

# La Purísima Catholic Church



***Welcome! Come in! Experience La Purísima Catholic Church!***

The church draws upon the rich heritage of the early California Missions as well as the deep religious faith of the parishioners of La Purísima. This new building is a response to the need for a worship space that will accommodate larger numbers of Catholic members, demonstrating that our church community is vibrant and growing. **It is our home and we hope you will feel welcome here.**

## **The Meaning of La Purísima**

“La Purísima” means the Most Pure (or Immaculate) one, referring to Mary in her Immaculate Conception. This dogma of the Church, proclaimed by Pope Pius IX in 1854, celebrates our faith that Mary, who, though conceived as all human beings are, was saved from sin because she was destined to give birth to the Second Person of the Trinity: Jesus.

The typical representation of the Immaculate Conception is derived from the traditional painting of the Assumption of Mary but adds the crescent moon below, and the figure is accompanied by similes from the Litany of Loreto. She is usually dressed in white with a blue cloak. This image evokes *Revelation 12*: “And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed in the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.”

Mary, The Immaculate Conception is the patroness of the United States.

## **Parish History**

In 1895, Mexican Catholics began settling in El Modeno. In 1910, the first known Mass was held in El Modeno (by the pepper tree on Center Street). In 1924, property on Center Street in the City of Orange was donated and a frame building was erected which was the beginning of La Purísima Mission. The seating capacity was about 80. In 1927 additional property on Center Street was purchased for a new church. The original building was moved onto this property and an addition was made to seat about 200.

In October 1957, the Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity arrived. With the ever-growing aerospace industry bringing in new residents in the community, the parish flourished as a bi-lingual community.

In 1962 a new church seating 450 people was erected on the property on the corner of Hewes and Spring Streets. The Archdiocese of Los Angeles gave La Purísima a “parish” status on May 8, 1964. La Purísima School was opened in September 1965. In 1976, Pope Paul VI established the Diocese of Orange.



The 1970’s saw the immigration of the Vietnamese people, who have established themselves as a vital part of our La Purísima community.

The Claretian Missionaries accepted the invitation from the Diocese to care for the people of La Purísima in 1983. At the same time, we experienced a large population growth of Mexican people with their rich culture. The 1990’s, our growing Filipino Community introduced us to their beautiful spirit.

**Planning for our new church begins . . .** Bishop Tod Brown gave permission for the construction of a larger church with seating for at least 1,200 people. Our 3-year capital campaign began in the “Jubilee” year 2000, thus receiving its name, *“The Jubilee Project”*.

In July 2002, the Claretians turned over the pastoral care of the parish to the priests of the Diocese of Orange, guiding its final design and construction.

We are also very proud of our parish school, **La Purísima School**, which currently enrolls more than 300 students from Pre-K through 8th grade. 2005 celebrates the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our parish school.

## The Dedication of our New Church on June 4, 2005

### Traditional Spanish Architecture

The architecture is a California Mission style, with many design cues from the original *La Purísima Mission in Lompoc, California*, and from the California Revival Style that dominates old towns across California. For example, the top section of the bell tower is the same shape as the bell tower at the La Purísima Mission in Lompoc.



The stone veneer on the exterior and interior of the church reflects the colors of the stone in the hillsides surrounding El Modena.

What makes a building look like a church? It is that when you are looking at it from the outside, you can tell the purpose of what takes place inside. The tall central roof (clerestory) shows the processional space, the long sloping roof lines show the seating area of the congregation (nave). The copper domes show the importance of the Eucharist, one over the Altar, the other over the Blessed Sacrament chapel.



## Gathering Plaza

The space you are in is the first liturgically important space of the new church. The Gathering Plaza is not only a place for the community to gather after Mass but is a transition zone from the hectic pace of life into the entrance to the church, from the profane to the sacred, from earth to heaven. The plaza is also designed to accommodate the special processions where Mass starts outside.

As a “welcoming community”, the outdoor gathering area has rays cut into the concrete on diagonal lines that meet at the altar in the church. We are being drawn to the “table of plenty” of the Eucharistic Banquet that we celebrate at each Mass.

The tower above includes three bells and a **statue of La Purísima**. The statue is 72" high, cast fiberglass with bronze finish, and was chosen for her beauty and peaceful, welcoming appeal.



## Entrance Doors

The entrance to the church has 3 decorative double doors. These doors are the only entrance into the church, to focus everyone on the Baptistry ahead.

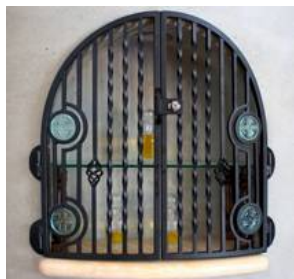
## Baptistry

The Baptistry is placed at the entrance to indicate that Baptism is the entry-point into the Church community. On either side of the font are the Confessionals, reminding us that we can only approach the Altar by means of penance.

