

# On the Road to San Diego: Junípero Serra's Baja California Diary

Translated and Edited by  
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## Introduction

San Diego was the occasion of the longest extant document Junípero Serra composed—the diary of his overland trip north from Baja California in 1769. Serra left Loreto on March 28 and arrived at what he called “the famous and desired port of San Diego” on July 1. That ninety-five day journey was arguably one of the most significant periods in Serra’s entire life. It was the first time the missionary identity he had adopted when he left his home island of Mallorca in 1749 was placed in an environment in which that identity could blossom. For between Loreto and San Diego, Serra entered unfamiliar territory as he encountered large numbers of non-baptized Indians for the first time in his life. The conversion of such people was the major reason he left Spain, but



*Father Junípero Serra, OFM. Portrait in the convent of Santa Cruz de Querétaro. Copy by Jose Mosqueda. Courtesy of Santa Barbara Mission Archive-Library.*

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circumstances had conspired to prevent him from engaging in what he regarded as genuine missionary activity. The native peoples to whom he ministered in the Sierra Gorda (1750-1758) and Baja California (1768-1769) had been evangelized before he arrived, and the years he spent preaching domestic missions (1758-1767) involved trying to renew the faith and fervor of various parishes and towns whose population was already Catholic. But on May 15, 1769, at Velicatá in Baja California, Serra met a group of unbaptized Cochimí. He was emotionally overwhelmed by that experience because he felt he was at last beginning his real missionary life.

The enthusiasm and intensity Serra brought to San Diego and Alta California was kindled by his interactions with the Cochimí, Kiliwa, Pai-Pai, and Kumeyaay people he met as he journeyed north. His assessment of these peoples was generally positive, since he judged them anxious to receive the gospel he was offering. When he wrote in his first letter from San Diego on July 3 that “this land is a beautiful land,” he was referring to more than the landscape. He was also referring to the Kumeyaay people, in whose territory he had been since June 19 and whom he hoped to entice into the church. Immediately after meeting them, he characterized them in this way: “Their beautiful physique, comportment, friendliness, and happiness have won all our hearts.” Similarly, when he wrote enthusiastically of the Rumsen at Monterey “they have come to see us a number of times [and] very humbly and generously have given us some of their food,” he was thinking of the Cochimí at San Juan de Dios and the Kumeyaay at Rosarito, both of whom had offered the expedition food.



*Visitador General José de Gálvez. Portrait courtesy the Gálvez family, Buenos Aires.*

Junípero Serra formed his basic ideas of California Indians on his way to San Diego, and the best way to understand those ideas is to read his own words in the diary he composed. This diary probably contains Serra’s genuine thoughts, for when he wrote it he did not intend for the diary to be published. He wanted the diary of Juan Crespí, who was on the first leg of the land expedition, to become the major published account of the journey, and he became frustrated in later years by Crespí’s delays in completing a polished version of this document. Serra’s original intended audience was more limited. He was writing for himself and his Franciscan brethren at the Colegio de San Fernando in Mexico City.

He probably expected that the diary might also be read by José de Gálvez, the Visitador General who had organized the colonization expedition. In this essay, we present a new translation of those parts of Serra's diary that dealt with the two aspects of Serra's life which would define his activity in Alta California from 1769 until his death fifteen years later: his newly-energized missionary identity and his encounters with the native peoples of the Californias. We also provide a commentary in order to place Serra's words into context.

