, a Mother, and an Intercessor. She is also very much into the aesthetics of how poetry, art, and literature depict the Virgin Mary into making her the soft and beautiful woman that she venerated and worshiped as a child. But the beauty of the poems and the art should not fool the reader. Warner is also criticizing these images of the Virgin and she shows how these images contribute to the oppression of women.

Jaroslav Pelikan's Mary Through the Centuries depicts Mary from a historical perspective, yet he also tends to write similar to Warner. But he is not into the feminist arguments that Warner and Hamington talk about in their texts. Nevertheless, these texts have broadened my ideas and conceptions of the Virgin Mary. I used to have a narrow view about Mary but now I know that things are not just one way or the other. There are many ways to view the Virgin and if one takes into consideration the feminist views then one can walk away fulfilled of all the knowledge one has gained. In brief, the Virgin Mary has

provoked, inspired, and attracted many followers from different backgrounds and religions to her. This ultimately makes the relationship between the Virgin and the self personal. Thus no two relationships are alike. And so the Marian devotion among Miami's immigrants reflect a vast array of beliefs and needs.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

Researcher: Roniel Vallejo

Congregation: Notre-Dame d'Haiti Catholic Church

Name of Service: Mass

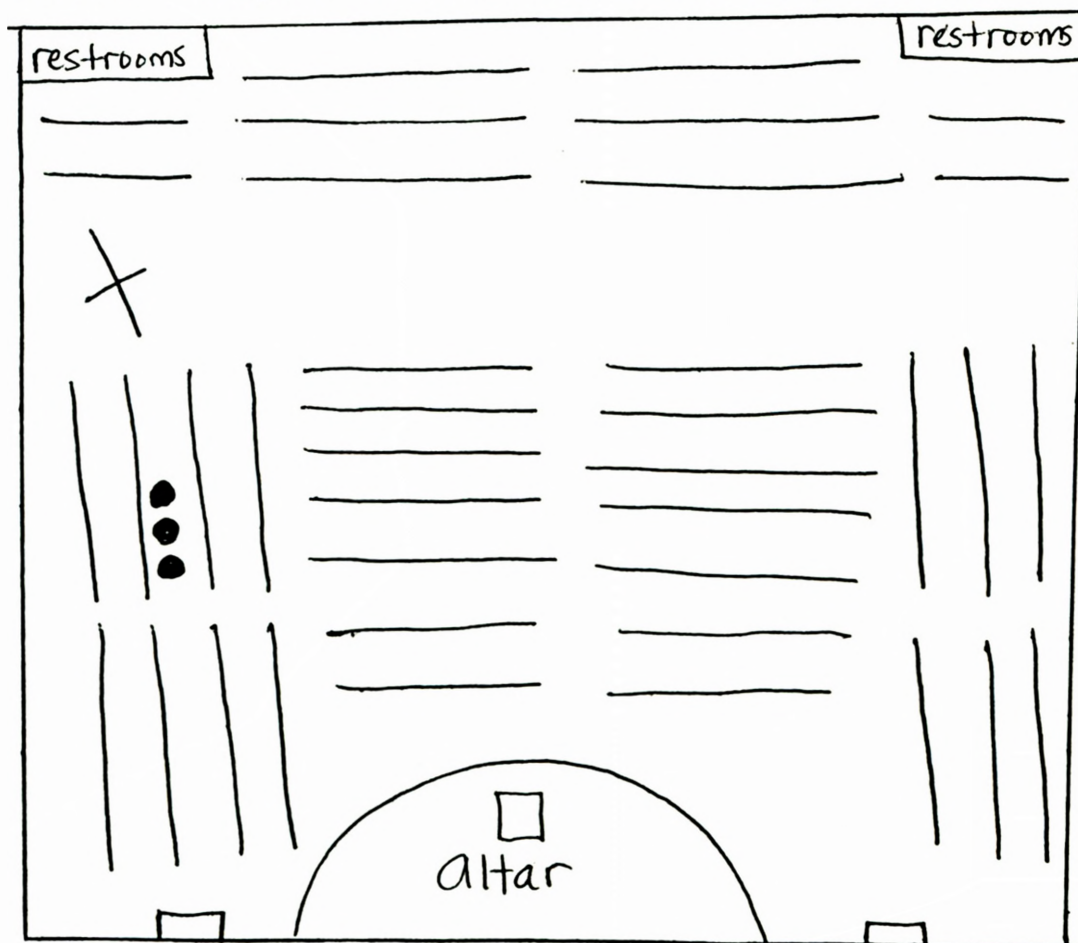
Date of Observation: 03-02-02

Time of day: 7:20 pm to 9:30 pm

Place (in church, activity building, gym, etc.): Inside Church

PHYSICAL LAYOUT

1. What is the physical layout of the room? How are those present arranged? Describe and sketch (if possible).



\*This protocol is from the Pew Study.

2. What materials, statues, signs, symbols are in the room?

What notable sights, sounds, smells?

Where I sat in the church there was a Christ statue behind me. A painted icon was on the far wall of Mary and child. This icon is of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. The sounds were very loud as I mentioned in the observation section. The preacher used a microphone and his loud voice was multiplied several times more. There was also a beautiful stained-glass window of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

3. As people gather, is there silence, visiting, singing, etc?

As people gather there is mostly talking, singing, and a lot of charismatic activity.

4. What language do you hear spoken? Haitian Creole

#### PEOPLE

5. How many people were present? (estimate) About 100

6. Number of pews or seats in room? About 50 pews

7. Percentage full? 99%

8. Ethnicity (%):

Anglo: 0%

Black: 98%

Hispanic: 2%

East Asians (Chinese, Koreans, Vietnamese): 0%

South Asians (Indians, Pakistanis, etc.): 0%

9. Female (%): 80%

Male (%): 20%

10. Ages (%): Children: 10%

Teens: 10%

Adults: 70%

Seniors: 10%

11. Socio-economic composition (%):

Poor: 30%

Working Class: 60%

Professional: 10%

a). What are your clues? (dress, types of cars in parking lot etc.)

Most of the cars in the parking lot were mostly new and were maintained in good shape. The way people were dressed was as if they were dressed comfortably at home and then they came to church. Others seemed that they came from work directly to church.

12. How well do people seem to know one another? How do they interact?

Most of the people seem to know each other. Even if they did not know you they were pretty friendly with me and my mom and her husband.

13. How are people dressed? (casual, formal)

A little bit of both.

### **WORSHIP RITUAL**

14. What is the central activity of the worship service?

(discussion, praying, singing)

The service was mainly preaching and singing. And later it became a regular traditional mass. Although it had a flair of charisma. Afterwards there were comments about activities going on in the community.

15. In what language(s) is it conducted? Were there other languages spoken? Describe:

It was only conducted in Haitian Creole. The only exception was when the priest talked after the mass in broken English. He just spoke in English because the ad was printed in English.

16. Who is the main leader of the service? Minister, priest, layperson?

At first there are several people from the community and later when the mass started the priest takes over.

17. Are there others who play significant roles during the services? (choir, band, ushers, etc.)

Besides the priest and the lay persons preaching, some people walked around collecting donations. And they collected donations twice in a roll!

18. What type of readings (sacred literature, poetry, etc.) was used?

Mostly the Catholic Bible. A basic traditional charismatic mass.

- a). Summarize the message of the readings.

I would love to but I did not understand anything. It was

all in Haitian Creole.

19. Briefly list the issues and topics mentioned during the sermon/homily.

I did not understand any of the issues because of the language barrier.

20. Tone of service and message? (upbeat, joyous, somber, ritualized, and routine)

When the lay persons were in control it was upbeat and joyous and at times very loud. When the mass started the service became very ritualized and also routine.

21. Were there any types of foods involved in the services? If so, please.

There was no food provided during the service.

22. Music (type, frequency, participation, music books, sheets or overhead)

The only music came from the layperson(s) who sang while they were preaching. This was done acapella style for there were no instruments. The congregation sang along as well.

23. How did the congregation respond? Bored, involved, enthusiastic?

What are your indicators?

Most of the congregation responded very involved and enthusiastic. Because they sang along with rhythm, passion, and devotion. A few people were either asleep or praying throughout the entire service....



24. Were there any unusual responses, such as speaking in tongues, shouting, spontaneous singing?

There was one guy who started shouting Jesus' name constantly and his entire body was jerking uncontrollably. It lasted for about a few minutes or so.

25. What announcements were made during or after the services? Briefly describe.

Before the service there were no announcements. After the mass the priest did briefly remind the parishioners about current community events that were posted on the church flyers. The only one that I recognized was about a college fair which was printed in English.

#### **CONVERSATIONS AND INTERACTIONS OUTSIDE OF SERVICE**

26. Describe any significant incidents or interactions that occurred before or after the meeting among participants.

After the mass, I interviewed three people asking them "What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?" My mom was criticized for taking pictures inside the church. And I was labeled a "sacrilegious" person for taking a picture of the stained-glass window of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

27. Describe conversations, if any, you had with participants (list people and significant comments).

I interviewed three people (two males and one female) on what does the Virgin mean to them; and they responded with unique, colorful, and rich answers.

being here. In this church and this neighborhood.

I finally have the courage to respond to my stepfather about his racist beliefs and my mom gives me an angry look. She is warning me not to get into an argument with him, because he drove us to church. I am very grateful that he brought us here, but I have to stand up and challenge his beliefs. Because if I remain silent I will be as guilty as him. My silence will let him know that I am agreeing with everything he is saying. At times he seems to be joking about his racist beliefs but at other times he seems really absolute in what he says and believes.

I get upset and I let him know that the term "race" is actually racist. It was invented by European men who wanted to make a "distinction" between them and "others." I let him know that I prefer the term "ethnicity." My mom and he are surprised to hear my shocking revelations. My stepfather stops making ridiculous and harmful remarks and now I feel that we can enter the church service in peace.

At first we did not know where the entrance to the church was. My mother and stepfather looked a bit worried and tense. I started looking around to see if I found a door of some kind. It was 7:15 pm. The place was dark and badly lit. I saw a group of young men hanging around the corner of the church. I was going to ask one of them where the church entrance was but I was held back by my stepfather. Then I saw a young woman who seemed that she was in the early stages of pregnancy. I kindly interrupted

her walk and asked her where the church entrance was. She seemed a bit confused and I had to repeat the question. She finally acknowledged that she understood my question and then with her right arm she pointed towards the church' entrance. I thanked her and I left.

When I saw the direction in which she pointed to I started to see the cleverly "hidden" door. I did not see it before because maybe my stepfather's comments started to poison the well within my own mind whether I wanted to accept it or not. I was in awe looking at the stained glass mural of the Virgin and child. My mom and her husband entered the church before me and with a quick pace. I was wondering why are they in such a hurry? Anyways the mass starts at 8:00 pm. We arrived about forty-five minutes beforehand. I thought this was great because now I can try to talk to the congregants and get to know about their beliefs regarding the Virgin Mary.

The door is swung open by my rude stepfather. The mass seems to have started forty-five minutes earlier! But wait, this is no mass.... The church seems to be completely full except for some pews that are way in the back somewhere. Most, if not all the people were standing up. The lady right next to the door was giving away free flyers that contain information of the upcoming events that pertain to the church and the community. My stepfather was holding my mom's hand and he totally ignored the lady! I was really embarrassed! I stopped next to her and I

said "hello" and she smiled and gave me one. I then smiled at the people as I walked to where my mom and her husband decided to sit. The lady that was passing out the flyers came towards us and kindly gave one to my mom and one to my stepfather. This increased my embarrassment, but then again maybe my stepfather just did not see her?

The service is definitely not a mass. How can I tell? Well, for one, there is no priest. The altar is empty and there are five seats arranged in front of the altar. The people who are occupying these seats seem to be from the community. They are reading the Bible and they are commenting on what they read. They seem to preach about the end times but I really cannot know for sure because I do not know Haitian Creole. Moreover, one gentleman got up and he started to speak really loudly, using a microphone I really felt that my brain was going to explode and my ear drums were going to collapse!

I am aware that the intense loud voice is bothering my mom too. My stepfather fell asleep but his snoring is not as loud as the man's voice. Maybe if he did not have a microphone the tone of his voice would be exactly fine. I was amazed to see my stepfather sleeping while the man preached in an extreme loud voice! I really wish I could have understood what he was saying but all the preaching and all the readings were in Haitian Creole. Furthermore, I started to get a headache because the language that I do not understand plus the loud voice that is

made one hundred times louder thanks to the use of the microphone is really impacting my ears well being.

My butt starts to hurt and I wonder why? My mom lets me know that she is getting a migraine headache and that her butt hurts too! I am wondering why our butts hurt? Then I get up but not before I feel a deep pinch on my behind. I notice that the pew that we are sitting at is broken in half and the broken edges were pinching our behinds! I was surprised to see that a pew was broken in the middle. This is the first time that I have seen a broken pew! My mom and I move to another part of the pew that is not broken but we notice that the pew that is made out of wood is cracked from the beginning of one side all the way to the end! My stepfather does not seem to notice because he is still sleeping! My mom decides to stay next to him so as to not wake him up, but I let her know that if her butt starts to hurt again to not complain to me.

The service is still going on. I start to meditate so the loud noise would not pierce my ears. The meditation is not working. I then pretend that I am actually enjoying the service but it does not work. My mom looks at the watch and lets me know that the mass is taking too long. I let her know that the mass is at 8:00 pm and thus it has not started yet. She gives me a face that lets me know that she will have to suffer even more. I tell her to relax and try to enjoy the mass. I was hoping and praying that the priest would not scream as loud as the man that

was currently preaching. After he finished the congregation stood up and most of the people lifted their arms in the air. I saw quite a number of them had shirts that said that they are "charismatic." I know now why they are lifting their arms. I try to join in the singing but I do not understand it. I try to pretend that I understand their language but I am just fooling myself.

The charismatic atmosphere was evident in the church. There was a point that a young man a few pews away started to scream and tremble in religious ecstasy! I was shocked because it was the first time I have seen this type of behavior in a Catholic church. The man was trembling, shaking, speaking in tongues, screaming, and calling out to Jesus. This lasted for about five minutes. Then he returned to "normal." My stepfather woke up. My mom looked at me because she was concerned about what just happened. I told her I would explain what she just saw after the service and mass ended. When my stepfather brought to our attention that his butt hurts too, he noticed that the pew was cracked in half. He then made comments that the church was a total wreck. I wanted to argue against him but I did not want to call attention to me.

After my stepfather brought up that the church was a wreck one of the kneeling supporters fell and collapsed! It made a very loud noise as if someone detonated a bomb in the church! Luckily it was not from our pew but the pew that was right next

to us. The people sitting in the pew were a bit shocked and they seemed to show that it was not their fault that the kneeling supporter detached itself from the pew right in front of it. I start to look at all the pews that were in sight and I started to notice that most of the pews behind us and right next to us were really in bad shape! What has happened to these pews? Do people come in here throwing parties or something? I did not want to put the blame on anyone but it seemed that someone or a group of people were responsible. At least all the other churches that I have been to are kept clean and intact.

I do not mean to say that Notre-Dame d'Haiti is unclean but that it deserves a bit more of attention when it comes to the pews and floors. It was brought to my attention by Dr. Rey that the church is held right inside what used to be a cafeteria. Maybe this explains the broken pews and the dirty floors. But I still feel that the people in charge of the cleaning should do their job. I do not know how pews are made or ordered but if they are expensive maybe this is one of the reasons why new pews have not been ordered. I also wonder why or how did the pews break? Did someone or a group of people jump on them as if it were a party? Did someone that wants to sabotage the church walk into the church one day and tried to break as many pews as possible? All these are just speculations. There is no way I can know for sure. Maybe someone within the congregation knows but since I do not speak their language I am totally lost.

While I was getting ready for the mass to begin I came to the chilling conclusion that I will not be able to interview anyone unless they knew either English, Spanish, or American Sign Language! I started to think that maybe the second or third generation will probably know English. I mean I am a second generation Cuban American and I learned English when I was in kindergarten so I assumed that second and third generation Haitians would at least know English as well. My theory would get proven or not after the mass was over. Eight p.m. was around the corner and my mom was anxious to leave. My stepfather was asleep again....

As the mass started the priest walked into the church and several people, who might not be Catholic, left. Maybe the community has an interdenominational service before the mass? This is what it looked like to me. The chairs that surrounded the altar were placed somewhere else. The priest looked at me as well as my mom and her husband because we were the only white people there. Still I think he probably was wondering if we had any underlying motives to be at today's mass. Unfortunately I did but they are not mean or harmful. This is for the project that I am doing. Anyways, I finally was able to tell when and how the priest conducted the mass because it was just like any other traditional mass that I have been to. The only difference was the language barrier that I encountered.



During the mass I started looking around the church to see if I saw young people to interview, in the hopes that they would know English. Moreover, I saw about a few that I suspected would probably know English. After the mass I would corner them and hopefully interview them. Of course I would introduce myself and talk to them in a calm, nice way. I just wanted to hurry just in case they would tell me that they are in a hurry. So in that case I would have to speed things up. When the priest told the church that now we can give peace to one another all the Haitians that were seated in front of us and behind us were very friendly in giving us the "peace be with you." At times when I shook their hands and I told them "peace be with you" in English they remained silent. Maybe they were expecting me to know their language?

I was extremely relieved to know that the priest did not use the microphone and even if he did he would speak in a calm and direct voice. This was soothing to my ears and I would imagine the ears of everybody else. Unless one wanted to go deaf before his/her time, it was at least very pleasant for me to hear someone speak in a calm yet direct manner. My ears can finally have peace too.

When the time for the standing and kneeling came, I was really scared to put my entire body weight on the kneeling supporters because if they would collapse like the pew that was next to us I would crawl into a hole and literally die! So I

tried to understand Haitian Creole but I could not capture anything, although my ears really liked the songs that were sung. My body was moving to the left and to the right, as well as to the front and towards the back. The songs brought peace to my soul. I would have liked to have understood what they were saying but sometimes just liking the music or song is better than understanding the lyrics, because music transcends language barriers. But I really did not care what the lyrics were saying. The voice of the congregation and the rhythm of the songs were enough for me to enjoy them. I even tried to sing along even if I did not know what they were saying. In either case, I truly loved the songs that were sung that day....

I was contemplating whether to partake of the Eucharist or not. My stepfather was in the way and my mom wanted to know what the priest was saying. My stepfather pretended that he knew their language, and when the priest said something he told my mom that the priest was asking the congregation who would like to dance with him after the mass! He kept on saying ridiculous things and my mom believed some, but at times she questioned what he said. My mom is very gullible to what he says. Moreover, I wanted him to quit whispering so I could enjoy the mass, but he just kept on making all these things up. Maybe he thinks it is funny, but if someone would say stuff like he said about him I am sure he would definitely not like it.

The time of the Eucharist is coming and I am a bit afraid. I have not confessed and I was going to confess on my own. But I still felt guilty so I did not get in line. My stepfather seemed a bit surprised to see that I did not get in line, but I really do not care what he thinks. Thinking back, now I wish I could have taken the Eucharist, but just the feeling that I would interview people after the service made me feel kind of uneasy. After the Eucharist was given the priest looked at me in an unclear way. I wish I had the power to read minds, but his look did not look in any way good. After the mass was over the priest started to talk in English! After all this time and my ears can finally understand something. It turns out that he is just reminding the congregation that pretty soon there would be the 2002 Miami National College Fair. This was printed inside the flyer that the kind lady gave to me. He also wanted the parents to get involved in their children's college choices. He later started talking in Haitian Creole. The only reason he spoke in English was because the add itself was printed in English. Otherwise, he would have remained talking in Haitian Creole all this time.

One of the woman parishioners asks the priest a question and my stepfather told my mom that the woman was asking the priest when will the dance be held for single women! Anyway, the mass ends and I give the camera to my mom. She is in charge of taking pictures inside and outside the church. I am in charge of

getting people to interview. At first I find this guy who looks to be around the age of seventeen or so. I introduce myself and I ask him if I can ask him one question. He seems rather shy but he is willing to cooperate. My theory is so far correct. He knows English! I am happy, and so we head outside the church because inside the church the people are talking too loud for my hand-held recorder to record his voice. (Please see the interview section, he is interview number 1).

After I finished interviewing him, I thanked him and I head inside the church again to find another person to interview. My mom is going crazy taking pictures of almost anything and everything that is inside the church. A group of women are talking in English and they are surprised to see that we just came to church to take pictures! My mom listens to what they said and she looks at them with a harsh and angry facial expression. The women look at my mom and they all start to laugh in a worried and anxious laugh. Then they all leave. I told my mom that she should be a bit friendlier with people, but I understand why she got angry. People judge others without knowing what and why they are in a certain place. My mom did not try to communicate with the women because she had the idea that maybe all of them only knew Haitian Creole. I guess she proved herself wrong.

My next "victim" was a nice young man who shook my hand. To my luck, he also knows English! I introduce myself and I ask

him "What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?" He is a bit shocked and surprised but he responds that he would continue to talk but he had to leave. (Please see interview number 2). Finally everyone left. Then I see a woman and her daughter together. I walk up to them and the daughter is the only one that knows English! I was a bit disappointed because all the interviews so far were with second generation Haitians. And this one seemed like it would be the last interview. I introduced myself and I asked the daughter the same question I asked everyone. She was surprised but she answered. (Please see interview number 3).

Finally when I was about to find someone else my stepfather asked the daughter if she would take a picture with me. She agreed but her mom ran away. Her mom does not like taking pictures. Later her husband came out of the restroom and he did not speak English either. I finally gave up because ninety-five percent of the congregation had already left. So just before we were going to get inside the car, I noticed the beautiful stained-glass mosaic of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. So I got the camera that my mom held and I walked towards it. Just before I was going to take the picture I noticed a group of Haitians outside and they were looking at me. When I took the picture they told me that I was being "sacrilegious"! I just ignored them and I left. I did not want them to stone me or anything, but in my opinion they were exaggerating because it is only a

picture. But I guess ignorance kills a city. When we got inside the car and started to drive away my stepfather told us that he gets along with Haitians but not with other black people. Again his racist beliefs were driving me crazy and I wanted to punch him. But since my mom was present I just told him that he cannot spend his entire life generalizing. Hopefully second and third generations from all ethnicities will put an end to racism, sexism, and any other negative "ism" that exists.

Interpretation of What I Saw at Notre-Dame d'Haiti Catholic  
Church

Besides all the negativity that my stepfather brought into the research, I can say that Notre-Dame d'Haiti is really a nice church. All the racist remarks he made did not work because I usually reject negative comments about others. Apart from this I felt that the church members were looking quite a lot at my mom, stepfather, and me. I do not imply that most people in the church are racist but that they were a bit surprised to see Latin people enter the church. The third person that I interviewed told me that I should come back the next day because the mass would be composed of mostly Latins. And I told her that I am researching immigrants in Miami and at the moment I was interested in Haitian people not Hispanic people. She looked rather surprised, but I felt that she wanted me to be with "my group" of people. I just had to let her know that I am not racist. And anyway, even if I am Latin how does she know that I know Spanish? I know many Hispanics that were born and raised in the United States and they cannot speak Spanish even if their lives depended on it.

I wonder why the church did not post the fact that they have a preaching service before the mass? Do they want to keep this a secret? When I called, the guy gave me all the mass days and times but he never said anything about a service before the mass. Maybe he himself did not know. Even the recorded message does

immigrants to maintain their ethnic identity. Moreover, the role of this particular face of Mary helps Haitian immigrants to claim her as their own unique Mary and thus transnationalizing her.

Interviewee 1: ... I like the Virgin Mary because she gave birth to Jesus. That was the first time that she gave birth to Jesus. And she was a virgin. That's why we call her the Virgin Mary. ...

Interviewee 2: ... I like the Virgin Mary because she gave birth to Jesus. That was the first time that she gave birth to Jesus. And she was a virgin. That's why we call her the Virgin Mary. ...

Interviewee 3: ... I like the Virgin Mary because she gave birth to Jesus. That was the first time that she gave birth to Jesus. And she was a virgin. That's why we call her the Virgin Mary. ...

Interviewer: What does the virgin Mary mean to you?

Interviewee 4: ... I like the Virgin Mary because she gave birth to Jesus. That was the first time that she gave birth to Jesus. And she was a virgin. That's why we call her the Virgin Mary. ...



**Date & Time of Interviews:** 03-02-02 from 9:30 to 9:45 pm

**Interviewer:** Roniel Vallejo

**Interviewee & Church:** Anonymous & Notre-Dame d'Haiti Catholic Church

Interviewer: *What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?*

Interviewee #1: What does the Virgin Mary mean to me? She means hope, belief in the Lord, and purity. That's pretty much it.

Interviewer: *Do you feel that your faith, your Catholic faith helps you maintain your identity?*

Interviewee #1: Yes I believe that. It helps me go through the days when times get rough I would pray to the Lord for better days for my mom, my family, and friends.

Interviewer: *Thank you.*

Interviewer: *What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?*

Interviewee #2: Oh!!! She's my love!!! Oh!!! I like the Virgin Mary!!! Because ... she came into play once she gave birth to Jesus. That was one thing so big that she can do for her life! She shows us that once you believe in Christ you can see, I mean when you believe in God, you can see what God can do. That's why you can say that nothing's impossible. This is the answer that she says to

the angel. When the angel asked her, when the angel said to her that nothing's impossible with God. That was the big Christian thing that she did. She was willing to do it because I love God. She loves God a lot! She is **A** example for us! To follow her! The way she does it. I like her. That's why everybody is asked to follow what she said because; even at the wedding....in the wedding at Cana...she goes to Jesus: "They are missing wine." She has her heart just like us to love God to love people. I'm sorry but I can't stay any longer.

