

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine

Other names/site number: Site #CW0390-CW0392

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 22741 Hwy. 71

City or town: Winslow State: Arkansas County: Crawford

Not For Publication: ☐

Vicinity: ☒

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

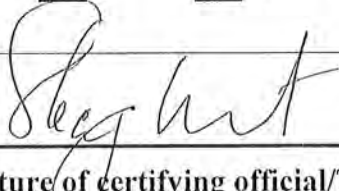
I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national X statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A B C D

	<u>4-3-19</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>Arkansas Historic Preservation Program</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ___ entered in the National Register
___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register
___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private: ☒

Public – Local ☐

Public – State ☐

Public – Federal ☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s) ☒

District ☐

☐

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Site

Structure

☐

Object

☐

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing

Noncontributing

3

buildings

sites

2

structures

4

objects

9

Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION—Church/Shrine

RELIGION—Church-related Residence

RECREATION AND CULTURE—Work of Art

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION—Church/Shrine

RECREATION AND CULTURE—Work of Art

VACANT/NOT IN USE

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Late Gothic Revival

OTHER/Plain-Traditional

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN

MOVEMENTS/Bungalow/Craftsman

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Stone, Asphalt, Asbestos

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Our Lady of the Ozarks parish grounds are located on land donated by a former nun from Iowa named Clara Muxen, which she purchased upon moving to the area in 1941. The church is a 2,045 square-foot building designed in the Gothic Revival style with vernacular elements, such as the native stone exterior and single gable roof. E. Chester Nelson, an architect from Fort Smith, designed the building in 1944 and Mullen & Baker of Mena was the primary builder. A carpenter from Winslow named Harold Duncan also helped with the construction.

On the parish grounds, a paved semi-circle driveway extends from the highway and connects to a sidewalk, which leads to the front (east) entrance to the church. The sidewalk also extends to curve around the south side of the building. The large semi-circle driveway encloses a lawn where a cast stone Lady of the Ozarks statue stands on a native stone foundation. A gravel circle driveway extends from the semi-circle driveway on south curve and leads to the Parish Hall to the south of the church. A cast-stone statue of St. Therese stands on a native stone foundation in the center of the gravel circle driveway. A stone well house is positioned near the northwest corner of the Parish Hall with a small figure of St. Anthony set within its east wall. Behind the Parish Hall, off the southwest corner, is a stone well. The original rectory resides on the north

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side of the property. Another stone well house sits behind it. Two cast-stone statues are set on the north lawn off the northeast corner of the rectory—a Christ Resurrected statue, set on a stone foundation, and a Christ Crucified statue, set in a stone pedestal with six steps. Two cast-stone angels sit on either side of the pedestal. A blue polygonal church sign set on a stone foundation is located on the front lawn near the southeast boundary marker.

Narrative Description

Our Lady of the Ozarks Church – Contributing

Front/East Façade

The front of the church has a symmetrical design with a single-gable roof and an extended, centered porch with a double-door entryway. The church and porch walls are all faced with cut native stone. The porch walls are also buttressed on each corner. The porch has a gabled awning to match the roof and a raised concrete floor with three small steps extending from the sidewalk. The steps are flanked by black metal handrails and two stone pony walls that are topped with concrete. The steps lead to a pointed archway in the front porch wall, which is framed at the top by a finely cut triangular keystone and voussoirs extending halfway down the wall. Inset above the keystone is a small stone cross. The front door is made of wood and painted blue with white framing. It also comes to a pointed arch with a finely cut keystone and voussoirs to match the front porch wall. Both sidewalls of the porch are open with classic archways. A concrete wheelchair ramp extends from the south wall of the porch. The cornerstone for the church sits at the bottom of the southeast corner of the building.

On either side of the porch three identical double-hung, stained glass lancet windows (six in total) are set in the main wall. A keystone and voussoir stones beset the top half of each window. One large lancet window is centered above the porch awning with two smaller, yet congruent, windows on either side. A keystone and voussoir stones beset the top half of each window. A pointed arch, louvered attic vent is centered above the windows near the roof. A cross is positioned at the front of the gable on the roof.

Side/North Façade

The north wall of the church is faced in native stone. The main portion of the wall contains four stained glass lancet windows of equal size. On the rear corner (northwest), a wing wall juts out from the main façade and holds an entrance to the sacristy. On the east face of the entrance wall, a set of stone steps with a stepped pony wall lead up to an arched blue door with white framing. Three small stained glass lancet windows ornament the north-facing side of the entrance wall.

Rear/West Façade

The entire rear wall is faced with native stone in keeping with the rest of the building. A stone bell tower abuts the northwest corner of the wall. It is buttressed on one side, which is visible

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from the front of the church. The top half of the tower is also visible from the front as it rises above the wing wall on the north façade. It is intermittently beveled on the edges, narrows as it rises, and culminates in a pointed top. The belfry is an open pointed archway just below the top of the tower and is beset by a keystone and voussoirs. A stone rail with three slats spans the width of the belfry below the bell.

An enclosed stone lean-to shed with a slanted metal roof extends from the center of the rear wall. The door to the shed is on the north-facing wall and is made of wood. The rear (west) wall of the shed has two small window openings, which are both boarded. Extending from the south wall of the shed to the southwest corner of the church wall is a chain-link fence enclosing a space around the heat and air conditioning units.

At the bottom of the primary rear church wall, between the bell tower and the shed, hangs a small, hinged basement window with six small panes and wood casing. Just above the roof of the shed on the left side is another small window opening, which is boarded. A circular, Marian stained glass window with white wood casing decorates the center of the rear church wall. It is centered above the shed roof and is encircled by voussoirs. A rectangular louvered attic vent is positioned at the top of the wall above the window.

Side/South Façade

The south side of the building is exactly similar to the north façade in design. It is faced in native stone with a wing wall on the southwest corner of the building that contains an entrance to the prayer chapel. Like the north side, it has stone steps with a stepped pony wall, a blue door, and three stained glass lancet windows. Also like the north wall, the main south wall has four tall stained glass lancets with similar accent features as those on the north façade.

