**STATE:** Idaho  
**COUNTY:** Lewis

**ENTRY DATE:** Jun 24 1976

**1. NAME**

**COMMON:** Saint Joseph's Mission (Slickpoo) - Site 9  
**AND/OR HISTORIC:** Nez Perce National Historical Park

**2. LOCATION**

**STREET AND NUMBER:** Four miles south of Jacques Spur on Mission Creek off U.S. 95

**CITY OR TOWN:** Culdesac

**STATE:** Idaho

**CODE:** 16

**CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:** Lewis

**CODE:** 069 61

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY (Check One)</th>
<th>OWNERSHIP</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District Building</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>In Process</td>
<td>Restricted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Structure</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Being Considered</td>
<td>Unrestricted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Occupied</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public Acquisition</td>
<td>Unoccupied</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private Residence</td>
<td>Preservation work in progress</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**PRESENT USE. (Check One or More as Appropriate)**

- [X] Agricultural
- [ ] Government
- [ ] Park
- [ ] Transportation
- [ ] Comments
- [ ] Commercial
- [ ] Industrial
- [ ] Private Residence
- [ ] Other (Specify)
- [X] Educational
- [ ] Military
- [X] Religious
- [ ] Transportation
- [ ] Comments
- [ ] Entertainment
- [X] Museum
- [ ] Scientific

**4. AGENCY**

Saint Joseph's Mission Historical Society  
**REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)** Route 1, Box 39  
**CITY OR TOWN:** Culdesac

**STATE:** Idaho  
**CODE:** 16

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

**COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:** County Recorder's Office  
**STREET AND NUMBER:** County Courthouse  
**CITY OR TOWN:** Lewiston

**STATE:** Idaho  
**CODE:** 16

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

**TITLE OF SURVEY:** Nez Perce County-National Historical Sites, Idaho-A Feasibility Report  
**DATE OF SURVEY:** October, 1963  
**FEDERAL**

**DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:** National Park Service, Pacific Northwest Region  
**STREET AND NUMBER:** 523 Fourth and Pike Building  
**CITY OR TOWN:** Seattle  
**STATE:** Washington  
**CODE:** 053
Saint Joseph's Mission is a wood frame structure with horizontal lapped siding. The original sanctuary, built in 1874, was 60 feet by 26 feet with a single peak roof running longitudinally over the nave and a lean-to roofed sacristy at the rear. The building was supported on wood piers. This structure was built by a contractor, M. Williams of Lewiston. In 1904, the nave was extended and a bell tower was incorporated into the new front of the building. A choir loft was installed over the nave in the new portion. The original front windows flanking the central door were utilized on the side of the structure while the original door trim was reutilized on the bell tower, but modified by the addition of two double hung second story windows providing light for the choir loft. Two additional windows were also added to the extended nave, and the base of the bell tower became the narthex for the sanctuary. The addition was placed on a perimeter stone foundation wall and the spaces between the perimeter wood piers which supported the original structure were filled in with matching stonework at this time. The interior had a cove ceiling and today appears much as it did in 1904; the altar and many other furnishings are original.

The only obvious changes to the structure since the historic period are the addition of stained glass to the choir loft windows (1963), the construction of a concrete sidewalk from the entrance out to the road (1936, redone 1972), and the construction of the concrete front porch and steps (1955).

From its construction in 1874, Saint Joseph's has been plagued with two structural problems. The foundation along its perimeter has been settling, requiring several floor leveling operations, and its cove ceiling has been spreading the roof trusses, necessitating the placement of tie rods along the nave. The building today is consequently in only fair condition; $50,000 would be required to stabilize and restore this structure.

Boundary: Commencing at a point on the South line of Lot 19, Section 4, Township 34 North, Range 3 West Boise Meridian, said point being 37.5 feet West of the Southeast corner of the said Lot 19, thence North 3 degrees 54 minutes West a distance of 50.1 feet; thence South 82 degrees 45 minutes West a distance of 262.0 feet to a point on the county road; thence South 3 degrees 51 minutes East along the county road a distance of 90.0 feet; thence North 3 degrees 54 minutes West a distance of 39.9 feet to the place of beginning. Excepting herefrom the part of the above described tract that lies within the right-of-way of the county road.

Lying within Lots 19 and 30 of Section 4, Township 34 North, Range 3 West Boise Meridian, in Lewis County, State of Idaho, for historic monument purposes as a non-federally owned portion of Nez Perce National Historical Park.
### 8. SIGNIFICANCE

#### PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- [ ] Pre-Columbian
- [x] 16th Century
- [ ] 18th Century
- [x] 20th Century
- [ ] 15th Century
- [ ] 17th Century
- [x] 19th Century

#### SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

- 1874-1958

#### AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aboriginal</th>
<th>Prehistoric</th>
<th>Historic</th>
<th>Engineering</th>
<th>Religious/Philosophy</th>
<th>Urban Planning</th>
<th>Other (Specify)</th>
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<tr>
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#### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Saint Joseph's Church, Slickpoo, and the First Presbyterian Church at East Kamiah are the oldest such establishments in the Nez Perce Country; both edifices were erected in 1874.