Interviewer: *Thank you.*

Interviewer: *What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?*

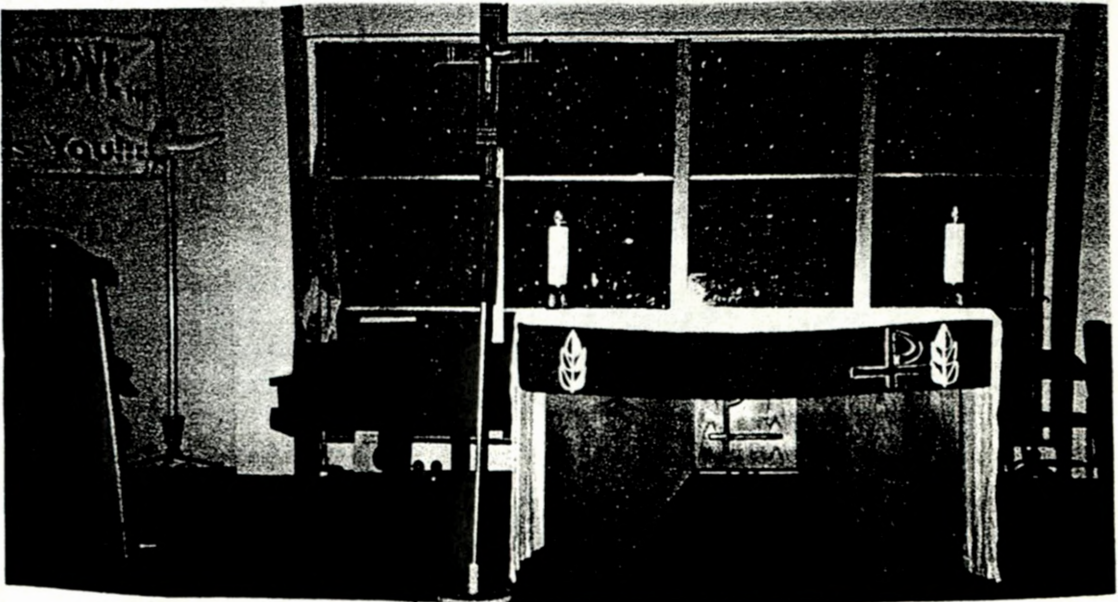
Interviewee #3: Well to me...what the Virgin Mary means to me she's my mother. She's the first thing that's in my life. Um...she solves all my problems through thick and thin. I can go ahead and pray to her and know that I will get a response from her. She's a miraculous person.

Interviewer: *Thank you.*

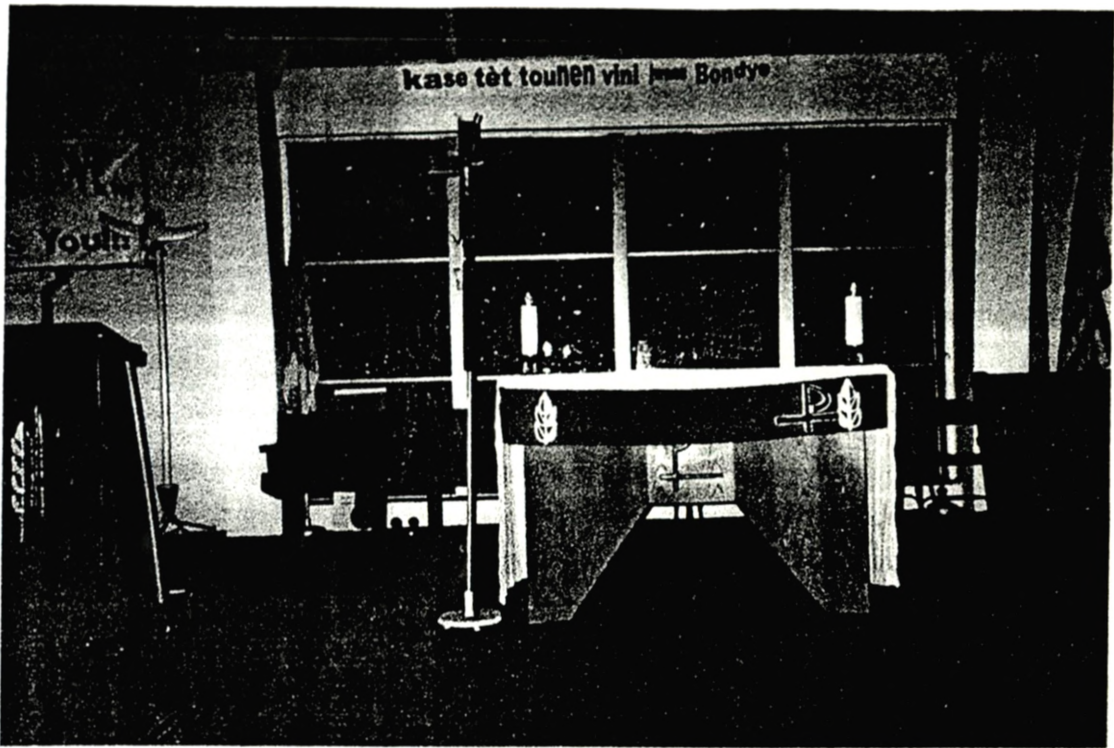
Interviewee #3: Your welcome.



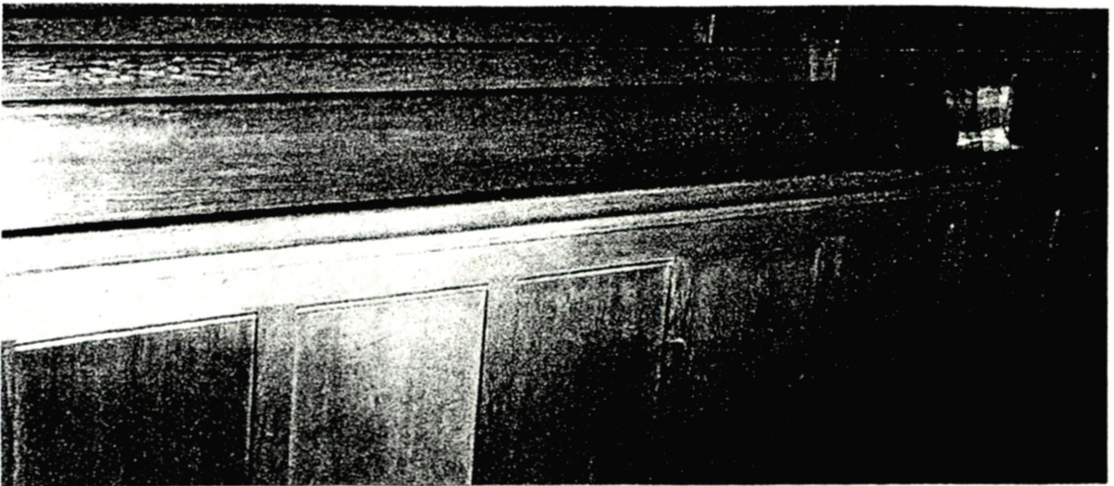
Inside Notre-Dame d'Haiti Catholic Church. This risen Christ was right behind me. The wooden cross is also seen.



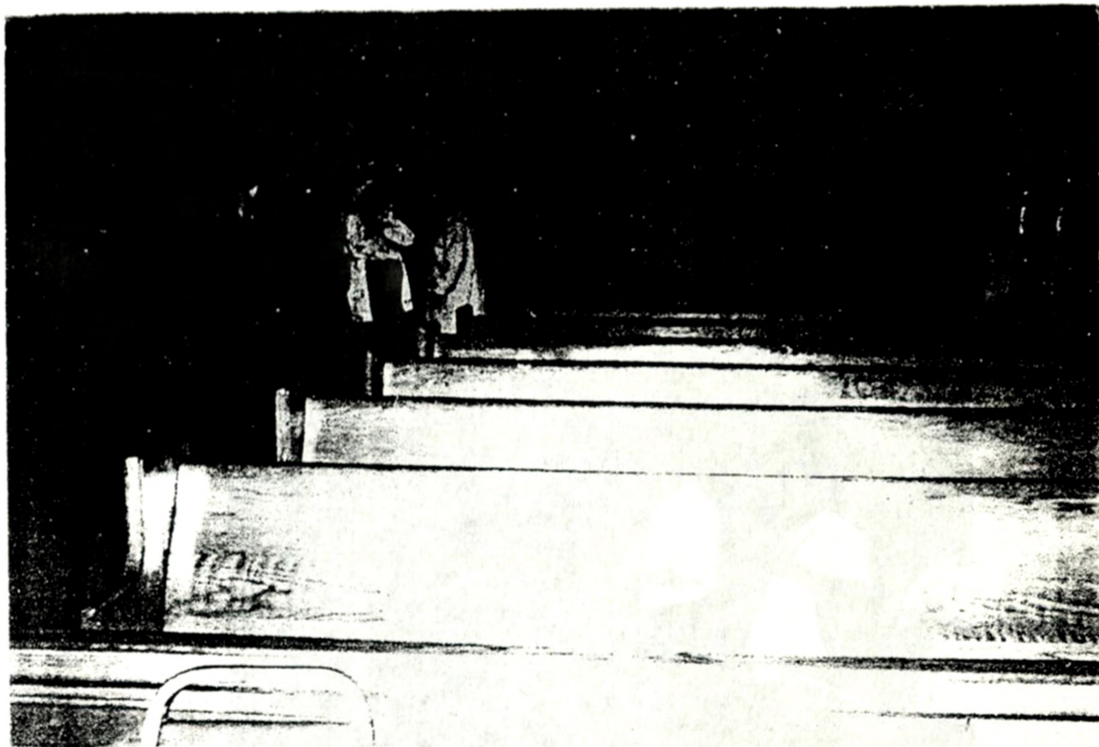
This is the altar in which the sacred Eucharist became the body and blood of Christ. The purple color shows that the Lent season has begun.



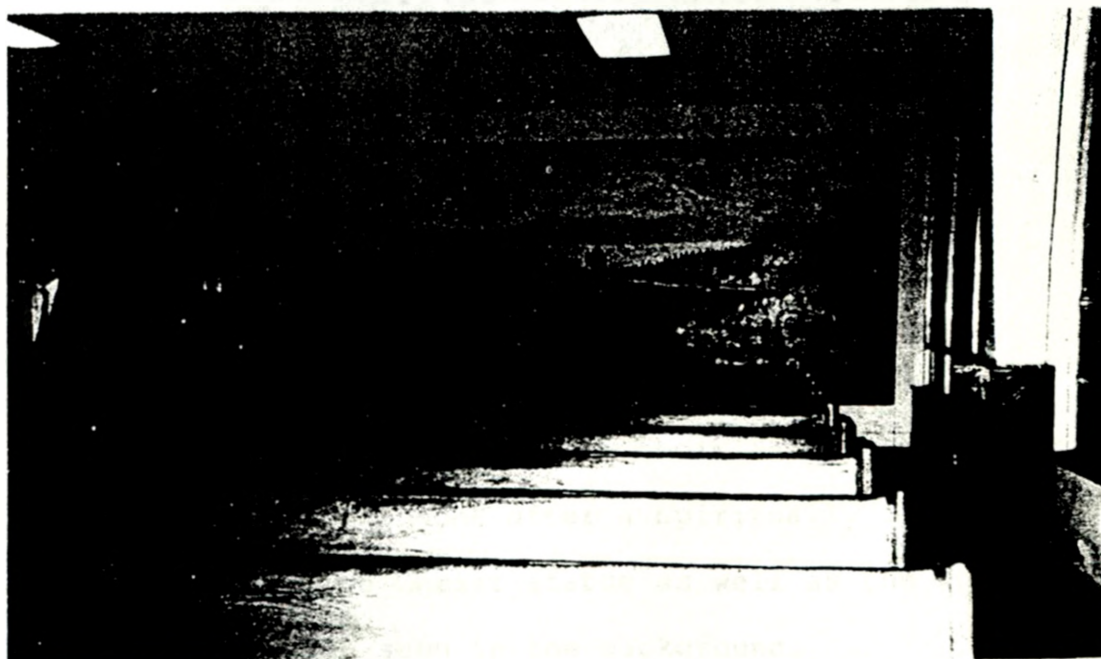
The altar shows the candles and the holy cross. In the background one can see the beautiful stained-glass window.



The pews are empty after the mass is over.



The congregants gather together to talk about community issues and how they can be resolved.



If one looks closely towards the background, the image of Our Lady of Perpetual Help is a bit visible.



The parishioners gather their things as they are ready to go home after a spiritually fulfilling mass. The Christ statue as well as the wooden cross are seen in the background.

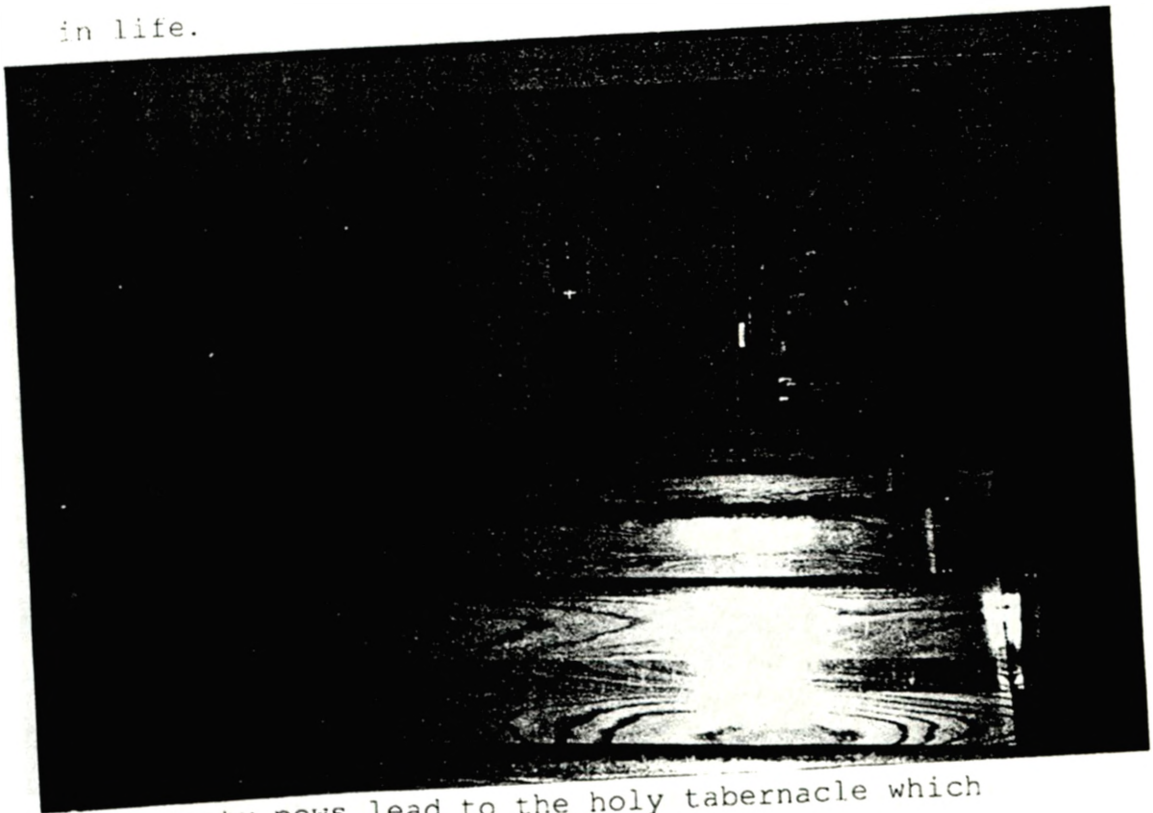
**BECAUSE THE WORLD NEEDS LOVE...**



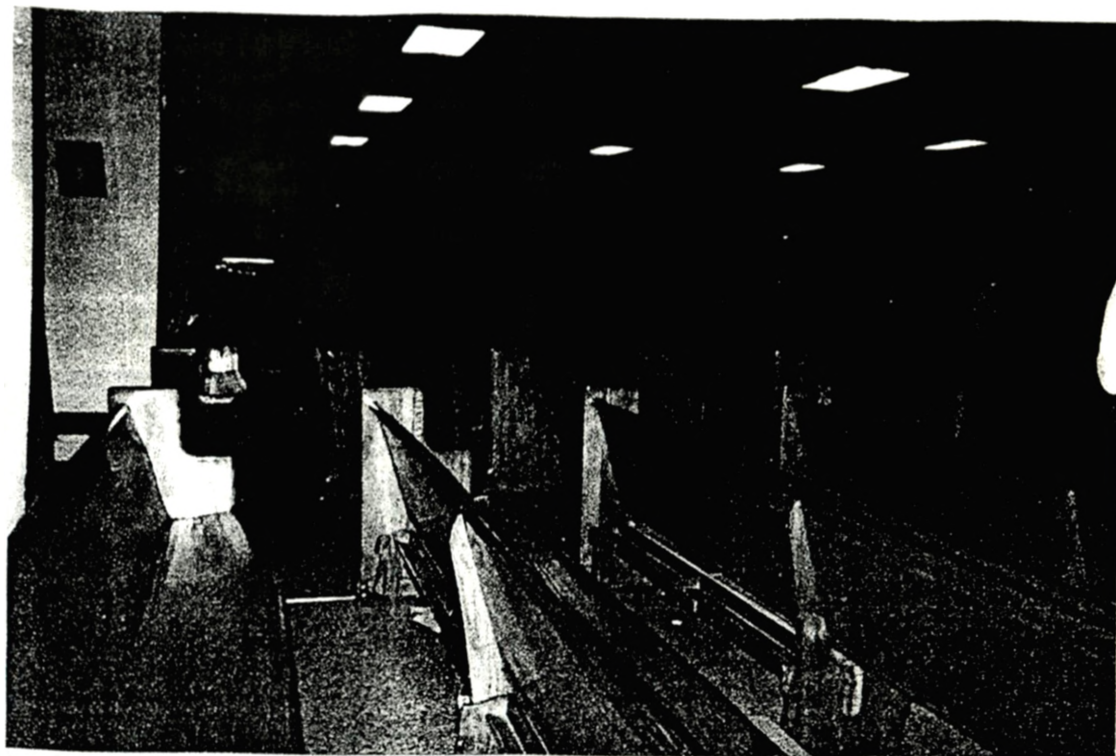
**The Church Needs You!!!**



This sign is right above the door. It allows the Christian to truly think about the important things in life.



The empty pews lead to the holy tabernacle which holds the sacred Eucharist.



These are the empty pews. But if one looks closely one can see that the kneeling supporters are broken.



This is my third interviewee. She was really nice and she provided a spiritual insight into the Virgin's care and love towards humanity.





This is the last picture taken at Notre-Dame d'Haiti Catholic Church. This is the outside mosaic of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. When I took this picture I was labeled a "sacrilegious" person.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

Researcher: Roniel Vallejo

Congregation: Mision Santa Ana (St. Anne Missions)

Name of Service: Fourth Sunday Lent Mass

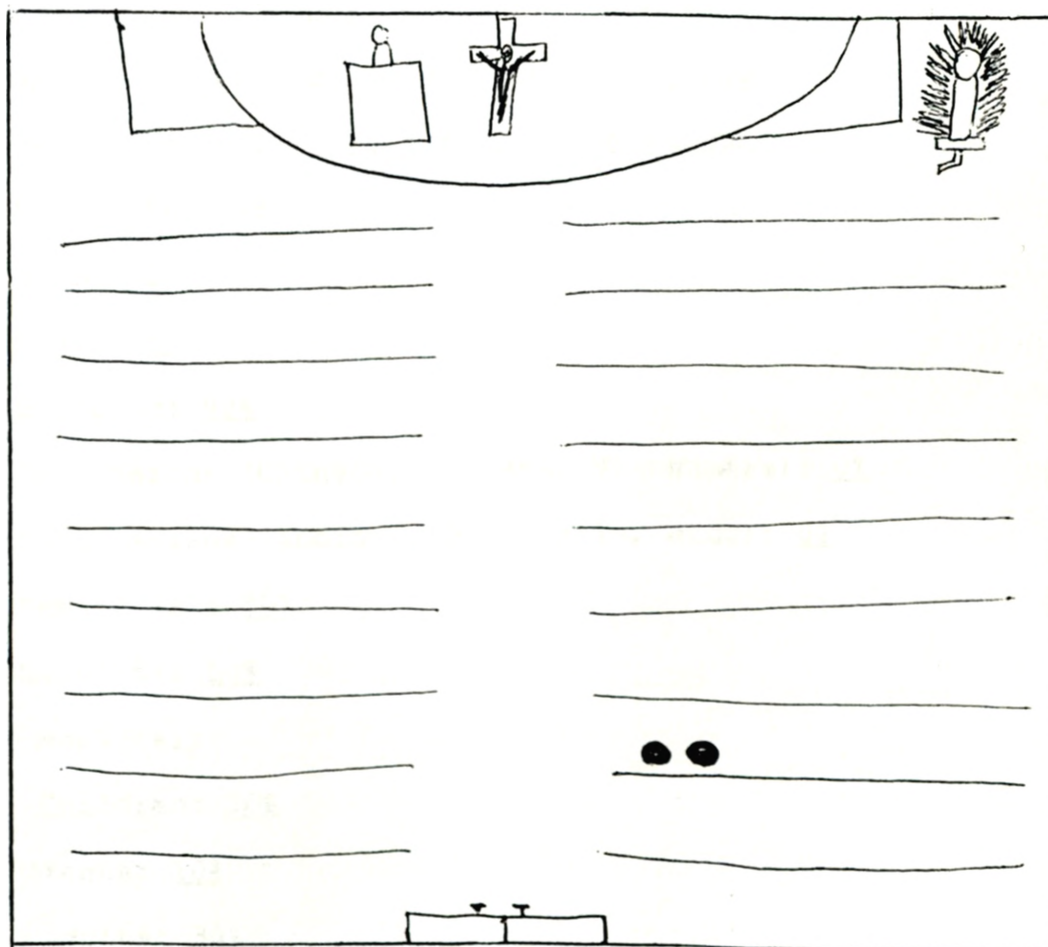
Date of Observation: 03-10-02

Time of day: 10:30 am to 12:15 pm

Place (in church, activity building, gym, etc.): Inside Church

PHYSICAL LAYOUT

1. What is the physical layout of the room? How are those present arranged? Describe and sketch (if possible).



\*This protocol is from the Pew Study.

2. What materials, statues, signs, symbols are in the room?

What notable sights, sounds, smells?

There is a big statue of St. Anne with the Virgin Child (Mary). There is also a Guadalupe statue inside the church and a crucifix. Outside of the church there is a tall cross.

3. As people gather, is there silence, visiting, singing, etc.?

As people gather there is a lot of talking, noise, and greetings among each other.

4. What languages do you hear spoken? Spanish

### PEOPLE

5. How many people were present? (estimate) 300

6. Number of pews or seats in room? 24 pews

7. Percentage full? 200% full! (No hyperbole)

8. Ethnicity (%):

Anglo: 5%

Black: 5%

Hispanic: 90%

East Asians (Chinese, Koreans, Vietnamese): 0%

South Asians (Indians, Pakistanis, etc.): 0%

9. Female (%): 50%

Male (%): 50%

10. Ages (%):

Children: 30%

Teens: 10%

Adults: 30%

Seniors: 30%

11. Socio-economic composition (%):

Poor: 10%

Working class: 80%

Professional: 10%

a). What are your clues? (dress, types of cars in parking lot etc.)

The dress and the type of cars were the clues.

12. How well do people seem to know one another? How do they interact?

People seem to know each other quite well. Even if they did not know each other, it did not stop them to meet and talk.

13. How are people dressed? (casual, formal)

Most of the people were dressed casual. Others seemed to come with very comfortable clothes that depicted Aztec gods and goddesses.

### **WORSHIP RITUAL**

14. What is the central activity of the worship service?

(discussion, praying, singing).

The central activity of the worship service is the mass.

The mass was very traditional.

15. In what language(s) is it conducted? Were there other languages spoken? Describe.

The mass was conducted strictly in Spanish.

16. Who is the main leader of the service? Minister, priest, layperson?

Before the mass started, nuns taught or encouraged church singing. Then the priest took over when the mass began.

17. Are there others who play significant roles during the service? Choir, band, ushers, etc.

No just the priest. Although nuns and laypeople were walking around the pews to find space for the 100% that were standing all over the church.

18. What type of readings (sacred literature, poetry, etc.) was used?

A traditional mass readings: Hebrew Bible, New Testament, and other sacred texts.

- a). Summarize the message of the readings.

The message was that most people can see but they are spiritually blind. The gospel was referring to the miracle that Jesus did to allow the blind man to see. Thus, during Lent we must be spiritually aware of our surroundings. Because a lot of people see, but they are blind to the spiritual realm.

19. Briefly list the issues and topics mentioned during the sermon/homily.

During the mass, the traditional liturgy took place. After the mass, the priest announced that Hellmann's Mayonnaise are offering to donate fifty cents to the church if the

parishioners used the fifty cent coupon available at the back of La Voz Catolica newspaper (The Catholic Voice).

Thus he advised that we should use the fifty cent coupon so the church can get some extra money.

20. Tone of service and message? (upbeat, joyous, somber, ritualized, and routine).

The priest talked in a moderate tone of voice. But when he wanted to emphasize something he increased the tone of his voice so much that the microphone speakers would have an awful screeching sound. I felt that my ear drums would burst.

21. Were there any types of foods involved in the services? If so, please.

There were no foods involved during the service but after the mass, many people flocked around an ice-cream truck. It seemed that they were hungry and they wanted to eat something after the mass ended.

22. Music (type, frequency, participation, music books, sheets or overhead).

There were no sheets distributed. There were a few when one came into the church, but it seemed that most of the music was learned. Everyone or almost everyone there knew the songs by heart. It gave me a sense that this is a close community that are learning their traditions and thus know all their sacred songs by heart.

23. How did the congregation respond? Bored, involved, enthusiastic? What are your indicators?

The congregation responded very involved and very enthusiastic.

24. Were there any unusual responses, such as speaking in tongues, shouting, spontaneous singing?

No, just the same traditional Lent mass with a very active congregation.

25. What announcements were made during or after the services?

Briefly describe.

A nun who is from Los Angeles, was saying farewell to the congregation because she was going back. And after the mass, the priest advised everyone to use their fifty cent coupon so the company would donate all the money back to the church.

#### **CONVERSATIONS AND INTERACTIONS OUTSIDE OF SERVICE**

26. Describe any significant incidents or interactions that occurred before or after the meeting among participants.

I tried to interview people but most of them were very shy and thus they did not cooperate. I felt that they might be afraid if INS deported them back to Mexico. This of course, if they were illegal aliens.

27. Describe conversations, if any, you had with participants (list people and significant comments).

I asked two guys: "What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?"

and one remained silent. While the other told me that she was "the mother that I never had." And this impacted me in a meaningful way. A meaningful way in the sense that Mary can replace a physical mother....