Interior

Just inside the front door, the church has a small narthex with stair access to an organ loft on the southeast corner. On the northeast corner inside the church is a cry room with a glass wall. The nave consists of wood flooring and original oak pews donated by Bishop Alfred Morris in 1945.¹ The walls are covered in wood paneling, which was installed in 1968. Wainscoting runs along the length of the church walls just below the bottoms of the stained glass windows. The carpeted sanctuary stage steps up slightly from the nave floor and holds the primary altars. The apse is set off by a large pointed archway on the west wall and holds the St. Joseph and Sacred Heart of Jesus statuary, as well as the circular stained glass Marian window. On the northwest side of the apse is an entrance to the sacristy, and on the southwest side is an entrance to the prayer chapel. This chapel also has a pointed-arch doorway on the face of the sanctuary wall, which is covered with a veil, and it houses the original Virgin of the Smile statue that was cast in 1942.

¹ "New Statue to be Unveiled Sunday at Winslow Shrine," *The Guardian*, June 15, 1945. 6.

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Parish Hall – Contributing

The Parish Hall, which was completed in 1946, is a Craftsman-style building on the south side of the church property. It has a single gable roof and a stone foundation. Each side of the building is faced with original siding painted yellow (from original white). The front (east) façade contains a centered double door with the words, "PARISH HALL" on the top of the doorframe. A gabled awning with black metal supports covers a small concrete porch with two steps. A new concrete wheelchair ramp extends from the main sidewalk to the north side of the porch. Centered above the porch awning is a white, wooden loft window. A white gable vent sits above the loft window at the crux of the gable. To either side of the front door are four double-hung, six-over-six vinyl windows (eight total), which recently replaced similar wood-cased windows.

The side (north) façade is faced with the yellow siding, while the stone foundation is visible beneath. Six double-hung, six-over-six vinyl windows are staggered across the wall. In the center of those windows is one six-pane vinyl window.

The rear (west) façade is faced with the yellow siding with a visible stone foundation beneath. One six-over-six vinyl window hangs on the northwest corner. An extended sun room with a matching gable juts from the primary wall. Its facing is consistent with the rest of the building. One six-pane vinyl window hangs on its northern wall. Another six-pane window and two twelve-pane casement windows hang on the western wall. The south wall contains two more twelve-pane casements, a door, and one double-hung six-over-six window. Five concrete steps lead up to a small porch in front of the door. Two double-hung six-over-six windows are set on the southwest corner of the primary wall.

The side (south) façade has similar facing as the rest of the building with the stone foundation visible beneath. The wall holds six double-hung, six-over-six vinyl windows.

Since it was finished in 1946, the Parish Hall has been used for multiple purposes, including as a Shrine Shop for visitors and pilgrims, a lodging facility, a fellowship hall, and a nuns' residence. Although the roof and windows have been replaced and the siding has been painted, the original structure still stands. In this sense, the building contributes to the shrine's historical significance as a pilgrimage site.

Rectory – Contributing

The rectory, on the north side of the property, was the first building to be totally completed in 1944. It sits on a stone foundation and is faced with white siding with a gable roof. On the front (east) façade is a single door with three stone steps leading to a small porch and gabled awning. On either side of the door are two (four total) double-hung, six-over-six wood-frame windows. Each set of windows has a metal awning over it. On the northeast corner are two more windows of the same style with a metal awning.

The side (north) façade has the same white siding with a stone basement wall. On the northeast corner, there are two small four-pane casement windows. Another similar window abuts a stone

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chimney that rises in the center of the wall. To the right of the chimney there is another small, double-hung window. To the northwest corner, there are two more double-hung six-over-six windows. On either side of the base of the stone chimney, in the basement wall, are two boarded up basement openings.

The rear (west) façade of the rectory has white siding and a stone basement wall is visible beneath. It holds three sets of two double-hung six-over-six windows—two sets to the northwest side and one set to the southwest side. One additional double-hung six-over-six window hangs between these sets. In the basement wall on the northwest corner, there is a door to the basement. A boarded up basement window is also set near the center of the stone basement wall.

The side (south) façade has facing consistent with the rest of the building. One double-hung six-over-six wood-frame window is set to the southwest side of the wall. Next to the window is a single-door side entrance with a brick porch, steps, and a black metal railing. A horizontally sliding window is set next to the door. Another double-hung six-over-six window and single door entrance are positioned on the southeast side of the wall.

Our Lady of the Smile Statue – Contributing

The statue on the front lawn is a cast-stone recreation of a popular statue at St. Sulpice Church in Paris, France. It features a Madonna with outstretched arms and a starry crown standing on a globe. The statue sits atop a three-tiered stone pedestal in front of a stone planter bed. It was unveiled and blessed in August of 1946 at the dedication of the finished church building. It became an important part of the annual pilgrimage for the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as a key event for the ceremonies was to crown the statue.

Christ Crucified Statue – Contributing

The Crucifix statue is the northernmost statue on the property. It consists of a cast-stone Christ figure and sign hung on a concrete cross. The cross was replaced from an earlier version of the statue after sustaining damage. The cross is set on a stone pedestal with seven stone steps. Two smaller stone pedestals flank the tall pedestal, and each holds a cast-stone angel figure, both of which previously adorned the property markers on each side of the grounds. The original statue was unveiled on the grounds in 1945, and became a key fixture for visitors and pilgrims to the shrine.

Christ Resurrected Statue – Contributing

Near the front of the rectory, a cast-stone Jesus statue with outstretched arms sits on a stone pedestal and foundation. It was on the grounds by 1949 in time for the first pilgrimage to the shrine. Later a red and gold heart with cross was later placed on the chest of the statue.

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St. Therese the Little Flower Statue – Contributing

In front of the Parish Hall, a cast-stone statue of St. Therese stands on a stone pedestal and foundation. She is holding a crucifix and roses, which have been painted red and green. It was also on the grounds by the time of the first pilgrimage in 1949. This places it within the appropriate period of significance. St. Therese also holds particular significance for the parish as the saint that inspired the popularity of the Lady of the Smile statue in France.

