

# San Gabriel Arcángel



## Fourth Mission

**Founded:** September 8, 1771 by Father Pedro Cambon and Father Angel Somera

**Named for:** Archangel Gabriel

**Location:** on Junipero Street and West Union Drive in the city of San Gabriel

This mission, although one of the most prosperous, was also one of the most difficult missions for the padres assigned there. Located along the well-traveled trails used by travelers from Mexico to Alto (upper) California - and later from eastern United States to the west coast - it was a stop off point for numerous travelers. Many of these were simply weary from long and difficult traveling and only in need of food and temporary shelter; but there were also plenty of unwelcome visitors. The mission was often crowded with the military, whose behavior was usually very disruptive to the missionaries as well as the Native American living within the mission.

In 1775, the mission was moved to a new site. This new site was so prosperous that it became known as "The Queen of the Missions". It produced more wheat than any other mission as well as large crops of corn and beans.

Large herds of cattle provided the means for the highly prized industries of tallow-rendering and soap-making, as well as tanning hides for leather goods. The Native Americans here were also highly skilled weavers and wine makers.

Unique to this mission is the mosque-like appearance of the church. This is believed to be modeled after the Cathedral of Cordova (formerly a mosque) in Spain. The church was begun in 1779 but was not completed until 1805.

When secularization was ordered in 1834 the mission and all its wealth was sadly taken away from the Franciscans. When, in 1843, the Franciscans regained control of the mission, almost nothing was left. Most of the buildings were too damaged for use, and the remaining natives were close to starving.

President Buchanan restored the neglected property to the Catholic Church in 1859. A highlight of the museum there is a collection of canvases believed to be the oldest examples of sacred art done by native California painters.

Who was this Mission named for? \_\_\_\_\_

Explain why it was difficult for the missionaries assigned to this Mission.

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What sacred art is stored in the Mission museum? \_\_\_\_\_

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What was this Mission modeled after? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why do you think it took so long to complete the building of the Mission? \_\_\_\_\_

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