### **Diary of the expedition of Padre Junípero Serra from Loreto to San Diego from March 28 to July 1, 1769**

*Hail Jesus, Mary, Joseph*

*Diary of the expedition to the ports of San Diego and Monterey for the greater glory of God and the conversion of the infidels to our Holy Catholic faith. After visiting the missions of the south where I met with the Ilustrísimo<sup>1</sup> Señor Don José de Gálvez of His Majesty's Chamber Council, Visitador General of New Spain and principal director of these conquests, with whom I conversed at length about this expedition, I set out from my mission and the Royal Presidio of Loreto in California on March 28, 1769, the third day after the Feast of the Resurrection.*

#### **Note 1<sup>2</sup>**

*On January 6 of this same year, finding myself at the port of La Paz with His Excellency Señor Visitador General, I blessed the packet boat named San Carlos. Aboard ship I sang the Mass and blessed the royal standards. The litany and other prayers to Our Lady were sung. Su Ilustrísima [Gálvez] gave a passionate speech that invigorated the spirits of all who would be sailing on that vessel to the ports of San Diego and Monterey. They boarded the night of [January] 9 and set sail on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Don Vicente Vila, a celebrated pilot in European waters, was selected commander of the sea expedition. Don Miguel Costansó was the engineer. The leader of the troop was Don Pedro Fages, lieutenant of the company of volunteers. I appointed Padre Predicador Fray Fernando Parrón missionary of the expedition and later missionary to the infidels. He had been my companion in Loreto from the time we had arrived in California. Everyone was exceedingly happy when they left on January 10.*

#### **Note 2**

*On February 15, when I had already returned to Loreto, the same blessing of the vessel and of the royal standards was performed at Cabo San Lucas on the second packet boat, the San Antonio, also known as El Príncipe, which immediately set out for the same ports. On board were Padres Predicadores Fray Juan González Vizcaíno and Fray Francisco*

Gómez whose goal was the same as that of the other missionaries. Vizcaíno had recently arrived from Mexico and Gómez had been a minister at the Misión de la Pasión,<sup>3</sup> which had been suppressed by order of Su Ilustrísima. The Indians from that mission were moved to Mission Todos Santos. And with this the maritime or naval expedition was set in motion.

### Note 3

Su Ilustrísima decided that for the land expedition, Don Fernando de Rivera y Moncada, the captain of the company of this peninsula, should begin to arrange everything that the horses and pack mules would need for the journey, as well as all the food and provisions. He is the same person who was here during the time of the Jesuit Padres. Rivera y Moncada was to travel to all of the missions and deliver the order from Su Ilustrísima to the missionary Padres who already had control over the mission temporalities. For the successful completion of these endeavors and so that Rivera y Moncada could then begin the land journey, at the request of His Majesty, on September 28, 1768, I sang a Mass of intercession at Loreto in honor of San José, who was chosen as the patron saint of both the land and the sea expeditions. Two days later, Rivera y Moncada left Loreto and headed to Mission San Javier to begin his process of removing whatever pleased his fancy from what was available at that mission and at the others.

That is exactly what he did. And even though it was done with a rather heavy hand, they suffered through it for God and for the king. Rivera y Moncada spent three days at this place called Velicatá, which is now a new mission, so his animals could have enough time to rest. He then left with twenty-five soldiers, three mule drivers, a sufficient number of Indians on foot, and all the provisions he deemed necessary. He also took Padre Predicador Fray Juan Crespí with him to serve as priest and missionary for that portion of the expedition. Until then, Crespí had been the minister of Mission La Purísima Concepción de Cadegomó. May God protect them along the way so that their journey will end happily.



Fernando de Rivera y Moncada. Internet photo.

### Note 4

In order to complete the land expedition, at the beginning of the month of March, Su Ilustrísima [Gálvez] ordered that the governor and commander of this peninsula, Don Gaspar de Portolá, set out with the rest of the missionaries who had been appointed, the rest of the soldiers, and the provisions and other necessary items for such an arduous and large-scale expedition. Portolá would be the commander-in-chief of both portions of

*the land expedition. The governor obeyed the order and left his Royal Presidio of Loreto on March 9 with his retinue. Even though I was always eager to join this expedition, I was not able to leave so quickly. I was determined and promised to do so as soon as possible (as I later did). In the meantime, I gave Padre Predicador Fray Miguel de la Campa the assignment of accompanying the travelers. He was the minister at Mission San Ignacio. As soon as the travelers arrived at his mission, he joined them. He traveled with the expedition until they reached Mission Santa María de los Angeles at the edge of the frontier. They had to stay there for quite some time waiting for the provisions that were supposed to arrive by ship at the Bay of San Luis Gonzaga, which was close to that last mission. They then spent time getting the pack train ready and making other preparations until I arrived there to join up with their group, as I shall recount later.*



Statue of Gaspar de Portolá, Spanish Landing, San Diego, California.