The Baptistry replaces holy water fountains in the church, so as you enter you bless yourself with the water that recalls your baptism: water which is always blessed and ready to be used for baptisms. The font includes a pedestal resembling the “tree of life” and bowl made from granite imported from China. Water trickles from the bowl into the main pool, with has a protective Lucite barrier for safety.



The pool calls to mind a grave, with dark tile inside and stone walls that appear to be piles of dirt, for we are baptized into the death of Christ so that we might be raised up with Him. The pool allows for full immersion baptisms, so that the full sign of going down into the waters of death and being raised again into newness of life can be experienced. A circle of Jerusalem stone surrounds the font, tying it to the Altar.



There are niches in the two columns near the Font. The niche on the right is the **Ambry**. The Ambry contains the holy oils used in the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism and Confirmation), in Holy Orders, and in the Anointing of the Sick.

The niche on the left holds a statue of **St. John the Baptist**, often shown in relation to the baptismal font. The statue is hand carved and burnished with gold leaf accents. It is done in an antique style. The wood itself is recycled from ancient buildings so it is very possible that it is several hundred years old.



and

**The Paschal (Easter) candle** nearby was blessed and lighted at the Easter Vigil on the previous Holy Saturday. It represents the risen Christ, Light of the world. (In the Easter season it stands in the sanctuary.) This candle is lit at the beginning and end of life, at Baptisms and funerals, as well as throughout the Easter season.



There are only 17 rows of pews to add to the feeling of very intimate seating. The last three rows are flexible seating with chairs that can be moved around as needed, especially for Baptisms.

### **Madonna della Strada by Feruzzi**

Turning to the left, you walk past a statue of Mary holding the baby Jesus, specifically, **Madonna della Strada by Feruzzi**. This statue is 60" high, and hand carved from Linden wood and imported from Milan.



Behind this left rear wall are other rooms:

- Bride and Usher Room with an extra restroom
- Confessional
- Audio Visual Room
- Entrance and foyer into Blessed Sacrament chapel

### **Blessed Sacrament Chapel (or Eucharistic Chapel)**

The Blessed Sacrament is reserved in the Eucharistic Chapel, which has its own columns and a barrel vault ceiling with a special lamp designating the chapel. At the entrance is a pair of doors etched with angels kneeling in adoration and guarding the Chapel. A small arched stained glass window is planned for the opposite end of the barrel vault.



**The Eucharistic Chapel** is a round room with a 30-seat capacity, and an 18-foot high domed ceiling. It has a separate entrance from the outside so worshipers may come anytime to pray and meditate.

There are 14 stained glass windows. In addition to St. Joseph, the criteria for choosing the saints were: beatified or canonized by Pope John Paul II; lived in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century; represent various vocations and ages; relevance to our country or community. As you stand in the chapel and face the glass doors and out into the nave, following clockwise from the right, the windows show the following saints and blessed:

**St. Maximilian Kolbe** (1894 - 1941), priest & martyr; Nazi victim at Auschwitz.

**St. Therese of Lisieux** (1873 - 1897), religious; Patroness of the Missions; proclaimed Doctor of the Church in 1997 by Pope John Paul II; young adult.

**Bl. Francisco Martos** (1908 - 1919) & **Bl. Jacinta Martos** (1910 - 1920), lay persons; visionaries of Our Lady of Fatima; brother and sister; youngest to be beatified.

**Bl. Kateri Tekakwitha** (1656 - 1680), lay person; first Native American beatified.

**St. Pio of Pietrelcina** (1887 - 1968), priest; founded a hospital, miracle worker, stigmatist.

**Bl. Teresa of Calcutta** (1910 - 1997), religious; founded Missionaries of Charity; served the poorest of the poor.

**Bl. Damien de Veuster of Molokai** (1840 - 1889), priest; served lepers in Hawaii, became a leper himself.

**St. Katherine Drexel** (1858 - 1955), religious; American woman who founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, serving poor Native and African Americans.

**Bl. Junipero Serra** (1713 - 1784), priest; founded California Missions.

**St. Faustina Kowalska** (1905 - 1938), religious; Visionary of the Divine Mercy.

**St. Joseph the Carpenter** – Step-father of Jesus; Patron and Protector of the Universal Church; carpenter and patron of workers.

**St. Frances Xavier Cabrini** – (1850 – 1917), religious; founded Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart; spent some time in southern California; first American citizen to be canonized a saint.

**St. Gianna Beretta Molla** (1922 - 1962), lay person; wife & mother, medical doctor; sacrificed her life for the life of her unborn daughter; canonized May 2004, patron of pro-life movement.

**St. Josemaria Escrivá** (1902 – 1975), priest; founder of Opus Dei; canonized in 2002.



**The Tabernacle** is set on a pedestal designed in the same style as the Altar, including a Jerusalem stone top, and is placed up against the opposite wall from the glass doors. The Tabernacle is a gold enclosure with inlaid stone and a dome top. It is held up by angels and architecturally compatible with building. The doors to the tabernacle include a built-in monstrance for adoration.