Well Houses – Contributing

Two stone well houses stand on the property, one behind the rectory and one off the northwest corner of the Parish Hall. Each is a square stone structure with a small gable roof. The well house near the Parish Hall has a small arched, recessed area that holds a small figure of St. Anthony de Padua. Each well house was established within the significant time period.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

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Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☒ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION

Period of Significance

1944-1969

Significant Dates

1944-1946
1949

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Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Architect - E. Chester Nelson

Builders - Mullen & Baker; Harold Duncan

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Before the construction of Our Lady of the Ozarks, Catholics in the Boston Mountain region of northwest Arkansas had little access to church services. After an effort by local women to organize a parish, the Diocese of Little Rock formed Our Lady of the Ozarks and parishioners established a small mission near Winslow, Arkansas. In 1944, the parish began building the current native stone church and established a Marian statue on the front lawn. Over a two-year period, the parish added more statues to the grounds and finished the original plans for the church. Bishop Alfred Morris officially dedicated the shrine in August of 1946. After the inaugural diocesan pilgrimage in 1949, over the next two decades, the site became an increasingly popular pilgrimage destination for Catholics around Arkansas and in the Ozarks region. Since its inception as the first Marian shrine in Arkansas, Our Lady of the Ozarks has remained a prominent shrine and has served as an annual destination for Catholic pilgrims in Arkansas. For these reasons, it is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **statewide significance** under **Criterion A** with a period of significance between 1944 and 1969. Although the significance of the building as a Catholic shrine and pilgrimage site has continued past 1969, it does not meet the threshold of exceptional significance. It is also being nominated under **Criteria Consideration A** as a religious property.

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Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

History and Significance of the Property

With the highest reliefs in the central United States, the Boston Mountains of northwest Arkansas have historically been difficult to navigate. Settlers began to move into the area around present-day Winslow in the early nineteenth century, but they were often disconnected from outside society. Rugged stage lines and wagon roads were the primary means of movement into and out of the area until the 1880s, when the St. Louis-San Francisco Railway built a track through the region to connect Fayetteville to areas south of the mountains. This brought more industry, and thus, more people into the area around Winslow. Due to the scenic beauty and mild temperatures of the region, many of the people who began to come in the late 19th and early 20th centuries were known as “summer people,” who kept homes in the mountains for the summer months. This tradition continued in the region throughout the 20th century and eventually led to the establishment of the Catholic Church in Winslow.²

Despite the increased access and influx of people, this region was still sparsely populated compared to surrounding places like Fayetteville and Fort Smith. Those two towns were the closest centers of society, and residents of the Boston Mountains often relied on them for connections to popular commerce and culture. In particular, Catholics in the mountains had to rely on priests from Fayetteville or Fort Smith to visit the area in order to experience mass and confession. The Catholic Church in Arkansas officially came to the northwest portion of the state in the 1840s, after which time, priests in Fayetteville and Fort Smith were responsible for attending to the needs of Catholics in the remote surrounding areas. They would often stay at the houses of devoted Catholics to perform rites, and other members of the faith in the area would congregate.³ This continued into the early 20th century. A 1925 history of the Catholic Church in Arkansas was reprinted in the newspaper for the Diocese of Little Rock. It stated that, in addition to duties at his home church, the priest in Fayetteville “as circumstances permit, says Mass on occasions at Hinesville, Bella Vista, Bentonville, Decatur, Gravette, Siloam Springs, Sulphur Springs, West Fork, Winslow, and wherever neglected Catholic families may be found.”⁴

Around this same time, the road system began to expand in the area. Work on the portion of Highway 71 that runs through the Crawford and Washington County line, through Winslow, began in 1920. The final paved portion was opened to traffic in 1930, and travel into and out of became much easier.⁵ Mountain Catholics were able to travel more regularly to Fort Smith and Fayetteville to attend mass, but an effort soon began to build a church in the area.

² Margaret J. Guccione, “Boston Mountains,” *Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*; Jo Ann Kyle, “Winslow (Washington County),” *Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*. Accessed September 24, 2018.

³ Jane Browning, “Parish Profiles,” *The Guardian*, June 10, 1990. 8.

⁴ “Fayetteville,” *The Guardian*, January 31, 1925. 22.

⁵ Ralph Wilcox, “Old U.S. 71, Greenland Segment,” *National Register of Historic Places*, September 24, 2004. Section 8, Page 2, 4.

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In 1941, three women helped lay the groundwork for a new church in the remote area. Two summer homeowners in Winslow, Elizabeth Sublett of Fort Smith and Ann Guilliot of Dallas, Texas, began researching and surveying Catholic families in towns around Highway 71, from West Fork to Mountainburg. They compiled their findings and presented them to Auxiliary Bishop Albert Fletcher. Clara Muxen, a former nun and teacher from Iowa, helped establish the new mission. She came to Arkansas with members of her family in September of 1941 and decided to make it her home after staying at the Sky-View Lodge on Highway 71. She purchased land on the opposite (north) side of the highway, where the current church stands. A recently abandoned gas station stood on her land, which she donated to the Diocese and began to renovate in order to use as a church building.⁶ The Diocesan newspaper, *The Guardian*, described her work at the time: "The establishment of this mission has been the result of the untiring efforts of Miss Clara Muxen, who has transformed a filling station into an attractive little chapel and living quarters for the priest. Miss Muxen has been instrumental in rounding up a number of Catholics in the vicinity and has been instrumental in getting converts to the Church."⁷

Muxen was also instrumental in the naming and ornamentation of the church, which ultimately led to its status as a shrine. The mission was named Our Lady of the Ozarks in honor of a replica virginal statue that Miss Muxen brought back from Europe ten years before her move to Arkansas.⁸ The Virgin of the Smile statue was associated with St. Therese, a young nineteenth-century saint from Lisieux, France, who claimed to be healed by the visage of Mary as a child.⁹ The statue was created by DePrato Studios in Chicago and was to be housed in the small chapel.¹⁰ It still stands in the current church as a token of its beginnings. Father Lawrence Schaffer, the pastor of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Tontitown, Arkansas, was appointed to tend to the needs of the new mission's congregation. On October 25, 1942, he celebrated the first mass and blessed the statue and the church as Our Lady of the Ozarks.¹¹

The gas-station church remained the primary place of worship for two years until the church became an official parish of the Diocese on February 2, 1944. Bishop Alfred Morris had given authority to the Provincial Congregation of Stigmatine Fathers to attend to the parochial needs of the church, which appointed Father Francis Mackin from White Plains, New York, to be the first resident pastor of the new parish. Father Mackin assumed the position on January 31, 1944.¹² Catholics around the country, including Massachusetts and Michigan, donated large sums of money to help build a new church. Muxen donated more of her land north along the highway to

⁶ Jane Browning, "Parish Profiles," *The Guardian*, June 10, 1990. 8.