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Serra chose to leave Loreto on the Tuesday after Easter. As was so often the case with him, the date was not accidental. In 1749 he left his ancestral village of Petra on the exact same day in the Catholic liturgical calendar. At that time he thought he was journeying to become a missionary among the unbaptized. But events had disappointed him, as he had spent two decades working among people who had already received that sacrament. Now, exactly twenty years later, he believed he was finally undertaking the journey upon which he thought he had been embarking in 1749— a journey that would enable him to work among those who had not been baptized.

Serra's first stop was Mission San Javier, staffed by Francisco Palóu, who would soon be moving to Loreto as chief administrator of the Baja California missions. There was one item of business that had to be taken care of immediately. When Portolá passed through San Javier on his way to Velicatá a few weeks earlier, he told Palóu that he was concerned about the poor condition of Serra's leg (it had grown worse during a trip Serra made to the southern missions after his first meeting with Gálvez in 1768). Portolá believed that Serra's condition might slow the progress of the expedition. He asked Palóu to try to convince Serra not to make the journey and allow Palóu to go in his place. Palóu agreed, although he



*Mission San Francisco Javier Biaundó. Photo by W. Michael Mathes.*

undoubtedly knew that Serra would vigorously refuse such a request. Palóu made the request and Serra of course refused to consider it. After that, the two of them got down to business.

Serra spent three days at San Javier, mainly briefing Palóu on the issues he would be facing after Serra left. Palóu offered Serra some additional provisions for his journey, provisions that he sorely needed. Serra's departure was very emotional. He and Palóu had known each other for almost thirty years and they had no idea if they would ever see one another again. Serra certainly hoped they would. According to Palóu, Serra's words of farewell were, "Goodbye until we meet in Monterey, where I hope we shall see each other in order to labor in that vineyard of the Lord." Palóu was less certain. His farewell was simply, "Until we meet in eternity."<sup>4</sup>

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*March 28, [traveling].*

*Nothing happened along the way worth mentioning.*

*March 29, 30, and 31. I lingered at the mission [San Francisco Javier de Biaundó] for a variety of reasons. The most important reason for stopping was to see the mission's minister, Padre Lector Fray Francisco Palóu, Comisario of the Holy Office, with whom I share a special and long-time friendship. He was elected by our colegio to succeed me as president of these missions if I were to die or be away for a prolonged period of time. This last circumstance was the second important reason for stopping here. We needed to discuss and agree upon the measures he would have to undertake to maintain the stability*



Father Serra journeys to California by mule as illustrated by Ted DeGrazia from Father Junipero Serra: Sketches of his Life in California, Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1969.

of these missions during my absence. And the measures would have to be clearly defined and put into place by the time Su Ilustrísimo Señor Visitador General [Gálvez] arrived in Loreto, which was expected at any time. The third, and for me the most important reason for stopping, was to express my gratitude. The fact is that the only provisions I took from my mission in Loreto for such a long journey were a loaf of bread and a piece of cheese.

