Coeur d’Alene’s Old Mission State Park

Coeur d’Alene’s Old Mission State Park is home to Idaho’s oldest standing building, the Mission of the Sacred Heart or Cataldo Mission. The site has a long history associated with various groups, cultures, and religious beliefs. The main story told is the coming together of the Coeur d’Alene Tribe and Jesuit Missionaries. Together they built the Mission and a self-sustaining village with minimal tools and supplies. This story is unique to Idaho and an important part of the history of the Pacific Northwest.

The site is sacred to many different people for many different reasons. The permanent exhibit Sacred Encounters: Father De Smet and the Indians of the Rocky Mountain West is housed within the park visitor center. This Smithsonian-quality exhibit includes video, displays, and artifacts from around the world.

The history of the site is varied and a continuous story of life and historic events. Throughout its rich history, the mission has served many purposes: as a place of worship for Native people; a hospitality and supply station for settlers, miners and military personnel; a working farm; a disembarkation point for boats heading up the Coeur d’Alene River carrying miners and later railroad and pipeline workers; a Jesuit novitiate; a gathering place to sign treaties and resolve issues; and, the site of a labor dispute between union and non-union miners. Many colorful people, cultures and activities converged at this important spiritual, cultural and historic site.

While the functions of the mission overlapped over time, its original purpose has always remained the same: to serve as a place of worship and spiritual connection for members of the Coeur d’Alene Tribe. Thus, this is a living site and the Tribe’s connection to it has continued through the generations despite the nineteenth century creation of a reservation removed from this location. The Sacred Heart Mission is visited annually in tribal celebration and the area is revered as the ancestral homeland for many of today’s reservation families.

Today, Coeur d’Alene’s Old Mission State Park consists of the 1850 mission building, an 1887 parish house, two cemeteries, a 9,000 square foot visitor center and outdoor trails with interpretive panels and audio stations along points of interest on the site. All of these features combined create a fascinating and educational snapshot of historic Idaho and the Native people of the region.

In recognition of its historic significance, the Sacred Heart Mission was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1962 as a National Historic Landmark. Then in 1975, the mission and its surrounding 18-acres were designated a State Heritage Park and a state historic site by the Idaho Department of Parks & Recreation.

Over one hundred thousand visitors from all 50 states and numerous foreign countries visit the park annually, making it the most visited heritage park in the state. More than four thousand school children from eastern Washington, northern Idaho and western Montana visit the mission each year.

Coeur d’Alene’s Old Mission State Park is well known and respected by residents in the region and is a natural draw for tourists. A significant and important vehicle for regional economic development and tourism, the mission and park are considered by many to be the western gateway to the historic Silver Valley.
Field Trips

Coeur d’Alene’s Old Mission: An Educational Experience

In 1962, the U.S. Department of the Interior designated the Old Mission at Cataldo a National Historic Landmark, only one of two such designations, at that time, in the entire state of Idaho. Now it is one of three historic buildings. National Historic Landmarks are nationally significant historic places designated by the Secretary of the Interior because they possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. Preserved because of its cultural and historic significance, Coeur d’Alene’s Old Mission State Park provides a unique opportunity to study the coming together of two different religions and diverse cultures. It also supports a surprising diversity of plants and animals.

Others will be enjoying the visitor center and park resources at the same time as your group. Please remind and encourage your students and chaperones to be respectful and mindful of other park visitors and to speak in quiet voices and be attentive.

Reservations

School groups and other organized educational groups are welcome year round at the park. The bulk of groups can be found at the park beginning the third week in April and through the second week of June. Some groups prefer to come in September and October. Park staff present a brief orientation for arriving groups either at the Visitor Center, Mission, or on the bus depending upon the scheduled activities. Orientation talks include a brief explanation of the significance of Coeur d’Alene’s Old Mission State Park, expected behavior, as well as safety hazards the group may encounter. Reservations can be made by calling 208.682.3814 or emailing the park at old@idpr.idaho.gov. Reservations for visits are final after the park has received the signed Field Trip Sign Off form and a final reservation confirmation email has been sent from the park to the responsible individual. If this form is not received, then there is no reservation for the group.

