

5/4/18

Dear Mr. Sarmiento and CMF members,

I hope this letter finds you in good spirits. I am writing to you today to thank you so much for giving us the opportunity to visit the San Gabriel Mission. It was an amazing trip filled with lots of learning. It all started with Ms. Shauna who was very thoughtful, considerate, and welcoming to all of us. She organized some docents to take us on a tour of the mission. Soon after arriving we began our tour. We had an amazing group of docents guide us through. Our particular one, Ms. Helen, was extra special. She was very patient and so knowledgeable. She happened to be a member and descendant of the California Indians that lived and worked there when the mission was functioning as such back then. She told us many stories, one of them included, was about her grandmother who was the key keeper for the Mission in her time.

As we went through with the tour, the students got a first hand look and experienced what life would have been like back then. We had learned about it in the classroom and so experiencing in person was enriching for them. Our students got to hear and see where and how the people made candles. They saw and heard about how they worked with the cowhide to make leather goods. They visited the church and got to hear how they celebrated mass, how and where they baptized, and the history behind all of that. They also got to see and hear about how and where the priests prepared to celebrate mass. They were also taken to the kitchen area where the meals were prepared in large pots in order to feed all the people that lived and worked there. The students were very surprised to hear that back then they referred to the "pozole" soup we know now as "popcorn soup". They all laughed when they heard that. They also enjoyed ringing the bell that they used back then to summon the people to come eat. The students were also taken to the cemetery and shown where the important high-class priests and dignitaries were buried. Our guide shared some special stories about them as well. These were stories of levitation that left our students with their mouths and eyes open. They also learned about the aqueduct that provided the people with the much-needed water supply back then. The students also got the chance to enter into the museum that houses old important documents, photos, and other artifacts from that period of time.

All in all, this trip gave our students a very enriching experience and it was made possible because of you. I could not thank you enough for making this happen. This experience is one that, if it weren't for you and your generosity, it would have never happened. I am almost certain that our students, for many reasons, would have not gone on their own. So thank you again from all of us.

Take good care of yourself,

Maribel Vazquez, NBCT
Lucille Roybal-Allard Elementary School

The following are some pictures highlighting parts of our trip.



Learning about the various tools the workers used.



Learning about how to cure the cowhide in order to make leather goods.



At the cemetery learning about the meaning of these religious images.



Learning about the different bells; a way of communication.



Learning about the bell that connects all the missions in California.



A farewell picture with our docent, Helen. She was amazing!



Learning about where and how a child was baptized by the priest.



Learning about what a priest does as he prepares to celebrate mass.



Learning about the various important documents, furniture, and other artifacts about the mission.



Learning about the aqueduct that provided water to the mission.