*During the year I was there I had no say with regard to temporal matters. I was treated as a mere guest of the Señor Real Comisario who lavished me with crumbs. When I left, his generosity toward me did not exceed what I have described. However, Reverendo Padre Palóu more than made up for this insult. He generously provided me with food, clothing for my own use, and other amenities for my journey. I could not bring myself to reflect upon whether I should take all that he had given me or consider leaving any of it behind, for being the sinner that I am, I am still attached to my creature comforts. May God reward such charity.*

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Serra spent the next week heading north. He stopped for a few days each at Missions San José de Comondú and La Purísima. On his way to the next mission, Guadalupe, Serra met about ten Indian families. They communicated to him that they were from Mission Guadalupe, but since food was scarce at the mission the resident priest there, Juan Sancho, had told them that they had to go out to the hills and find food for themselves. Serra's encounter with them left a deep impression on him, for the devotional song they chanted for him convinced him that Christianity had taken root among these people. This filled him with hope for the project he was undertaking farther north. On the other hand, his perception that the Indians were unable to feed themselves after close to half a century of mission life increased his sense that the missionaries' responsibility



*Sketch of Native Indians near San José del Cabo c. 1760 from Doyce Numis, ed., The Drawings of Ignacio Tirsch, Los Angeles: Dawson's Book Shop, 1972, p. 89.*

for the welfare of their flock was going to be a very deep and profound one. Serra did not record who else was with him during this encounter. He only remarked that the pack train was not there because it had been delayed. Therefore, it is not entirely clear what the quality of communication between him and the native people actually was on this occasion, and what they actually told or tried to tell him. But whatever did happen, Serra chose to interpret it as a sign of hope for the future and in a way that increased the importance of the role of the missionary in providing for the livelihood of converted Indians.

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*April 7.* I set out very early in the morning for the next mission, Guadalupe. I walked all day, only stopping briefly at noon to have a bite to eat and rest for awhile. As night was falling, I arrived at the spot called El Cardón, where I slept under the stars. There I met about ten Indian families—men, women, boys, and girls. When I asked them why they were there, they told me with great sadness that they were from Mission Guadalupe. They were not from any of the rancherías<sup>5</sup> but rather from the mission village. Because there was not enough food, the Padre had been forced to send them back to the mountains to look for food. Since they were not accustomed to doing this, they were not having much success. It was very hard on them, especially seeing their children suffer and hearing them cry. I felt very sorry for them. It was most unfortunate that the pack train had been delayed and would not arrive there that night, but the Indians were not left without aid. A pot of good atole<sup>6</sup> was made for the women and children from some corn that was in a pouch. The process was repeated and the second pot of atole was given to the men, which was of some consolation to them. They were even happier when I told them to go back to their mission because the Padre would be receiving corn by sea on the canoe from Mulegé, by order of Su Ilustrísimo Señor Visitador General. I went to lie down and rest and the Indians went off to pray together. They ended by singing a tender hymn about the love of God. The Indians from that mission are reputed to have a talent for singing sweetly. Their reputation is well deserved, for the time I spent listening to them was of great consolation to me.

*April 8.* I left that place and after a laborious trek through those hills I arrived at around noon at the pueblo of San Miguel, which is a visita<sup>7</sup> of that mission. I encountered the same or greater number of Indians from that mission village. They related the same thing that the other Indians had told me. They were given the same remedy and left alone. A few of them followed me that afternoon when I left for Mission Guadalupe. It was already night when I arrived at the mission and I was extremely tired. I had arrived again at the farthest point of a journey that I had ever made before in California.



*Mission Santa Rosalía de Mulegé. Photo by Iris Engstrand.*

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Serra arrived at Mission Guadalupe late on Saturday night, April 8. He remained there until April 14, spending most of his time catching up on correspondence. The priest of the mission, Juan Sancho, who had been a student and later a faculty colleague of Serra's in Mallorca, gave him a fifteen-year-old boy to be his servant for the rest of the journey. The boy was a *ladino* who was able to read and assist at mass. His name was Juan Evangelista Benno. He was named after Benno Ducrue, the Jesuit who had baptized him. Father Juan Ignacio Gastón, the minister of Mission Santa Rosalía de Mulegé, came to bid Serra farewell. Gastón came to the New World with Serra in 1749 and they worked together in the Sierra Gorda. Serra, Sancho, and Gastón spent a considerable amount of time together, not knowing if they would ever see each other again.<sup>8</sup>