Fees

School groups entering the park for educational purposes are required to pay $1 per student and $5 per adult. School buses and vehicles are exempt from the entrance fee only if they have exempt plates. If adults, students, or teachers are arriving in vehicles without an exempt plate, they are required to pay the motorized vehicle entrance fee of $5, unless vehicles have an Idaho Passport or Annual State Park Pass properly attached. Fifteen passenger vans, and larger, and non-exempt plate buses are required to pay the motorized vehicle entrance fee of $25.

Facilities

The park and facilities are open year round, seven days a week, excluding major winter holidays. Summer hours, 9 am to 5 pm, are in affect April through September. Winter hours, 10 am to 3 pm, are in place October through March. The historic buildings include the Parish House and Sacred Heart Mission. Exhibits are found in the Parish House and visitor center, including the 5,000 square foot exhibit Sacred Encounters: Father De Smet and the Indians of the Rocky Mountain West. An 18-minute DVD, “House of the Great Spirit”, is available to view, and there are (3) seven-minute videos included in the Sacred Encounters Exhibit. Food, gum and beverages are not allowed in any of the buildings. Restrooms are available at the Visitor Center and a vault toilet is located near the upper parking area. Drinking water is available in the Visitor Center and west of the Sacred Heart Mission. Picnic tables are
located throughout the park for use, please remain as a group in the various areas since more than one school may be on site at a time.

We love students and chaperones to shop in our gift shop during their visit. Please ensure that students enter in small groups accompanied by an adult, who is prepared to assist students with decision making, line monitoring, and paying for items.

The west courtyard has picnic tables and areas where students can eat their lunch and move about. Remember that there are other people using the park and remind your group to be respectful of others.

**Student and Adult Conduct**
The following should be discussed with all group participants prior to their arrival at the park.

The historic buildings and structures are fragile and should not be used to play hide and seek, nor should anyone climb on the Mission columns, or bell tower.

All the natural and cultural features within the park are protected. Collecting of plants, flowers, leaves, animals, or rocks is strictly prohibited. Since walking or climbing on the park and historic features can cause irreversible damage, all visitors to the park areas are required to stay on the paved or gravel walkways/trails unless in the picnic and day use areas. If you have an opportunity to view the wildlife found at the park, use caution and do not disturb the animals. Feeding, handling, or harassing wildlife is prohibited. All litter must be disposed of properly.

The Sacred Encounters Exhibit has many wonderful items on display and some items and displays are very fragile. Groups are expected to be respectful and adhere to appropriate behavior fitting the museum setting, and to stay together. No running, hiding, or goofing off is permitted. Do not let students or chaperones lean on, or tap the cases, video screen, or scrims. The exception is an interactive display that provides a quality learning experience and is designed to be interacted with. **No photography** is allowed within the exhibit, this includes photos taken with cell phones. If unacceptable behavior is observed, the group will be asked to leave the exhibit. Photography is allowed within the Parish House and Mission.

The cemetery headstones are very fragile. **No rubbing** or making relief impressions is allowed. This can cause serious harm to the gravestone. A gravestone rubbing is the practice of placing paper over the stone and rubbing graphite, charcoal, or a crayon over it to transfer an impression of the lettering.

**Safety**
In order to have a safe visit, precautions must be taken. Running, pushing, or horseplay in general can lead to serious accidents and is prohibited along with climbing on stone ledges, historic features, and fences. Please ensure that groups remain together with their adult. There are several ponds that at times have high water and generally there is a good chance of seeing a moose in the park. Keep a safe distance from wildlife and be respectful of animal space, particularly if there are young animals with their mothers. Do not allow the group to access the various ponds, river, and other bodies of water. In the event of an accident, contact the nearest park staff member.

