

SERVICES AND MASSES

VISITING HOURS: _____

OCTOBER THRU APRIL
9 A.M. - 4 P.M.

MAY THRU SEPTEMBER
9 A.M. - 6 P.M.

DAILY MASS: _____

11 A.M. DAILY
MONDAY THRU SATURDAY

SUNDAY MASS: _____

12:00
(NOON)

EL SANTUARIO GIFT SHOP

All proceeds from profits at our gift shop are used for the church. We appreciate your purchases and support.

"A POEM FROM A BLIND MAN" AND "EL POSITO"

I am blind, Traveled many miles to Chimayo, a place I love, in its silence and peace I left this gift a poem.

If you are a stranger, if you are weary from the struggles in life, whether you have a handicap, whether you have a broken heart, follow the long mountain road, find a home in Chimayo. It's a small Spanish town settled many years ago by people with a friendly hand. Their culture still lives today, they will tell stories about miracles in the land. Since 1813 Santuario is the key to all good, a Church built as graceful as a flower swaying in the summer breeze, nested in a valley protected by wild-berry trees.

In the dusty roads of Chimayo, little children with brown faces smile, majestic mountain tops rule over the virgin land. When the day is done the sun falls asleep without regret, sleeping in the twinkle of a starry, starry night. It's that old country feeling in Chimayo I can't forget. In all the places in the world I have been, this must be heaven

C. Mendosa, Las Cruces, New Mexico

"Santuario de Chimayo"

P.O. Box 235
Chimayo, NM 87522
505-351-4889
505-351-4360

El Santuario (The Shrine) was built between 1814 and 1816. The "miraculous" crucifix of Our Lord of Esquipulas was found around 1810. There is no written testimony concerning the apparition of Our Lord in the Chimayo area. What we have is tradition passed from one generation to another by the people of El Potrero. Here is one account of a "true" story as told by the storyteller.

One tradition recalls that during Holy Week on the night of Good Friday, Don Bernardo Abeyta, who was a member in good standing of the Hermandad de Nuestro Padre Jesús el Nazareno (Penitentes) was performing the customary penances of the Society around the hills of El Potrero. Suddenly he saw a light springing from one of the slopes of the hills near the Santa Cruz river. Don Bernardo went to the spot and noticed that the shining light was coming from the ground. He started to dig with his bare hands, and there he found a Crucifix. He left it there and called the neighbors to come and venerate the precious finding. A group of men was sent to notify the priest, Fr. Sebastian Alvarez at Santa Cruz.

Upon hearing the extraordinary news, the priest and people set out for Chimayo. When they arrived at the place where the Crucifix was, Fr. Sebastian picked it up and carried it in a joyful procession back to the church. Once in the church, the Crucifix was placed in the niche of the main altar. The next morning, the Crucifix was gone, only to be found in its original location. A second procession was organized and the Crucifix was returned to Santa Cruz, but once again it disappeared. The same thing happened a third time. By then, everyone understood that El Señor de Esquipulas wanted to remain in Chimayo, and so a small chapel was built.

El Santuario was a privately owned chapel until the year 1929. At that time several people from Santa Fe bought it and turned it over to the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.

A more detailed history of El Santuario is available in "EL SANTUARIO on the High Road to Taos" available at the Santuario Gift Shop.

Photography - Ed Taylor/Santa Fe

El Santuario de Chimayo



"LOURDES OF AMERICA"

A place to pray and meditate
and to experience peace of
mind as well as of body.



EL SANTUARIO has five beautiful Reredos (series of sacred paintings). Two on either side of the church as you enter and one behind the main altar.

The Reredo behind the main altar is the largest of the five Reredos. It was painted by Molleno also known by the nickname of, The Chili Painter.

Top row left to right: There is a cross with the lance and rod with a sponge, a heart and the four wounds. The center has the Franciscan emblem showing the cross over which the arms of Christ and St. Francis cross each other, the crown of thorns and three nails. There is a cross which has been said to be the Jerusalem cross. However, it differs quite a bit from it. There are some geometric designs all around the niche where the big Crucifix rests. At the bottom left, there is a stalk of wheat that symbolizes the Bread of Life and on the right a bunch of grapes, symbol of consecrated wine or blood of Christ. Attached to the Reredo there is a carved and painted tabernacle.

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

El Santuario has been recognized as having historical value by the U.S. Department of the Interior. In 1970 it was designated as a "National Historic Landmark". The bronze plaque designating it as such is prominently displayed in the vestibule of the church.



REREDOS

In addition to the Reredo behind the main altar, El Santuario has four additional Reredos. There are two located on either side of the church as you enter.



The first Reredo to the left as you enter was probably painted by José Aragon of nearby Cordova. It contains three rows of three figures each, topped by a painting of God the Father.

The second Reredo on the left side of the church was also probably painted by José Aragon. The three men at the top represent the Holy Trinity.



The third Reredo on the right side of the church, nearest the altar was painted by Miguel Aragon. At the top is a white dove representing the Holy Spirit.

The fourth Reredo on the right nearest the entrance was painted by Molleno (the Chili Painter). At the top is a carved painted shell design.



A more detailed description of the Reredos can be found in the publication "El Santuario on the High Road to Taos" available at the Santuario Gift Shop.



BULTOS:

Of all the bultos (carvings) in El Santuario, there is one of particular significance for the people of Chimayo: a man on horseback representing St. James, better known in the village as "El Señor Santiago." The devotion to El Señor Santiago is very popular, not only in Chimayo, but in many other places in New Mexico, South America and Spain.



"LOURDES OF AMERICA"

El Santuario has been called the "Lourdes of America". No one seems to know exactly how this came about. However, there are testimonies that the extraordinary has occurred. Fr. Sebastian Alvarez in his letter to the Episcopal See of Durango, dated November 16, 1813, expressed his feelings of the people coming from afar to seek cures for their ailments and the spreading of the fame of their cures, induced many more faithful to come in pilgrimage. He did not mention any specific fact, but something was there. El Santuario has been a place of worship from the beginning – a place to pray, to thank, to ask, to meditate and to experience peace of mind as well as of body.

In time, the mass media paid attention to the little Shrine in the Sangre de Cristo mountains. Newspapers from Chicago, Denver, New York and Los Angeles; Time and Newsweek magazines have all taken it upon themselves to inform the public about the Shrine. This has resulted in a considerable flow of mail requesting information about the Shrine. People come to the Santuario in the thousands, close to 300,000 a year. They come to worship the Almighty, to ask for peace in the world and in their hearts, to fulfill a promise, to feel the healing touch of God.

Pictures, statues, or other items left at the Santuario, will be removed from the chapel at the discretion of the Pastor.