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*April 10. The Padre Ministro of Mission Santa Rosalía de Mulegé came here today to bid me farewell. His mission is situated near the beach along the coast of the Gulf of California and is the only mission not along the route of my journey. This Padre, Fray Juan Ignacio Gastón, was one of the missionary recruits who came with me from Spain. Later, he was my fellow missionary in the Sierra Gorda. I have always been especially fond*

*of him and I am indebted to him. The three of us spent today and the days that followed consoling one another, knowing that we most likely will not see one another again until we meet in Heaven, and that our efforts are for the greater glory of God. Each of us, wherever we may be, will work to win many souls for His Most Holy Majesty. May it be so. Amen.*

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After leaving Mission Guadalupe, Serra spent a few days at the next mission, San Ignacio. He left there on April 18 and traveled for two days to Mission Santa Gertrudis. At that mission he met a very lonely and depressed missionary, Dionisio Bastera. The two of them had preached domestic missions together for a number of months in 1763 and 1764 in Puebla and Oaxaca and this was their first meeting in a year. It was an emotional encounter and Serra stayed at Santa Gertrudis for six days.

While there he became personally involved in Gálvez's plan to shift Indian populations among various missions. As a minister of Carlos III, Gálvez had brought a vision of enlightened despotism to Baja California. When he arrived in 1768 he promulgated a sweeping and unrealistic series of plans for the peninsula, involving trade fairs, improved mining, Indian towns, and other measures that he thought would bring prosperity to Baja California. He quickly judged that the traditional life ways of the Baja California Indians were inimical to the progress he



*Mission Santiago (Baja California) c. 1760 from Doyce Nunis, ed., The Drawings of Ignacio Tirsch, Los Angeles: Dawson's Book Shop, 1972, p. 47.*



*Statue of Father Fermín Francisco de Lasuén, Mission San Carlos Borromeo.*

envisioned. Therefore, in his judgment, those life ways had to change. He saw that the missions at the southern end of the peninsula had good agricultural prospects and was disappointed that they had become depopulated. Therefore, he decided to consolidate the remaining Pericú at Mission Santiago, which entailed moving a number of them from Todos Santos to that mission. That would free Todos Santos to receive a large number of Guaycura neophytes from two missions farther north, Dolores and San Luis Gonzaga. The Jesuits had never attempted to congregate large numbers of Guaycura people at those two missions given the arid nature of the landscape. Instead, the vast majority of indigenous peoples generally remained after

baptism in their traditional villages in the hills at some distance from the mission. Moving to Todos Santos would have entailed a double move—to a new territory and into a different social unit, the mission village.

Gálvez realized there could be problems with this move and envisioned a larger than normal contingent of soldiers for Todos Santos. Palóu reported that the Guaycura who were forced to relocate engaged in various forms of resistance at their new mission and that the move was not a success. Of the 800 people who were relocated, only 170 remained at the mission three years later. While some undoubtedly fled, many died from diseases they contracted at the new location. According to Palóu, who remained in Baja California until 1773, all of Gálvez's edicts about Indian relocation were resisted in one fashion or another by the native peoples and the ill feelings created by these moves caused the missionaries great problems. But the closure of Missions Dolores and San Luis Gonzaga did have the effect of freeing up missionary personnel for the voyage to San Diego.<sup>9</sup>

As part of these population shifts, some of the people at Santa Gertrudis were slated to



*Mission San Francisco Borja. Photo by W. Michael Mathes.*

be removed south to the missions of La Purísima and San José de Comondú. The people resisted that move and indicated that they would end their affiliation with the mission rather than move south. Four months earlier the priest at the nearby mission of San Borja, Fermín Francisco de Lasuén, had reported similar resistance among the people of that mission to Gálvez and the visitor general had rescinded the order relating to San Borja.<sup>10</sup>

Serra undoubtedly knew of this situation, yet he and Basterra spent a good amount of time going around and urging the Indians to accept the move. Serra stated in his diary that Gálvez's plan was "very much to my liking." He clearly implied that the Indians were persuaded to move. But he never precisely said that. Rather, he merely stated that things were "in good order."