**Group Size and Supervision**
Group size should be limited to a maximum of 25-30 students dependent upon class size. Groups larger than this have difficulty staying together and students may have difficulty hearing the group leader. If
your group is larger than 30 students, plan to divide your group into smaller groups, providing each group with its own leader. Plan ahead and have groups assigned before you come. Groups of twenty or less are needed to enter the exhibit. More than one group can be in the exhibit at one time after the first group has passed through the first module with the 7-minute video. The smaller the group, the more individual students will gain from the experience. There should be one adult for every six to eight students. Leaders and adults must remain with the group at all times.

Weather
The weather at the park can be unpredictable. You may experience all types of weather during your visit. Please plan accordingly and encourage all to dress appropriately for outdoors and indoor activities.

What to Bring
Each member of the group should bring the following: lunch if you plan to eat at the park, a water bottle, warm coat or jacket, and be wearing sturdy shoes or boots (no sandals, flip flops, or open toed shoes). Please note that food, gum, or beverages are not allowed within the historic buildings or the visitor center.

Before the Field Trip
Please visit our park website https://parksandrecreation.idaho.gov/parks/coeur-d-alenes-old-mission and click on the Education Resources tab. Information sheets, vocabulary, and people & places lists are available along with fact sheets and the video “House of the Great Spirit”. Please view this video with your group before your visit as it will not be shown during your time at the park. This will allow the group to become familiar with certain terms and people names. This includes those listed above along with fact sheets for the Cataldo Mission, Parish House, and Sacred Encounters exhibit.

Field Trip – Recommended Itinerary
Because most groups visiting the park have the same amount of time available, the following sample itinerary may be useful.

10:00 am: Arrive at park and use restrooms.

10:15 am
Meet at the upper parking area with all students/chaperones for Orientation with park staff and Mission History. After history presentation divide into groups as necessary.

10:45 am
Group 1: Tour the Visitor Center, view Sacred Encounters: Father De Smet and the Indians of the Rocky Mountain West.

Group 2: Tour the Parish House, grounds, and historic cemeteries.

Park Activities
Lunch
Depart
Site Tour

Background Information
There are eighteen acres surrounding the historic buildings, visitor center, and cemeteries. For safety reasons, we require that students remain in their small supervised groups, and not be allowed to explore the site independently. There are several sloughs and other water areas that are frequented by moose and other animals.

We suggest that you plan your site tour before coming with your students to maximize your time at the park. Please ensure that students and chaperones are respectful of the site, each other, and other park visitors. No running, pushing, or horseplay is allowed in the historic buildings, visitor center, or on the pathways.

The following buildings and areas are part of the site tour. Teachers may schedule a living history presentation given inside the Mission. The Parish House, Main Cemetery, and Sacred Encounters Exhibit are self-guided. Please see the fact sheets for the following:

Mission of the Sacred Heart/Cataldo Mission
Parish House
Sacred Encounter Exhibit
Main Cemetery
The Sacred Heart Mission/Cataldo Mission is located on a hilltop 24 miles east of Coeur d’Alene, Idaho along I-90. It was constructed in 1850-53 by members of the Coeur d’Alene Tribe and Catholic Missionaries. It is Idaho’s oldest standing building. Father Anthony Ravalli, S.J., helped create the design. He had studied literature, philosophy, theology, mathematics, and natural sciences and medicine in Italy before coming to the United States.

The building’s stone foundation was shaped and put into place by hand. Many Coeur d’Alene women and children packed these rocks from a mountain half a mile away. Men hauled trees and cut it into lumber. This lumber was shaped into the dressed timbers and rafters using a broad-axe and an improvised whipsaw. Handmade rope and pulleys lifted the large timbers in place. A hand auger drilled the hole for the wooden pegs to hold the lumber together in a mortise and tenon joint. Willow saplings were fastened to the uprights, woven with grass, and plastered with mud and clay – a process called waddle and daub. Father Ravalli carved and painted the altar and carved two statues with a pen knife. He also painted the glass transom above the front door, his depiction of the Sacred Heart. A village, with many structures, surrounded the graceful Roman Doric style mission, including the restored Parish House.