The story of the church and mission is inseparably intertwined with the life of their founder, Father Joseph Cataldo. He was the link between the mission and important events and personages elsewhere in the Nez Perce Country. All felt the impact of his strong character for 60 years, from the mission's founding in 1868 until his death in 1928.

The stories of both the mission and priest illustrate the conflict between rival Christian denominations, between Christianity and native beliefs, and the efforts toward religious toleration.

Beginning in the early 1830's, Christian churches in the United States competed in a drive to bring Christianity to the Nez Perces of the Oregon Country. The Reverend Henry Spalding, a Presbyterian, was the first permanent missionary on the scene. He established a mission station in the Lapwai Valley in 1836. While offering keen competition generally, Roman Catholic missionaries did not found any stations on Nez Perce lands during this early period. However, many Nez Perces on buffalo hunts east of the Bitterroots came into contact with the Jesuit priests of the Rocky Mountain Mission established by Father Pierre De Smet in the early 1840's.

In 1847, Spalding left the Nez Perce Country following the killing of his associate, Dr. Marcus Whitman, by the Cayuse Indians in the Walla Walla Valley. While Catholic missionaries continued to be active in today's Montana and along the Columbia River, neither priest nor preacher worked among the Nez Perces in their homeland for the next 20 years.

Father Cataldo's Nez Perce activity began when he sought the vacant Nez Perce Agency teaching position at Lapwai in 1867—only six years after the Agency's founding. The post had been held previously by Reverend Spalding. Though his bid was unsuccessful, it marked the beginning of Cataldo's long struggle to carry out his missionary and educational work among the Nez Perce.

President Grant's Peace Policy for administering the Indian reservations, whereby various churches assumed responsibilities for the various reservations, came into effect at Lapwai in 1871. Although the Catholic
9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"The Jesuits in Old Oregon"; William Norbert Bishoff (Caldwell, Idaho), 1945.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES
DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY

<table>
<thead>
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<th>CORNER</th>
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<th>LONGITUDE</th>
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<td>Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>Degrees</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>SE</td>
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<tr>
<td>SW</td>
<td>Degrees</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
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LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES
DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY
OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degrees</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
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APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1 acre

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>COUNTY</th>
<th>CODE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Laurin C. Huffman II, Historical Architect and Jack Williams

BUSINESS ADDRESS: National Park Service, Pacific Northwest Region

STREET AND NUMBER: 523 Fourth and Pike Building

CITY OR TOWN: Seattle

STATE: Washington

DATE: November, 1973

PHONE: 206-442-1006

12. CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

State Liaison Officer recommendation:

☑ Yes

☐ No

☐ None

State Liaison Officer Signature: W. W. Waller

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Liaison Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The recommended level of significance is: ☐ National ☐ State

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE: W. J. Martin

Date: 6/24/76

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER:

DATE: 6/24/76

SPO 938-449
8. Church had hoped to have the Nez Perces assigned to its sphere of interest, the Presbyterians acquired this responsibility. Even so, Father Cataldo finally succeeded in founding a mission with school and church at Slickpoo.

Father Cataldo also had to contend with General O. O. Howard, commander of U.S. troops in the Nez Perce War of 1877, in his struggle to propagate his faith. During this period the Father played a key role in dissuading northern tribes from entering the war. This missionary success led to further steps forward for religious toleration.

Father Cataldo continued to minister to the Nez Perce at Saint Joseph's until his death in 1928. The church and school which he founded served the reservation until 1958. The church, under non-federal ownership, is now a part of Nez Perce National Historical Park, authorized by Public Law 89-19, May 15, 1965.
10.

U.T.M.

37S

850E

11 522037 5128085
**1. NAME**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMON</th>
<th>AND/OR HISTORIC</th>
<th>NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)</th>
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<tr>
<td>St. Joseph's Mission (Slickpoo) - Site 9</td>
<td>Nez Perce National Hist. Park</td>
<td><strong>JUN 4 1976</strong></td>
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**2. LOCATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>COUNTY</th>
<th>TOWN</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>Lewis</td>
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Four miles south of Jacques Spur on Mission Creek off U.S. 95

**3. PHOTO REFERENCE**

<table>
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<th>PHOTO CREDIT</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>NEGATIVE FILED AT</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jack Williams, Supt. Nez Perce</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Nez Perce National Historical Park</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**4. IDENTIFICATION**

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

Front of St. Joseph's Mission, looking east