**Mision Santa Ana****(St. Anne Missions)****The Mexican Mission in Homestead**

03-10-02

Sunday

Fourth Sunday Lent Mass

Church

Homestead

Conducted by a Mexican Priest

Conservative Traditional

13875 S.W. 264<sup>th</sup> Street

(305) 258-3968 (In English)

(305) 258-9682 (In Spanish)

This time my godfather, my mother, and I were the ones to go to this church. I was going to go with a friend of mine, but my mom decided that she would get lost because she just came from the army. Thus my mother asked my godfather if he was willing to take us and he said yes. The reason my stepfather was not able to go was because he works on Sundays. This church is very peculiar because the only day they have mass is on Sundays at 11:00 am. This means that whoever works on this day can never attend this church's mass. All the other houses of worship that I have been to have mass everyday of the week and with different time slots. This allows individuals to fit mass into their hectic schedules. But this church is the very first one that I

have come across that only has mass on one day of the week.

I was wondering why is the mass held on a single day and at a single time? I asked a nun and she told me that the reason mass is held just once a week and at a particular time is because most of the parishioners are Mexican; and the church is basically a mission to reach out to them and offer mass on a day and time that most, if not all, can attend. This made sense to me. Besides, most of the Mexican immigrants work around the church area, and thus the church provides for them mass at a time that most can agree upon.

I got my camera and my cassette recorder and off we went to St. Anne's Mission. By the time we arrived, it was 10:30 am (half an hour before mass began). My godfather decided to stay in the car. He has only been to church several times, for baptisms, first communions, and marriages. These are the "traditional" times he deems necessary to attend church. He stayed in his car, and he fell asleep. My mom and I went on the journey alone.

Several families were gathered together outside the church. I would greet them and they would greet me with a bit of shyness. I saw that the name of the church is in Spanish so this indicates that the church services will be conducted in Spanish. I saw the tall skinny cross that was outside the church next to a picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Then I saw the statue of St. Anne holding her daughter, the Virgin Mary in a loving embrace. It

was the first time in my life that I have seen a statue that depicted mother and daughter in such a pose.

I started walking around trying to interview a few people before mass started. My mom told me to hurry up because my godfather would be bored. But if he is sleeping why should he be bored? I asked an older gentleman, and he received me with a bit of suspicion. Many people were shy and embarrassed to even talk to me! I was wondering how to get an interview if these people are extremely shy? Moreover, I decided that I should interview people after the mass, even though my godfather would figuratively kill me.

My mom and I entered the church. I was relieved that my stepfather would not be with us, since all his racist beliefs would upset my day. I would not have minded if my godfather would have gotten the guts to come with us because he always remains silent. When I opened the church doors, I felt a gothic silence. The nuns were praying and a few people were already seated in the pews. Some were praying while others were just there. Maybe they were praying, but they were not praying in the traditional way Catholics would pray.

This time the camera was in my hands and I started taking pictures both outside and inside the church. Since I felt a gothic silence, I decided to limit my picture taking to one or two shots. I did not want to disturb the parishioners' quiet time with the divine. My mom told me to remain in the church

until the mass ended. She also told me to go ahead and interview people but I wanted to wait until I saw second or third generation Mexicans. Because so far, the first generation were really shy and they did not communicate much. One man told me that the Virgin means "*mucho*", or much, to him, but he did not elaborate on the significance of "much".

Marian devotion was quite evident in this church. The altar has a large crucifix, to the left of which is a statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Most, if not all, parishioners that entered through the side of the church would take a brief moment to kneel or pray in front of the statue. I was thinking to myself that maybe the church would be half empty because mass was about to begin and most of the church was empty. All of a sudden the church started to fill up. I was surprised because in most church services I have attended there are more women than men. This was the first time that I would see men and women entering the church together in peace, unity, and faith.

The nuns let the faithful know that if anyone wants to confess that they may do so before the mass starts. My mom and I are shocked to see that couples (men and women) come to church and actually look interested in being present. What took me by surprise to was the amount of children each couple had! I would estimate that the average household would have at least three or four kids. I guess they follow the rhythm method that the Orthodox Catholic hierarchy allows for birth control. And the

fathers interacted with their sons and daughters like it was a real pleasure to have offspring. This was really amazing and beautiful at the same time, because the Latin men that I know feel that it is the mother's duty to raise and participate in the child's life. But now I can finally see that these Mexican men are not like this. They take part in their children's development as well as being active in their lives, as an ideal father should. I do not know if they are just putting up an act for others to see or if they actually are this way. I felt that they are genuinely like this.

I look at my watch and it is 11:05 a.m. Five minutes after the mass is supposed to start, the priest has not even appeared yet. I guess he had many people who had to confess. I noticed that women were more prone to confess than the men. I am not trying to imply that women commit more sins than men but that women probably feel that confession is necessary for their spiritual life as a Catholic, whereas the Mexican men at the church did not feel it was a duty as a Catholic to confess. Maybe they feel that their wives would intercede for them as well? I cannot know for certain because the issue of confession is very personal for people so this would be left to speculation.

The priest makes his appearance at 11:10 am. The procession begins. I am very surprised to see that the pews are all full! I am even more surprised to see that more people are still arriving. How will all these people fit!? One of the

parishioners walks up and down between the pews to see if he can find space for the people who are standing. He manages to find space for a woman who is pregnant, and he escorts her to a space in one of the pews in the front. He tells her that the baby that she is carrying has to be taken care of. Then he starts walking back and telling people to follow him. Most refuse while others do follow him. He manages to squeeze a few of them in several pews. He tells parents to put the baby carriers on the floor. The parents carry the baby and put the plastic carrier on the floor. Now two people can fit in the pews. He keeps walking back and forth between the pews to see if he can find extra space for the parishioners who are currently standing up.

I get nervous because I focus my attention on the man who is walking back and forth between the pews trying to find space for the others. Besides, I cannot see the altar because the people who are standing do not let me see the priest or the altar itself! All I hear are noises coming from the people who are standing and also the man walking between the pews. The only time I try to focus on what the priest is saying is when the congregation that is seated stands up. In this brief moment my height permits me to see beyond the heads of those who are standing. I feel bad for them because if I were in their place I would hate to stand through an entire mass, especially one in which the priest seems to talk forever. And what he is saying is

until the mass ended. She also told me to go ahead and interview people but I wanted to wait until I saw second or third generation Mexicans. Because so far, the first generation were really shy and they did not communicate much. One man told me that the Virgin means "*mucho*", or much, to him, but he did not elaborate on the significance of "much".

Marian devotion was quite evident in this church. The altar has a large crucifix, to the left of which is a statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Most, if not all, parishioners that entered through the side of the church would take a brief moment to kneel or pray in front of the statue. I was thinking to myself that maybe the church would be half empty because mass was about to begin and most of the church was empty. All of a sudden the church started to fill up. I was surprised because in most church services I have attended there are more women than men. This was the first time that I would see men and women entering the church together in peace, unity, and faith.

The nuns let the faithful know that if anyone wants to confess that they may do so before the mass starts. My mom and I are shocked to see that couples (men and women) come to church and actually look interested in being present. What took me by surprise to was the amount of children each couple had! I would estimate that the average household would have at least three or four kids. I guess they follow the rhythm method that the Orthodox Catholic hierarchy allows for birth control. And the

fathers interacted with their sons and daughters like it was a real pleasure to have offspring. This was really amazing and beautiful at the same time, because the Latin men that I know feel that it is the mother's duty to raise and participate in the child's life. But now I can finally see that these Mexican men are not like this. They take part in their children's development as well as being active in their lives, as an ideal father should. I do not know if they are just putting up an act for others to see or if they actually are this way. I felt that they are genuinely like this.

I look at my watch and it is 11:05 a.m. Five minutes after the mass is supposed to start, the priest has not even appeared yet. I guess he had many people who had to confess. I noticed that women were more prone to confess than the men. I am not trying to imply that women commit more sins than men but that women probably feel that confession is necessary for their spiritual life as a Catholic, whereas the Mexican men at the church did not feel it was a duty as a Catholic to confess. Maybe they feel that their wives would intercede for them as well? I cannot know for certain because the issue of confession is very personal for people so this would be left to speculation.

The priest makes his appearance at 11:10 am. The procession begins. I am very surprised to see that the pews are all full! I am even more surprised to see that more people are still arriving. How will all these people fit!? One of the



parishioners walks up and down between the pews to see if he can find space for the people who are standing. He manages to find space for a woman who is pregnant, and he escorts her to a space in one of the pews in the front. He tells her that the baby that she is carrying has to be taken care of. Then he starts walking back and telling people to follow him. Most refuse while others do follow him. He manages to squeeze a few of them in several pews. He tells parents to put the baby carriers on the floor. The parents carry the baby and put the plastic carrier on the floor. Now two people can fit in the pews. He keeps walking back and forth between the pews to see if he can find extra space for the parishioners who are currently standing up.

I get nervous because I focus my attention on the man who is walking back and forth between the pews trying to find space for the others. Besides, I cannot see the altar because the people who are standing do not let me see the priest or the altar itself! All I hear are noises coming from the people who are standing and also the man walking between the pews. The only time I try to focus on what the priest is saying is when the congregation that is seated stands up. In this brief moment my height permits me to see beyond the heads of those who are standing. I feel bad for them because if I were in their place I would hate to stand through an entire mass, especially one in which the priest seems to talk forever. And what he is saying is

not audible due to the poor condition of the speakers.

I am worried about the people who are standing up so I cannot pay attention to what the priest is saying. I know that the gospel is referring to miracle of Jesus making blind to see. Now the priest uses that story to explain how people in modern times physically see but are spiritually blind. And he says that there are even people in the church who are also spiritually blind. He says that this will only remedy itself if people actually practice what they preach. This is basically the entire gospel message for the mass. The priest realizes that the church is 200% full and that the sooner the mass ends the better because when the Eucharist is given it will take a while for those standing and for those seated to receive their communion.

There is a second generation Mexican woman who is with her third generation daughters. The white American woman sitting next to my mother gives her her seat. Now she is standing. But the man finds her a seat. I see a man who is standing with the rest of the 100% of those congregants who are standing and he is wearing a peculiar shirt. It is a black shirt and on the back there are several images. But the images that caught my eyes were the fact that the shirt displayed an Aztec temple, an Aztec god, and an Aztec goddess. The goddess was almost naked! And only the god's face is depicted. The goddess was lying on the ground in a sensual manner. I wondered if he had felt these were his only "suitable" clothes for church? I tried to interview him

after the mass but he told me to interview somebody else because he hardly attends mass. I guess he might be pagan but this cannot be known for certain. Even if he considers himself "Catholic", he might not know how to "appropriately" dress for church. I wonder if he hardly attends church services, why was he here today? He left before I was able to ask him that....

When the Eucharist was being distributed, I wanted to partake of it but the church was extremely too crowded. I thought I might as well not even try. The distribution of the Eucharist took a rather long time because the priest and several nuns had to disperse themselves throughout the church to make sure everyone that wanted to partake in the Eucharist would be given the chance. After it was over, the man who was walking between the pews to find extra space for those standing, was passing out the free newspaper, The Catholic Voice (La Voz Catolica). The priest made sure to inform the church to use the coupon on the back so the company would donate fifty cents for every coupon used to the church missions.

After the mass was over it took a while for my mom and I to exit the church building. Then I asked several people about the Virgin and her meaning to them, but most of them were extremely shy and they left me with no response. (I will analyze the reason why they were shy and several other incidents in the next section on the interpretation of what I observed). The interviews are not that elaborate but at times a short interview

provides much more insight than a long one. This will become evident in the interview section of the St. Anne Missions.

By the time my mom and I got back to the car, my godfather was laying down in the driver's seat! He was snoring so loudly that it was heard outside the car! He woke up after we knocked on the car window and then he looked surprised. I saw two men who seemed to be second generation Mexicans and I walked to where they were and I asked them the simple question that I always asked: "What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?" They looked surprised because no one has ever asked them this question before but one remained silent while the other looked sad. The guy that looked sad told me: "She is the mother of all mothers. She is the mother that I never had...." I looked at him and I told him I was sorry. I felt bad because I felt that I provoked a sad memory to arise but this was the last interview that I had.

I thanked them and I left. When the car was leaving I saw an ice-cream truck right outside the gates of the missions and the people looked happy eating sweets right after the mass. As the car drove away my godfather had an upset facial expression. He did not say anything. But I wish he would have known what I learned: A spiritual mother can replace a physical mother....

Interpretation of What I Saw at St. Anne's Mission Catholic  
Church

When I first started to interact with the congregants before and after the mass, many of them did not want to cooperate with me. First, second, and third generation Mexican Catholics were very suspicious of who I was. I always introduced myself as a student from Florida International University, or FIU. And I explained the nature and the purpose for my interviews. Many of them were still unwilling to cooperate. I really did not know why. Until after the mass, there was a group of second generation Mexican Catholic men gathered together and talking. I walk up to them and they see that I have cassette recorder and all of them (except one) start running away from me! I have never seen so many people afraid of me before! It made me feel as if I had power over them somehow.

I kept getting closer and closer and they would just keep running and running! Then I interviewed the only guy that did not run away and he was more than willing to help me. When I was done the group of men that ran away were looking at me with a look of fear in their eyes. When I looked at them they started to keep running! How crazy this situation was! I wish I could have videotaped it! I am not trying to make fun of them but why are they afraid of me? A college student who is just trying to find out what the Virgin means to them? This had deeper roots and deeper psychological affects as well.

I finally gave up on them because I knew for every step I took towards them they ran thirty steps away from me. I knew that there was something going on. The last time I checked, I am not an undercover agent from the government trying to deport illegal immigrants back to their native land. But maybe to them I was. I wish they could have been a bit more self-conscious because if I am from INS or some other agency that deports illegal immigrants back to their country I would not be alone. I would be supported by a group of people. But I guess they had many fears. I really wish I could have had the opportunity to talk to them so they would see that I was definitely a "good" guy.

Besides, I am sure they heard my interview with their legal friend. All this is only speculation. I really cannot exactly pinpoint why they ran away from me? If they are legal immigrants then they must have something up their sleeve. Maybe they are drug dealers? Or maybe they committed crimes that have never been solved? Again, all these are speculations that I came up with. They could be on the target or way off. But the only ones that know why they ran away is actually them. So unless I can get into their brains I will never be able to know for sure.

I was also disappointed by many interviews that I tried to initiate but many were never answered. I asked several people both men and women, the simple basic question: "What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?" And many responded, "I don't know."

Or they would remain silent, and some even had the audacity to tell me to ask someone else because they never come to church or they really do not know. I explicitly told them to tell me what they had in their hearts not what the hierarchy of the church says and many still did not respond! I was flabbergasted that they did not know what the Virgin Mary means to them; then why come to church? I mean if one does not know what s/he personally believes in then why waste time going to a spiritual place? Perhaps as a seeker? I felt like if someone hit me on the head with a bat because how can these people who come to church every Sunday have no idea of what the Virgin means to them? It was truly sad.

My mom and I told my godfather what we encountered and he suggested that I should have asked about Guadalupe instead of the Virgin Mary. But Guadalupe is the Virgin Mary! I started to think that maybe these people make a distinction between the Virgin Mary and Guadalupe! If this is so then there is really a theological problem. This would be a good study to undertake. I mean how can an orthodox Catholic not know the difference between the Virgin Mary and her many apparitions? If people make a distinction between Mary and her apparitions I wonder how they would explain both? The only examples that I can think of is if people make a distinction between Mary and one of her apparitions; is to regard Mary as a human being and the apparition as a goddess figure? Otherwise, why would someone

make a distinction? I did encounter a few people who did recognize that Mary and Guadalupe are the same. So maybe not everyone knows this or they choose not to accept it?

The irony that I felt when entering the church was that the name revolved around St. Anne (the Virgin's mother), but the main religious figure and symbol that surrounds the Mexican immigrants' existence is the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Guadalupe helps Mexican immigrants maintain a direct link to their homeland, Mexico. The role that Guadalupe plays is one in allowing Mexican immigrants to unite every Sunday under one roof, even though at times there is not enough space for everyone.

At St. Anne's, under the patronage of Guadalupe, Mexican immigrants come into contact with their own people and their own unique apparition of Mary. Thomas Tweed's theory is also relevant to this case. Mexican immigrants attain a translocative and a transtemporal identity through the church but more importantly through the religious image, symbol, and significance of Guadalupe. This particular image of Mary functions in allowing Mexican immigrants to keep their cultural and religious practices while away from their country. Thus the image of Guadalupe unites Mexican immigrants in giving them direct access to their people, culture, and most importantly, their common religion as Catholics.



**Date & Time of Interviews:** 03-10-02 from 12:15 to 12:30 pm

**Interviewer:** Roniel Vallejo

**Interviewee & Church:** Anonymous & St. Anne Missions Catholic Church

Interviewer: *Que significa la Virgen Maria para usted? (What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?)*

Interviewee #1: *Mucho. Significa mucho. Se puede decir que es la madre de todos nosotros. Es la madre de Jesucristo. Y el murio por nosotros. Para nosotros ella significa mucho. (A lot. She means a lot. It could be said that she is the mother of all of us. She is the mother of Jesus Christ. And he died for us. For us, she means a lot.)*

Interviewer: *Gracias (Thank you)*

Interviewer: *Que significa la Virgen Maria para usted? (What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?)*

Interviewee #2: *La Virgen Maria se significa mucho. La Virgen para mi, porque mi mama me ensenio que vaya a una iglesia catolica. Y yo no puedo traicionar a mi madre, la Virgen de Guadalupe. (The Virgin Mary means a lot to me. The Virgin for me, because my mother taught me to go to a Catholic church. And I cannot betray my mother, the Virgin of*

Guadalupe.)

Interviewer: *Muchas gracias senora (Thank you very much madam.)*

Interviewer: *Que significa la Virgen Maria para usted? (What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?)*

Interviewee #3: The Virgin Mary? Uhmm...

Interviewer (Mom): *Puedes hablar un poquito mas alto? (Can you speak a little louder?)*

Interviewee #3: The Virgin Mary means to me uhm... a mother to Jesus. If it wasn't for her he wouldn't have done his first miracle. She really didn't do any miracles but she helped uhm, to do, to help us with miracles and things like that. She means a mother to me. That's about it....

Interviewer (Mom and I): *Thank you.*

Interviewer: *Que significa la Virgen Maria para usted? (What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?)*

Interviewee #4: *You nunca vengo a la iglesia. (I never come to church).*

Interviewer: *What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?*

Interviewee #5: Uhm...the God of Jesus...I mean the mom of Jesus, I guess....

Interviewer: *Okay thanks.*

Interviewer: *Que significa la Virgen Maria para usted? (What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?)*

Interviewee #6: *Uhhmm La Virgen Maria? (The Virgin Mary?)*

Interviewer: *Si. La Virgen de Guadalupe, la Virgen Maria. (Yes. The Virgin of Guadalupe, the Virgin Mary.)*

Interviewee #6: *No se! (I don't know.)*

Interviewer: *Para usted? Que es lo que usted siente en su corazon? Lo que es ella? (For you? What do you feel in your heart? Who she is?)*

Interviewee #6: *La...la verdad no se.... (The... the truth is I don't know.)*

Interviewer: *La mama de Jesucristo? (The mother of Jesus Christ?)*

Interviewee #6: *La mama de Jesucristo... no...no se que decir... (The mother of Jesus Christ... I... I don't know what to say...)*

Interviewer: *Okay...gracias. (Okay, thanks).*

Interviewee #6: *de nada (your welcome).*

Interviewer: *Que significa la Virgen Maria para usted? (What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?)*

Interviewee #7: *Bueno se significa que es la madre de nuestro Senor Jesucristo. (Well, she means she is the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ).*

Interviewer: *Gracias (Thanks).*

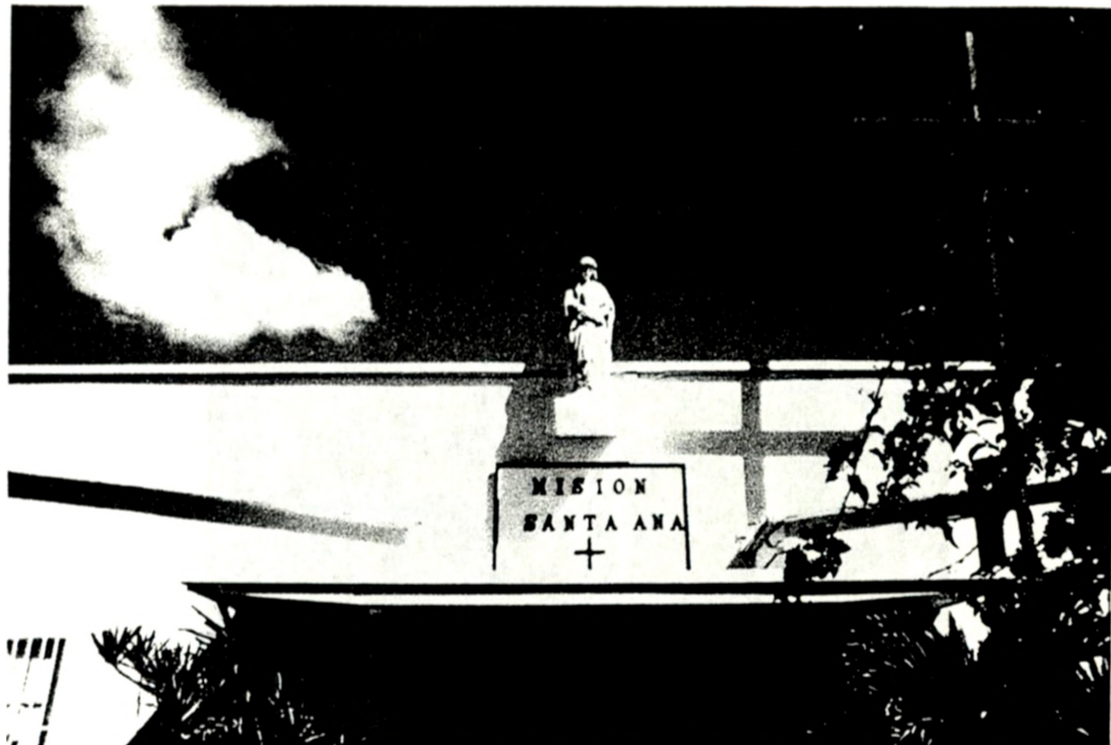
Interviewer: *What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?*

Interviewee #8 and #9 (brothers): (Brother #8 is mumbling)...Brother #9: Virgin Mary man, that's like you know...that's the mother of all mothers...you know.... It's like my mother I never had.... (Sad tone of voice).

Interviewer: *I'm sorry.*

Interviewee #9: *It's alright.*

Interviewer (looking at brother #8): *Would you like to say anything? Or... (shakes his head saying 'no'). Okay, thank you.*



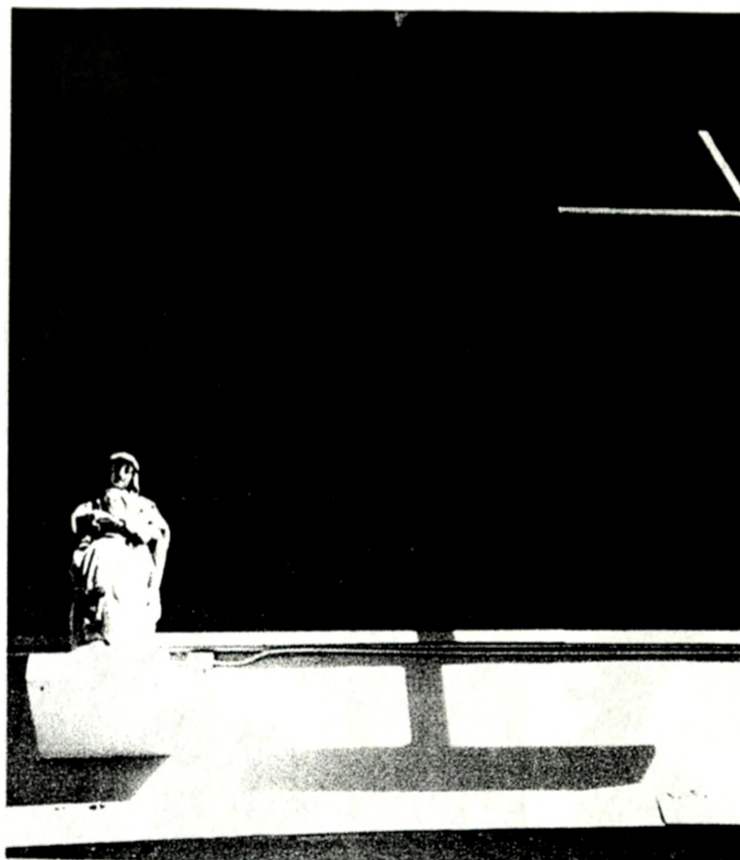
This is the statue of Saint Anne and the Virgin Mary when she was a child.



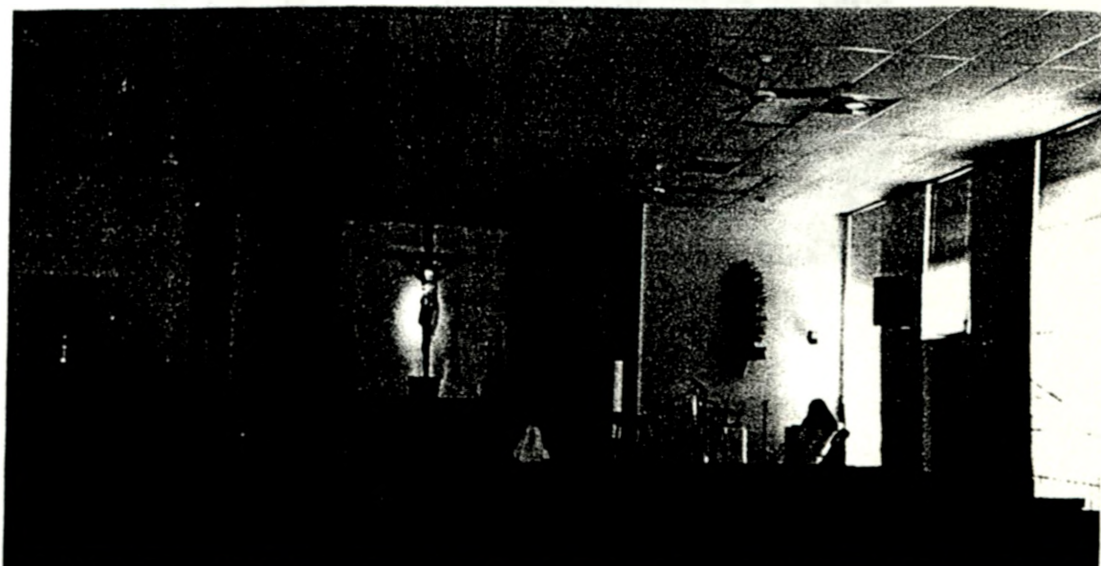
St. Anne's Missions (Mision Santa Ana) also has a wooden cross that is reflected on the church itself.



