

SERRA PROGRAM

EDITOR'S NOTE

Junípero Serra (1713-1784), the founder of Franciscan missions in the present State of California, was educated at the Royal and Pontifical University of Palma. He was a tenured professor of philosophy there, when in 1749 he volunteered to go to Mexico as a missionary. In that country, he served his apprenticeship among the Pamé Indians of Sierra Gorda (1750-1758) and in Lower California (1767-1769).

In 1769 Spain decided to occupy Upper California to prevent Russian or English encroachments. Serra established his first mission at San Diego on July 16, 1769. In all, he began nine missions on carefully selected sites after first obtaining the consent of the concerned natives: San Diego, July 16, 1769; San Carlos, June 3, 1770; San Antonio, July 14, 1771; San Gabriel, September 8, 1771; San Luis Obispo, September 1, 1772; San Francisco, October 8, 1776; San Juan Capistrano, November 1, 1776; Santa Clara, January 12, 1777 and San Buenaventura, March 31, 1782.

After a careful survey of the territory from San Diego to San Francisco, he formed a plan of development of the whole area. It was a vision not of isolated missions and military presidios but of an interrelated system of ports, presidios, towns and missions. In 1773, Serra travelled the 1,500 miles to Mexico City to consult with the viceroy, Antonio María Bucareli.

In a series of meetings, Serra discussed his vision and his needs with Bucareli and his staff. At their suggestion, he then wrote a memorial in 32 sections. Serra's vision was to become the catalyst of the official program. First of all, there was a need to regulate the relations between the ruling military, the missionaries, the Indians and, hopefully in time, the townspeople. This was done in the *Reglamento Echeveste* (July 1773). It was to become the first basic law of California. Next, a supply system had to be invented with the procurement and shipping office in Mexico through the port of San Blas and a scheduled fleet to transport men, animals and goods to and from California. This was established by the end of the year 1773. Serra also needed mules and oxen to put his California society on wheels. He was granted 150 mules at once. It was hoped that more animals could

be shipped on the hoof via an overland route, then being explored. In January 1776, the first overland expedition arrived at Mission San Gabriel from Tubac, Arizona. It brought 244 persons together with herds of horses, cattle and provisions. Later arrivals permitted the foundation of four towns among them San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Most of all, Serra needed role-models for his neophytes to train them in the crafts, and in Christian living. Five artisans were granted for this purpose to each mission. Henceforth, only married couples would be accepted as settlers to set an example of Christian family, the foundation of a stable society. The money for all these expenditures was to come from the Pious Fund of the expelled Jesuits. Thus, California was saved for Spain, and eventually, for the United States. In 1931 California placed a statue of Serra in our National Capitol.

Padre Junípero Serra died at his headquarters in the Mission San Carlos in Monterey, California, August 28, 1784. His body was buried in the floor of the sanctuary of the mission church. The year 1984, accordingly, was the bicentennial of Serra's death.

At the urging of friends, it was decided to commemorate the event with an academic program with a focus on the frontier of Northwestern New Spain during Serra's time, 1750-1825, as well as on his work in Upper California.

Fortunately, the suggested program was well received. With a warm spirit of cooperation, the American Catholic Historical Association and the Conference of Latin American Historians each ceded one of their sessions at the National Convention of the American Historical Association to be held in Chicago from December 27-30, 1984. In this way, it was possible to establish the following program:

SERRA PROGRAM

at the

AMERICAN HISTORICAL CONVENTION

Chicago, Illinois December 28, 1984

Hyatt Regency Hotel

SESSION I

THE MISSION AND THE INDIAN

With the Catholic Historical Association

Friday, December 28

San Francisco Room—West Tower, Ballroom Level—9:30-11:00 A.M.

California Indian Reaction to the Franciscans

Florence C. Shippek

University of Wisconsin—Parkside

Impact of the European Upon the California Indian
 Harry Kelsey
 Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History
 If Junipero Serra Were Alive: Missiological-Anthropological Theory Today
 Louis J. Luzbetak, S.V.D.
 Ex-Editor of *Anthropos*
 Chairman: Fredrick Pike (Notre Dame University)

SESSION II

THE AMERICAS—SERRA LUNCHEON

Friday, December 28, 12:00 P.M.-2 P.M.

The Center

Speaker: Miguel León Portilla

California in the Dreams of Galvez and the Achievements of Serra

Chairman: Richard E. Greenleaf (Tulane University)

SESSION III

THE FRONTIER OF NORTHERN NEW SPAIN: 1750-1825

Friday, December 28

Stetson E—West Tower, Parking Level, 4:30-6 P.M.

The Enlightenment in Spain: Influences Upon New World Policy

Iris Engstrand

University of San Diego, California

Land Tenure Patterns in Northern New Spain, 1750-1825

Susan Deeds

University of Arizona (Tucson)

Social and Demographic Change in Northern New Spain, 1750-1825

Robert Jackson

University of California (Berkeley)

Chairman: Michael Meyer (University of Arizona)

Commentator: David Weber (Southern Methodist University)

The Editor wishes to renew his thanks to each of the participants whose studies contributed so much to the success of the Program. Equally, he wishes to acknowledge the financial aid provided by D. Carlos Abella, Cultural Affairs Office, Spanish Embassy, Washington, D.C. which in part made possible the publication of all the studies written for this Program.

ANTONINE TIBESAR, EDITOR