

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Cathedral Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe of Ponce

and or common same

2. Location

street & number Town Plaza

not for publication

city, town Ponce

vicinity of

state Puerto Rico

code

72

county Ponce

code 0760

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Catholic Church , Diocese of Ponce

street & number Box 205, Station 6

city, town Ponce

vicinity of

state Puerto Rico 00732

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Supreme Court of Puerto Rico, Church Litigation Case #6, 1904

street & number Box 2392

city, town San Juan

state Puerto Rico 00903

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Inventory of the Historic Churches
of Puerto Rico

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1984

federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office

city, town San Juan

state Puerto Rico

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Cathedral Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe of Ponce sits inside the town plaza, oriented on an east-west axis, its entrance facing west. It is separated from its immediate surroundings by a low wall modulated by pillars supporting cast iron lamposts. A historic 1883 fire house is attached to the church's rear facade (east).

The cruciform plan consists of a nave and two aisles, intercepted by a transept, culminating in an apse covered with a dome. There are nine bays including the apse. The first bay comprises the vestibule or sotocoro. A curious wooden stairway attached to the front wall leads to the concrete choir loft on the second level. There is a large pipe organ in the choir loft. Arcades, decorated with designs of low relief, divide the main nave from the side aisles. The arches rest on pillars composed of three round columns. The nave, as well as the aisles, are roofed by ribbed groin vaults. The main nave is roofed at a higher level than the aisles, allowing for a clerestory area consisting of double arched stained glass windows. The transept is formed by a wider structural bay than the rest. It protrudes from the side walls and forms two chapels covered with brick domes on pendentives. The plaster has been removed on the walls and dome of the left chapel, exposing the brick and rubblework construction. This area is now used as the baptistery. On the right side (south) of the church a larger chapel was built in 1911, extending three bays parallel to the side aisle. This chapel consists of a small nave covered with groin vaults of complex design, and culminating in the dome of the transept. This chapel is a small intimate space, with stained glass windows and a noteworthy wooden altar of Gothic design, which used to be the main altar of this cathedral. The church plan culminates in a square apse covered by a lanterned dome on pendentives. The altar, of neoclassic design, is made of alabaster, and is modern. The sacristies, at each side of the apse, are roofed with brick vaults. The cathedral conserves its original gray and white marble floors, except in the side chapel and the apse, where terrazzo is used. The building conserves most of its original doors and windows, and has very good examples of stained glass. The principal construction material used is brick and rubblework.

Two highly decorated towers (three levels each) flank the neoclassical central body of the facade. The towers are entered from the interior of the church through curious corner doors simulating columns. The facade's large rectangular doorway is framed by two pairs of free-standing round columns and a rectangular window on each side. The second level of the facade is composed of a large rectangular window and two niches topped with triangular pediments. A large triangular pediment supported by two pairs of pilasters crowns the facade's central body. The side facades are modulated by moldings of low relief reflecting interior bay organization, with an arched stained glass window at each bay.

The external mass and volume of the church can be appreciated from the plaza that surrounds it.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below					
prehistoric	archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion		
1400-1499	archeology-historic	conservation	law	science		
1500-1599	agriculture	economics	literature	sculpture		
1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	education	military	social		
1700-1799	art	engineering	music	humanitarian		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	commerce	exploration settlement	philosophy	theater		
1900-	communications	industry	politics government	transportation		
		invention		other (specify)		

Specific dates 1835-1839, 1911, 1937 **Builder Architect** unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Cathedral Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe of Ponce is of architectural and historical importance. It is one of only five cathedrals on the island, reflecting Ponce's importance as one of its largest cities. Its complex plan arrangement and its multiple domes and vaults make this church stand out among others on the island. An old church located in the same place was torn down and, in 1835, construction of a new church was begun. It was finished in 1839. The actual church conserves most of the construction and design elements of the 1839 structure. The south chapel was added in 1911, and is well integrated to the original structure's architecture. The original facade (see enclosed historic photograph) is very similar to that of the church of Juana Díaz and probably inspired its design. The facade went through a major reconstruction after an earthquake in 1918 damaged the towers. Between 1931 and 1937 the towers were rebuilt in a highly decorated style, reflecting an era of great prosperity in the city of Ponce.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Marvel, Thomas S. and Maria Luisa Moreno, Architecture of Parish Churches in Puerto Rico, Editorial Universitaria, Rio Piedras, P.R., unpublished.
Historic Photographs (2), c.1910, Junghanns Collection, General Archives of Puerto Rico, San Juan, PR.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 2960 sq.mts.

Quadrangle name Ponce, PR

Quadrangle scale 1:20,000

UTM References

A

1	9	7	5	2	5	8	0	1	9	9	3	2	1	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

The church is located inside the town plaza. It is bounded on the north, east and south by the town plaza, and on the west by a historic firehouse and Union St. (See enclosed location plan).