⁷ "New Our Lady of the Ozarks Mission on Beautiful Mt. Gaylor: Catholic Laywoman Responsible for Work," *The Guardian*, October 30, 1942. 6.

⁸ "Famous Arkansas Author Traces Origin, History of Noted 'Shrine of Our Lady of the Ozarks'," *The Guardian*, August 10, 1956. 3.

⁹ Ibid.; Jane Browning, "Parish Profiles," *The Guardian*, June 10, 1990. 8.

¹⁰ "Famous Arkansas Author Traces Origin, History of Noted 'Shrine of Our Lady of the Ozarks'," *The Guardian*, August 10, 1956. 3.

¹¹ Jane Browning, "Parish Profiles," *The Guardian*, June 10, 1990. 8; Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Dedication Program, Diocese of Little Rock Archives, Little Rock, Arkansas, August 27, 1944; "Famous Arkansas Author Traces Origin, History of Noted 'Shrine of Our Lady of the Ozarks'," *The Guardian*, August 10, 1956. 3.

¹² Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Dedication Program, Diocese of Little Rock Archives, Little Rock, Arkansas, August 27, 1944; "Rectory at Winslow to be Blessed After Mass, October 15," *The Guardian*, October 13, 1944. 7.

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the Diocese of Little Rock, and construction began on the current church in May of 1944, with Mackin leading the groundbreaking and overseeing the project. The Diocese employed an architect from Fort Smith named E. Chester Nelson to design the building and the Mullen and Baker company from Alma to construct it. A carpenter from Winslow named Harold Duncan also contributed to the building's construction.¹³

With the majority of the exterior stonework complete by the end of summer, the first mass in the new church shrine was held on August 27, 1944. A new Marian statue was set on the front lawn of the church as a foreground piece for viewers along the highway. Father Paul Desmond of Immaculate Conception Church in Fort Smith blessed the statue in an afternoon ceremony after the mass.¹⁴ The statue was cast as a replica of an eighteenth-century fixture at St. Sulpice Church in Paris, France, which was sculpted by Edmé Bouchardon. The new statue was set on a native stone foundation to match the exterior of the church and later served as a key visage for pilgrims to the shrine, contributing to its significance. The rectory was completed by fall of 1944 and dedicated on October 15. Meanwhile, the church was being used, but it was still not complete.¹⁵ Due to the war effort, the parish experienced some difficulty in securing materials and manpower to build the new structures. Portions of the church's original plans were not completed until later, including stonework on the porch walls and a stone bell tower on the northwest corner of the church.¹⁶ Work continued on the stone exterior through 1945, but it was not complete until the following year. Meanwhile, one of the parish's currently existing sculptures, the Christ Crucified, was installed and blessed on June 17, 1945.¹⁷ In May of 1946, the Little Flower Hall—named for St. Therese—opened as a combination convent, visitor's lodge, and parish hall.¹⁸ After Father Mackin announced the full completion of the shrine in late summer of 1946, the parish planned a dedication mass and ceremony on August 25, 1946. *The Guardian* noted that, "Sunday, the peal of the bell erected in the new tower of the church will usher in a full day of memorable activity for this little parish."¹⁹ This included a dedicatory sermon by Bishop Alfred Morris, after which he laid the cornerstone on the church.²⁰

After it was complete, the church's local attendance grew throughout the latter half of the decade, and the statues on the lawn created an interest with tourists traveling the highway. The year 1949 proved to be a crucial year for the growing popularity and significance of the shrine. The first Diocese-wide pilgrimage to Our Lady of the Ozarks was planned for the feast time of The Immaculate Heart of Mary in late August. It was reported that, "The first Diocesan pilgrimage of the Shrine of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Our Lady of the Ozarks, will long be

¹³ Jane Browning, "Parish Profiles," *The Guardian*, June 10, 1990. 8.

¹⁴ Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Dedication Program, Diocese of Little Rock Archives, Little Rock, Arkansas, August 27, 1944; "First Mass Said at Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine, Winslow, August 27th," *The Guardian*, September 1, 1944. 1.

¹⁵ "Rectory at Winslow to be Blessed After Mass, October 15," *The Guardian*, October 13, 1944. 7.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*; Original blueprints from May 12, 1944 show the bell tower and stone porch with buttressed walls as part of the design, but the article from *The Guardian* show a photo of the church from October of 1944 with an erect, yet unfinished, porch and no bell tower.

¹⁷ "New Statue to be Unveiled Sunday at Winslow Shrine," *The Guardian*, June 15, 1945. 6.

¹⁸ "New Home for Ladies Opens at Winslow," *The Guardian*, May 24, 1946. 2.

