

Day One: 12/6/08

The thirty-five pilgrims boarded our **MEXICANA** flight in LAX at 12:30 in the morning. Three and a half hours later our weary band landed in the small and crowded airport in **ZACATECAS**, proceeded through customs and were met by our guide and guardian angel for the next 8 days: Raul Gonzalez Cadena.

It was the morning of the 6th and Raul escorted us to our gleaming bus for the ride to our Hotel and a hot buffet breakfast. We then started our pilgrimage by visiting the first of what would be many magnificently carved and ancient Cathedrals. We would return later for Mass but after a quick visit we proceeded on a small walk around the environs of the Cathedral Square before mounting our bus for an extensive underground tour of an old and deep silver mine, no longer in use. In so far as it has crept under the town itself over hundreds of years it has been declared too dangerous to dig further. The poor miners who dug that massive and impressive underground mine carved an intricate labyrinth and its own peculiar architecture. One can only wonder at the blood and sweat left behind in that rich vale of tears. A great part of that moiled treasure went to Spain but much went to build the beautiful town and monuments above our heads. From there we went up the mountain and took a cable car ride overlooking the town itself. Back in the Cathedral we celebrated Mass and returned to the hotel. That evening, those interested went out to a unique restaurant constructed in an abandoned bull ring. The architect took great pains to include the architect of the old in to the new.