

## DAILY LIFE IN MISSION ESPADA, 1778



*At the break of dawn a bell rings, arousing the mission Indians to assemble for prayer and religious instruction. An Indian official checks carefully to determine who is absent and why.*

*After church, the mission Indians return to their homes for a breakfast of atole. After breakfast,*

*everyone goes off to his or her assigned work for the day. Men, women, boys, and girls all have different jobs and chores.*

*Some men are building the mission; others are making or repairing equipment. Boys and young men, apprenticed to master carpenters, blacksmiths, or masons, learn a trade while working. Elderly men make arrows for the mission defense force, while swapping stories. Other men practice loading and firing muskets and cannon. Mounted guards protect those working in the labores from frequent raids by enemy tribes. The corn is not yet ready to harvest, so only a few men are farming.*

*While watching the young children, women prepare food or spin wool into yarn. Several gather around an horno to bake. Other women are dying yarn for the men who weave cloth. Elderly women fish or seine the acequia, and tend to the sick. Girls learn the skills needed to be good wives and mothers in Spanish society.*

*All boys and girls learn about Catholicism from the missionary.*

*At noon the bell tolls for prayers and lunch. Lunch is the main meal, consisting of meat and vegetables. Siesta follows while sentries maintain a watch over the community. Comanche have been seen in the region. Mid-afternoon everyone returns to his or her chores.*

*The workday ends in late afternoon with an evening worship service and more religious instruction. The evening meal is atole, a favorite food of the Indians. Supervised recreation fills the time to sunset. Children may play tag or marbles. Some Indians are learning to play the guitar or violin, which are used in worship. Spanish dances are taught as an acceptable form of recreation.*

*Sunset brings an end to the day. Mission Espada is now silent, awaiting a new day.*

*[Words in italics are in the Appendix glossary.]*