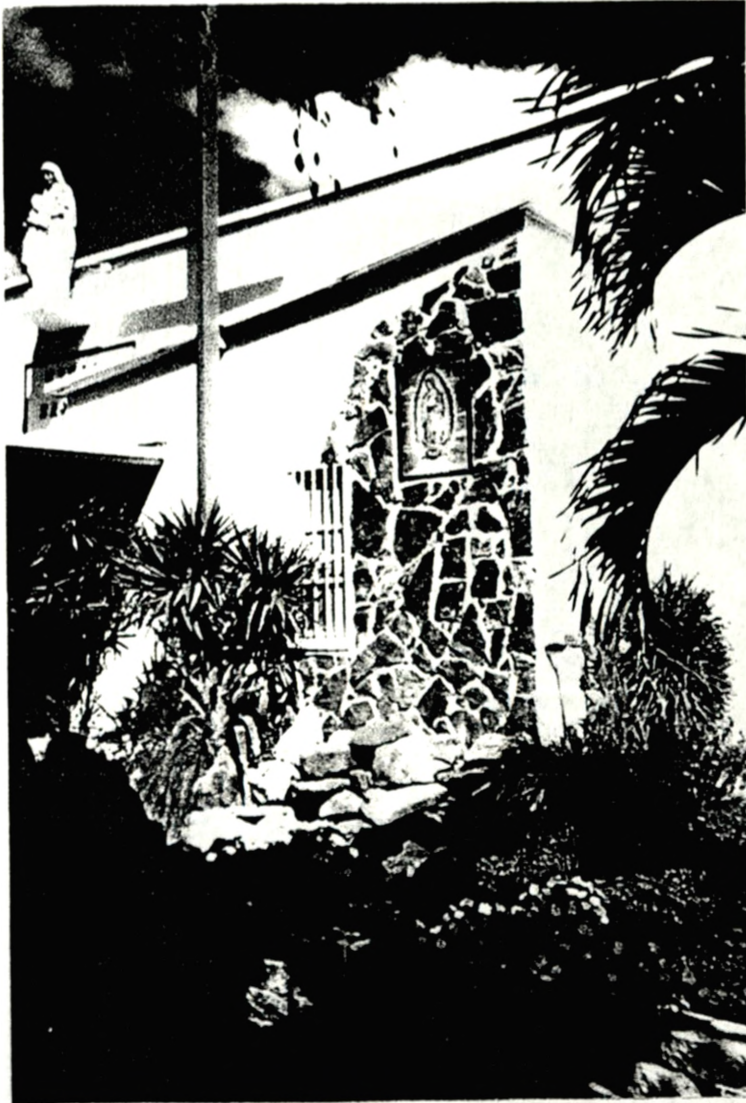
This plain cross invites everyone to come inside the church. The cross is quite tall and skinny. The shadow of the cross is reflected on the church wall due to the sun's light.



This is a close up of St. Anne and the Virgin Mary.  
St. Anne holds her daughter in a loving embrace.

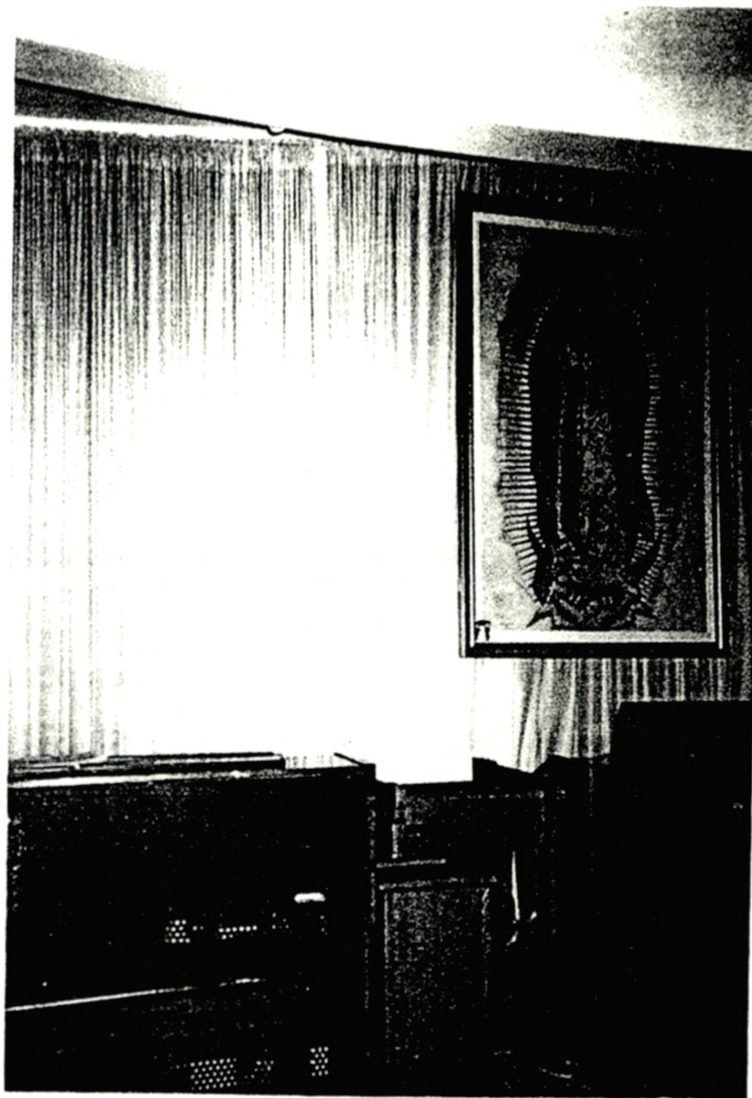


This is the altar that is inside the church. A crucifix  
is in the middle of the altar. To the left the tabernacle  
is in sight and to the right a statue of Our Lady of  
Guadalupe is visible. They welcome the parishioners.



This is a small picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe that is outside the church. The wooden cross as well as the St. Anne and Virgin Mary statue are also visible.





This is a copy of the original Guadalupe that appeared to Juan Diego in Mexico during the 16<sup>th</sup> century. This is at the back of the church. One has to look very carefully if one is to see it.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

Researcher: Roniel Vallejo

Congregation: St. Mary's Cathedral

Name of Service: Early Weekday Mass

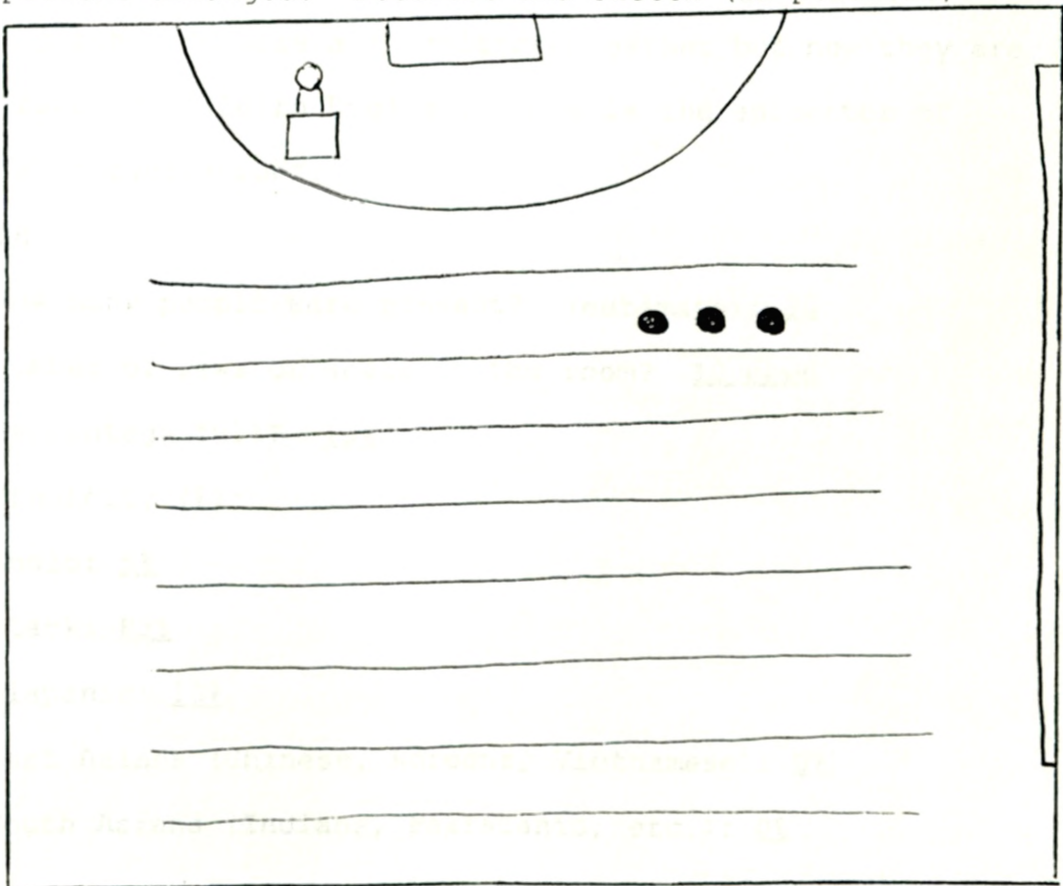
Date of Observation: 03-12-02

Time of day: 8:15 am to 8:45 am

Place (in church, activity building, gym, etc.): Chapel inside  
Cathedral

PHYSICAL LAYOUT

1. What is the physical layout of the room? How are those present arranged? Describe and sketch (if possible).



\*This protocol is from the Pew Study.

2. What materials, statues, signs, symbols are in the room?

What notable sights, sounds, smells?

In the chapel room within the cathedral, there is a fabric style depiction of Jesus at Emmaus' house. The tabernacle had small encrusted icons of Christ' passion. The symbolism of the color purple permeated the environment.

3. As people gather, is there silence, visiting, singing, etc.?

As people gather there is whispering, silence, and private prayer.

4. What languages do you hear spoken? English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole. Although the mass was conducted strictly in English. So here all immigrants gather but now they are "forced" to learn English. This is the epicenter of "Americanization".

### PEOPLE

5. How many people were present? (estimate): 30

6. Number of pews or seats in the room? 10 pews

7. Percentage full? 10%

8. Ethnicity (%):

Anglo: 5%

Black: 85%

Hispanic: 10%

East Asians (Chinese, Koreans, Vietnamese): 0%

South Asians (Indians, Pakistanis, etc.): 0%

9. Female (%): 80%

Male (%): 20%

10. Ages (%):

Children: 0%

Teens: 0%

Adults: 90%

Seniors: 10%

11. Socio-economic composition (%):

Poor: 90%

Working class: 10%

Professional: 0%

a). What are your clues? (dress, types of cars in parking lot, etc.)

The dress and the type of cars were the clues.

Although many did not have cars, they just walked to the cathedral.

12. How well do people seem to know one another? How do they interact?

When I entered most, if not all the people present were praying silently.

13. How are people dressed? (casual, formal)

Most of the people were dressed casual. And some were dressed a little less than casual.

**WORSHIP RITUAL**

14. What is the central activity of the worship service?

(discussion, praying, singing)

A traditional mass. Although this mass was the quickest one (time wise) that I have ever attended! It lasted a maximum of thirty minutes! All the other masses that I have ever attended have lasted around one hour (minimum) to two hours (maximum). This mass broke the record as being the shortest mass that I have ever attended.

15. In what language(s) is it conducted? Were there other languages spoken? Describe.

Only English. Although the parishioners knew other languages. But the priest conducted the entire mass in English.

16. Who is the main leader of the service? Minister, priest, layperson?

The priest.

17. Are there others who play significant roles during the service? Choir, band, ushers, etc.

Yes, a mature lady went up on the altar to read a passage from the Old Testament and the Psalm.

18. What type of readings (sacred literature, poetry, etc.) was used?

The traditional mass readings.

a). The conflicts in the New Testament regarding doing any

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The traditional mass readings.

a). The conflicts in the New Testament regarding doing any

type of labor or movement on the Sabbath. The priest made it known that the Sabbath was made for the man, not the man made for the Sabbath.

19. Briefly list the issues and topics mentioned during the sermon/homily.

-Trust in the Lord for He will always provide.

-Worship God on Sunday and every other day but also enjoy the Sabbath.

-And other inspirational sayings for the Lenten season.

20. Tone of service and message? (Upbeat, joyous, somber, ritualized and routine)

The tone of the service was somber, very ritualized, and very routine.

21. Were there any types of foods involved in the services? If so, please.

There was no food involved before, during, and after the mass.

22. Music (type, frequency, participation, music books, sheets or overhead)

The songs which the congregation participated in were songs that were already known and/or learned. There were no visual guides for the rest of us. Thus, the singing was initiated by one of the participants. Once he started to sing, the others followed him.

23. How did the congregation respond? Bored, involved, enthusiastic? What are your indicators?

At first the congregation responded a bit bored. But when the five-minute singing got its rhythm, the parishioners became very involved and enthusiastic.

24. Were there any unusual responses, such as speaking in tongues, shouting, spontaneous singing?

There was only spontaneous singing towards the end of the mass.

25. What announcements were made during or after the services? Briefly describe.

There were no announcements made. The priest just said the usual: "Let us all go in peace."

#### **CONVERSATIONS AND INTERACTIONS OUTSIDE OF SERVICE**

26. Describe any significant incidents or interactions that occurred before or after the meeting among participants. One of the interviewee's told me that he likes the Catholic Church because thanks to them the town looks "better."

27. Describe conversations, if any, you had with participants (list people and significant comments).

I was surprised to see that most of the people who were involved in the quick mass, actually work in the small cathedral store. Others are associated with the Archdiocese of Miami.



**St. Mary's Cathedral**

03-12-02

Tuesday

Chapel Mass

Cathedral

Little River

Conducted by an American Priest

Conservative Traditional

7525 N.W. 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue

Miami, FL 33150

(305) 759-4531

This was not the first time I have been to this Cathedral. On March 5, 2002 there was a weekday mass at 5:30 pm. My stepfather was going to take us (mom and I) to the mass. He took the express way and he told my mom that we should not worry that the mass will last one hour. With his mentality we arrived at 6:00 pm (half an hour late!). I get out of the car, and I try to enter the cathedral but the large doors are locked. I walk to the other side of the cathedral but those doors were locked as well. I finally see a couple walking around the cathedral and I ask them if mass will be held today? And they look at me with a surprised look and they let me know that mass already finished! I was very surprised because usually masses last for at least one hour. This was the first mass that I have ever been too that only lasted half an hour.

Since we arrived so late we definitely missed the entire mass. I was glad in a way because this would shatter my stepfather's generalization that masses last "a long time." Since the couple was right in front of me I decided to interview them in the process. Their responses are the first two in the interview section. I thank them and I head back to the car where my mom and her husband await for me. I let them know the entire situation and my stepfather (a bit annoyed) said that we would be back another day.

March 12, 2002 arrives. We are heading back to the cathedral. This time we arrived at least five minutes before the mass started. I was relieved. I was a bit surprised to know that the mass will be held in one of the small chapel rooms. I guess at 8:15 am (during the weekday) not many people attend. We enter the chapel and it is almost full. I was surprised to see my stepfather leading my mom to sit all the way in the front pews. After I get a few flyers and literature from the cathedral I walk into the chapel.

I see that the chapel has many immigrants but the majority seemed to be Haitians. I hear that people are whispering in Haitian Creole, Spanish, and English! On the altar there was the usual tabernacle surrounded with icons. The altar wall has a stitched depiction of Jesus seated at the table in Emmaus' house. The priest makes his entrance. The usual standing and sitting procedure takes place. After the blessings and the public

confession of sinning, were the readings from the Bible begin. I noticed that this mass was done very fast. I knew that it would last thirty minutes, thus the priest did everything in his power to get the mass going. I personally did not like it. I felt that the mass was done for the sake of being done. It did not contain the congregational piety that was evident at the other masses that I attended for this project.

The reading from the Old Testament and the Psalm was done by a parishioner. Her reading was not clear because it seemed that she was learning English. When the gospel was going to be read by the priest, we all stood. The gospel revolved around the time when Jesus performed miracles on the Sabbath. The priest said that the Sabbath was made for the man, not the man made for the Sabbath. When it came time to kneel I held the pew that was in front of me. When I let go of it, the pew came tumbling down! When it hit the floor it produced a very loud bang that I thought someone threw a bomb into the church! This happened three times! I was so embarrassed. One would think that the pews are screwed in tightly at the floor base, but this was not the case. The first time I was not aware that by holding on to the pew, I was literally lifting it off the floor! So when I let go of it the clash between concrete floor with a wooden pew was very loud.

The second time I was aware of it but I did not pay attention to it. And finally the third time I knew I had to stop laying my hand on the pew that was in front of me. I used it to

help me stand after we were allowed to stand. I just wish that it would be screwed at the bottom so the banging would not occur. After the third bang I pretended that I did not exist. When the time of the Eucharist came, I was too embarrassed to get up and partake of it. My mom and her husband were coercing me to do it but I did not feel right. The three loud noises that occurred in the chapel were my fault and I felt that it would have been rude to take the Eucharist after I caused so much mischief.

The mass ended and I did not feel that I was at a mass. As I said, the priest hurried it so much that if I would have received the Eucharist he would have probably shoved it down my throat! I just felt that this priest did everything in his power to make sure that the mass ended by 8:45 am. This was also a factor that discouraged me from receiving the Eucharist. Afterwards, I started taking pictures and I did my interviews. I encountered a few people who did not know English. For example, Haitian women who did not know English. Hispanic women who did not know English. Of course I conducted the interview in Spanish but since I do not know Haitian Creole I could not conduct it for the Haitian women who did not know English.

After the interviews were over, I noticed the school that is right next to the cathedral, and children were crossing the street and were meeting individually with the priests. There were about four or five priests present. And they gathered a group of children and they sat around the pews and it seemed that

the priest was their spiritual counselor. Or that the children were probably confessing or preparing to receive their first communion. After this we got inside the car and we left the beautiful cathedral.

### Interpretation of What I Saw at St. Mary's Cathedral

My interpretations of St. Mary's Cathedral is one of "Americanization." I truly felt that this is the epicenter for all immigrants to participate in the mass as well as learn English and finally become part of American society. This does not mean that one should forget his/her homeland but recognize that their lives are now in the United States of America. The reason I came up with this theory is due to my experiences at the other two churches and the shrine of Our Lady of Charity.

In the shrine, most, if not all the masses are conducted in Spanish. In Notre Dame d'Haiti the mass is conducted in Haitian Creole. And in St. Anne Missions the only mass that they have is conducted in Spanish. Now since St. Mary's Cathedral is the main cathedral in Miami the masses are held in English. This in a way coerces the immigrants that live in Miami to make an effort to learn English as a second language. I do not know why some immigrants do not want to learn English? Maybe if they are surrounded in their own ethnic enclave, then maybe they feel that they do not have to learn English because all their needs are met using their native language. This is perfectly fine. But what will happen when the ethnic enclave is no longer there to support the immigrant? What will happen then?

The Americanization that St. Mary's Cathedral provides is not an intensive one but it is a start. At least people have a choice whether they want to learn English or not. By conducting

the mass in English the immigrants have an opportunity to see the English language in action. In action in the sense that the mass that they always celebrate in their native tongue is now celebrated in English and it seems that if the mass is celebrated in English, then English should be learned or at least given a try. This Americanization is not obvious to the everyday person who attends mass. This is something that is evident if one undergoes the research that I have done.

By observing masses at different epicenters of ethnic identity, I was able to distinguish the meaning and the underlying significance that pervades each church, shrine, and cathedral. The cathedral provides a melting pot of cultures, languages, and identities. But the underlying goal of the cathedral is to acknowledge these differences and celebrate them but at the same time awaken the immigrant into the reality that they exist in a different world now. This new world celebrates their diversity but at the same time it gears them into becoming aware of their American selves. This new "self" is not meant to replace the old self but to complement it.

If one analyzes the fruits of learning English and becoming "Americanized" then this will definitely open doors to a better future within the United States. Although one has to acknowledge that if there is an ethnic enclave then the need to be Americanized is not urgent and in many cases it is not wanted or needed. This is perfectly fine but what will happen when the

ethnic enclave is no longer there to support the immigrant? These are all speculations. At least the immigrants that I know do not like to think about their future. They are more than happy to just live life in the present moment. Thus, the need to learn English and become "Americanized" is usually left as an individual choice. Because one can learn English and still not be integrated into American culture and society. Although in modern times, it is hard to pin point exactly what an "American culture" is. Usually it will be defined by the dominant culture and popular culture of a particular region.

Again, the mass was attended by more women than men. This seems to imply that the women still find it necessary to attend mass. Although the mass held at the ethnic churches the men would also come. But here probably the men are working and/or they do not find a need to go to the cathedral when they can attend their epicenter that will be conducted in their own native language. Nevertheless, St. Mary's Cathedral is the epicenter of Miami, which is open to any ethnic group. But like many Americanized places, if one attends one knows that the main language will be English. This is part of being "Americanized." In brief, if one learns English, one is not limited to the use and understanding of their native language.

What is unique about St. Mary's Cathedral is that it does not cater to a specific ethnic group. It is open to anyone who wishes to pass through its grand gates. The sacred spaces of



Notre-Dame d'Haiti, St. Anne's Missions, and Our Lady of Charity Shrine differ from that of the cathedral in this respect. The notion of Mary that a particular immigrant group may have, does not apply when entering St. Mary's. The cathedral is dedicated to St. Mary rather than any of her particular manifestation. The nationalism that was seen among immigrants at the other houses of worship is absent in the cathedral.

Thus Tweed's paradigm breaks down at the cathedral. The transcendence of time, space, and location is not clearly visible. The image of Mary in the cathedral is too broad for any one group to claim as its own and thus cannot unite the immigrants as in the other churches. The identity and culture of the cathedral is one of Americanization. By having a generic form of Mary, the cathedral functions in divorcing immigrants from more specific images. This seems to coerce the immigrant to accept their new lives within the United States. Thus the clear identity, culture, and cult that is present in the other houses of worship, is not present in the cathedral. Here immigrant devotion shifts to a whole new focus, a whole new life, a whole new way of seeing Mary.

Date & Time of Interviews: 03-05-02 from 6:00 to 6:05 pm

Interviewer: Roniel Vallejo

Interviewee & Church: Anonymous & St. Mary's Cathedral

Interviewer: *What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?*

Interviewee #1 and #2 (couple): What does the Virgin Mary means to us? Ha!!! ha!!!! Ha!!!!!! I cannot really answer that now. (Church bell ringing in the background). Uhhmmmm.... Virgin Mary, Virgin Mary, Virgin Mary.... She is Jesus' mother. That's right! Jesus' mother! (Airplane is flying over us and a loud screeching noise is heard - the interview cannot be heard). The mother of... of... uhhmmmm...God's son! That's what it is.... You know what I mean? You know what I mean? That's what it is. You know what I mean? The Virgin Mary....she brought the MAN into the world.

Interviewer: *Thank you.*

**Date & Time of Interviews:** 03-12-02 from 8:45 to 9:00 am

**Interviewer:** Roniel Vallejo

**Interviewee & Church:** Anonymous & St. Mary's Cathedral

Interviewer: *Que significa la Virgen Maria para usted? (What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?)*

Interviewee #3: *Ella es la madre de Dios y yo la amo con todo mi corazon. Y la respeto y la amo. (She is the mother of God and I love her with all my heart. I love and respect her.)*

Interviewer: *What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?*

Interviewee #4: *I...I honestly come to this church every Sunday alright? And I really don't understand the Catholic faith. But I'm saying, I believe in God. But when it comes to specifics you know, I...I'm new to this. But I come to the church every Sunday but I feel good coming here. So you can explain to me about the Virgin Mary...*

Interviewer: *I was asking you what you feel in your heart....*

Interviewee #4: *Yes, like I said, I believe in God. Honestly I am a believer. I'm a believer. To me, the Virgin Mary means a lot to me. Since I come to the church I enjoy it. Honestly I appreciate coming here. The priests....I don't know them because every week there is somebody different.*

But I do come to church. But I like the Catholic church, I do like it, you know? I live in the neighborhood and I'm so glad for the Catholic church in here. It has made it a better neighborhood. I've been living in here for over thirty years. And now everything looks way better. Why? Because of the Catholic church. Are you one of the clergyman?

Interviewer: *No, no. I'm a student.*

Interviewee #4: You'll be a priest pretty soon?

Interviewer: *No.*

Interviewee #4: You don't want to be a priest?

Interviewer: *No.*

Interviewee #4: How far are you going? Just being a student and that's it?

Interviewer: *This is my last semester.*

Interviewee #4: That's good. You don't preach?

Interviewer: *No. I'm just doing a project. Like what does the Virgin Mary mean to the people of Miami?*

Interviewee #4: You tell me. That I didn't answer you. But I am waiting for you to tell me.

Interviewer: *I guess most of the people that I have interviewed, they mostly have different answers. They say she is the mother of Christ, or she is their mother. They love her....*

Interviewee #4: I would say about the same. (Wind is blowing to hard and I cannot listen to what he is saying....) I do like her. I'll be back. I hope I'll meet you. My name is A. I will ask for Ron. Thank you.

Interviewer: *Thank you.*

Interviewer: *What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?*

Interviewee #5: (The interview is not audible because there was too much heavy wind blowing outside.)

