



A Priest's Persuasive Plea

Missionaries like Padre Kino had to report back to their superiors about their progress, challenges, and requests. Padre Kino was known for his optimism. One critic in 1695 said of Kino,

“He saw a forest where there was only mesquite bush,
and a lake where there was a puddle of water.”

Other priests spoke more plainly about the realities of their job which were not always pleasant. In most cases, the reports were meant to persuade the leadership back in Europe to pursue a particular course - to send supplies, to mount an expedition, or to issue an order.

Read Pedro Font's harrowing account. Underline and label on the margin when he uses the following persuasive strategies:

Claim	the main point
Big Names	experts and important people that support your side of the argument
Logos	using logic, numbers, facts, and data to support your argument
Pathos	appealing to your audience's emotions
Ethos	making yourself seem trustworthy and believable
Kairos	building a sense of urgency for your cause
Research	using studies and information to make your argument seem more convincing

Question #1) What does Padre Font finally request from Padre Ximenez?

Question #2) Are you convinced? Respond as Padre Ximenez below:



Very Reverend Father Guardian of the College of Santa Cruz,
Father Diego Ximenez:

My Venerable Father, Superior and Lord:

... I am writing so that you will not be ignorant of what is happening here and because others have urged me to do so ... I predicted this in a letter to the Reverend Father Cartegena on March 24, 1775; and still more clearly in a letter to Father Reyes on August 19, 1775; and even more clearly in a letter to Your Reverence on July 18 of this year of 1776. ...

I now go on to relate the terrible experience I have had, and I tell Your Reverence that I am not one to write nonsense, even though Your Reverence may think it to be that ... I like to speak clearly and do not wish to omit anything that I think about a matter when I consider it important, as I do now ...

Even before I entered my room at about eight in the morning, the hostile Piatos with the Seris and some Apaches (about twenty or thirty at most) fell on that unfortunate pueblo of Santa Magdalena ... They bore arrows, lances, and small oval shields. Some wore tanned hides like the soldiers. All howled in unison and they caused such destruction that they destroyed the pueblo ...

In three assaults, they caused the following damage: in the first assault they seized the few horses I had for my needs and for travelling ... Then they took the few cattle and oxen belonging to the pueblo from the corral beside the house while we looked on, unable to prevent it. Then they began to sack the houses of the Indians and to set fire to them. After this, they retired to the brush for a while in order to secure the cattle and animals they had stolen.

Persuasive Strategy:

Claim
Big Names
Logos
Pathos
Ethos
Kairos
Research



Finally the hostiles returned for the third time. Their intent was to take our lives, for nothing else remained in the pueblo ... Here we were with the fire near, without arms, and with the enemy at the door. This they struck three times with a great rock, making a fairly large hole in the middle ...

Now came the greatest agony, for either we would have to die indoors by fire, which was already beginning to spread to the parlour where I was with my Indians, or else, going outside we would have to give ourselves up to the enemy who would kill us with lances ... I cried to God as best I could, and resigning myself to die, I waited for them to come in and deliver the final blow and end my life. Suddenly the enemy was in retreat. Just at that moment, Indians and others were arriving from San Ignacio to save us....

I suffer a new fright every day ... On Saturday the 23rd, the same enemy fell on the mission of Sáric and left it almost destroyed. So that it may be better said, I will copy what Father President Ramos, minister of that mission, says in a letter which he wrote to Father Diaz and which he sent to me unsealed so that I could read it:

“Dearest brother ... The destruction was complete. They carried off the oxen and cattle; they speared about 200 head of sheep; they set fire to a large part of the pueblo; they killed some and wounded others; some died, suffocated by the smoke ...”

It is hardly possible to leave the house without risk of one's life ... Where will we get the cattle, horses, and other things required for new missions if there are none here to obtain? Where will we get the masons, smiths, and carpenters who are so necessary for the new foundations, if there are hardly

Persuasive Strategy:

Claim
Big Names
Logos
Pathos
Ethos
Kairos
Research



any in this country? ... What muleteer will be found willing to take the needed supplies for those ministers if they have to go through a land where they are under attack and must suffer losses and other misfortunes?

... There remain in my inkwell many things I could still say. I do not say them because what I have already said suffices to make clear the unhappy state of this land and these missions.

For this very reason I now wish to ask the permission of the Reverend Father President, as I also ask it of Your Reverence, to leave this country (and I am not alone in this resolve). I intend to go, if God offers me the chance, not to flee from labor, but rather to save my own life and to be able to keep on working in the service of God and for the conversion of souls when the occasion offers.

Pueblo of San José de Imuris, November 30 of 1776

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pedro Font" followed by a large, stylized flourish.

Father Pedro Font,

Your most reverent subject and useless servant who devotedly venerates you and kisses the hands of Your Reverence.

Persuasive Strategy:

Claim
Big Names
Logos
Pathos
Ethos
Kairos
Research