

The Muwekma Ohlone Tribe's Position on the Canonization (Sainthood) of Junípero Serra

The Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area is OPPOSED to the Canonization (Sainthood) of Junípero Serra!

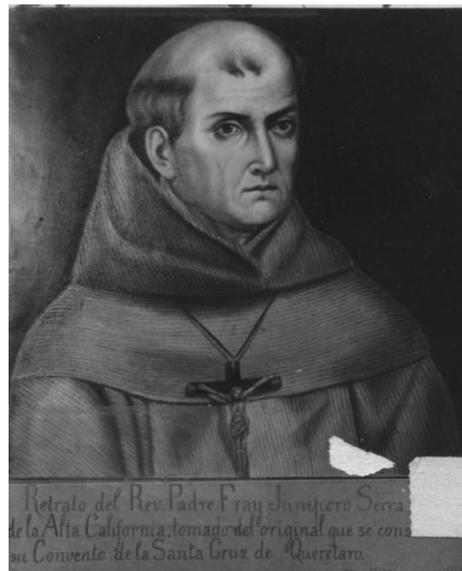
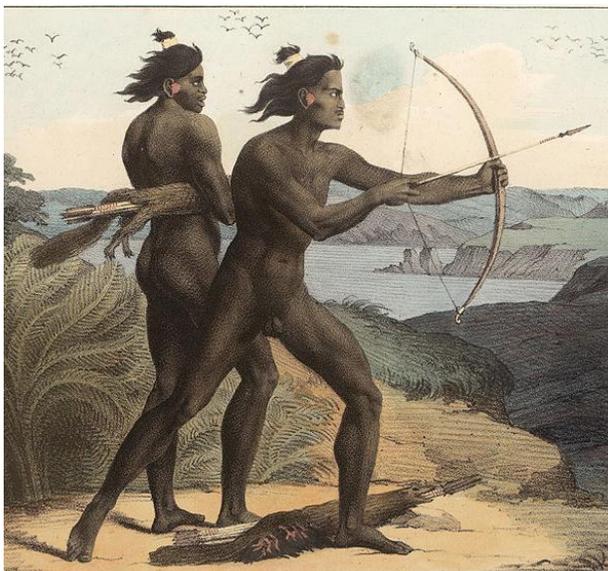
To become canonized as a saint, there needs to be two verifiable postmortem miracles. Canonization (sainthood) requires two miracles, whereas beatification (blessed) requires only one. Furthermore, there needs to be evidence of: 1) having led an exemplary life of goodness and virtue worthy of imitation, 2) having died a heroic death (martyrdom), or 3) having undergone a major conversion of heart where a previous immoral life is abandoned and replaced by one of outstanding holiness

Formally declared saints are chosen ultimately by the pope, but only after a thorough investigation of the life, writings, and legacy of the saintly candidate. Testimony from witnesses and experts, physical evidence, and the entire life of the person is examined with fine detail.

Thusly, Sainthood is reserved for those men and women who have truly performed a series of miracles for the betterment of people (suffering or not), however Sainthood **should not** be accorded to those persons who participated in Colonial systems of conquest and coercive conversions such as practiced by the Hispanic Empire in partnership with the Catholic Church. This colonial system of empire expansion and conquest not only by Spain, but by the other European powers as well, brought nothing but death and destruction to millions of innocent Native people residing in the Americas, and to other indigenous people around world.

Certainly the devastation wrought by the Hispanic Empire in California saw tens of thousands of Indian people dislocated, relocated, and transformed into a slave labor force at the 21 missions, and in this specific case at Mission San Carlos where Junípero Serra orchestrated his efforts.

Although viewed through the lens of western civilization Junípero Serra was a good and godly man, however on the other hand, viewing him through the lens of the victims, **he was no saint at all**, but rather another power broker representing the interest and intent of the conquering Hispano-European Empire.



The end result and lasting legacy of his efforts as the President of the California Missions left all of the Indians within that sphere of influence of the missions completely devastated through introduced diseases, harsh changes in life style, loss of lands, culture and language to this very day. The legacy of Junípero Serra is that the Catholic Church still has retained vast holding of California Indian lands, and previously federally recognized tribes such as Muwekma Ohlone Tribe (Missions Santa Clara, San Jose and Dolores), Amah-Mutsun Tribal Band (Mission San Juan Bautista) and Esselen Nation (Missions San Carlos/Carmel and Soledad) as well as many other historic California Indian Tribes **remain landless** and almost completely disenfranchised within their respective historic and ancestral homelands.

The only miracle that can truly be attested to, after the destruction of the lives of almost one million California Indians at the time of Spanish contact in 1769 and reduction to less than 20,000 people after 1900, is the surviving tribal communities that refused to succumb to both the Hispanic Empire and the ensuing American conquest after 1846. **If canonization should be accorded to anyone, it should be reserved to those Native American resistance leaders and spiritual men and women who made major sacrifices in order to maintain the integrity and identity of their respective tribal traditions and lineages over these past centuries.**

Junípero Serra should just be viewed as a product of his time and as a historic figure, nothing more and nothing less. **The Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area is OPPOSED to the Canonization (Sainthood) of Junípero Serra!**

Aho!