Interviewer: *Que significa la Virgen Maria para usted? (What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?)*

Interviewee #6: *Para mi, la Virgen Maria es la madre de Dios de Jesucristo. Es algo muy especial. My familia (a bus passes by and the interviewee is not heard.) Yo antes trabajaba en un synagogue. Y ahora estoy trabajando aqui en la Catedral de Santa Maria. (For me the Virgin Mary is the mother of God, of Jesus Christ. It is something very special. My family (bus passes by) I used to work in a synagogue. And now I am working in St. Mary's Cathedral.)*

Interviewer: *Un synagogue? (A synagogue?)*

Interviewee #6: *Judio (Jewish)*

Interviewer: *Tu eres Judio? (Are you Jewish?)*

Interviewee #6: *No, no. La diferencia verdad? Porque aprender un poco como es la religion Judia. Y luego vine paca. Pero toda mi vida yo he sido Catolico.*  
*(No, no. The difference right? Because I learned a bit the Jewish religion. And later I came over here. But all my life I have been Catholic.)*

Interviewer: *Entonces la Virgen Maria para usted es... (Then the Virgin Mary for you is...)*

Interviewee #6: *Es una madre para mi. La que trajo a Dios a este mundo. (She is a mother to me. She brought God into this world.)*

Interviewer: *Gracias. (Thank you)*

Interviewer: *Que significa la Virgen Maria para usted? (What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?)*

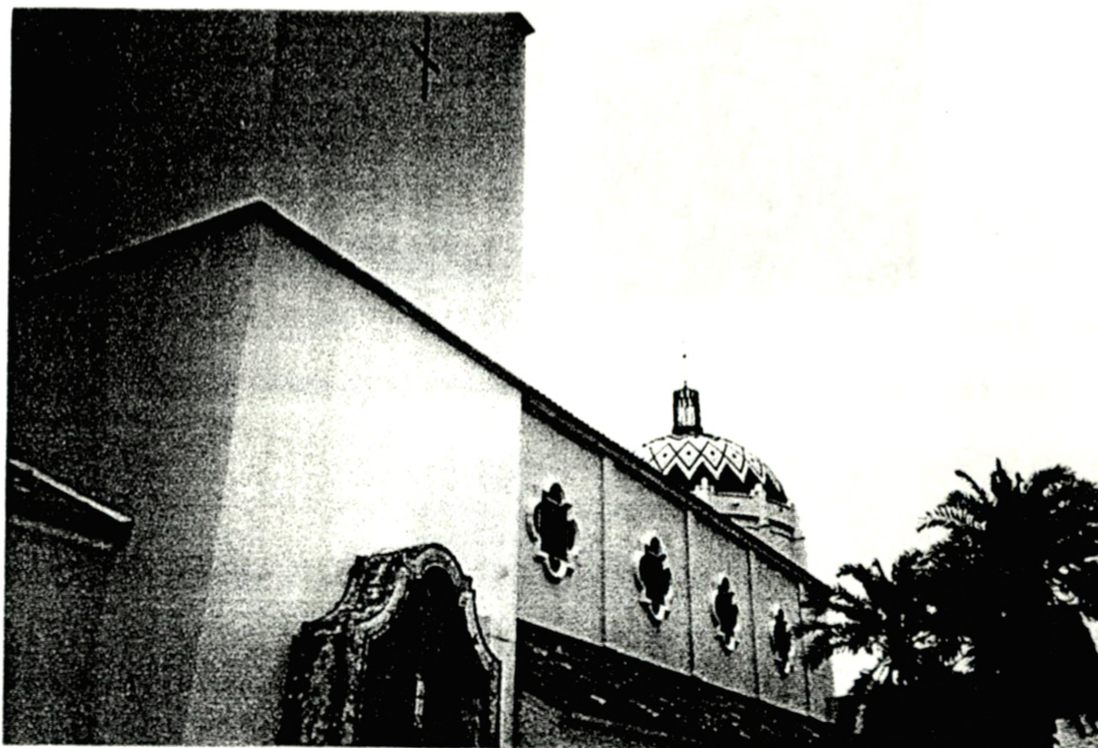
Interviewee #7: *La Virgen Maria es para mi, la madre de Dios y como todo, la madre de todo nosotros. La salvadora en cierto aspecto porque ya que ella tuvo la suerte de ser escojida para ser la madre del salvador del mundo. Pues es la salvadora de todos nosotros. Y hoy en dia como las cosas estan en el mundo, pues nesesitamos mas del resguardo de ella y la proteccion de ella. A*

*salvar el mundo de tantas calamidades y tantas miseria que hay.* (The Virgin Mary for me is the mother of God. She is the mother of all of us. She is the savior in certain aspects because she had the luck to be chosen to be the mother of the savior of the world. Thus she is the savior of all of us. And now-a-days how things are in the world, we need more of her shield and protection. So she can save the world from so many calamities, and much suffering that exists today.)



This is the outside of St. Mary's Cathedral. This long tower has a bell that let's the town know when mass is about to begin.

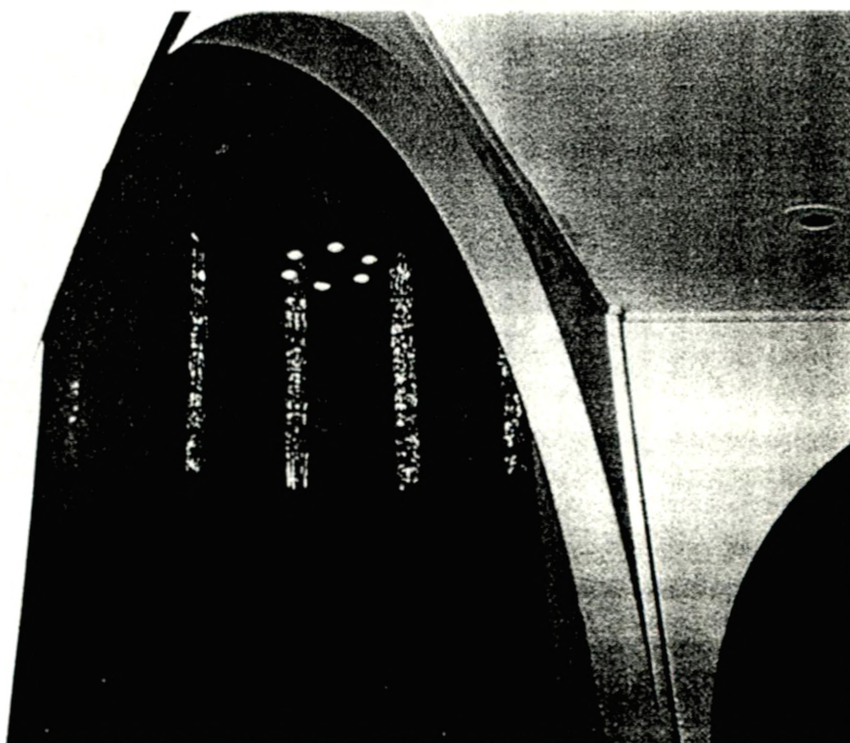




This is the lower horizontal part of St. Mary's Cathedral. The ornate structure shows a dome that has shapes of blue diamonds.



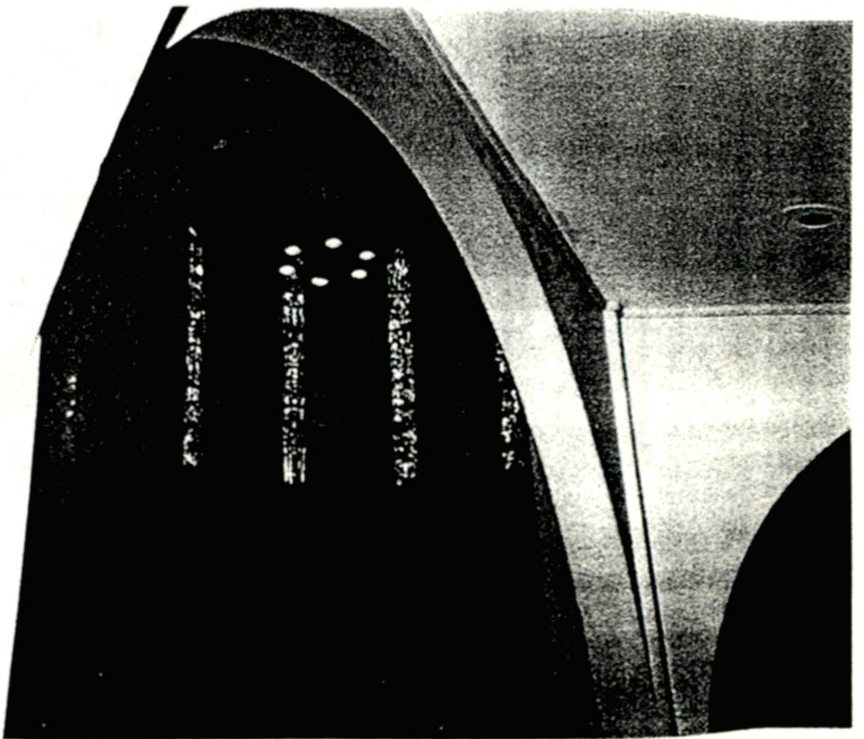
This is the lower part of the horizontal structure of the Cathedral. The stained-glass windows are on all sides.



This is the inside of the Cathedral. The intricate stained-glass depict the story of the Gospels. Within the story, the Virgin Mary is shown in these mosaic colorful windows.



This is the lower part of the horizontal structure of the Cathedral. The stained-glass windows are on all sides.



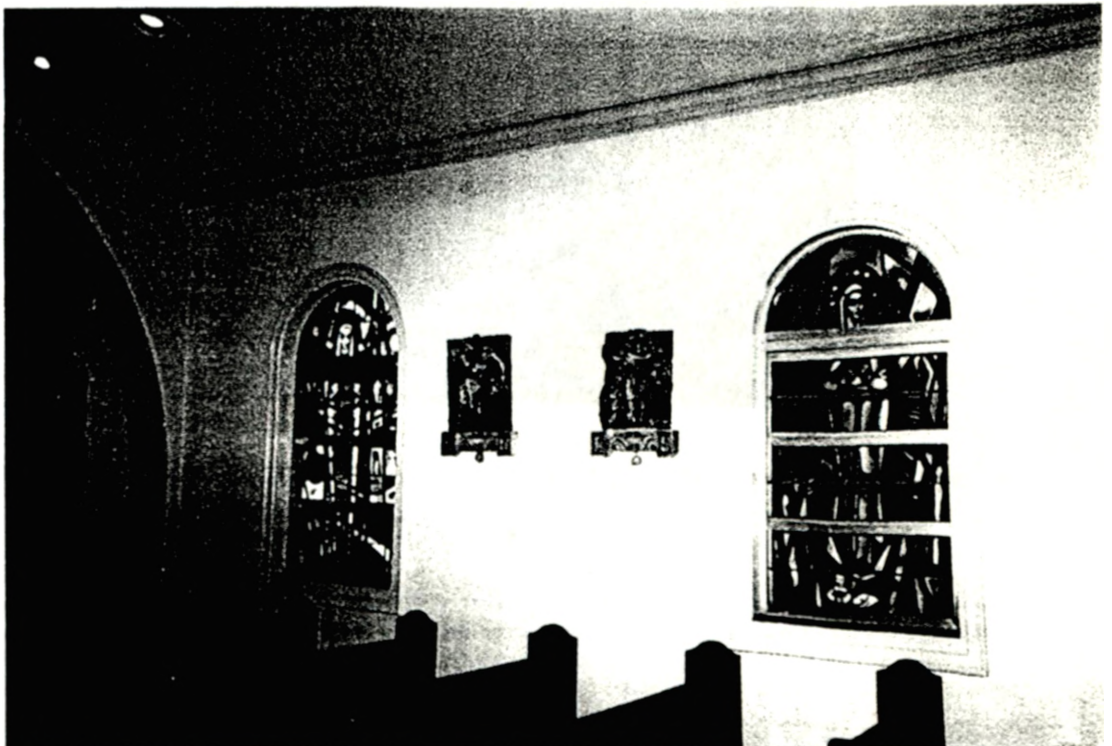
This is the inside of the Cathedral. The intricate stained-glass depict the story of the Gospels. Within the story, the Virgin Mary is shown in these mosaic colorful windows.



This is the inner room within the cathedral where the mass was held. I guess bigger events are held in the cathedral like weddings and baptisms.



This is the inside of the huge cathedral. The picture is dark because not a lot of light is coming through the windows.



These are close ups of two Marian stained-glass windows. The artist(s) went through great pains to create the beauty that is evident in this picture. The light pierces through them, allowing the divine presence to be present.



This last picture shows the Virgin Mary holding the baby Jesus. She seems to be breast-feeding him. The flash of the camera came out right on top of the baby. This makes an allusion to the Gospels that Jesus is the light of the world. Yet this light is nourished by the Virgin Mary. The mother of all humanity.

## Our Lady of Charity Shrine

Weekday Shrine Mass

Conducted by a Cuban Priest

Conservative Traditional

3609 South Miami Avenue

Miami, FL 33133

(305) 854-2404 (In Spanish)

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In Our Lady of the Exile, Thomas A. Tweed argues many new ideas about religion yet some of these ideas were originated by other scholars. Throughout his text Tweed argues that the Shrine is regarded as a very special space for Cuban exiles in Miami; the shrine is a sacred center that allows Cuban exiles to symbolically relive life as if they were in their homeland. Moreover, Tweed makes the distinction between the "churched" Cubans and the "unchurched" Cubans. Tweed also acknowledges that the shrine attracts followers of Santeria and popular Catholicism. In doing so, Tweed shows that the Cuban diaspora is very unique and very unusual.

Suffering is a key element that Tweed discovered at the shrine. He argues that many people at the shrine share his view that "there is something about the disorientation and suffering of exile itself that has led them to religion"(31). This view makes it easy to understand many Cubans' need for religion, although some will argue differently. The theory of Karl Marx

might well explain this: religion anesthetizes the suffering. According to the people Tweed talks to, exile hurts and thus they need the Church (31).

When I went to the shrine it was generally full. It was about half men and half women. Strangely, just as Tweed noted, the priest had to remind people that they have had to confess before partaking of the Eucharist. After the mass was over, the priest was a bit upset because a man went up to have him bless the ashes of his grandfather but the priest said that the Mass is only to celebrate and not to bless dead relatives. Thus he told the people that if they needed their ashes of dead relatives to be blessed he would do it at another time. Also an elderly lady after taking the Eucharist, left the shrine. The priest was extremely angry about this. "Esta gente no saben lo que estan haciendo [These people do not know what they are doing]". I thought it was a bit funny yet shocking. I guess she was in a hurry? This goes back to the "churched" vs. the "unchurched" Tweed talks about. Maybe the lady who left was "unchurched"?

Another surprising thing I saw at the shrine was the star that is between the busts of Jose Marti and Felix Varela. This pentagram of a star resembles the Wicca/Pagan star. But a Cuban lady told me that the star represents the star on the Cuban flag. I was a bit relieved because I knew that Santeros attended the shrine to. But it did not have the circle around it, so I guess her interpretation may be correct. As I sat on the bay's edge I



saw several fruits and vegetables floating in the water. I also saw many, yes many coins on the ocean floor. Mostly pennies but also nickels, dimes and quarters. I even think there were half dollars and one dollar coins too. Tweed did not make the distinction between Our Lady of Charity and Ochun regarding love. Yes, both may represent love but Ochun represents sexual love while Our Lady of Charity represents pure Christian love (48). The contested narratives between Our Lady of Charity and Ochun is very interesting.

When a Catholic at the shrine participates in the mass the priest talks about the "several conditions that must be met in order to receive communion"(47). As Tweed argues, this is done because many or some Cuban Catholics may not know the orthodoxy and orthopraxis way of receiving communion. Tweed's argument regarding this point is correct. I must wonder whether in other parts of the world such as in Africa and Celtic Ireland, priests say the same reminder(s)?

Tweed grapples with the similarities and differences of "diaspora" and "exile". "'Diaspora', the central term in my analysis here, highlights their dispersion from a center. 'Exile' signals that the dispersion was not fully voluntary and that return remains a possibility for some of the dispersed"(83). This seems logical and reasonable, yet I'm not sure if some may even want to return? Tweed also makes the powerful distinction between the diasporas of some peoples such as Africans who were

literally "forced" out of their country, whereas Cubans had a choice although that choice was a bit narrow (83). I was talking to one of the Cuban Catholics at the shrine after Mass, and this older male told me a sad tale about his best friend in Cuba, who asked for his opinion and advice on whether or not to leave Cuba. He said, "*Yo no te puedo decir que te vayas.... Tu tienes que hacer esa decision* [I cannot tell you to leave.... You have to make that decision].

Tweed makes a very powerful argument using the concept of exile as related to time and space. "(B)ut exile involves a disruption of time as well as disorientation in space"(85). This argument can be supported by Jewish scholars who make time and space a very valuable theme in their life. Tweed gives credit to past scholars of religion but still forms his own "original" theory.... "Still, and here is where my interpretation begins to diverge, the meanings of those shared symbols and practices have varied over time and among groups on the island, as has the meaning of Cuban identity"(85). This is a very bold yet demanding statement. This can also apply to a few other diasporic groups within Miami. Tweed also makes the remark that the distinction for Cubans regarding exiles is whether one is living inside or outside the political borders (85). The final analysis that Tweed makes about the exile Cuban community within South Florida is a fact. The distance between the homeland and the native land is so small that it makes exile even worse. This

odd space creates many ranges of emotions for Cuban exiles.

"That is why the space of exile is so odd"(87).

Nevertheless, Tweed recognizes the "flaws" of past theorists but makes their theory much more relevant to the study at hand. "Theorists who have followed this flawed line of thinking-and there have been many-acknowledge that these supralocal religions have their sacred centers-Jerusalem, Bodh Gaya, and Mecca"(91). By doing this Tweed is in effect incorporating such theorists as Emile Durkheim and Mircea Eliade. Is the sacred space of the shrine very significant for all the pilgrims who attend or just the Cuban exiles? Tweed is working on his own theory of religion, yet he builds from past scholars such as Eliade, Durkheim and Jonathan Z. Smith. But later Tweed makes his own theory much more apparent where he says, "(f)or Cubans in Miami and other displaced peoples, diasporic religion, like diasporic nationalism, is transtemporal and translocative"(94). This means that the land in which the diasporic people live is only temporary and thus it transcends the exile.

Tweed argues that Our Lady of Charity is the chief symbol that unites all exile Cubans and thus allows them to form unity (97). Tweed also argues that the diaspora of Cubans can also be compared to Jews, Africans, Europeans and many other groups who have come to the United States for some reason or another. This analogy is very good in that it allows the Cuban exiles to know that they are not alone in this "transtemporal" battle.

Tweed also makes a very interesting point by arguing that other ethnicities do not communicate with Cubans at the shrine because they do not know about this. But the actual communication occurs outside the shrine, thus allowing the shrine to escape the modern world and gather with fellow Cubans.

The final point that Tweed makes is that religion is both vertical and horizontal. But Tweed argues that in the shrine the religion is horizontal, in that people get to socialize with others and feel their pains and tell narratives. "To put this differently and extend my interpretation a bit, religions can have a vertical and a horizontal dimension, and it is the horizontal that is most important for diasporic groups" (139). In the Jewish tradition the vertical leads to God and the horizontal leads to fellow humans. When Yom Kippur comes, forgiveness of sins must come from both sides: vertical and horizontal.

"Religions, I suggested, might be locative (associated with a homeland where the group resides), supralocative (with diminished ties to both the homeland and the adopted land), or translocative (moving symbolically between the homeland and the new land)" (139). This argument is unique and it addresses the common situation of modern day Miami. I'm sure this also applies to many other diasporic groups within the United States.

My personal experience at the shrine was a fascinating one because I was able to meet three people around my age. I thought I was going to have to translate for them, but they knew English.

I'm not sure about the third one because there were a few misspellings in her written interview. But overall the samples were quite interesting to read. Tweed's text has allowed me to investigate the shrine and use this method for other tasks as well. The first two interviews involve a sister and a brother, while the third involves woman who visited the shrine by herself. The vertical relationship of the shrine is to the Heavens, and the horizontal relationship(s) are among Cuban exiles as well as any other group, who socialize and commune together, sharing their sorrows and joys, their tears and hopes. In brief, Tweed's text has allowed me to view the shrine and the Cuban diaspora in a whole new light, and now I am able to understand a fuller meaning behind it all.

ENGLISH-LANGUAGE VERSION OF THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:STUDY OF DEVOTION TO OUR LADY OF CHARITY:

Today's Date: March 21, 2002

1. Male\_ Female X
2. Where do you live? City: Miami Country: United States of America
3. Age: In what year were you born? 1979
4. In which country were you born? Cuba
5. If you were born in Cuba, in which municipality were you born? La Salud
6. If you were not born in the United States, in which year did you arrive in this country? 1980
7. Why have you come to the shrine today?  
To show my grandma, who is visiting from Cuba, a place of worship for Our Lady of Charity.
8. How long have you had devotion to Our Lady of Charity?  
Since I was five years old.
9. Where did your devotion to Our Lady of Charity begin?
  - A. Cuba\_
  - B. United States X
  - C. Another country. Specify: \_\_\_\_\_
10. In the United States, has your devotion
  - A. Increased\_
  - B. Decreased\_
  - C. Remained the same X

\*This questionnaire is taken from Thomas Tweed's text.

If it has increased, in what way?

11. What is the most important reason you are devoted to Our Lady of Charity?

Because she is the mother of Jesus, the Lord.

12. In what ways, if any, does Our Lady of Charity help you?

She helps me because she resembles a divine being that listens to prayers of those in need. Our Lady of Charity represents hope beyond worldly tragedies.

13. How important is this devotion to you?

A. Not important at all\_

B. Not very important\_

C. Somewhat important\_

D. Very important X

14. What is your attitude about contemporary Cuba?

My attitude about contemporary Cuba is that the dictator needs God in his life, as well as those that follow his ruthless orders.

15. In what way and to what extent is devotion to Our Lady of Charity connected with your beliefs and feelings about Cuba?

To a large extent my devotion to our Lady of Charity is connected with my beliefs and feelings about Cuba because She is the mother of the Cuban people and will help us surpass the current situation in the island.

16. In your opinion, does the second generation of Cuban Americans (those who were not born in the United States or

who arrived when very young) have the same degree of devotion to Our Lady of Charity? Why or why not?

Yes, because they have learned to have faith in Our Lady of Charity through the teachings of their Cuban relatives.

17. Does the place itself where the shrine was built, the surrounding landscape, have any significance for you?

Yes. It is next to the ocean and Cuba is an island surrounded by the ocean. Also, I came through the Mariel boatlift and had to travel by ocean. It signifies the physical barrier and geographical structure which separates Cuba from the U.S.

18. What is your impression of the shrine building?

It has a unique structure and beautiful wall painting in the center depicting the story of Cuba and the role of religion in its history. It is like no other building structure I've seen. It is oval shaped pointing to the heavens, where Our Lady of Charity resides.

19. Which aspects of devotion are most important to you personally? (Circle as many as you think are appropriate.)

- A. daily masses\_
- B. masses for the municipalities (on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday)\_
- C. rosaries\_
- D. blessing of the children born in exile (first Sunday of the Month)\_



- E. blessing of the sick (fourth Sunday of each month) \_
  - F. pilgrimage and mass on the feast day (8 September) X
  - G. pilgrimages of the provinces (once a year) \_
  - H. offerings of flowers after the daily masses during May \_
  - I. personal devotions X
  - J. other. Specify: \_\_\_\_\_
20. How often do you attend the annual rosary and mass on the feast day?
- A. never \_
  - B. occasionally X
  - C. almost every year \_
  - D. every year \_

**ENGLISH-LANGUAGE VERSION OF THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:****STUDY OF DEVOTION TO OUR LADY OF CHARITY:**

Today's Date: March 21, 2002

1. Male  Female
2. Where do you live? City: Miami Country: U.S.A.
3. Age: In what year were you born? 1976
4. In which country were you born? Cuba
5. If you were born in Cuba, in which municipality were you born? La Salud
6. If you were not born in the United States, in which year did you arrive in this country? 1980
7. Why have you come to the shrine today?

I came to the shrine to sit down for some "quiet and peaceful time" and to communicate my concerns to God, Christ, and Our Lady of Charity.

8. How long have you had devotion to Our Lady of Charity?  
I have had devotion to Our Lady of Charity ever since my parents have taught me about her significant role in my Cuban heritage.
9. Where did your devotion to Our Lady of Charity begin?
  - A. Cuba
  - B. United States
  - C. Another country. Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

\*This questionnaire is taken from Thomas Tweed's text.

10. In the United States, has your devotion
- A. Increased\_
  - B. Decreased\_
  - C. Remained the same X

If it has increased, in what way?

My devotion has remained the same.

11. What is the most important reason you are devoted to Our Lady of Charity?

The most important reason I am devoted to Our Lady of Charity is because she represents the hope for the Cuban people - - my people.

12. In what ways, if any, does Our Lady of Charity help you?

Our Lady of Charity has helped me in reaching long term goals in my life, such as sustaining the hope for my own house - - my dream home. In general, Our Lady of Charity is representative of the hope that I have for acquiring those things in life that I feel are important to me.

13. How important is this devotion to you?

- A. Not important at all\_
- B. Not very important\_
- C. Somewhat important\_
- D. Very important X

14. What is your attitude about contemporary Cuba?

My attitude about contemporary Cuba is that the current government is not meeting the needs of the country. So, the

Cuban people should look towards a different form of government (modeled after the United States) that truly is effective in resolving the needs of its people.

15. In what way and to what extent is devotion to Our Lady of Charity connected with your beliefs and feelings about Cuba? My devotion to Our Lady of Charity is intricately and directly connected with my beliefs and feelings about Cuba. The reason for this is that Our Lady of Charity has become embedded into my culture, by way of my parents' teachings and the annual September 8<sup>th</sup> celebration of her day.
16. In your opinion, does the second generation of Cuban Americans (those who were not born in the United States or who arrived when very young) have the same degree of devotion to Our Lady of Charity? Why or why not? Being a second generation Cuban American myself, I can testify that I have about the same degree of devotion as that taught to me by my parents. Although the grave political situation in contemporary Cuba has heightened the focus of Our Lady of Charity amongst Cuban exiles, this focus has always remained consistent for me.
17. Does the place itself where the shrine was built, the surrounding landscape, have any significance for you? The place itself where the shrine was built and the surrounding landscape have a special significance to me since the proximity of such a shrine to the Biscayne Bay (as

a large body of water) is a reminder of the Strait of Florida - the only physical barrier between the Cuban exiles in Miami (such as myself) and the long-remembered Cuba.

18. What is your impression of the shrine building?

My impression of the shrine building is that it has become quite a remarkable place of worship. The additions and structural improvements done on the shrine building (such as the adjacent religious shop and the monuments to Jose Marti and Felix Varela) have made the shrine "more complete." The mixture of proudness in Cuban heritage and the associated devotion to Our Lady of Charity as evidenced in these improvements denote the landscape as a "piece of Cuba" which Cuban exiles can resort to in order to keep alive the Cuban spirit.