The Mission measures about 90 feet high and 40 feet wide. The six, square, upright timbers in front are 28 inches square and the two by the altar are 3 feet by 3 feet. All are more than 25 feet long, and were hewn and planed with a broad axe.
The Parish House was the center of the business and social life of Old Mission. It was “home” to priests and brothers of the Society of Jesus, or Jesuits, who served the people of the region. Jesuit priests supervised construction of the first residence in the early 1850s. Fires destroyed two early parish houses, but the priests and Coeur d’Alene Tribe rebuilt.

By the mid 1880s, a flood of miners, farmers and military personnel poured into what would become North Idaho. The Jesuits decided to construct a new Parish House, choosing a design that was popular at the time. In the spring of 1887, carpenters set framework for the building. They ordered wood from sawmills in Spokane Falls, and purchased hardware supplies locally. Brother Achilles Carfagno, S.J., a veteran carpenter from St. Joseph’s Mission among the Nez Perce, assumed on-site responsibilities. He hired at least two local craftsmen to assist him, and they completed the house exterior by October. The installation of hardwood floors, a chimney, and other finishing touches had to wait until spring of 1888.

Father Joseph Joset, S.J., a pioneer missionary who had come west in 1844, was a regular visitor to the new Parish House during these years. Priests also used the Parish House as a way station when going to and from their assignments in the Silver Valley mining communities.

For a short period between 1899 and 1902, many men seeking to become Jesuit brothers, known as novices, lived in the Parish House. Prayer plus hard work, physical and manual labor, were part of the daily training. These workers harvested up to 500 tons of hay annually, a large portion of which they sold to the cavalry units at Fort Sherman in Coeur d’Alene. They also raised large gardens, milked cows, and produced cheese. These items were sold to travelers or the army.
The 5,000 square foot museum at the visitor center houses the exhibit: *Sacred Encounters: Father De Smet and the Indians of the Rocky Mountain West*. This exhibit tells the story of the coming together of the Coeur d’Alene Tribe and Jesuit Priests (Blackrobes). Over a hundred years before Father De Smet met the Coeur d’Alene Indian Tribe, their chief, Circling Raven, prophesied of the coming of the Blackrobes and encouraged his people to watch for them. When Father De Smet encountered the schitsu’umsh people, (today known as the Coeur d’Alene Tribe), they welcomed him.

This exhibit details the lifestyles of the Coeur d’Alene and other Salish speaking people during the 1840s and their introduction to the Catholic World and how the two cultures and religions became blended together. The exhibition has nine different areas with displays, video, and music. Drawings and displays illustrate the lifestyles of the tribes of the Inland Northwest. Text describes Coeur d’Alene and Bitterroot Salish prophecies of fair skinned men with long black shirts that would bring a new religion and change the lives of the people forever.

Artifacts represent the tools, clothing and items used during the time period of 1840 to 1877, plus a sampling of vibrant Coeur d’Alene beadwork from the turn of the century are on display. In the final exhibit people express their opinions about the past, their thoughts about the relationship between Christianity and Native spirituality, and about the continuing survival of Indian tradition and identity.
Main Cemetery Fact Sheet

These sacred grounds are the final resting place of over 300 people. Many of the items used to mark the graves have disappeared. Originally, small log houses, known as grave houses, dotted the cemetery. There are no remnants of the grave houses, but the use of them is documented in an 1860 drawing by Father De Smet as shown below. The entire drawing may be seen in the Sacred Encounters Exhibit.

The original cemetery area was larger than the area now surrounded by a fence. The original boundary has not been determined.

Many of the graves are still visible by the small unmarked mounds and depressions. Those buried here include members of the Coeur d’Alene Tribe, Mission caretakers, and early settlers.