¹⁹ "Dedication of Shrine at Winslow Next Sunday Marks Great Generosity," *The Guardian*, August 23, 1946. 1.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

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remembered as one of the finest demonstrations of the faith of the Catholics in Arkansas. Many hundreds of pilgrims were on hand for the full day's ceremonies."²¹ The pilgrimage drew hundreds of devotees again the following year from Arkansas and neighboring states. The parish also offered lodging in the Little Flower Hall for infirmed Catholics that wanted to attend. *The Guardian* also advertised all the lodging available in the area in preparation for the visitors. The new pastor of the parish, Father Joseph Costa, even announced that people could bring tents and cots to sleep on the grounds of the shrine.²²

The success of the event led to even greater numbers of pilgrims in the years that followed. According to an article ahead of the 1951 pilgrimage, "Each year, the number attending this Pilgrimage increases by hundreds, as also the number of special graces and favors obtained."²³ That year, around 1,200 people made the pilgrimage.²⁴ The shrine began to extend its influence beyond the Diocese of Little Rock, gaining some national attention. In July of 1951, the Marian statue on the lawn appeared on the cover of a national Catholic publication called *Immaculate Magazine*, which featured a story about the shrine and pilgrimage.²⁵ People from across the nation began to seek out the shrine for personal pilgrimages. It was noted that, "Great interest in this Shrine, especially the Annual Pilgrimage, has been shown not only in the Little Rock Diocese and in those nearby, but many people from far and wide in the United States are enrolled as friends of the Shrine and try to make it an annual visit."²⁶

For Arkansas Catholics, the event became a tradition. By 1952, the August pilgrimage to Our Lady of the Ozarks allowed parishioners of the Diocese to regularly express devotion to Mary and to interact with their Bishop—Albert Fletcher by that time. The Diocese began offering a round-trip bus shuttle from St. Edward Catholic Church to encourage people within the Diocese to attend.²⁷ The following year, it was reported that people who took the bus "so thoroughly enjoyed the beautiful trip [and] had such a good time going in a group (and of course received valuable spiritual benefits), that this year they want to arrange for two bus-loads instead of one."²⁸ The majority of the pilgrims were from western Arkansas, closer to the area, but *The Guardian* also continued to advertise local lodges, encouraging would-be travelers to make the trip for leisure in addition to spiritual devotion, with one headline reading, "Plan a Vacation Near Our Lady's Shrine in the Ozarks at Winslow".²⁹

The Diocese advertised the event heavily each year, focusing especially on its unique spiritual offerings in association with Mary as a "mediatrix" for spiritual graces, according to church

²¹ "Hundreds Join in First Pilgrimage to Our Lady of the Ozark Shrine," *The Guardian*, September 2, 1949. 8.

²² "Ozark Pilgrimage Plans in Final Stages; Many Expected," *The Guardian*, August 11, 1950. 6; "Ozark Shrine Pilgrimage," *The Guardian*, September 1, 1950. 1.

²³ "Third Annual Pilgrimage to Winslow 'Lady of Ozark' Shrine, August 26," *The Guardian*, August 3, 1951. 2.

²⁴ *The Guardian*, September 7, 1951. 1.

²⁵ "Third Annual Pilgrimage to Winslow 'Lady of Ozark' Shrine, August 26," *The Guardian*, August 3, 1951. 2.

²⁶ "Pilgrimage to Shrine of Our Lady of the Ozarks August 26; New Announcement on Reservations," *The Guardian*, August 17, 1951. 3.

²⁷ "Diocesan Pilgrimage, Aug. 24, Is a Demonstration of Homage to Our Lady of the Ozarks," *The Guardian*, August 22, 1952. 2.

²⁸ "Pilgrimage Bus Leaves Capitol August 23," *The Guardian*, August 14, 1953. 2.

²⁹ *The Guardian*, August 14, 1953. 2.

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doctrine.³⁰ The pilgrimage in 1954 held particular significance for two reasons. The first was the ten-year anniversary of the founding of the church building. The second was that the Pope had declared 1954 to be a Marian Year for all Catholics to renew their devotion to Mary and honor the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. The Bishop made an official announcement imploring Arkansas Catholics from every parish to participate:

Although this Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of the Ozarks is intended to make up only a small part of your Marian Year Devotions, it is nevertheless very important as a Diocesan-wide event. It is an opportunity to demonstrate publicly our love for Our Lord's mother...

I hope every parish and mission will be represented. What a joy it will be for all of us if we can make those Ozark Mountains re-echo with the sound of many voices raised in hymns and prayers in honor of the Mother of God!

But I will not be satisfied merely for each parish and mission to be represented. I hope every Catholic will be represented!

Of course, I know that every single Catholic cannot make the pilgrimage in person. Where that is not possible, he should be represented by those members of the parish or mission who can make the pilgrimage.

In order to make this representation more personal, I ask that pastors post lists in the vestibule of their churches where parishioners who cannot make the pilgrimage personally can inscribe their names. These lists should be brought to the Shrine by those making the pilgrimage from the parish or mission. The lists will be placed on the altar of Our Lady of the Ozarks and the names they bear will be remembered especially in the Masses and prayers said that day at the Shrine.³¹

Father Costa noted that he expected the 1954 pilgrimage to surpass all other years in attendance and also that more people would make private pilgrimages.³² The official event offered pilgrims a special chance to view a relic of Mary's veil and it ultimately drew 3,000 devotees, more than doubling any of its previous years.³³

After that year, the number of visitors at the pilgrimage never reached that level though *The Guardian* continued to advertise the event. After having initiated the annual event, Father Costa's last pilgrimage to oversee was in 1959. Father Dino Giampaolo was appointed as the interim pastor of the shrine on August 27, 1959, a week after the pilgrimage.³⁴ A new long-term pastor, Father Samuel Fayad, was appointed on November 30, 1959, and he directed the pilgrimage events of 1960.³⁵ The Bishop continued to be the primary celebrant of the pilgrimage

³⁰ "Pilgrimage to Ozark Shrine Next Sunday, August 23, is Expected to Attract Another Great Throng," *The Guardian*, August 21, 1953. 2.

³¹ "Official Announcement: Bishop's Office," *The Guardian*, August 6, 1954. 2.

³² "Sixth Annual and Marian Year Diocesan Pilgrimage to Ozark Shrine Planned for August 22," *The Guardian*, August 6, 1954. 1.

³³ "Three Thousand Can Look Back on Ozark Rites," *The Guardian*, September 3, 1954. 3.

³⁴ "Official Announcement," *The Guardian*, August 28, 1959. 1.