19. Which aspects of devotion are most important to you personally? (Circle as many as you think are appropriate.)

- A. daily masses X
- B. masses for the municipalities (on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday) \_
- C. rosaries \_
- D. blessing of the children born in exile (first Sunday of the Month) \_
- E. blessing of the sick (fourth Sunday of each month) \_
- F. pilgrimage and mass on the feast day (8 September) X
- G. pilgrimages of the provinces (once a year) \_

- H. offerings of flowers after the daily masses during May\_
- I. personal devotions X
- J. other. Specify: \_\_\_\_\_
20. How often do you attend the annual rosary and mass on the feast day?
- A. never\_
- B. occasionally X
- C. almost every year\_
- D. every year\_

**ENGLISH-LANGUAGE VERSION OF THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:****STUDY OF DEVOTION TO OUR LADY OF CHARITY:**

Today's Date: March 21, 2002

1. Male\_            Female X
2. Where do you live? City: Miami    Country: U.S.A.
3. Age: In what year were you born? 1979
4. In which country were you born? Cuba
5. If you were born in Cuba, in which municipality were you born? Habana
6. If you were not born in the United States, in which year did you arrive in this country? 1980
7. Why have you come to the shrine today?  
To vist and see it.
8. How long have you had devotion to Our Lady of Charity?  
For 20 years.
9. Where did your devotion to Our Lady of Charity begin?
  - A. Cuba\_
  - B. United States X
  - C. Another country. Specify: \_\_\_\_\_
10. In the United States, has your devotion
  - A. Increased X
  - B. Decreased\_
  - C. Remained the same\_

**\*This questionnaire is taken from Thomas Tweed's text.**

If it has increased, in what way?

I believe in it more

11. What is the most important reason you are devoted to Our Lady of Charity?

The believe I have on her.

12. In what ways, if any, does Our Lady of Charity help you?

In the way she helps me.

13. How important is this devotion to you?

A. Not important at all\_

B. Not very important\_

C. Somewhat important\_

D. Very important X

14. What is your attitude about contemporary Cuba?

I really disliked it.

15. In what way and to what extent is devotion to Our Lady of Charity connected with your beliefs and feelings about Cuba?

It keep their hopes up.

16. In your opinion, does the second generation of Cuban Americans (those who were not born in the United States or who arrived when very young) have the same degree of devotion to Our Lady of Charity? Why or why not?

I think they do it depends on their ansisters.

17. Does the place itself where the shrine was built, the surrounding landscape, have any significance for you?

Yes it really touch when I go their.



18. What is your impression of the shrine building?

I think it is very peaceful.

19. Which aspects of devotion are most important to you personally? (Circle as many as you think are appropriate.)

A. daily masses X

B. masses for the municipalities (on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday) X

C. rosaries X

D. blessing of the children born in exile (first Sunday of the Month) X

E. blessing of the sick (fourth Sunday of each month) X

F. pilgrimage and mass on the feast day (8 September) \_

G. pilgrimages of the provinces (once a year) \_

H. offerings of flowers after the daily masses during May X

I. personal devotions X

J. other. Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

20. How often do you attend the annual rosary and mass on the feast day?

A. never \_

B. occasionally X

C. almost every year \_

D. every year \_



This is the outside structure of Our Lady of Charity Shrine. The outside of the shrine has verses from the New Testament in Latin. If one looks closely, there is a painting right beneath the brown structure of the shrine. The three "Juanes" as they are called by Cuban Catholics, are shown in their struggle to arrive safely to the shore. The Lady of Charity takes the form of the brown cone. The cross is at the top. This also symbolizes Tweed's argument of the horizontal relationship. The horizontal encompasses all human relationships. The three doors are open to anyone who would like to enter the shrine.



This is the five-pointed star that is right outside of the shrine. I thought this represented some Pagan symbol but this is not the case. This star represents the Cuban star.

## The Miami Herald Synopsis of Marian Events from 1988 to 2001

### The Miami Herald 1988 - 1989

In a South Miami home, a woman reads aloud from a prayer book. "The people are giving thanks to the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception, whose likeness is portrayed on a small, worn statue surrounded by white lilies and dozens of candles"(Biddulph 1B). This celebration allows Nicaraguans to unite and devote themselves to the Virgin Mary of the Immaculate Conception. This celebration was part of "La Purisima, The Most Pure, the holiest day for Nicaraguans, who keep touch with their culture and traditions while away from home"(1B). Two thousand Nicaraguans gather near 107<sup>th</sup> avenue around a fifteen-foot-high altar of Mary that is handmade. It is covered with daisies. Many large speakers exclaim Catholic hymns and many hear them.

"'Who brings so much joy?' yelled Violeta Ocampo, an organizer, to the masses. 'Maria!' the crowd yelled back. Then the crowd loudly sang Nicaraguan hymns celebrating Catholicism and the Virgin Mary"(1B). The writer claims that in theory, La Purisima is a "purely religious holiday. In practice, it's like Thanksgiving, Christmas and Halloween combined"(1B). Geoffrey Biddulph observes that friends and family gather around to give thanks. Apples and candy are passed out to the children. "Prayer and reflection on the joys of life dominate all talk"(1B). Monsignor Pablo Vega, a Nicaraguan, says, "It is important to be with other people so you can gather to give

manifested in a way that shows their nationalistic ties with their homeland. Another article by Geoffrey Biddulph cites how the image of the Virgin Mary of Fatima will be taken to several churches as part of the "Catholic preparation for Christmas"(36).

"A Night of Nostalgia and Prayer" an article written by David Hancock briefly describes the Marian devotion that Cubans have with Our Lady of Charity. A crowd of seven thousand gather at the stadium. Although many Cubans in exile like the Virgin Mary and are grateful for being in the US, many still long for their country.

Each year since 1961, the two-foot statue of Our Lady of Charity, the patron saint of Cuba, is ferried from its shrine in Coconut Grove to the stadium. It is a re-enactment of a 300-year-old legend in which three youths found a statue of the Virgin floating in the waters off Cuba. The legend has more recent significance in Miami. When the Virgin Mary arrived from the bay and was placed on the stadium stage, the image was clear: We may have left our country, but our faith has come here with us. (1B)

This three hundred year old legend is what sustains the Marian devotion of Cuban Catholics in Miami. Our Lady of Charity is the statue form that according to the legend it appeared to the three men around the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Finally, Gloria Recio Montero says, "I'm nostalgic. But I'm happy. The three great loves of a life are God, country and family. We have that. The love of country

is not complete, because we don't have Cuba', she said. 'But we have a great country in the United States' "(1B).

Karen Branch with her article, "Shouts of Purisima Ring with Nicaraguan Memories" shows the Marian devotion that Nicaraguans display in their Miami homes. Reverend Francisco Santana shouts, "Who brings so much joy?" And hundreds of people shout back: "La Concepcion de Maria!" (7). This Nicaraguan tradition venerates the Virgin Mary in a way that helps them maintain their ethnic identity. Some people when interviewed by Branch commented that this celebration makes them "homesick" (7). "The celebration of the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception, commonly referred to as the Purisima (The Most Pure), is one of Nicaragua's most sacred traditions" (7). There are many different legends that pertain to how this celebration of the Immaculate Conception began. But the most common one is how St. Teresa's brother, Alonso Zepeda de Ahumada took the statue and it would constantly disappear from him. He later decided to build a church in her honor.

"The nine-day religious festival celebrating the Purisima ends Dec. 7. On that day, Nicaraguans traditionally open the doors of their homes in a tradition somewhat similar to Halloween" (7). People enter homes and they see the beautiful altars that the family has built. The griteria or "the Shouting" brings many joys to Nicaraguans as well as to Catholics who want to participate. The visitors are given sweets and later they sing sacred hymns in honor of the Virgin. "It keeps our

traditions, so our children and grandchildren don't forget them, just like my parents taught me', said Violeta O' Campo, who helped organize the celebration"(7).

This last article from 1988 is titled, "Our Lady of Charity" by Lourdes Fernandez. This article describes how a family dealt with a son that was hospitalized with hepatitis. Nancy Rizo is praying to the Virgin Mary in order for her son to get better. "The faithful believe Our Lady of Charity has worked miracles before. They pray with unquestioning faith that she will work minor miracles for them"(20). Although many priests say that it is really a matter of faith. Elba Aguilar says, "I came to give thanks because it was not as bad as I had thought. One always has to give thanks"(20). She claims that leaving the shrine one's heart is purified. And one leaves with a "renewed hope"(20). There are also prayers to Our Lady of Charity that asks favors for a successful delivery of pregnant mothers. "The shrine was built to honor Cuba's patron saint, but Nicaraguans, Colombians and other Latin Americans also visit"(20). Bishop Roman says that the Virgin Mary is "very special in all Latin America. When Franciscan and Dominican missionaries went to Latin America, they spread their deep devotion to Christ's mother"(20). Maria Pezzo is Colombian but she visits the shrine of Our Lady of Charity every Wednesday. "We give her different names, but she is the same. I have always had faith in her. She is the mother of Christ"(20).

The Miami Herald 1990 - 1991

In "Nicaraguan Festival Honors Virgin Mary", Marilyn Garateix observes and writes about the annual feast of La Griteria (The Shouting). This is a celebration that Nicaraguans have every year to honor the Virgin Mary. Nicolas Lopez-Maltez says, "It's part of our national culture. It goes beyond religion. We were all raised learning the songs of La Griteria"(4). It is interesting to note that this celebration (according to him) "goes beyond religion". It seems that the Shouting is a cultural thing but one cannot deny that its roots are religious. While Nicaraguans go around the altars, they sing and pray. Then the participants shout: "Who causes such happiness?" "The owner of the altar then responds: 'The conception of Mary', and hands out treats such as gofios, roasted maize meal sweetened with cocoa, and pieces of sugar cane and sweet lemons"(4).

While much Marian devotion in Miami is inspired by feasts and statues Mary, at times the desecration of statues has inspired a surge in Marian devotion. In "Intruder Lays Waste to Statues, Antiques in Gables Church", David Hancock describes how James Charles Gardipee destroyed and shattered paintings, statues, and other religious objects from the Church of the Little Flower. "After Gardipee's arrest, the priests retraced the destruction they believe he caused to the ornate, Mediterranean-style church during the few minutes he was alone



inside"(1B). The article says that after Gardipee entered the church he pulled an "intricately painted, life-size statue of the Virgin Mary from its pedestal"(1B). But Bishop Thomas Wenski says, "'The fact that he went for the statues shows that it was contempt for religion'"(1B). Gardipee was treated for minor cuts on his hand and foot. His daughter did not know what ignited this anger. She knows that her father is very religious but she thinks that he is not Catholic. The service to purify the church from the desecration was scheduled for the following Sunday.

Another similar incident occurred on May 1, 1991. In "Virgin Mary Statue Stolen from Shrine", Nancy Klingener reports that the statue of Our Lady of Regla was stolen from the shrine. "Every year on Sept. 8, the day Cuban Catholics traditionally honor the Madonna, the statue is featured in a religious parade through Old Town"(1B). The theft was reported to the police but the people want the statue back. "If they did it as a joke, we want it back, no matter. We need the saint back"(1B). This is sad because it seems that people who see Marian devotion in Miami as being "idolatry" are probably the ones who are destroying, and stealing the statues.

Finally, the last article I found from 1990 reports of yet another desecration to more Marian statues. "Vandals broke into Our Lady of Divine Providence in West Dade Friday and destroyed a statue of La Caridad Del Cobre, Our Lady of Charity, that was more than 100 years old"(1B). The statue of Our Lady of Divine

Providence was beheaded as was the image of baby Jesus. Reverend Francisco Santana says:

They are irreplaceable. The congregation of this church is made up of immigrants from Cuba, Nicaragua and 15 other Latin American countries. So many tears have been shed before these images. So many immigrants have stood before them in prayer. (1B)

Cuban-born Santana feels terrible because he says, "It is like coming home and finding someone has hurt or beaten your mother" (1B). Many congregants are extremely angry. This is the fourth time the church has been broken into. "The motive was not money. They took only a few coins from a basket. They could have taken more. This was a profane act" (1B). This vandalism act makes Rev. Jose Nickse say, "sounds like some kind of ritualistic thing or they would have broken candles and other things. It seems like somebody who has something against statues as idols. It was the desecration of something holy" (1B). In situations like these he only thinks about restoring the statues.

**The Miami Herald 1992**

The only article that pertains to Marian devotion is in a shrine within the country of Mexico, thus this article does not pertain to my research because it is not in Miami.

**The Miami Herald 1993**

The only article that pertains to Marian devotion is in a shrine within the island of Cuba, thus this article does not

pertain to my research because it is not in Miami.

### The Miami Herald 1994

Right of the Florida Turnpike, Pat Cogna believes that the Virgin Mary arrives every month. "Cogna oversees more than 30 volunteers and frets over parking for hundreds of pilgrims, drawn by word that Mary heals the sick and hears prayers on the 13<sup>th</sup> of every month at the home of Rosa Lopez"(Mitchell 1E). The Archdiocese of Miami is very skeptical. "The Archdiocese of Miami tells Catholics to ignore local apparitions of Mary. Skeptics say that the devout manufacture visions from their imagination. Even church theologians say only a minuscule fraction of Mary sightings are truly divine"(1E). But faith is something that runs deep in devout Catholics. Bud MacFarlane argues that the world is very close to a chastisement. Father Sosa says, "Do not go. Go to your church and celebrate the presence of Mary in other ways. This is very simple: Do not go to these places. Search for Mary in your heart"(1E).

The Marian apparitions that have been approved by the Catholic Church report that Mary's simple message is: "A call for spiritual conversion. A call for prayer and penance. And a call for Catholics to come closer to Christ"(1E). Father Sosa argues that Latin American Catholics have always had strong ties to Mary. But in the end the conflicts between faith and skeptics will be based on the person's faith.

Another article written by Brent Mitchell is titled, "In South Dade, Faithful Flock to Homemaker". The Padro family believes that Jesus and Mary appeared in their home. "The Padros don't want donations. They rely on a circle of Nicaraguan friends to distribute xeroxed sheets of messages that command: fast for penance, say the rosary, repent your sins, do not break with the Catholic Church"(5E). Jaime Padro cannot believe that he married a visionary wife. "I never thought in my remotest dreams that I would end up married to a visionary. It's faith that gives you the assurance about the apparition. Faith doesn't go against reason. It goes beyond it"(5E). This is interesting to note. For him faith goes "beyond" reason, so in a sense faith seems to be more important to people that have faith and it seems that faith is definitely more important than reason.

#### **The Miami Herald 1995**

There were no articles found that relate to Marian devotion in Miami.

#### **The Miami Herald 1996**

The only article that pertains to Marian devotion is not in Miami, thus it does not pertain to my research.

#### **The Miami Herald 1997**

In the article, "Mary of Nazareth, Blessed Art Thou Among Women", Coleman McCarthy says that:

Multiple identities of Mary, peasant woman of Nazareth, are definitions by believers, theologians, and artists. But

behind the images and versions, who is the real Mary? Biblically, little factual information exists. No words of Mary are recorded in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark or John. Only in Luke is she quoted and then extensively only in one scene. (32A)

This resembles what many scholars say about Mary. McCarthy argues that Mary's religion was a religion "centered on a God of the powerless"(32A). But he is sure that whether one is interested in Mary with zeal or theological enthusiasm, "interest in Mary has surged in recent years"(32A).

In this last article, Maria A. Morales discusses what she has observed at the celebration of Nicaragua's patron saint. "Tens of thousands of Nicaraguans who live around the county are expected to take part in this celebration to honor La Purisima Concepcion de Maria (The Purest Conception of Mary), as the Virgin Mary is known in Nicaragua"(1B). La Griteria (The Shouting) is an annual feast to honor the Virgin Mary. She is the patron saint of Nicaragua. The Nicaraguans that Morales interviews claim, "'this is part of our Catholic religious tradition, something we brought with us when we came to this country'"(1B).

#### **The Miami Herald 1998**

This article written by D. Aileen Dodd describes how Colombians in Miami gives thanks to the Virgin Mary for their country's independence. "Colombians, as hundreds of worshipers

celebrated the 179<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the independence of Colombia with a Mass and a fiesta"(2BR). Colombians feel that they have to honor the Virgin Mary because she has heard their prayers. "The Spanish-language Mass featured a Colombian religious rite honoring the Virgin Mary, whom they call Our Lady of Chiquinquirá"(2BR). In addition to Colombians, the other Hispanic members that attend St. Boniface congregation include: Puerto Ricans, Ecuadoreans, Dominicans and Argentines(2BR). Many immigrants are happy attending the church because they feel that it helps them know more about other immigrants that live around the area.

#### The Miami Herald 1999

In the article, "Nicaraguans Celebrate La Gritería", Dominique Collins Berta describes what she observed at the feast. "The celebration starts off with a Mass, after which food and presents are distributed among the crowd"(2B). Agustín Mendoza says, "'This year we are asking that everything is fine in terms of each nation in Central America'"(2B). Then the shouting starts. Someone asks, "'¿Quién causa tanta alegría? (Who causes much happiness?) and the crowd answers in rhyme: La concepción de María! (The conception of Mary!)"(2B). For twelve years, the Mendoza family has hosted the celebration in honor of the Virgin. They provided gifts, food, and drink. "Although the Mass takes place in a party atmosphere, the people come to show their religious devotion"(2B). Marjorie Mendoza (daughter of Agustín)

says, "It's like being in my father's country and doing the traditions that they do. When the priest comes and gives the Mass, it's like being in church and listening to what God wants us to listen to"(2B).

### The Miami Herald 2000

This article also captures the most celebrated feast of the Virgin Mary: The Immaculate Conception. Lila Arzua observes the celebration. "Members of the audience were invited to approach the flowered altar and sing to the Virgin"(2B). Arzua carefully observes that "although prayer and songbooks were distributed, most in the crowd knew the words by heart. They also feasted on traditional fare such as roasted beef strips, fried cheese and plantains"(2B). Marlon Blandon adds, "Here we are able to reunite a tiny piece of Nicaragua"(2B). Jasmin Perez says, "It's nice to feel that there is a part of Nicaragua in Miami"(2B). This celebration of the Shouting does look like fun. This year I will hopefully attend.

This last article describes how Cuban exiles pay tribute to Our Lady of Charity. "According to religious lore, Cuba's patron saint, Our Lady of Charity, first appeared to three storm-tossed fishermen in the Bay of Nipe in the early 1600s"(Ross 1B). The devotion to the Virgin "has been an ever-present feature of Cuban nationality since Cuba came into being"(1B). Sister Rosario Delgado says, "'I may live here, but my heart's in Cuba. She is our mother because she takes care of Cuba. No matter how bad

things are, the Blessed Mother is always there'"(1B). An elder Garcia affirms, "'I'm here out of devotion to the Virgin. In the 38 years that I've been here, I've never missed a celebration'"(1B). Geisy Perez said that the Virgin is a pillar of her existence (1B). She concludes by adding, "'The Virgin nourishes us, protects us and helps us. (She) never lets us down. Human beings fail you at times, but the Virgin is always there to help'"(1B).

**The Miami Herald 2001**

The only article I found does not pertain to my research.



OTHER INTERVIEWS WITH CATHOLIC IMMIGRANTS

Date & Time of Interviews: Various & Various

Interviewer: Roniel Vallejo

Interviewee & Church: Anonymous & Various

Immigrant from: Nicaragua; Sex: Female; Age: 39; Class: Lower Middle Class.

Interviewer: *What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?*

Interviewee #1: When I lived in Nicaragua, I was walking with my husband. Suddenly a nurse walked up to me and she gave me a rosary. She told me very fervently, to "pray the rosary." I accepted it and I kept on walking. When I turned to see who she was, the lady was gone! It was as if she disappeared! I was looking all over the place and I never found who she was. She was wearing a nurse' uniform. I also had a dream that the Virgin told me that I should never part with a statue that I have of her Immaculate Conception. One day I saw that the shadow of the statue reached the roof! I asked a priest and he didn't know what it meant.

Interviewer: *Wow! Sounds interesting. Is this what the Virgin means to you?*

Interviewee #1: She's the most pure being that has ever existed. No one can ever come close to who she was and is.

This is why God chosed her to become His mother.

Interviewer: *Thank you.*

**Immigrant from: Cuba; Sex: Female; Age: 69; Class: Lower Middle Class.**

Interviewer: *What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?*

Interviewee #2: She's like God. I like her very much. I consider her like God.

Interviewer: *Thank you.*

**Immigrant from: Cuba; Sex: Female; Age: 37; Class: Lower Middle Class.**

Interviewer: *What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?*

Interviewee #3: She means a lot to me. She is the mother of God. And God es our father who gave His life for us on the cross. He gave up his life for us sinners. I have a lot of faith on the Virgin. I believe very much in her. She is like my second mother.

Interviewer: *Thank you.*

**Immigrant from: Cuba; Sex: Female; Age: 35; Class: Lower Middle Class.**

Interviewer: *What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?*

Interviewee #4: She is the mother who brought God into this world. She is a symbol for all mothers. She

represents all the mothers in the world.

Interviewer: *Thank you.*

**Immigrant from: Cuba; Sex: Female; Age: 39; Class: Lower Middle Class.**

Interviewer: *What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?*

Interviewee #5: She's the mother of Jesus. She's my mother.

Interviewer: *Thank you.*

**Immigrant from: Cuba; Sex: Female; Age: 25; Class: Lower Middle Class.**

Interviewer: *What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?*

Interviewee #6: The thought of tender love and comfort comes to my mind whenever I think of the Virgin Mary.

Aside from being the matriarchal figure

("patroness") in my native Cuba, the Virgin Mary

also evokes a feeling of inner peace in my heart

and calms my fears whenever I am confronted with

the troubles that life sometimes presents to me.

Definitely, the Virgin Mary is the omnipresent,

protective and celestial mother which comes "to

the rescue" when I am feeling "down" and sad.

Interviewer: *Thank you.*

**Immigrant from: Cuba; Sex: Female; Age: 55; Class: Lower Middle Class.**

Interviewer: *What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?*

Interviewee #7: *Para mi la Virgen María significa bondad, paz, y sacrificio pues a través de ella, el Padre Celestial, fue la elegida, para traer su hijo al mundo el cual dio su vida por nosotros, y hacernos saber que no estábamos solos, que tenia que existir la fe y la esperanza. Nuestra Madre Celestial siempre esta entercediendo a través de su hijo por nosotros, en cualquier situación que yo me encuentre, mi pensamiento va hacia ella pues es la que me da la fuerza y el valor que necesito a través de cualquier situación. Pues para mi la Virgen María es símbolo de ejemplo de crecer en la fe, y de rezar, como ella siempre*

*lo pide, por sus hijos aquí en la tierra.*

"Aleluya".

(For me the Virgin Mary means goodness, peace, and sacrifice because through her, the Celestial Father, was the chosen one, to bring His son to the world which gave His life for us, and to let us know that we are not alone, that to exist the faith and the hope. Our Celestial Mother always intercedes for us through her, in any situation that I am, my thoughts go towards her because she is the one who gives me the force and the value that I need through any situation. Then for me the Virgin Mary is a symbol of example to grow in the faith, and to pray here, as she always requests it, by her Earthly children.

"Alleluia.")

Interviewer: *Thank you.*

Immigrant from: Cuba; Sex: Female; Age: 22; Class: Lower Middle Class.

Interviewer: *What does the Virgin Mary mean to you?*

Interviewee #8: In order to answer this question in a comprehensive manner, I wish to account for my perception of the Virgin Mary beginning with my childhood years. I now recall the time when I was seven years of age and was sitting on one of the seats of the Miami Marine Stadium. It was September. The Fall season had just begun and the cool breeze brought with it the scent of saltwater and marine life which inhabited the immediate surroundings. After much observation of the ocean in front of me, I saw that everyone stood up and looked towards the left side of the stadium. Many of these individuals were waving a Cuban flag into the air as if anticipating something. Then, a boat which carried the statue

of Our Lady of Charity began to approximate the multitude that was clapping and singing. After a while, the boat came to a stop and the statue was transferred from the boat to the stage area. I was at an event which celebrates the day of Our Lady of Charity every month of September. What I remember thinking at the time was that the Virgin Mary, in spiritual form, was very near because she must have heard how so many people were calling her name and praying. In my childhood mentality, I imagined that sometime in the evening she would appear, filling the sky with her presence -- and that she would answer all of our petitions as well as take away the "evil" people and eliminate human suffering. The evening came to a close and what I had imagined would occur became a child's unfulfilled dream. Then again, I was looking at life through

inexperienced eyes--thinking mostly everything had an easy and quick solution. I thought that if the Virgin Mary saw the faith people had that day in the stadium, then she would immediately answer our plead. At that time, I wasn't aware of the complexity of life. Neither was I aware of the complexity of the relationship of humans with the divine. Soon enough, I realized that the Virgin Mary is a maternal figure which oversees her children (all of humanity). She recognizes that each individual has free will and that divine intervention in worldly matters is exercised at particular points in time--when it is appropriate and good for all humans on Earth. As I grew older, my admiration towards the Virgin Mary dilated. I remember going to church and kneeling in front of her statue. It was very quiet inside the church and this



allowed me to hear my thoughts. I imagined Mary's life during the period she lived in. While playing the story of her life in my head like a roll of film in constant motion, I realized how extraordinary and important the Virgin Mary was and is and will always be. She accepted the responsibility that comes with being the mother of the son of God--the Savior of humanity. And she took upon this role with great modesty. Currently, I personally feel that the Virgin Mary protects me in my daily life. I have good health and the capability to love. Those gifts, I know, come from Mary and her son, God. Summing my perception of the Virgin Mary from my childhood years to my adult life, she means many positive things to me. Such as a mother that is always present, especially when fellow humans fail to provide us with

comfort, love, and attention. Overall, she personifies the word hope--hope that humanity will change for the better if they follow her and her son's example. If this doesn't occur, then I hope the dream that I once had sitting on the bleachers of the Miami Marine Stadium becomes a reality.

Interviewer: *Wow! Your response has been the longest one! Thank you very much for your beautiful insight!*

Interviewee #8: I hope I did not bore you.

Interviewer: *No! Your response came from the heart and that is what I am looking for. I have never attended the Marine Stadium event. Your response inspires me to attend the event this year. Thank you.*

Interviewee #8: Your welcome.

