

Santa Inés



Nineteenth Mission

Founded: September 17, 1804 by Father Estevan Tapis

Named for: Saint Agnes

Location: in the town of Solvang, 3 miles east of U.S. Highway 101

The last mission founded in southern California, Mission Santa Ines completed the mission chain that stretches 650 miles between San Diego and Sonoma. Located in the beautiful Santa Ynez Valley, with miles of fertile land, this mission quickly flourished.

After eight years of continuous building, the quadrangle, with a large adobe church, was complete. But soon after the great earthquake of 1812 hit and most of the church and other buildings were badly damaged. In 1817 the new church, with a campanario beside it, was dedicated.

In order to sustain the mission and its many livestock and crops an elaborate water system was designed. Water was brought from the mountains several miles away.

Despite the beautiful valley around the mission, there were few visitors due to its remoteness from the El Camino Real. It was a long and difficult journey to this mission, so the few travelers that did visit were heartily welcomed. When anyone was spotted coming up the long trail the church bell was quickly rung to signal to everyone that a visitor was approaching. There were special signals to let everyone know if the visitor was a padre, Native American, or white man. Everyone at the mission gathered at the door to greet the visitor.

When secularization was ordered, in 1834, the padres were forced to share residence at the mission with a Mexican settler. During this unhappy period, most of the Native Americans left the mission.

Fortunately, complete control of the mission was returned to the padres in 1843. The Franciscans then opened the first seminary in California, the College of our Lady or Refuge. This was later moved to a different location and the mission was sold to a Mexican settler. Later, when the United States gained control of California, most of the property was returned to the church.

Though never entirely abandoned, the mission buildings were not properly cared for and soon fell into disrepair. In 1904 the new mission pastor, with the help of a niece, spent the next 20 years restoring the mission to much of its original splendor.

Who was this Mission named for? _____

Describe the location of this Mission. _____

How did the remoteness of this Mission affect it? _____

When was secularization ordered? _____

What was done to sustain the Mission? _____