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

N/A

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marisa Gómez, Arch. and Ester Cardona, Arch.

organization Investigaciones Bonaire, Inc.

date July 1984

street & number Tetuan 103

telephone (809) 724-4997

city or town Old San Juan

state Puerto Rico 00901

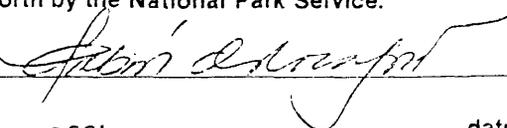
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title State Historic Preservation Officer

date October 30, 1984

For NPS use only

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

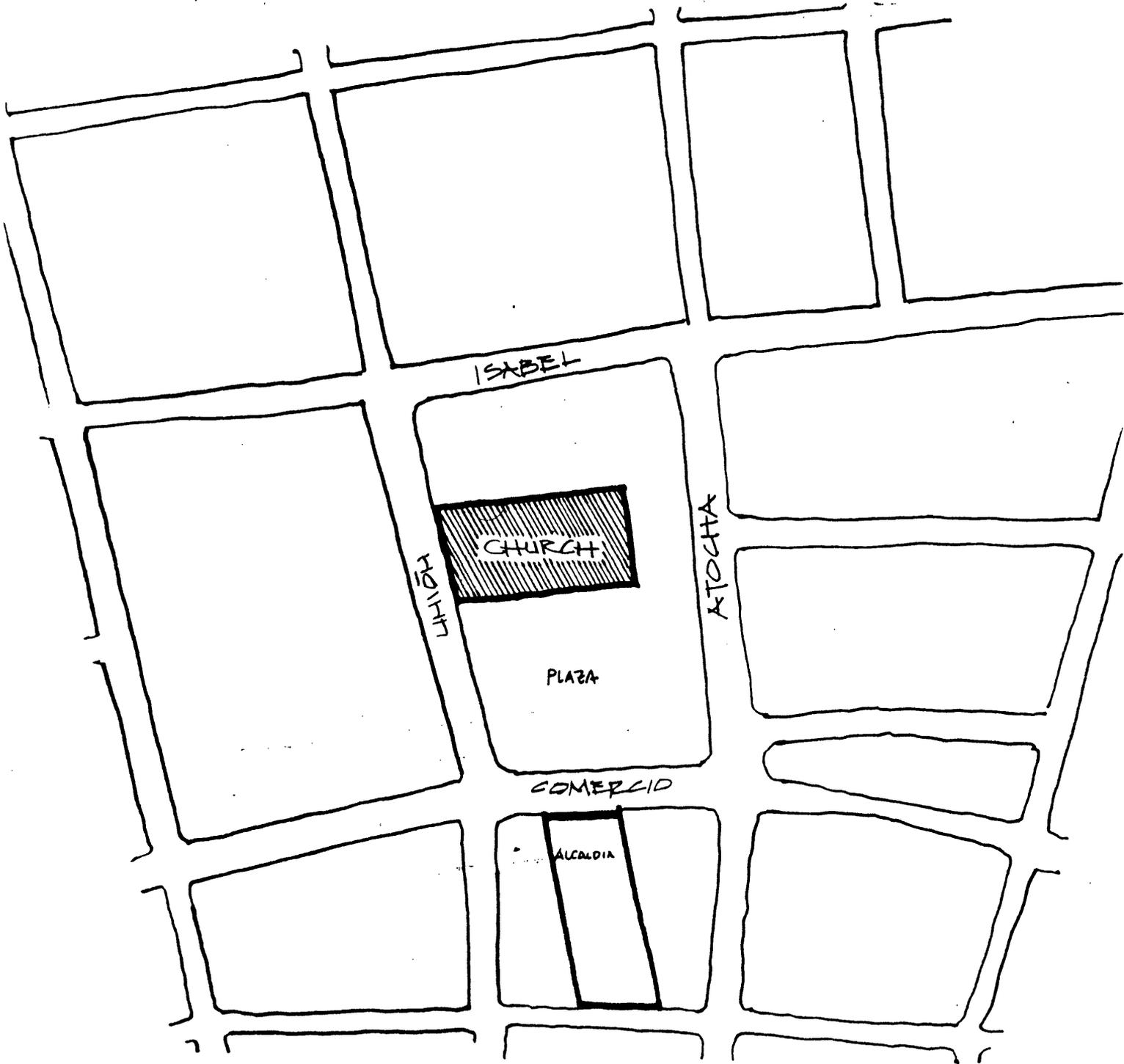
date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration



town: **PONCE**

scale: 1:2000



north

INVESTIGACIONES BONAIRE INC.

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