## CONCLUSION

This project has tried to encompass the vast views of Mary that are so relevant to the immigrants of Miami. I would say that even though there is a struggle to become a melting pot, I see that there remains a salad. A salad in the sense that each immigrant group maintain their own distinct form and flavor but when they unite in St. Mary's Cathedral the differences seem to disappear. There each immigrant group is unconsciously coerced into becoming an "American", in the sense that one's homeland is to be forgotten and now this is the "new" life. Many may not become aware of this but there is definitely an underlying agenda in the cathedral. I am not saying that is negative or positive. All I am saying is that one's native language, one's native culture has to give way to their "new" Americanized selves.

Each ethnic group tries to maintain its culture, language, and ideologies, but when it comes to Marian devotion these differences tend to blend at the cathedral. Although each immigrant group does have a different image of the Virgin, there is still the common acceptance that all these images reflect the same person: Mary. Thus Marian devotion in Miami is peculiar because there is an attempt to find shelter and acceptance among these immigrants. They are aware that they come from different countries but their connections of being away from their homeland forces them to try and find refuge and comfort with their ethnic identity as well as with their religious identity.

Marian devotion in Miami is like a diamond. It has many facets that are different but when seen from another angle it reflects the same need that the other side has. These needs are: the need to be loved, accepted, and having a sense of self that is shown through belonging to an ethnic group thus having a "true" identity. The religious structures that I attended were filled with immigrants that wanted to find shelter from a harsh a cruel world that pervaded their everyday existence. What I mean is that once immigrants arrive here they find that there is definitely a clash between them and the dominant group(s). By maintaining their sense of self through ethnicity, culture, and religion, these immigrants can find temporary solace when attending these religious structures.

Of course there is tension between the immigrants who are "churched" versus those that are "unchurched" in their homeland (Tweed 12). But the immigrants that are "unchurched" still find a place within their religious structure. This need to belong is crucial to their existence if they are to remain living in the United States, even though Miami is a largely Latin enclave that generally supports immigrants and helps them through the process of assimilation. But in Miami the need to learn English is not a dire need. Of course, if one is to find a "better" job one needs to know English.

The devotion that each immigrant has towards Mary alleviates the pressures that are found in a country that is literally

controlled by computer technology. The anxiety that is produced is alleviated when Marian devotion takes place. Likewise, there are some radical feminists that argue that having devotion to Mary will increase one's internal oppression. Regardless, Marian devotion is still a very important part of the immigrants' religious life. Clearly the growth of the Catholic Church is increasing in Miami due to immigrants. They bring their religion, devotions, and other spiritual concerns with them when they arrive, central to which is their love for Mary.

Many immigrants bring with them their own form of worship as well as their distinct form of Marian devotion. This allows them to preach and market their form of prayer. Marian devotion also takes on the form of civic engagement because some of the immigrants that I interviewed told me that, because inspired by Mary, they would preach and serve the homeless within their community. This further allows them to build a strong fellowship when it comes to religion and ethnicity.

Another thing that I found very interesting was the fact that the Mexican missions were absolutely filled with parishioners. Of course the majority were immigrants. But the one thing that surprised me was the way in which both women and men engaged in the mass as if they actually were enjoying it. This is something that I have never seen before. Usually there are more women than men in the church. I just felt that the Mexican immigrants were really united through their ethnicity,

culture, and religion. Not to mention their authentic and loving devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The one thing that I really enjoyed about this project is the fact that I learned so much! My conception of the Virgin was so narrow and at times very ignorant. But the readings, the actual field work, and the theorizing has opened my eyes to appreciating Mary much more. Of course I know the debates going on within feminist circles regarding Mary. But within the immigrant circles they all seem to love Mary very much. Some do it out of convenience to have an identity. Others do it because their parents taught them. But many others do it for the simple fact that they admire, embrace, and love her. I am not trying to generalize Marian devotion within Miami, but the experiences that I had helped me open my mind to further discussions on the Virgin. For sure, my picture of Mary has already evolved and I know it will continue to evolve. One thing is uncertain: what will the future of Marian devotion be? This is of course left to speculation, but the modern age is being shaped by feminist ideology. A few people fear that the end to patriarchal religion is at hand but what is there to fear? One should never fear change. But again this is my opinion. Like Rogelio Zelada told me during an interview: "Mariology is a book that will always be missing chapters to be written." This is crucial in order to develop the importance of Mary in the history of salvation."

The theoretical analysis of the symbol of Mary is one that is at the same time specific such as Guadalupe, and at the same time very broad as in St. Mary's Cathedral. The central theoretical paradigm allows immigrants to assimilate the image, symbol, and icon of Mary into their own culture, nationalism, cult, and ethnic identity. Thomas Tweed's analysis is seen in all places of worship studied here except for St. Mary's Cathedral. As stated earlier, St. Mary's Cathedral contains the image, symbol, and icon of Mary that is too broad and too generic for any ethnic group to claim as their own. The only symbol of Mary that they can claim as their own is the particular apparition that their country witnessed.

Moreover, to differentiate between the many images, symbols, and icons of Mary is clearly seen in Notre-Dame d'Haiti, St. Anne's Missions, and Our Lady of Charity Shrine. But within St. Mary's Cathedral the distinctions are very minute. The cathedral remains the generic symbol of Mary in the hopes of attracting all Catholics not just Catholics that pertain to a specific ethnic group. The difficulties that I encountered during the interviews has more than one clear meaning. According to Tweed, "studies on interviewing show, differences in the age, gender, ethnicity, and class of the interviewer yield differences in informants' responses. This is unavoidable"(8). This seems to be a problem that many people encounter when doing unscheduled interviews. Finally Tweed's analysis of Our Lady of Charity fits the

immigrant groups studied in this project. He says, "The religion of the displaced draws on transtemporal and translocative symbols that transport followers to another time and bridge the homeland and the new land"(12). This is definitely visible in all the places of worship that I visited but not the cathedral. Thus immigrant groups studied here use the religious image, symbol, and icon of Mary to have a direct connection with their cultural, religious, and ethnic identity.

The essence of Marian devotion in Miami is one that is constantly changing. The face of Mary is being shaped by all the different images, ideologies, beliefs, and other factors that revolve around the mother of Jesus. But one thing is certain: Mary means a lot to the immigrants of Miami, sometimes so much that they cannot put their devotion into words. In brief, the multifaceted diamond that Mary represents is clearly present in the immigrants of Miami who praise, honor, and love her.



Appendix A:

Interviews with

Religious Clerics

and Professors

Interview with Rogelio Zelada on 01-28-02

1. **How would you describe Marian devotion in Miami?**

1. *La devoción Mariana en Miami es un signo fuerte de identidad católica que tiene una especial diversidad gracias a los diferentes grupos étnicos de los católicos que componen la Arquidiócesis y a los diversos grupos y movimientos que promueven diversas devociones y prácticas piadosas en torno a la Virgen María. Creo que, en general, la influencia de la cristología se ha hecho sentir al ubicar mucho mejor el rol de la Virgen dentro del misterio de la Iglesia, lo que ha resultado en una expresión de fe mucho más cristocéntrica.*

(Marian devotion in Miami is a strong sign of catholic identity that has a special diversity thanks to the different ethnic groups from the catholics who compose the Archdiocese and to the diverse groups and movements that promote diverse devotions and pious practices around the Virgin Mary. I believe that, in general, the influence of Christology has been made feel when locating far better the role of the Virgin within the mystery of the Church, which has been in an expression

of much more Christ-centered faith.)

**2. Is Marian devotion diverse within Miami?**

2. *La devoción a la Virgen se manifiesta de diversas maneras.*

-*Visitas y peregrinación a la Ermita de la Caridad, ahora Santuario Nacional de la Virgen*

-*Celebración en las Parroquias de las fiestas de las patronas nacionales de hispanoamérica*

-*Presencia de capillas devocionales en algunas parroquias con las imágenes de las patronas nacionales*

-*Rezo del Rosario y otras devociones promovidos por las comunidades y los movimientos marianos*

-*Uso de signos marianos (medallas, escapularios, imágenes, placas, rosarios, estampas, etc)*

-*Peregrinaciones desde Miami a santuarios marianos en el exterior (Fatima, Lourdes, Medjugorge, Guadalupe, etc)*

(The devotion to the Virgin is pronounced in diverse ways.

-*Visits and peregrination to the Hermitage of the Charity, now National Sanctuary of the Virgin*

- Celebration in the Parishes of the celebrations of the national patrons of Hispano-America
- Presence of devocionales chapels in some parishes with the images of the national patterns
- Prayer of the Rosary and other devotions promoted by the marianos communities and movements - Use of marianos signs (medals, escapularios, images, boards, rosaries, stamps, etc) - Peregrinations from Miami to marianos sanctuaries in the outside (Fatima, Lourdes, Medjugorge, Guadalupe, etc.)

**3. How many Marian feast days to your knowledge are celebrated in Miami?**

3. A nivel arquidiocesano la principal celebración mariana en Miami es la del 8 de septiembre, fiesta de la Virgen de la Caridad que congrega habitualmente a más de 10,000 personas para la Eucaristía. La Virgen de la Caridad, además de ser la patrona de los cubanos es la segunda patrona de Miami. Los Nicaraguenses organizan la fiesta de la Inmaculada, el 8 de diciembre, precedida por la "Gritería", ( la Inmaculada es oficialmente la Patrona principal de Miami), de la misma manera los dominicanos celebran a Ntra. Sra. de la Altagracia el 21 de enero,

*en la Misión de la Altagracia (que pronto se convertirá en Ermita). Los puertorriqueños celebran a su patrona, La Virgen de la Providencia el 19 de noviembre y los mejicanos hacen una gran fiesta en Sta. Ana, Homestead el 12 de diciembre, etc. Esto, poco a poco va tomando consistencia en todos los grupos nacionales, sobre todo en los lugares o en los momentos en que se van organizando mejor gracias a su aumento numérico.*

(At archdiocesan level the main mariana celebration in Miami is the one of the 8 of September, celebration of the Virgin of the Charity that congregates habitually to more than 10.000 people for the Eucaristia. The Virgin of the Charity, in addition to being the patron of the Cubans is the second patron of Miami. The Nicaraguenses organizes the celebration of the Immaculate one, 8 of December, preceded by the "Gritería", (the Immaculate one is officially the main Pattern of Miami), in the same way the Dominican ones celebrate to Ntra. Mrs. of the Altagracia the 21 of January, in the Mission of the Altagracia (that soon

will become Hermitage). The Puerto Ricans celebrate their patron, the Virgin of the Providence the 19 of November and the Mexicans make a great celebration in St. Ana, Homestead the 12 of December, etc. This, little by little is taking consistency in all the national groups, mainly in the places or the moments at which they are organized better thanks to this numerical increase.)

**4. What calendar dates are essential or universal to any Marian devotion in Miami?**

4. *Las fiestas universales del calendario litúrgico católico oficial son el 1ro de Enero, "Sta. María Madre de Dios", el 15 de agosto, la "Asunción de María a los cielos"; el 8 de septiembre, "la Natividad de la Virgen"; el 8 de diciembre, la "Inmaculada Concepción de María". Otras fiestas populares son: Ntra. Sra. de la Candelaria, el 2 de febrero; "Ntra Sra del Carmen" el 15 de julio; Ntra. Sra. de la Merced" el 24 de septiembre. También la fiesta de la Virgen de Lourdes, el 11 de febrero y Ntra. Sra. de Fátima el 13 de mayo.*

(The universal celebrations of the liturgical calendario catholic official are 1ro of January, " Sta. Maria Madre

de God ", the 15 of August, " Asunción de Maria to skies "; the 8 September, " the Natividad of the Virgin "; the 8 of December, the " Immaculate Conception of Maria ". Other popular celebrations are: Ntra. Mrs. of the Candlemas, the 2 of February; " Ntra Mrs. of the Carmen " the 15 of July; Ntra. Mrs. of the Favor " the 24 of September. Also the celebration of the Virgin of Lourdes, the 11 of February and Ntra. Mrs. of Fátima the 13 of May.)

5. **Is Marian devotion in Miami a way to maintain a connection to one's foreign country?**
5. *La celebración de las patronas nacionales son indiscutiblemente una ocasión privilegiada de renovar la identidad de cada una de las personas que participan en ellas; la Virgen se convierte especialmente entonces (y siempre) en un símbolo de la patria lejana, y todo lo que acompaña la fiesta litúrgica, (comidas, procesión de símbolos y objetos significativos, banderas, música, trajes nacionales, etc.) ayuda a conectar con los recuerdos y las raíces de la cultura en la que aprendieron y conocierton la fe.*  
(The celebration of the national patrons is

unquestionably a privileged occasion to renew the identity of each one of the people who participate in them; the Virgin becomes then (and always) a symbol of the distant mother country, and everything specially what accompanies the liturgical celebration, (eaten, significant procession of symbols and objects, national flags, music, suits, etc.) aid to connect with the memories and the roots of the culture in which they learned and conoscierton the faith.)

**6. What role does nationalism play in Marian devotion within Miami?**

*6. La devoción a la Virgen ayuda a mantener y alimentar la identidad de nuestros pueblos, especialmente cuando su presencia en la arquidiócesis es significativa o numerosa, las imágenes y las fiestas de las patronas se convierten en puntos de encuentro con las raíces y la historia.*

(The devotion to the Virgin aid to maintain and to feed the identity on our towns, specially when its presence in the arquidiócesis are significant or numerous, the



images and the celebrations of the patrons the roots and history become points of encounter with.)

7. **How does Canon Law decide which icons and/or statues get placed inside a church and/or shrine?**

7. El Nuevo Código de Derecho Canónico de 1983 # 1188 dice que "Debe conservarse fielmente el uso de exponer a la veneración de los fieles imágenes sagradas en las iglesias, pero ha de hacerse en número moderado y guardando el orden debido, para que no provoquen extrañeza en el pueblo cristiano ni den lugar a una devoción desviada" (Repite literalmente las directrices del Vaticano II en la Constitución Sacrosanctum Concilium, Capítulo VIII, # 125. Se pide además que las imágenes colocadas en los templos para la devoción de los fieles posean calidad artística y se cuiden las de valor histórico o de reconocida antigüedad.

(The New Code of Canonical Right of 1983 # 1188 says

that " the use Must be conserved faithfully to expose the veneration of the faithful images sagradas in

the churches, but has to be done in moderate number and

keeping the which had order, so that they do not cause

surprise in the Christian town nor give rise to a off

the track devotion " (literally Repeats the directives of the Vatican II in the Constitution Sacrosanctum Concilium, Chapter VIII, # 125. It is requested in addition that the images placed in the temples for the devotion of the faithfuls have artistic quality and those of historical value or of recognized antiguedad are taken care of.)

8. **Does the future of Mary depend in part of who is the pope?**

8. *En absoluto, este Papa es muy mariano, pero la devoción a la Virgen no depende del estilo de un determinado pontífice sino del misterio de su maternidad divina y de su lugar dentro de la Iglesia.*

(Absolutely, this Pope is very mariano, but the devotion to the Virgin does not depend on the style of a certain Pontiff but on the mystery of its divine maternity and its place within the Church.)

9. **What would you say will be the future of Marian devotion in Miami?**

9. *Actualmente la Iglesia católica en Miami es mayoritariamente hispana en su cultura, es difícil predecir con total certeza como será su composición en*

*el futuro, pero sea cual sea el grupo dominante o predominante, la devoción a la Virgen es una nota característica de la identidad católica. La tendencia actual es a tomar con más rigor la celebración de las fiestas patronales marianas y a erigir templos, capillas o parroquias bajo estas advocaciones: la Caridad, la Altagracia, la Inmaculada, la Providencia, el Perpetuo Socorro, Lourdes, Ntra. Sra. del Rosario, Madre del Redentor, Madre de Cristo, María Auxiliadora, Notre Dame d'Haiti, la Aparecida, etc.*

(At the moment the catholic Church in Miami is mainly Hispanic in its culture, is difficult to predict with total certainty as it will be his composition in the future, but is as it is the dominant group or predominant, the devotion to the Virgin is a note characteristic of the catholic identity. The present tendency is to take with more rigor the celebration from the marianas supervisory celebrations and to erect temples, chapels or parishes under these invocations: the Charity, the Altagracia, the Immaculate one, the Providence, Perpetual Socorro, Lourdes, Ntra. Mrs. of

the Rosary, Mother of the Redentor, Mother of Christ, Helping Maria, Notre Dame d'Haiti, Aparecida, etc.)

10. **Will there be a Vatican III? If so how will Marian devotion be impacted?**

10. *Es imposible saber si habrá o nó algún día otro concilio ecuménico en la Iglesia Católica. No sería raro, que si la situación lo amerita, algún futuro papa crea conveniente hacerlo. No necesariamente tendría que ser un Vaticano III, pues podría ser convocado y celebrado en otro sitio distinto y por motivo y situaciones distintas. Es parte de la tradición de la Iglesia el convocar a estas asambleas extraordinarias. Todo parece apuntar hacia que los concilios ecuménicos seguirán la misma nota del Vaticano II, la puesta al día de la Iglesia de cara al mundo en que le ha tocado vivir. El Vaticano II colocó a la Virgen dentro de la Constitución sobre la Iglesia. Ella es la Madre de la Iglesia, la que providencialmente sirvió como puente a la humanidad de Dios, a la encarnación del Verbo. La Mariología es un libro al que le faltarán siempre capítulos por escribir para desarrollar la importancia de esa mujer en la historia de la Salvación. Los estudios sobre la Virgen en el campo del diálogo*

*ecuménico ha dado extraordinarios resultados, no solo en el campo de la reforma protestante, sin también entre los teólogos judíos y musulmanes.*

(It is impossible to know if there will be or no someday another one I conciliate ecumenical in the Catholic Church. It would not be rare, that if the situation the amerita, some future Pope creates advisable to do it. Not necessarily it would have to be the Vatican III, because it could be summoned and be celebrated different and by reason and different situations elsewhere. It is part of the tradition of the Church summoning to these extraordinary assemblies. Everything seems to aim towards that the ecumenical concilios will follow the same note of the Vatican II, the bring up to date of the Church facing the world in which it has been called on to him to live. The Vatican II placed to the Virgin within the Constitution on the Church. She is the Mother of the Church, the one that providencialmente served like bridge the humanity as God, to the incarnation of the

Verb. The Mariología is a book to which it will always need chapters to write to develop the importance of that woman in the history of the Salvation. The

studies on the Virgin in the field of the ecumenical dialogue have given extraordinary results, nonsingle in the field of the protestant reform, without also between the Jewish and Muslim theologians.)

Espero que estas respuestas te sirvan para tu proyecto.

(I hope that these answers are helpful for your project.)

En Cristo, Rogelio Zelada

Interview with Father Sosa on 02-09-02

1. *How would you describe Marian devotion in Miami?*

It is a very strong devotion that people seem to have in their heart. And when special feast days of the year occur, Mary as a symbol calls them together to church and then they celebrate the mysteries of Christ. Through the devotion of Mary.

2. *Is Marian devotion diverse within Miami?*

Very diverse in Miami. We have all the patroness' of all the countries of the Americas. At more people in the world want to name Mary with its own cultural experiences. Especially from Latin America and even Europe, we have the devotions of all the patroness'. At least those that are represented in Miami.

3. *How many Marian feast days are celebrated in Miami?*

Oh my gosh! I do not know. Well the liturgical calendar has around six and ten in the official liturgical calendar. But the devotions of the people that compliments their popular calendar there may be close to twenty to twenty-one Latin American peoples. So I would say, from Latin America I would say twenty-one. But from Europe I'm not sure. So these are several feasts during the year that occur. Some of which are from the liturgical calendar others are celebrated by the date from the people's remembrance and nostalgia. Well, I don't want to say "nostalgia." From the people's faith

experience.

4. *What calendar dates are essential or universal for any Marian devotion in Miami?*

Well that's the official group. It will be December 8<sup>th</sup>: The Immaculate Conception, December 12<sup>th</sup>: Our Lady of Guadalupe, August 15<sup>th</sup>: The Assumption. And of course, in Miami, September the 8<sup>th</sup>: Our Lady of Charity is one of those feast days that echoes many sentiments but it's not in the official calendar. But I think that would be an essential one. But there are others.

5. *Is Marian devotion in Miami a way to maintain a connection to one's foreign country?*

It is. As a symbol it creates the dominant devotion becomes a symbol which echoes a number of feelings. Obviously, the religious feeling is the one that is evident. But also the cultural feeling so as to keep identity with the values. Yes.

6. *What role does nationalism play in Marian devotion within Miami?*

Nationalism...very little. If you take nationalism as a political statement because it doesn't mean anything. I would call it cultural identity. It gives a sense of meaning to the people. It reminds them of where they are from. Where they are going to. Why they are here? It also brings people together in a community sense. Bounded by a heritage.



So I wouldn't really call it nationalism so much as cultural identity.

7. *How does Canon Law decide which icons and/or statues get placed inside a church and/or shrine?*

The question is, how does a Marian devotion become a valid devotion for a public cult. And that is decided by, not by canon law, but by ultimately by the Pope. Through a process that sometimes emerges out of the people's experiences. Who ask the Pope to name this particular devotion of the country. Sometimes it is through a people's faith and experience and then it goes through some form of a religious experience around the place. Which then, such as Lourdes and Fatima. Then it requires a process of investigation. And all the Holy Father says to these process' "Yes this devotion is worthy of public cult." Public. There might be other devotions that are private venerated. Because we don't worship Mary, we venerate her. There might be some that are privately venerated but it is not publicly venerated. Publicly, besides the countries, there are six or seven that are publicly venerated. (Thinking to himself). The other devotions are very cultural.

8. *Does the future of Mary depend in part of who is the pope?*  
 No. Not him. The future? No, Marian devotion is in the hearts of the faithful. Although there is some form of structure and acknowledgment and recognition. Still the

faithful will continue to believe in Mary.

9. *What would you say will be the future of Marian devotion in Miami?*

I think it will continue to surface. The important thing is how the clergy channels it. And it should channel it to lead people to know Jesus more closely. That's the whole idea of Mary. Leading, from the time of the cross. Jesus says to St. John, "Here is your mother." And before he dies, he says, "Here is your son." And in reality there is an exchange, of Jesus giving us Mary as our companion, you might say. Our intercessor. The one that walks with us. Accompanies us, inspiring us, animating us. Leading us up to Jesus. Not in any excess, but leading us to Jesus. So I think that concept is extremely important now from a mythological concept. We all need a mother. And this is a great mother to have. Just as we have God as our father, we have Mary as our mother. And that's the people describe it in a popular way. Just like Mary did at Canaan. She tells, Jesus that there is no wine. And Jesus does his first miracle by changing the water into wine. And in a way, Mary will always be part of the faithful devotion because she is seen as an intercessor that leads us to Jesus.

10. *Will there be a Vatican III? If so, how will Marian devotion be impacted?*

Well I don't know. I think it is very expensive to do a Vatican III. I think what this pope has been doing is synods. Sessions of gatherings with different groups of the church. Instead of one with bishops only, he gathered with the synods of bishops. And that's what he's doing. And with different themes. Since Vatican II there have been synods, that the faithful that keep several themes such as social justice.

Interview with Bishop Thomas Wenski on 02-19-02Questions:

How would you characterize Marian devotion in Miami? Do you think there will be a Vatican III? If so how will Marian devotion be impacted?

Answers:

Wherever you find Catholics you'll find Mary. The demographics of Marian devotion in Miami is very broad. Our Lady of Charity is celebrated by the Cuban people. Our Lady of Lourdes is celebrated by many Catholics. In July, Colombians celebrate the Divine Providence. During May, Mother's Day is celebrated by devoting the day to the Blessed Mother. The Immaculate Conception is held on December 8<sup>th</sup>. This is celebrated by Nicaraguans. Regarding Vatican III...no. There won't be a Vatican III but there might be a Council of Trent II. I'm not sure how long it will last or how it will affect Marian devotion. I hope this helps.

Interview with Dr. Sarah Mahler on 03-11-02Questions:

What are the main celebrations or feast days that Nicaraguans consider crucial to their devotion of Mary? Does having a strong devotion to Mary allow some or most Central Americans to maintain their ethnic identity?

Answers:

The main feast days are La Purisima which is December 7 and La Virgen de Hato (end of November). La Purisima is the celebration of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception (which is the same Mary as the national patron saint of the U.S.). She is the national virgen of Nicaragua and is celebrated throughout the country on December 6-7 with altars to her and people go from home to home singing and venerating her at these home altars. People in homes give the visitors sweets. The main Nicaraguan parish in Sweetwater - Our Lady of the Divine Providence-has a confraternity that organizes the celebration of La Purisima at the parish. I have been twice and they have a rosary and special mass. It is done outside under a tent and about 1000 people attend. La Virgen de Hato is the virgen who is housed at the national Basilica in El Viejo, Nicaragua. She is often requested by priests in the country to travel to their parishes for special celebrations. It is also important to note that each town in Nicaragua has a patron saint and so each town has a date for the patron saint festival. These are very important to the local

identities of Nicaraguans and are, to a lesser degree, still celebrated in Miami. But mostly people celebrate the Purisima here. It is La Purisima that helps to distinguish the Nicaraguans from other national groups here in Miami. Some churches - Catholic parishes only - observe each major Hispanic group's patron saint day with a special service/mass and sometimes food, etc. The archdiocese discourages being too particular to any one national group so that a parish doesn't get a very strict national identity but this occurs anyway. Some parishes are more active than others in this multicultural tradition. Of course you can also tell a lot by just looking at the figurines inside each parish. Divine providence, for example, has La Purisima, but it also has the Virgen of Guadalupe (Mexico), El Divino Niño (multinational) and Caridad de Cobre (Cuba) among others. This is about all I can say to answer your questions. Hope it is helpful.

Prof. Mahler

Interview with Dr. Terry Rey on 03-16-02

1. *What would you say is the "universal" or common trait (if any) regarding Haitian devotion to the Virgin in Miami?*

The same as everywhere, really. Marian devotion in Haiti is rooted in deep human insight that the sacred is in large part feminine. For the poor, moreover, the notion that there is a Mother to whom one may turn in times of hardship renders the Virgin even more popular. Assimilation with female Vodou spirits like Ezili is also a force behind Marian devotion in Haiti, but this is in my judgement overstated in much of the literature.

2. *From your research what would you say is the most unique role that the Virgin plays in the Haitian community?*

As Our Lady of Perpetual Help, she is patron saint of Haiti. She is credited with healing the nation of a small pox epidemic toward the end of the 19th century, and Haitian Catholics generally believe that the nation is in her hands, and that she is Haiti's greatest hope.

