

## Sketch of Immaculate Conception Church

The Church of the Immaculate Conception is under the guidance and jurisdiction of the Cathedral Parish at the present time, but is growing very fast and we predict in the near future it will be a separate parish. Father Michael Raimondo has accomplished wonderful success since he took charge about two years ago. The chapel was built by the Franciscan Fathers with a little help from the Italian people (about \$400.00 in all). They selected the location because it was away from the other parishes. Father Soldi, an Italian Franciscan Father, was in charge until February 1905, when he was called by his superiors to fill another vacancy. As it was the Right Rev. Bishop Conaty's idea to have an Italian priest in charge (this church being attended only by Italian people), and not being able to obtain

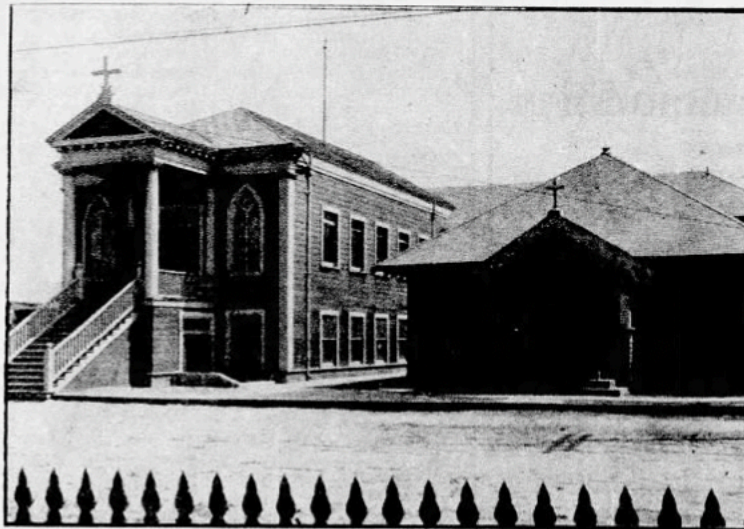
ones of the congregation. This chapel or hall will accommodate about 120 children. The large yard was fenced and outer buildings erected for bath and change rooms, so that with the large basement the children have ample play ground and a place to study during the week and especially Sunday afternoons, when Father Raimondo gives special instruction in catechism. There is a regular attendance of about 150 children, often the attendance has been over 200. The school is in charge of the Italian Sisters of the Sacred Heart Convent. Father Raimondo has not been able to carry out his plans and ideas in full on account of his health. Last winter he was so sick he was not expected to live, but has since regained his health and strength and as he says feels more able to do the work he has

finished his classical course in Vercelli and then went to the University of Turin where he studied for two years, expecting to obtain his diploma as professor of literature and of philosophy, but contrary to all expectations of relatives and friends he felt called to study for the priesthood and went to the Seminary of Turin, where he



FATHER MICHAEL RAIMONDO

studied for one year continuing his university course. Then after two more years in Cottolengo Institute he accepted a position as teacher in the Institute, taking a class of young people in Latin, Greek and Italian, while continuing his own studies. He was ordained to the priesthood in the parish church of San Giulio d'Orta, by Bishop Mattia Vicaris, of Novaro, September 19th, 1903. Father Raimondo was then appointed a professor in the little seminary at San Giulio, where he taught Italian, French, Latin and the sciences to the older children. After one year there he obtained permission to carry on regular church work and was appointed Vicar of the largest parish in Novara, San Martino, but his ambition was to give missions and preach to the masses, so obtaining permission to assist in the work of the Salesian Fathers of Don Bosco he, with Father Borgino, sailed for America, arriving in New York on the 23rd of November, 1904. After giving mission in the eastern states for a number of months he came to Los Angeles and was appointed by Bishop Conaty to take charge of the Church of the Immaculate Conception. Since Father Raimondo has taken charge of the church here he has made many needed improvements and has endeared himself to all his parishioners, especially the younger ones. His work among the children in Italy seems to have fitted him especially for his work here. If his health continues to improve so that he can carry out the many plans his Lordship the Bishop has given him the permission to do we predict another large parish to be added to our city by another year.



CHURCH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

another Franciscan Father speaking Italian, his Lordship gave the Very Rev. Michael Gorghino the General Superior of the Salesian Fathers of Don Bosco in America, who was conducting a mission here, the right to select a priest to take charge of the work, and he sent Father Michael Raimondo. Father Raimondo was selected because of his ability to interest the younger people in the church work as his past years since graduating and after being ordained have been with children and younger people. Father Raimondo found it would be necessary to enlarge the church or build a place where the young people could meet to study and be instructed. The Bishop allowed the Father to build a parish home, also a large hall to be used as a club room, a place for social gatherings, and as a chapel where the children and young people could hear mass without interfering with the older

planned. As most of the children under the Father's guidance are from poor families, nearly all working, mostly selling papers, it is hard at times to keep them together, but he has and is doing a great work among his people. Through the kindness of Bishop Conaty this church is clear of debt, the valuation of the chapel and improvements is about \$12,000.00, all but about \$4000.00 of it has been expended since Father Raimondo took charge.

### REV. MICHAEL RAIMONDO

Rev. Michael Raimondo, pastor in charge of the Church of the Immaculate Conception, was born in Alba, Italy, August 14, 1877, his father being an officer in the Italian army. The family moved from place to place during his early boyhood on account of his father's position. He studied and