³⁵ "Official Announcement," *The Guardian*, December 4, 1959. 1; "Stigmatine Fathers to Direct Devotions for Ozark Pilgrims," *The Guardian*, July 22, 1960. 1.

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going forward. By 1961, the church only boasted around 25 regularly attending parishioners and by 1962, a little over 700 people made the trip to the shrine.³⁶ As the numbers of devotees dwindled, the Diocese began to rearrange the leadership for Our Lady of the Ozarks. The following year, Bishop Fletcher invited the Glenmary Fathers, who traditionally worked in mission areas, to take charge of the parish. Father Venantius Preske became the new pastor in the summer of 1963 and assumed control of a 2,100 square-mile mission area.³⁷ With this large responsibility, Preske found it difficult to continue the August pilgrimage. The fifteenth annual pilgrimage to the shrine in 1963 was the last one to be held during the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. *The Guardian* noted the reasoning for the change:

The shrine of Our Lady in the picturesque Boston Mountain range between Fort Smith and Fayetteville, has long been a place of pilgrimage for both Arkansans and out-of-state visitors.

The new devotion for visitors is a private pilgrimage which may be made at any time of the year. It replaces a public pilgrimage that has been held on a Sunday in August for the past 15 years.

The Rev. Venantius Preske, pastor of the shrine church which includes a vast mission area, said this new arrangement will make it possible for more people to make the pilgrimage and at the same time provide him with more time for his missionary work.³⁸

The article continued to list the requirements for completing a private pilgrimage, but it did not address the feeling among devotees within the Diocese about the event's cancellation. Later, in 1995, one parishioner from Van Buren, Arkansas, named Kathleen Weinsinger, noted:

I often think of the yearly summer pilgrimage that our family and many others of the diocese made and celebrated under the guidance of our much respected Albert L. Fletcher, Bishop of Little Rock.

I have never understood the thinking behind the decision to cancel it. I remember reading that those wanting to, could make their own pilgrimage. I wonder how many people have—I know we haven't!³⁹

Although the shrine did not attract as many pilgrims in 1964, several continued to make the trip. Preske reported in October of 1964 that "more than 50 persons have made the private pilgrimage at the shrine since it was officially approved by His Excellency Bishop Albert L. Fletcher in August."⁴⁰ It continued to draw visitors from as far as Kansas and Virginia, while Arkansas Catholics trickled in slowly.⁴¹ The following year, the parish again could not offer an organized

³⁶ "Ozarks Shrine Prepares for Annual Pilgrimage," *The Guardian*, August 18, 1961. 3; *The Guardian*, August 31, 1962. 10.

³⁷ "Glenmary in Arkansas," *The Guardian*, July 5, 1963. 1; "1st Mass to be Celebrated in Huntsville, Ark.," *The Guardian*, October 4, 1963. 1.

³⁸ "Ozarks Vacationers Take Advantage of New Shrine Devotion," *The Guardian*, August 14, 1964. 16.

³⁹ "Shrine Still Open," *Arkansas Catholic*, October 28, 1995. 10.

⁴⁰ "Pilgrims Visiting Ozarks Shrine," *The Guardian*, October 9, 1964. 6.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

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public pilgrimage. Bishop Fletcher wrote a letter to parishioners to explain the decision, citing Father Preske's immense work in his large mission area in northwest Arkansas. After urging people to continue the practice of private pilgrimage to the shrine, the Bishop also mentioned his hopes for future diocesan events, writing, "After the many past years when we have had the public pilgrimage, Father Preske and I are both determined to continue it in the future as a means of showing special honor to our Blessed Mother..."⁴² He also mentioned that a new assistant priest was assigned to help Father Preske with his many responsibilities, but that he could not arrive in time to help plan an August pilgrimage.⁴³

The original plan was to continue the August pilgrimage in 1966, but in addition to the continuation of private pilgrimage, the shrine began offering a public pilgrimage program in May around the Feast of the Queenship of Mary, the first of which was held on May 29—Pentecost Sunday. Conveniently, the traditional crowning of the Marian statue on the front lawn of the church during past pilgrimages suited the new celebration as "Traditionally, faith in Mary's Queenship is shown by Catholics by crowning a statue of Mary in a public ceremony sometime in May. Crowning the statue of the Virgin of the Smile, the central feature of the Shrine, will be a part of the pilgrimage ceremony."⁴⁴ In addition to this date change, the remainder of the decade brought the passing of familiarity in other ways at Our Lady of the Ozarks. In 1968, the interior of the church was renovated, partly in adherence to decrees made during the Second Vatican Council, which ended in December of 1965. The walls were covered in paneling, new flooring was installed, a baptistery was built, and the altar area was reversed.

After the May pilgrimage was established, the shrine continued to offer various organized diocesan pilgrimages throughout the twentieth century, including a regular October rosary pilgrimage, which was established in 1986.⁴⁵ In 1999, the shrine was listed on a list of Jubilee Year pilgrimage sites, during which the shrine revisited its late-August diocese-wide event.⁴⁶ Most recently, the parish has continued to hold an annual October Pilgrimage and added a May event for Arkansas Catholics to attend.⁴⁷

During the Second World War, Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine was established as a more accessible center of worship for Catholics in the Boston Mountains between the more prominent areas of Fayetteville and Fort Smith. With its connection to a venerated nineteenth century saint from France, the church quickly became the most popular pilgrimage site in the Diocese of Little Rock beginning in 1949 with the first annual Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Pilgrimage. That popularity reached its zenith in 1954 during an international Marian Year of devotion, when 3,000 people made the diocesan pilgrimage. Although the event was cancelled in 1964, the shrine remained a site for personal pilgrimages and, later, continued its organized pilgrimages to

⁴² "Private Pilgrimages to Winslow Announced by Bishop," *The Guardian*, August 6, 1965. 2.

⁴³ *Ibid.* 1.

⁴⁴ "Public Pilgrimage to Ozarks Shrine is Scheduled for Pentecost Sunday," *The Guardian*, May 6, 1966. 1.