3. *What role does nationalism play, if any, in Marian devotion in Miami regarding Haitians?*

Haitians in Miami are generally quite nationalistic, even more so than Haitians in Haiti. But it seems that the ratio of Protestants to Catholics is higher among Haitians here than at home, and so fewer Haitians, percentage-wise, would "use" the

symbol to represent the nation here. For Catholics, however, Perpetual Help is constantly prayed to to heal Haiti, and many hymns are sung here and in Haiti to this effect.

4. *Do you feel that Marian devotion for Haitians in Miami, is a way for them to maintain their ethnic identity?*

Most definitely! Immigrants seek symbols to make them feel at home and to reconstruct a sense of home and culture in a new and often hostile environment. This is especially well demonstrated at Notre Dame d'Haiti Catholic Church in Little Haiti. And it is very forcefully evident during the events around Perpetual Help's feast day celebration on June 27.

5. *From your research have you noticed any differences between first, second, and third generation Haitians when you talk to them regarding the Virgin?*

I have not and really couldn't speculate as to what they might be.

6. *Do you feel that one generation is more open to talk to you regarding the Virgin?*

Older people are more enthused about talking about religion, especially from the homeland. They seem more nostalgic and more worried that cultural and religious traditions are being lost among the youth in the US.

7. *If you talk to them in Haitian Creole do you feel this allows you to become an "insider" when it comes to their ethnicity, language, and religion?*



Yes, and also since I am a practicing Catholic who knows Haiti intimately. I do feel an insider, even though I may be the only white person in the entire congregation.

8. *Do you feel that the Haitian community that attends Notre Dame d' Haiti have some concerns that the priest and/or pastor addresses or lacks to address?*

Notre Dame d'Haiti is extraordinary for its provision of a wide variety of social services to the Little Haiti community. I cannot imagine what else this church could do, really. It does seem to me, however, that NDH is quite conservative in its theology, and this could lead to the alienation of some youth, I would think.

9. *Would you like to add anything else that you deem important or would like me to know?*

I'll think about it.

Appendix B:

All the Marian Churches,  
Shrines, and Cathedral  
in Miami, FL

**ALL THE MARIAN CHURCHES, SHRINES, AND CATHEDRAL IN MIAMI, FL:**1. Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church\*38 N.W. 57<sup>th</sup> Court

Miami, FL 33126-4710

(305) 262-4192

(305) 267-0261

\*This church appeared three times in the Yellow Pages!2. Ermita de la Caridad (Our Lady of Charity Shrine)

3609 South Miami Avenue

Miami, FL 33133-4205

(305) 854-2404

3. Ermita de Regla (Our Lady of Regla Shrine)1920 S.W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street

Miami, FL 33135-3208

(305) 642-7878

4. Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation12230 N.W. 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue

North Miami, FL 33168-4529

(305) 681-1061

5. Immaculate Conception Catholic Church4497 West 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue

Hialeah, FL 33012-4016

(305) 822-2011

6. Mother of Christ Catholic Church  
14141 S.W. 26<sup>th</sup> Street  
Miami, FL 33175-7085  
(305) 559-6111
7. Mother of Our Redeemer Catholic Church  
8445 N.W. 186<sup>th</sup> Street  
Hialeah, FL 33015-2556  
(305) 829-6141
8. Our Lady of the Divine Providence Catholic Church  
10207 West Flagler Street  
Miami, Fl 33174-1743  
(305) 551-8113
9. Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Catholic Church  
9500 S.W. 184<sup>th</sup> Street  
Miami, FL 33157-7019  
(305) 235-5135
10. Our Lady of the Lakes Catholic Church  
15801 N.W. 67<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Hialeah, FL 33014-6608  
(305) 558-2202
11. Our Lady of Lebanon Catholic Church - Maronite Rite  
2055 Coral Way  
Miami, FL 33145-2625  
(305) 856-7449

12. Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church  
11291 S.W. 142<sup>nd</sup> Avenue  
Miami, FL 33186-7056  
(305) 386-4121
13. Our Lady of Mount Carmel Spiritual Life Center  
18330 N.W. 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Miami, FL 33169-4297  
(305) 654-9760
14. Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church  
13401 N.W. 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Opa Locka, FL 33054  
(305) 688-9663
15. Our Lady of Sorrows Traditional Catholic Church  
4801 West Flagler Street  
Miami, FL 33134-1453  
(305) 447-8911
16. Saint Mary's Cathedral  
7525 N.W. 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue  
Miami, FL 33150-3596  
(305) 759-4531
17. Saint Mary's Missionary Baptist Church  
136 Frow Avenue  
Coral Gables, FL 33133-4861  
(305) 443-8166

18. Saint Mary Missionary Baptist Church of North Miami Beach  
1550 N.E. 152<sup>nd</sup> Terrace  
North Miami Beach, FL 33162-5969  
(305) 956-5888
19. St. Mary's Wesleyan Methodist Church  
4798 N.W. 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Miami, FL 33127-2350  
(305) 758-1601
20. Visitation Catholic Church  
100 N.E. 191<sup>st</sup> Street  
Miami, FL 33179-3776  
(305) 652-3624

Appendix C:  
Marian Titles,  
Marian Teaching,  
Marian Passages,  
and Marian Feast Days  
within the United States

A LIST OF MARIAN TITLES FROM LATIN AMERICA

- ARGENTINA: Our Lady of Lujan
- BOLIVIA: Our Lady of Copacabana
- BRAZIL: Our Lady "Aparecida" (who appeared)
- CHILE: Our Lady of Carmel of the Maipu
- COLOMBIA: Our Lady of Chiquinquirá
- COSTA RICA: Our Lady of the Angels
- CUBA: Our Lady of Charity of El Cobre
- DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: Our Lady of "La Altagracia"
- ECUADOR: Our Lady of Quinche
- EL SALVADOR: Our Lady of Peace
- GUATEMALA: Our Lady of the Rosary
- HONDURAS: Our Lady of Suyapa
- MEXICO: Our Lady of Guadalupe
- NICARAGUA: Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception of El Viejo
- PANAMA: The Immaculate Conception
- PARAGUAY: Our Lady of the Miracles of Caacupe
- PERU: Our Lady of Mercy
- PUERTO RICO: Our Lady of the Divine Providence
- URUGUAY: Our Lady of the Thirty Three
- VENEZUELA: Our Lady of Coromoto
- (HAITI: Our Lady of Perpetual Help)

Taken from:

Zelada, Rogelio. "Marian Titles in the Popular Religiosity of Latin America." [Miami]: Southeast Documentations, 1996.



**OFFICIAL CHURCH TEACHING REGARDING MARY'S PLACE IN WORSHIP**

"Official Church teaching prescribes that God should receive latria, or adoration. The saints should receive dulia, or veneration, and Mary is worthy of hyperdulia, or superior veneration" (Hamington 39).

**GOD**

1. **Latria** - (Adoration) - 1. The act of worship. 2. Profound love, reverence, or admiration.

**MARY**

2. **Hyperdulia** - (Superior Veneration) - Mary is in between God and the Saints. She is thus in "limbo" as Hamington argues (39).

**SAINTS**

3. **Dulia** - (Veneration) - 1. To regard with respect, reverence, or deference.

\*These are all the Passages that Mary Appears in the Canonical

Scriptures of the New Testament:

1. Galatians 4:4
2. Mark 3:19-21, 3:31-45, 6:3
3. Matthew 1:2, 12:46-50
4. Luke 1:5-2:52, 8:19-21, 11:27-28
5. Acts 1
6. John 2:1-11, 19:25-27

\*Taken from Hamington's text, page 183.

**\*These are the Fourteen Feast Days Devoted to Mary that are  
Celebrated Within the United States Catholic Church:**

1. Immaculate Conception (December 8)
2. Mary, Mother of God (January 1)
3. Our Lady of Lourdes (February 11)
4. Annunciation (March 25)
5. Visitation (May 31)
6. Our Lady of Mt. Carmel (July 16)
7. Dedication of St. Mary Major (August 5)
8. Assumption of Mary (August 15)
9. Queenship of Mary (August 22)
10. Nativity of Mary (September 8)
11. Our Lady of Sorrows (September 15)
12. Our Lady of the Rosary (October 7)
13. Presentation of Mary (November 21)
14. Immaculate Heart of Mary (Saturday after Corpus Christi)

\*Taken from Hamington's text, page 187.

**\*These are the Fourteen Feast Days Devoted to Mary that are  
Celebrated Within the United States Catholic Church:**

1. Immaculate Conception (December 8)
2. Mary, Mother of God (January 1)
3. Our Lady of Lourdes (February 11)
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5. Visitation (May 31)
6. Our Lady of Mt. Carmel (July 16)
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8. Assumption of Mary (August 15)
9. Queenship of Mary (August 22)
10. Nativity of Mary (September 8)
11. Our Lady of Sorrows (September 15)
12. Our Lady of the Rosary (October 7)
13. Presentation of Mary (November 21)
14. Immaculate Heart of Mary (Saturday after Corpus Christi)

\*Taken from Hamington's text, page 187.

Appendix D:  
Literature  
from the  
Churches that  
I Attended

# Legliz Katolik Notredam d'Ayiti Notre-Dame d'Haiti Catholic Church

110 N.E. 62nd Street  
Miami, Florida 33138

Biwo Legliz (305) 751-6289  
FAX (305) 756-6470

Katechiz: (305) 758-5560  
Lekòl Angle: (305) 754-6607  
Day Care: (305) 751-6778  
Catholic Charities:  
One Stop Job Center (305) 758-2462  
Legal Services (305) 758-3301  
Literacy & Elderly Program (305) 759-3050  
Emergency Services (305) 759-0262

## Pwogram lamès:

### *Dimanch*

8:00 pm (samdi swa); 7:30, 9:00,  
11:00 am, ak 5:30 pm

*Jou semenn yo* 8:00 am ak 6:30 pm

## Konfesyon (Lapenitans):

Samdi: 6:00 pou 7:00 pm

## Batèm

Dezyèm ak Denyè  
Dimanch a 11:00 am

## Maryaj

Wè ak pè a  
omwen 6 mwa davans

## Katechiz

Samdi 9:00 pou 11:45

## Monsignor Gerard Darbouze, Kire

Pè Reginald Jean-Mary, Vikè

Pè Marc Presume, CSC

Sè Yamile Saieh, DRE



## *Men, gwoup ak mouvman ki patisipe*

*nan aktivite pawas la:*

Koral 9:00 (repitasyon samdi swa a 7:00)

Koral 11:00 (repitasyon samdi swa a 4:00)

Koral 5:30 (repitasyon vandredi swa a 7:00)

Reyinyon Lapriyè ((Karismatik) samdi swa a 6:00)

J.O.C. (Jenn Ouvriyè Katolik)

J.T.C. (Jenn Temwen Jezi Kri)

Lejyon Mari (2 praesidia)

Lasent Fanmiy

A.J.T. (Asosyasyon Jenn Latòti)

Gwoup Lapriyè ak Jèn Madi a

Sosyete Sen Vensan di Pòl

Misyonè Jezi Kri

Messenger Du Christ

Echoe Des Jeunes

# *Pierre Toussaint Haitian Catholic Center*

Madanm lan reponn li.  
 "Msiye, mwen wè se yon pwofèt ou  
 ye. Gran gran paran nou yo te sèvi  
 sou mòn sa a. Nou menm, nou di  
 se Jerzalèm, kota pou yo sèvi la ye."  
 Jezi di l'. "Madanm, kwè m' talè  
 konsa, se pap ni sou mòn sa a, ni  
 Jerzalèm nou va sèvi Papa a. Ou  
 menm ak moun ou yo, nou sèvi sa  
 nou pa konnen. Mwen menm ak  
 moun mwen yo, nou sèvi sa nou  
 konnen, paske se nan menm lavil yo,  
 delivrans lan soti. Men, talè konsa  
 menm koulye a deja, sa ki sèvi tout  
 bon vre yo, se ak lespri yo, yo pral  
 sèvi Papa a, tout bon vre. Se kalite  
 moun ki sèvi l' konsa yo, Papa ap  
 chèche. Se lespri Bondye ye. Moun  
 ki sèvi l', fòk se ak lespri yo, yo sèvi  
 l' tout bon vre."

Madanm lan di l'.  
 "Mwen konnen gen yon Mesij sa yo  
 rele Kris la, ki gen pou l' vini. Lè li a  
 vini, li a pale n' tout bagay." Jezi di l':  
 "Se mwen menm kap pale avè ou  
 a."  
 "Wala patizan l' yo nive atò. Yo sezi  
 vè lap pale ak yon madanm. Men  
 wèsonn pa di l'. 'Sa w'ap chèche?'  
 oubyen: 'Ki pawòl w'ap pale avè l'  
 konsa?' Madanm lan menm kite  
 lavil li a, li patiral lavil. Lè l' nive lidi  
 moun yo: "Vin wè yon nonm ki di m'  
 ou sa mwen fè. Eske se pali  
 menm ki Kris la?" Yo menm yo soti  
 nan vil la, pou yo vin wè l'. Pandan  
 li sa, patizan l' yo tap priye l', yo

tap di: "Rebi, manje ou! Li menm  
 l' te reponn yo. 'Manje mwen gen  
 pou m' manje a, nou pa konnen l'.  
 Patizan yo tap pale, youn tap di lòt:  
 'Pou di kèk moun ta pote manje ba  
 li?' Jezi di yo: 'Manje pa m', se pou  
 m' fè volonte Sila ki voye m' lan.' Se  
 pou m' fin fè travay li a nèt. Apa nou  
 ki konn di: 'Rete 4 mwa pou rekòt  
 nive?' Men, mwen asire nou: leve je  
 n', gade jaden yo, jan yo blan, se  
 rekòt la. Nèg kap rekòt a fin touche  
 lajan l' deja. Lap sanble danre l',  
 pou lavil ki pap janm fini an. Konsa,  
 nèg ki simen an kontan menm jan  
 ak nèg kap rekòt a. Kifè, pawòl la  
 vre la a. Youn simen, yon lòt  
 rekòlte. Mwen voye nou rekòlte,  
 kote nou pa te redi." Se lòt moun ki  
 te redi. Nou menm, nou vin antre  
 nan travay yo a."

Nan vil sa a anpil moun Samari kwe  
 nan li poutèt pawòl madanm lan te  
 deklare: "Li di m' tou sa mwen fè."  
 Lè moun Samari yo, vin jwenn li, yo  
 priye l', pou li rete lakay yo. Li rete 2  
 jou la. Anpil, anpil toujou kwè poutèt  
 pwòp pawòl li. Yo tap di madanm  
 lan: "Se pa poutèt pawòl pa ou la  
 nou kwè. Nou tandè ak 2 zòrey  
 nou, kifè nou konnen se li ki Sovè tè  
 a reyèlman vre."

Bon Nouvèl Jezi Kri a

# Pawòl Delivrans la

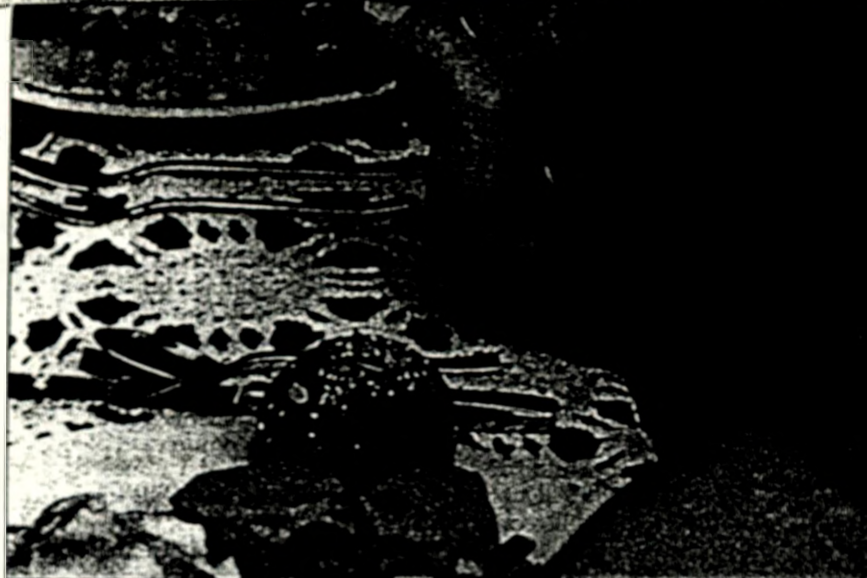


**WHOEVER DRINKS THE  
 WATER I GIVE HIM  
 WILL NEVER BE THIRSTY**

JN4/14

**Twazyèm Dimanch  
 Karem  
 3 Mas 2002**

Pierre Toussaint  
 Haitian Catholic Center  
 110 NE 62 Street  
 Miami FL 33138  
 (305) 751-6289



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# CATHEDRAL of SAINT MARY

www.CathedralofSaintMary.com

7525 Northwest Second Avenue  
Miami, Florida 33150

Rectory: 305.759.4531  
 Fax: 305.757.7456  
 School: 305.795.2000  
 Convent: 305.757.3183  
 Notre Dame d'Haiti Mission: 305.751.6289



**THE MOST REVEREND JOHN CLEMENT FAVALORA, D.D., PASTOR**  
**THE VERY REVEREND TERENCE E. HOGAN, S.L.D., RECTOR**  
 Reverend Monsignor Tomas Marin, J.C.L. in Residence  
 Reverend Robè C. Charles, M.A., Associate Rector  
 Reverend James A. Suchocki, in Residence  
 Reverend Alvaro Pinzon, J.C.D., in Residence  
 Mr. Ian Taylor, Deacon  
 Sister Jane Stoecker, SSJ, School Principal

**Parish Office Hours:**  
 Monday - Friday 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM  
 Saturday & Sunday 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

**Gift Shop Hours:**  
 Monday - Saturday After each Mass  
 9:00 AM - 5:30 PM  
 By appointment, please contact the Parish Office.

**Pilgrimage Groups and Cathedral Tours:**  
 Please contact the Liturgy Office.

**Characteristic Liturgies:**

Saturday Vigil	English	5:30 PM
Sundays	English	6:30 AM
	Kreyòl	8:00 AM
	English	10:00 AM
	Español	12:00 NOON
Monday- Saturday	English	8:15 AM
	English	5:30 PM

**Daily Rosary:** 8:00 AM  
 Blessed Sacrament Chapel

**Sacrament of Reconciliation:**  
 Saturdays 4:30 PM - 5:00 PM  
 (And by Appointment)

**Religious Education:**  
 Classes are from September to May.  
 (95)795-2016

**Staff:**

Parish Secretary  
 Office Manager  
 Bookkeeper  
 Director of Religious Ed.  
 Music Ministry and Organist  
 Liturgy and Evangelization, Sacristan  
 Plant Operations Manager

Alicia Vieito  
 Carolyn Sinnes  
 Dawn Blakeslee  
 Sr. Lorraine Kraverath, SSJ  
 Dr. Matthew Bryant  
 Anthony Suarez  
 Mike Sinnes

**Registration:**

- New parishioners should register at the Parish Office
- Nuevos feligreses deben registrarse en la Oficina de la Parroquia
- Moun ki fèk vin rete nan pawas la vin bay non nou nan presbitè-a.

**Weddings:**

- Arrangements to be made at least six months in advance.
- Notifiquen a la oficina por lo menos seis meses antes de la celebracion.
- Se pou nou fè aranjman ak legliz 6 mwa davans ou byen anvan sa.

**Baptisms:**

- Call Parish Office one month in advance.
- Notifiquen la oficina con un mes de anticipacion
- Fè aranjman ak legliz 1mwa davans ou byen anvan sa.



*Prayer to Our Lady,  
Patroness of the United States  
of America*

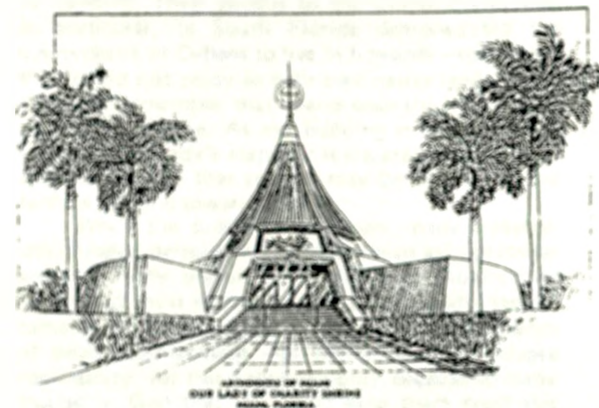
Mary Immaculate, Mother of God,  
and Patroness of the United States, we  
again dedicate to you our beloved  
country. Help us to be faithful to the  
ideals of those who founded America on  
faith in God. Inspire our leaders with a  
love of truth and honor. Be with us as  
we work together to bring about the  
kingdom of your Son.

Teach us to be grateful for our  
blessings and generous with our wealth.  
Give us compassionate hearts that we  
may be mindful of our suffering brothers  
and sisters.

Protect us always, O merciful Mother  
of God, and answer our prayers through  
the merits of Jesus Christ, your Son, our  
Lord.

Amen.

# Our Lady of Charity Shrine



3609 SO. MIAMI AVENUE  
MIAMI, FLORIDA 33133

305-854-2404  
305-854-2405

*The Historical mural of the Shrine which was painted  
by Teok Carrasco.*



## HISTORY OF THE SHRINE

# Our Lady of Charity

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, a raging storm threatened the lives of three farm workers caught in its tempest in the Bay of Nipe in Cuba. Turning to God for help, they felt that their prayers were answered as they found floating in the water a statue of Mary holding the child Jesus. An inscription on the statue read: I am the Virgin of Charity. That statue became the object of popular devotion among the Cuban people who built a beautiful shrine for Mary in the city of El Cobre in the province of Oriente, Cuba. The Blessed Virgin, honored as Our Lady of Charity, became the Patroness of Cuba and symbol of Cuban faith and culture.

When Communism began its growth in Cuba, it forced the exile of thousands who refused to live under such a totalitarian system of government. Then on September 8, 1961, there also came into exile with the Cuban people an important symbol of their religious faith. For on that date, a statue of our Lady of Charity entered the United States from Cuba via the Panamanian embassy. It was a replica of the statue honored at the National Shrine in El Cobre. Since the arrival of that statue in 1961, Cubans have celebrated the feast of Our Lady of Charity on September 8th of every year.

On September 8, 1966, Archbishop Coleman F. Carroll of Miami asked the Cuban people to build a shrine to honor their patroness. He donated land on Biscayne Bay for the project so that Mary's shrine could stand near the same waters that also bathe the island country of Cuba. In that shrine the statue of Mary which came from Cuba in 1961 would have its special place of honor.

Shortly after the conception of the project, a small chapel was erected. This original building stands today to the left of the Shrine, but it has since been remodeled into a convent for the Sisters of Charity who work at the Shrine.

The present Shrine building stands 90 feet high with a width of 80 feet on a foundation of land that itself is 14 feet above the sea level. The building has a conical form which corresponds to the shape of the image of Our Lady of Charity. As Christians then gather in the Shrine, it becomes reminiscent of the ancient prayer of the third century Christian Church: "Under your mantle we seek shelter, Holy Mother of God". Built in the shape of this mantle, the temple invites people, as it were, to enter within the heart of the Virgin, so that in it they can find the precious Word of God which lives there. The six columns which sustain the mantle represent the six provinces of Cuba with their 126 municipalities within those provinces.

Under the altar of the Shrine, there is a stone made of earth, stone and sand brought from the six Cuban provinces, and cast with the water brought from Cuba on a raft in which fifteen refugees perished at sea.

For the wall behind the statue of Mary, a mural has been prepared by Teok Carrasco, a painter who was born in Nipe, the place where the original statue was found. In the center of the mural appears the Virgin over the waters of Nipe and holding the Infant Jesus in her arms. The artist began the mural by painting Jesus but left it unfinished as he worked on the rest of the picture. Later he completed the image of Jesus, so to symbolize that Christ is the beginning and the end of everything. All around the Virgin and Child appears a graphic history of Cuba depicting various characters in that history from the island's discovery to the present day. The centrality of the Christ figure in the whole mural shows that he is the center of that Cuban history, that Jesus alone is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

The statue of our Lady holding out Jesus in her hands stands as an invitation for the faithful to look toward Jesus and to receive the two pilgrimage sacraments: Penance and Eucharist. The confessional is on the right side of the altar, as a reminder of God's merciful love and forgiveness. The tabernacle on the left side recalls for pilgrims the Eucharistic Supper. This tabernacle is made of carved mahogany, and its shape is identical to that of the Shrine. On its door one can read "EGO SUM", the Latin version of "I AM", the name God revealed for Himself in the Old Testament and the title also used by Christ in St. John's gospel.

The priest's chair was made from a Cuban palm. The chapel seats are the typical Cuban stool, that is, the stools of country folk made of wood and leather.

This newest Marian shrine in the United States was designed and built by Cuban refugees. John Cardinal Krol of Philadelphia dedicated it to the glory of God and in honor of Our Lady of Charity on December 2, 1973.

## The Meaning of the Shrine

Archbishop Carroll of Miami has said that this Shrine, named after the Patroness of Cuba, "would be to this area what the Statue of Liberty is to the Northeast of the United States." And in fact, the Shrine represents much more than steel, wood and cement. It stands as a monument to the religious faith of the Cuban people and their commitment to freedom. Their exodus to the United States and, in particular, to South Florida demonstrated the innate desire of Cubans to live in freedom—something they could not enjoy in their own native land. Today they still remember that island country in a special way at the Shrine. As the building is shaped in the form of Our Lady's statue, it is situated with its back toward Cuba so that prayers may be offered by the faithful looking toward Cuba.

When the project first began, many materialistic-minded persons criticized the plan as impractical and not really useful. Yet today even those critics in the past must marvel at how this beautiful temple came to be built through thousands upon thousands of small contributions—primarily out of a refugee community. All this happened only because so many trusted in God that He would help them erect this monument to faith and freedom. From the time that the first small chapel was erected by Biscayne Bay, prayers have continually gone up to God both for Cuba and for all who love true freedom. What is most important for man is to be free spiritually, and man can only know this freedom when he has joined himself with God, as did the Blessed Virgin herself. The Shrine stands as a symbol that only when man is spiritually free can he hope to free the rest of the world around him. Christians come to the Shrine to seek this freedom from God and to honor Mary who is the Patroness both of Cuba and also the United States.

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