Please do not take rubbings of these fragile headstones.
Words You May Hear at Coeur d’Alene’s Old Mission State Park

Altar - An elevated place where religious ceremonies may be performed.

Auger - A tool for boring holes.

Bitterroot - A plant with a starchy root that resembles a forked radish gathered and stored as a food for area tribes.

Black Robe - Name given to Jesuit Priests by area tribal members due to the black robes that the priests wore for clothing.

Broad Axe - Axe with large flat, wide cutting edge

Brother - A member of a religious congregation or order that is not ordained but does take vows.

Cavalry - A body of troops mounted on horseback

Camas - A plant with a starch bulb gathered, cooked and stored as food by area tribe members.

Caretaker - Person or group that takes care of goods, property, or another person.

Chalice - A special cup used during religious ceremonies.

Chapel - A small building for Christian worship, typically one attached to an institution or private house. The Parish House had a private chapel

Church - A building used for public Christian worship.

Digging stick - A tool used to dig bulbs and roots.

Façade - The face of a building. The Mission façade holds up four urns and the Cataldo Cross.

Father – A Jesuit priest who is ordained.

Gauntlet - A glove that protects the hand.

Glass transom - A horizontal window, usually above a door. Father Ravalli painted the glass transom with the sacred heart above the front entrance door of the Mission.

Grave House – A structure built over a grave that resembles a small house.

Gristmill - A mill for grinding grain.

Haying - To prepare grass or alfalfa for animal feed.

Hewn - To shape with an axe.

Huckleberry - Purple edible berry related to the blueberry. Juice from the huckleberry was used to stain the ceiling in the Mission.
**Jesuit** - A member of the Society of Jesus, a Roman Catholic order of priests devoted to missionary and educational work.

**Mission** - A building or monument constructed by religious missionaries as a place of worship.

**Mortise** - A rectangular hole in a piece of wood that receives a tenon of another piece to form a joint.

**Novice** - Someone who has joined a religious order, but has not yet taken the final vows.

**Paten** - A plate used for religious ceremonies.

**Parsonage** - Residence provided by the church for its working members.

**Pea** - A vegetable plant with pods containing edible seeds. Jesuits grew vegetable gardens with peas and introduced the pea to the Coeur d’Alene Tribe. The “*Coeur d’Alene*” word for ‘peas’ is liipwe [lee-puh-WEH].

**Plane** - A tool for smoothing a wood surface.

**Planks** - A long thick board, more than two inches thick.

**Sacristry** - A room in a church where sacred articles are kept.

**Saplings** - Young trees that are bendable and moveable. Grass woven between willow saplings and smeared with mud created the walls in the Mission.

**Society of Jesus** – Abbreviated with S. J. The official name for the Jesuits.

**Tenon** - A projecting piece of wood designed to fit into a mortise.

**Timber** - A finished piece of wood.

**Tule** – A type of bulrush or reed. These were sown together to create a tule mat. Several tule mats were used to construct a shelter or house. Tule are abundant along rivers and marshes.

**Urn** - A vase-like container used to hold things. There are four decorative urns on top of the Mission façade.

**Vestment** - Clothing or robes worn by priest or other members of clergy.

**Vow** – A promise or oath.

**Wattle and daub** - Process used for making walls, in which a woven lattice of grass (wattle) is held in place by a series of small saplings or poles attached to bigger timbers then smeared (daubed) with a sticky mud. The interior walls of the Mission are formed with this process.
People and Places

**Carfagno, Achilles, S.J.** – A carpenter from St. Joseph’s Mission among the Nez Perce that directed the construction of the current Parish House.

**Cataldo, Joseph, S. J.** - Father Cataldo lived at the Mission in 1877. The town of Cataldo is named after him and the Mission became known as the Cataldo Mission. Father Cataldo is the founder of Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington.

**Cataldo Mission** – Mission building at Coeur d’Alene’s Old Mission State Park constructed between 1848 and 1853. The oldest standing building in Idaho and also known as Old Mission, Mission of the Sacred Heart, Sacred Heart Mission, and Coeur d’Alene’s Old Mission.