⁴⁵ "Pilgrimage for Rosary Slated," *Arkansas Catholic*, October 2, 1987. 3.

⁴⁶ "15 Churches Decreed as Pilgrimage Sites," *Arkansas Catholic*, October 30, 1999. 1; Kathy Neal, "Celebrating the Jubilee on Pilgrimage," *Arkansas Catholic*, June 17, 2000. 12.

⁴⁷ Maryanne Meyerriecks, "Our Lady of the Ozarks Welcomes Devotion," *Arkansas Catholic*, November 2, 2017. Online at <https://www.arkansas-catholic.org/news/article/5357/Our-Lady-of-the-Ozarks-welcomes-devotion>

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be attended by hundreds of Arkansas Catholics each year. As one of the Diocese of Little Rock's only shrines and as a primary pilgrimage site for Arkansas Catholics for seven decades, Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **statewide significance** under **Criterion A**.

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"Pilgrimage to Shrine of Our Lady of the Ozarks August 26; New Announcement on Reservations," *The Guardian*, August 17, 1951.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other
- Name of repository: _____

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Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): Site #CW0390-CW0392

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.5

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 35.761355 | Longitude: -94.116602 |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

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Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Parcel #001-20841-000-E (See map.)

Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine resides in the center of a property on the northern slope of Mt. Gaylor, on the west side of Highway 71 in Crawford County, Arkansas. Stone markers on the southeast and northeast corners of the lawn delineate the northern and southern boundaries, while the eastern boundary is the highway and the western boundary extends slightly beyond the tree line behind the church. The Washington County line is located around 0.2 miles north of the property, and the town of Winslow, AR is 3 miles northwest.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This boundary includes the property owned by the Diocese of Little Rock and includes all historically significant buildings, objects, and features of the property.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: David Collins, Graduate Assistant, edited by Ralph S. Wilcox, National Register & Survey Coordinator

organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

street & number: 1100 North St.

city or town: Little Rock state: AR zip code: 72201

e-mail: ralph.wilcox@arkansas.gov

telephone: (501) 324-9787

date: January 22, 2019

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine

City or Vicinity: Winslow vic.

County: Crawford County

State: Arkansas

Photographer: David Collins

Date Photographed: September 10, 2018, and November 19, 2018

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Church east and south façades, looking northwest.
- 2 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Church south façade, looking northwest.
- 3 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Church south and west façades, looking northeast.
- 4 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Church west façade, looking east.
- 5 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Church north façade, looking southwest.
- 6 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Church north and east façades, looking southwest.
- 7 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Church cornerstone, looking west.
- 8 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Church sanctuary, looking east.
- 9 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Church sanctuary, looking west.
- 10 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Church sanctuary, looking southeast.

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- 11 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Church prayer chapel with the Virgin of the Smile statue, looking southwest.
- 12 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Church south façade and the St. Therese the Little Flower Statue, looking northwest.
- 13 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Christ Crucified Statue, looking west.
- 14 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Christ Resurrected Statue, looking northwest.
- 15 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Our Lady of the Smile Statue, looking west.
- 16 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine St. Therese the Little Flower Statue, looking southwest.
- 17 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Parish Hall east and north facades, looking southwest.
- 18 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Parish Hall north façade, looking southwest.
- 19 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Well House north of the Parish Hall, looking southwest.
- 20 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Parish Hall west façade, looking southeast.
- 21 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Parish Hall west façade, looking northeast.
- 22 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Parish Hall south façade, looking northeast.
- 23 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Rectory east façade, looking west.
- 24 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Rectory north façade, looking south.
- 25 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Rectory west façade, looking southeast.
- 26 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Rectory south and east façades, looking northwest.
- 27 of 27 . Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine Well House west of the Rectory, looking northeast.

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Figure 1: Parcel Map for the Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



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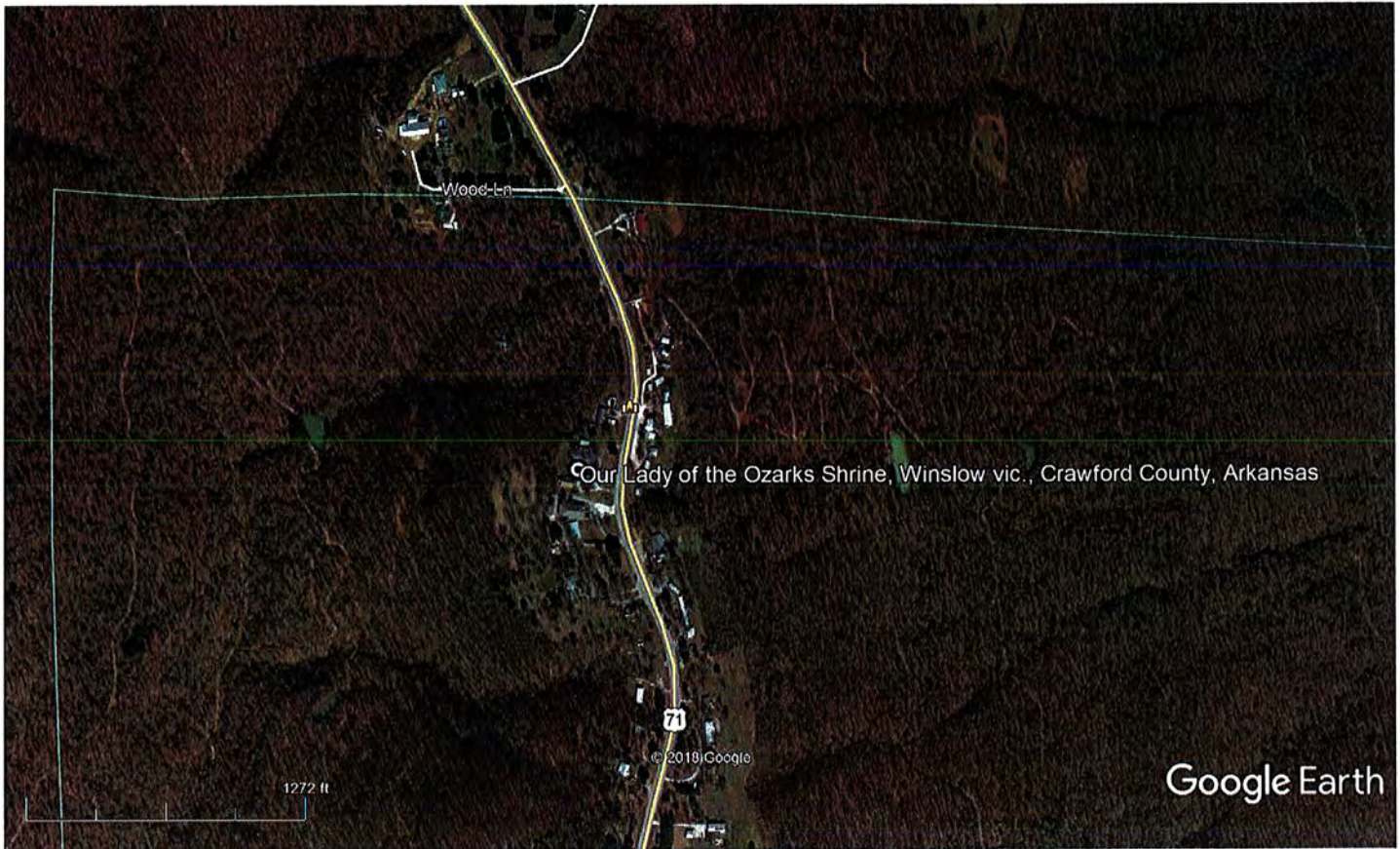
Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine

Winslow vic., Crawford County, AR

35.761355 -94.116602



North



|-----1272'-----|

Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine

Winslow vic., Crawford County, AR

35.761355 -94.116602



North

Our Lady of the Ozarks Shrine
Winslow vic., Crawford County, Arkansas

↑
North

Christ the Crucified
Statue

Christ Resurrected
Statue

Well House

Rectory

Church

Well House

Parish Hall

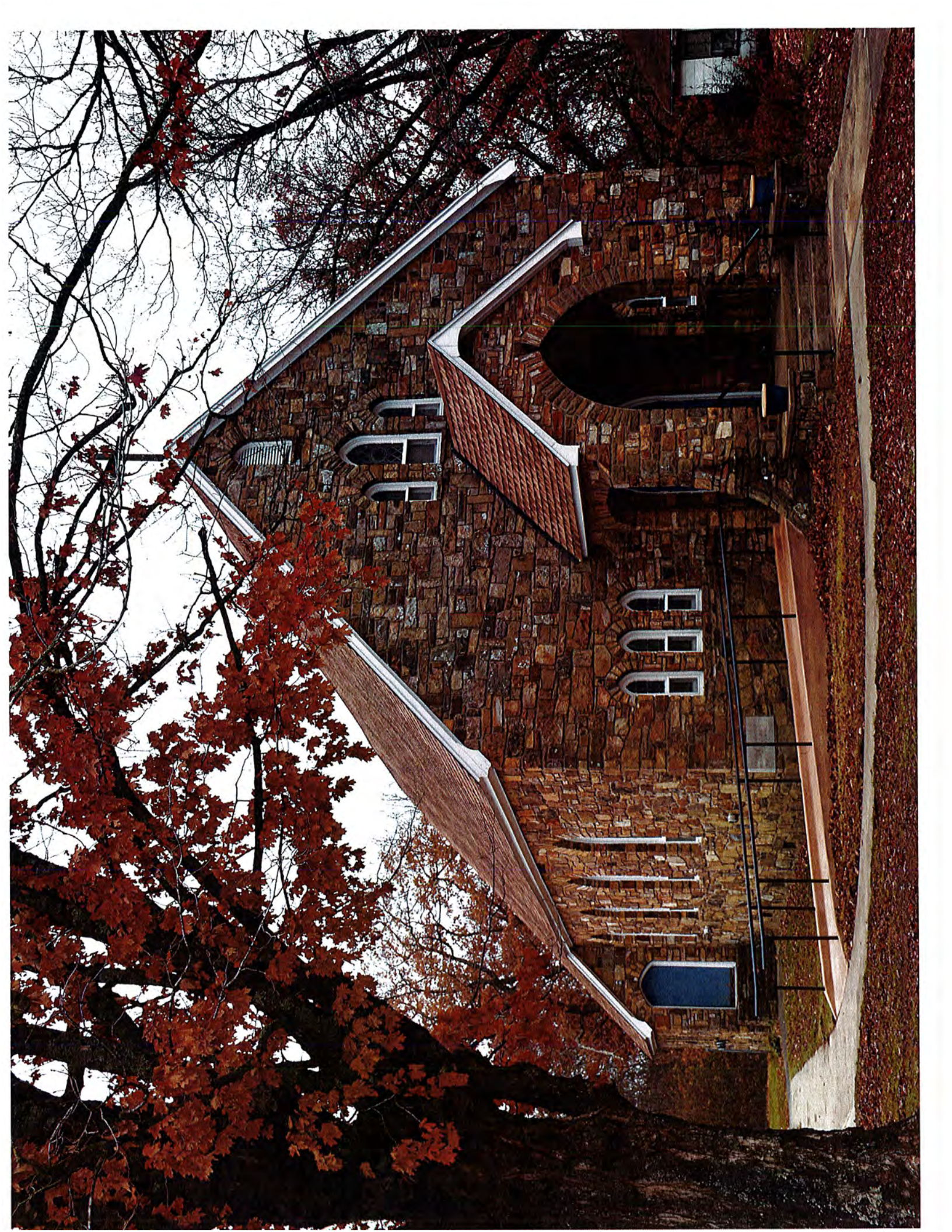
Our Lady of the
Smile Statue

St. Therese the
Little Flower Statue

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Google Earth

115 ft













OUR LADY OF THE OZARKS SHRINE
DEDICATED AUG. 25, 1946 BY THE

MOST REV. JOHN B. MORRIS D.D.
BISHOP OF LITTLE ROCK







































