

Santa Fe, City of Faith

The mystery of History can be better than a novel with clues leading to your ancestors. Many times we visit a city, town or village without even thinking what life was like for the founders. Don Pedro Ribera Ortega this year's Adelantado award winner, has spent his life teaching and we thank him for graciously being our guide to teach us a little history about Santa Fe. Don Pedro made us aware that he is going back to Spain to continue his research on "La Conquistadora" in October.

He asks for prayers that his research will be successful and that he will be able to find her origins. The olivewood Our Lady was carved from dates back to the 1300's and the design is thought to be Palestinian. The base of the statue has a slanted pole by which a pole could be inserted and thought to be used as standard. The arms of La Conquistadora were broken in 1692. It is speculated that maybe a standard bearer must have fallen in battle causing Our Lady's arm to break. The diamond necklace worn by La Conquistadora was an anonymous gift received in the mail. The Royal Crown worn by Our Lady is made of three different kinds of gold from jewelry donated by the Faithful to provide a crown for Our Lady in 1960. The gold was melted down; the emeralds, rubies and other precious stones were used in the design. She wears her crown in the June 24th procession when she is taken to Rosario Chapel. La Conquistadora has a wardrobe of one hundred fifty gowns.

Pedro suggested that a wonderful experience is to attend the procession and Mass when La Conquistadora is returned from Rosario Chapel to the Cathedral July 1st at 4:00 p.m. Anyone interested in attending?

Don Pedro also asked us to help pray the Novena. An effort is underway to get all the communities in New Mexico to pray the Novena. If you are interested I have copies.

Did you know that the Cathedral doors tell the Colonial story? The artist for the door panels is Donna E. Quasthoff. She begins the first panel in 1539 with Franciscan Fray Marcos de Niza and the Spanish story. Make sure to pick up a the wonderful pamphlet describing each panel

Did you know that Juan Paez Hurtado was buried in front of the chapel altar? The paintings on the altar are from Mexico 1770 by the famous artist Miguel Cabera whose paintings are all over Mexico and Europe.

In the chapel Christ Crucified is also from Mexico and thought to be in the 1700's. The painting of the three temptations of Christ were painted in 1716-1720. As are the paintings at the front of the church.

In the small show case there is a small image of the Christ Child that came from Spain and is thought to be from the 1800's. The pillar in the showcase is representative of the pillar from the first Christian Church built for Our Lady in Zaragoza. A decorative chest

is filled with dirt from La Vega de Granada. Our Lady of Pillars feast is on October 12 which is also Columbus's feast day.

Pedro took us on a tour of the plaza after explaining the three point defense system of Rome and showed us maps of the original city boundaries and construction of the plaza according to Spanish law. The presidio began behind the Place the stretched to where the Scottish Rite Temple currently is situated. The location for Presidio Military Chapel on the south side of the plaza was pointed out. The altar at Cristo Rey came from the military chapel. The Cristo Rey building is the largest adobe building in the United States.

Next stop was Sena Plaza. It was built in 1795 and once again was built with defense system in mind. The doors on the north side open to the corrals where the live stock was kept. The second story on the west side was used as a dance hall; this is also where the Territorial government held its meeting. Visitors from different parts of the world have been interviewed here. Plaques have been put down in this area designating where various homes had existed.

An interesting fact Don Pedro mentioned is the construction design of the Fine Arts building. Five different Indian Pueblos are modeled into this architectural design. Does anyone know which pueblos were used in the design?