**Circling Raven** – Chief of the Coeur d’Alenes that prophesied the coming of the Black Robes 100 years prior to their arrival in 1842.

**De Smet, Pierre-Jean, S.J.** - Father De Smet was the first Black Robe to meet with the Coeur d’Alene Tribe in 1842 near present day Coeur d’Alene. The town of Desmet is named after him.

**Fort Sherman** - Fort built at Coeur d’Alene, Idaho in 1878 by U.S. Army and named after General William T. Sherman. In 1878 the Cataldo Mission contracted with the fort to grow and sell hay to Fort Sherman for the cavalry horses.

**Huybrecht, Francis, S.J.** - Brother Huybrecht hand carved the ceiling panels of the Mission and several wooden frames. Each of the ceiling panels are held in place with small, wooden pegs.

**Magri, V., S.J.** - Brother Magri assisted Father Antonio Ravalli and helped supervise the efforts of the Coeur d’Alene Tribe in the construction of the Mission. He pegged the post and beams.

**Miller, Henry** - Caretaker of the Cataldo Mission between 1920 and 1924.

**Mullan, John-Captain** - A U.S. army engineer that built a rough wagon road across the Idaho Panhandle beginning in 1859 and ending seven years later. The road passed near the Mission and Mullan was a frequent visitor to the Mission.

**Parish House** - Building next to the Mission used by the church for business and social purposes. Where the Jesuits lived and later where the caretakers lived.

**Ravalli, Antonio** - Father Ravalli was the primary architect and designer of the Cataldo Mission. His work began in 1850.

**schitsu’umsh** - Coeur d’Alene Tribe name in their language, literally meaning “the ones that were found here”.

**Silver Valley** - A region of the Coeur d’Alene Mountains in North Idaho, noted for its history and mining heritage. Named for the silver found there.

**Syukhwim, Louise** - Coeur d’Alene Tribe member known as the “guardian angel of her whole Tribe” and among the first Coeur d’Alenes to be baptized Catholic in 1842. She is known for her devotion to assisting others, and being a translator, skilled nurse, teacher and foster parent.
Coeur d’Alene’s Old Mission State Park

Word Search

auger, Blackrobe, broad axe, camas, canoe, caretaker, chalice, Coeur d’Alene, cross, daub, Desmet, dugout, hay, hewn, huckleberry, Huybrecht, Jesuit, knife, lily, lodge, log, mortise, Parish House, pea, pig, Ravalli, reservation, Sacred Encounters, sapling, saw, schitsu’umsh, stone, tenon, tin, tribe, tule, urn, wattled.

Did you find any other words? Is so, list them below:
The following Parfleche and Basket activities are taken from the book, *More Than Moccasins*, by Laurie Carlson. These activities were chosen based upon the items on display within the Sacred Encounters Exhibit.
**Parfleche**

**FOLD A RECTANGLE IN THIRDS LENGTHWISE AND CROSSWISE. OPEN.**

**TRIM THE CORNERS AND ENDS ON THE SOLID LINES.**

**FOLD UP. PUNCH 2 HOLES AT EACH END, THREAD YARN THROUGH, AND TIE CLOSED.**

**MATERIALS**

- Construction paper, tagboard, or brown paper bag
- 4 pieces of yarn, 6 inches long
- Scissors
- Crayons or markers
- Hole punch
- Markers or crayons, or fabric paints for cloth

**Cut the paper into a rectangle. You can make it any size you like. Fold it in thirds lengthwise and crosswise, and then open it up. Trim off the corners and ends. Decorate with crayons or markers. The Plains people used geometric shapes, such as triangles, diamonds, and lines. Fold it along the creases. Punch 2 holes on each end, thread yarn through the holes, and tie it closed.**

**Say it: “parflesh.” Plains Indians made large hide envelopes to store food and clothing. They were easy to store inside the tepee and could be hung from the tepee poles. They could be stacked on a travois for moving.**
The Indians in the New England area, like the Mohegans, used long flat pieces split from hardwood tree logs. They used potatoes and paint to stamp designs on their finished baskets. You can decorate your woven mat the same way. Cut a raw potato in half. Use a spoon or knife to carve out a design, then press the potato into bright tempera paint and stamp your designs all over the woven mat. The Indians would have used berry paints for theirs.