### **Vietnamese Martyrs window**

A stained glass window depicting the Vietnamese Martyrs is in the far left corner just beyond the chapel. This window honors 117 Vietnamese and European missionaries killed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These are only a fraction of the nearly 130,000 Catholics who lost their lives between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.



### **Stations of the Cross**

Around the walls of the church are 14 carved images depicting scenes of Jesus' Passion and Crucifixion. They are hand carved linden wood in 3/4 relief (known as "bas relief") and hand painted in traditional colors by a company named Demetz located in Northern Italy. They have some of the best artists in the world creating inspirational religious pieces.

## Dedication candles

Also around the walls are 12 wrought iron wall sconces with candles. These candles are placed where the walls were anointed with Sacred Chrism during the Mass of Dedication on June 4, 2005. There are 12 of them, representing the 12 Apostles, the “foundation” on which the Church is built, and recalling the description of the City of God in Revelation in which the Apostles’ names are inscribed in the walls of the Heavenly Jerusalem. These candles are lit only on the anniversary of the parish day of Dedication, which is permanently a Solemnity for us.



## The Sanctuary

Pictured here, the President's Chair, Deacon's chairs, and the Ambo (right), and the altar base (below) are hand-crafted mission-style pieces made especially for our church. Each pew and chair has five pieces of contrasting wood imbedded in it, symbolizing the five wounds of Christ. This wood is pepperwood, salvaged from the 100 year-old pepper tree that used to be on the property.



**The Altar top** is made from Jerusalem stone, a limestone/marble quarried in Palestine and used for centuries, including the material to build the Wailing Wall and the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. This stone can be seen in various places throughout the church and was specifically used to tie the Altar to these other important parts of the church. So a connection is made between the Altar and the Baptismal Font (and by extension to the Ambry with the Sacred Oils); the Altar and the Tabernacle; and the Altar and various devotional niches around the church.

**The crucifix** is suspended from beams that cross above the Altar. The Corpus is from the old church, most likely made from Linden wood or Maple wood, and was refurbished and placed on a new cross made of oak.





**The statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe** (Patroness of the Americas and the Diocese of Orange), is a refurbished wood statue from the old church.



**The statue of St. Joseph** is hand-carved from Linden wood, and imported from Milan; it is a companion piece to the statue of Mary.



### **Outside**

As you exit the church, to the right, between the old and new churches, is a devotional space for private and group prayer. There is a statue of **Our Lady of La Vang**, a Vietnamese devotion to Mary that stands outside the Vietnamese Martyrs' window made from the white solid marble from North Viet Nam and hand carved by master craftsman at Ho Nai, Bien Hoa, South Viet Nam.

In this same devotional place, there is a shrine to **Our Lady of Guadalupe and St. Juan Diego** using refurbished marble statues from the old convent. Space for flowers and candles accommodate many of our parishioners' devotion to Our Lady.

Our donor recognition monuments were installed after the dedication. They are located close to the entrance of the church, on either side. We honor, and are very grateful for those who sacrificed for this Jubilee Project.



### Artists / Craftsmen:

Bob Yeager, a fine furniture maker and artist, refinished the statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe and the Corpus for our Cross and also fabricated the Cross. He does Church work exclusively for J. R. Evans And Company.



Wood and Iron Works of San Diego built and installed all the pews and Sanctuary furniture.

Deacon Rich Lovett, retired high school Shop Teacher, built the **Gift Table** by the Font.



### New Building Facts and Figures

- Interior Height 40' to the ridge
- Copper Dome is 8'
- 56' from the floor to the top cross on top of the dome
- Entire building is 16,500 square feet
- 17 rows of pews
- 30 seat Eucharistic Chapel
- Construction started March 2004 and concluded June 2005

The groundbreaking ceremony was celebrated on June 28, 2003, the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and the Dedication Mass was celebrated on June 4, 2005, the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary!

**The Stained Glass windows** were designed by two artists, both of whom are under contract with J. R. Evans And Company. The Vietnamese Martyrs window was designed by Mark Eric Gulsrud and fabricated by Perry Studios under Mark's supervision. The Saints windows were designed by Laura Gilroy and these are also being made at Perry Studios who will perform the installation. Mark Gulsrud and the Perry Studios are members of the Stained Glass Association of America and Laura Gilroy is a member of the British Stained Glass Association and she lives in Bristol, England.

**The Jerusalem stone** was donated by Matt Huarte of Santa Fe Collection in Anaheim. His stone buyer in Palestine chose the quarry and personally visited the site even though tensions between the Jews and Palestinians made such travel dangerous. The stone was packed and shipped by sea, and delivered and stored at Mr. Huarte's shop until it was ready for installation. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to him!

And, most of all, we owe a huge debt of gratitude to all the generous and giving parishioners of La Purísima Church, who donated the funds and participated in fund-raising events and gave of themselves to build this beautiful witness of our faith and love of God.