**Basket**

Instead of tagboard, you can use newspaper. Cut full sheets of newspaper apart at the center fold. Fold each piece lengthwise 3 times and put a bit of glue along the crease to hold its shape. Lay down 4 strips, all in the same direction. Weave 4 more strips over and under them, pushing all the strips close together in the center. Staple them together at the corners. Fold and crease all the strips to turn upwards. This will give the basket its shape. When you get to the end of a strip, staple another one over it. For the last row at the top, bend and staple strips along the edge.

Interesting effects can be created using 2 colors of tagboard or using the colored comics sections from the newspaper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MATERIALS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14 strips of tagboard,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 by 1 inches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stapler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scissors</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Weave 4 more strips over and under. Staple the corners.

Fold the strips up. Weave the rest of the strips over and under.

Fold and staple the ends when finished. Paint it.

Print designs with potato shapes and paint.

Lay 4 strips side by side.
Field Trip Summary

Coeur d’Alene’s Old Mission State Park is perfect for field trips and learning experiences. In addition to learning about Idaho’s Oldest Standing Building, the Cataldo Mission, students and other educational groups learn about the history of the areas as it relates to the Coeur d’Alene Tribe, local mining, railroad, and farming history, and local wildlife. Groups tour the Sacred Encounters Exhibit located in the Visitor Center, the historic Parish House, and Cataldo Mission. Please contact the park at 208.682.3814 or email at old@idpr.idaho.gov prior to your visit to schedule a field trip. Remember, your field trip is not finalized until we have your completed Field Trip Sign Off Form.

Fees: $1 per student, $5 per adult, MVEF fees apply to all non-tax exempt plate vehicles

Hours: Open daily, year round. Summer hours 9 am to 5 pm; Winter hours 10 am to 3 pm. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s Day.

Some things to do before your organized educational visit to Coeur d’Alene’s Old Mission State Park.

- Plan ahead and schedule your group by calling 208.682.3814 or email us at old@idpr.idaho.gov.

- Arrive at your scheduled time and if you are unable, or running behind, please notify park staff by calling the visitor center at 208.682.3814. Due to the number of schools and groups that wish to attend the park, some days there may be more than one at the park. Please stay on schedule.

- Plan your travels to allow your group a restroom break when you arrive and before you start your scheduled activities.

- Plan ahead if you are a large group and have small groups assigned before you come. Groups of twenty or less are needed to enter the exhibit. More than one group can be in the exhibit at one time after the first group has passed through the first module with the 7-minute video. Please check with park staff before entering the exhibit, there are a few special tips, requirements and information that you need before you enter.

- View the “House of the Great Spirit” before coming to the park. It and other information sheets are available to enhance your visit. A YouTube video and other handouts can be found on the park website. https://parksandrecreation.idaho.gov/parks/coeur-d-aleses-old-mission

- Please take the time to review the park map, a vocabulary list, word-search puzzle, and fact sheets. Please have fun and review these items with your group or students prior to their visit so they are familiar with words and terms used during their visit. The map of the grounds has the location of trails and other sites. Please be sure to share this information with all of your group.

We look forward to your visit and a very fun, educational day as your group learns about Coeur d’Alene’s Old Mission State Park and its associated history. Please ensure that you review the field trip reminders and expected behavior document prior to your visit. If you have any questions please contact staff at (208) 682-3814 or send an email to old@idpr.idaho.gov.
*Please note that the Wetland Trail and the lower parking lot are currently closed. **Do not use these areas.**

There is an overview area located behind the Mission that overlooks the Mission slough.