It is hard to imagine Serra going against what he knew was the opinion of his resident missionaries on this score. In fact, the Santa Gertrudis Indians continued to refuse to move and Serra had to know that this would be the most likely outcome. The important thing was that any colonial official in Mexico City who read the diary would learn that Serra had supported the policies of the visitor general.

Basterra's loneliness points to an important aspect of mission life which persisted beyond Serra's own death. Much of the historiography of Alta California has emphasized the tension between the missionaries and the soldiers. That tension was present. But there was another side to the story which is indicated by Basterra's anguish at not having anybody else with whom he could converse. Although missionaries and the lower ranking corporals and soldiers who constituted the mission escolta had different roles at the missions, their shared language created a unique bond. Their relationships were most often recorded in the documentary sources when they were in conflict, such as at San Diego in 1773 or Santa Inés in 1824. But in the normal day-to-day workings of any mission their relationships were undoubtedly more cooperative than confrontational, for they provided each other with a kind of companionship that no one else at the mission complex could provide. The frequent presence of soldiers in the mission registers as witnesses to various sacraments is an important indication of how closely these two groups relied upon each other.

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*April 20. I started out very early in the morning and passed by El Rosario shortly after the break of day. When I arrived that morning at Mission Santa Gertrudis, the Indians came out to greet me at the entrance with dancing and joyous gestures. Waiting for me at the door of the church was the Padre Ministro of the mission, Padre Predicador Fray*

*Dionisio Bastera. He was donned with his cope and accompanied by acolytes, carrying a cross, candles, a censer, and holy water. I venerated the holy cross in his hands and incensed it. I sprinkled the people with holy water and we entered the church to give thanks to God, as we should, for all that He has given us.*

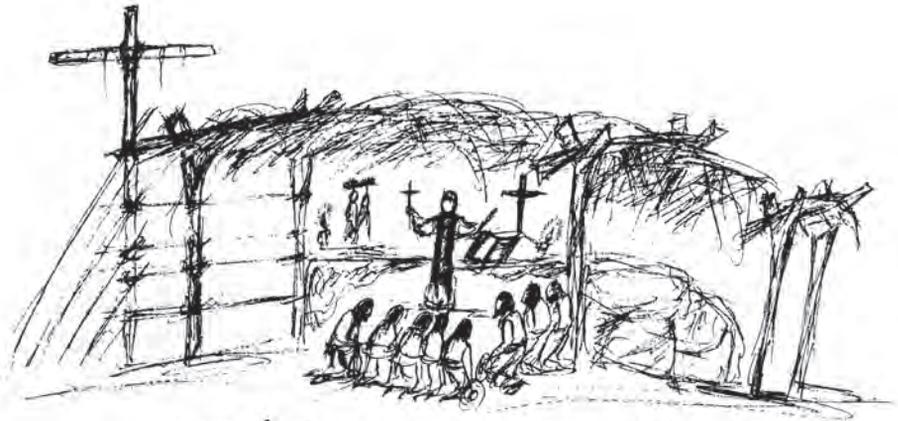
*As soon as the Padre had removed the sacred vestments, we hugged one another for the first time and our eyes filled with tears (my eyes still fill with tears as I write this). We were so overcome that we were unable to speak until we had paid due tribute to this natural human emotion.*

*The Padre had been deeply depressed for many days because he felt so isolated. Even though there were many Indians in the mission, there were no soldiers or servants (the captain had taken them from him for the expedition), not even an interpreter to help him. He had expressed his frustration to me in numerous letters, asking me for help, which I was not able to do, no matter how much I wanted to do so. I tried by every means possible, not just with conciliatory letters but also by speaking to Su Ilustrísimo Señor Visitador General, writing to the captain, and speaking with the governor, but it was all to no avail. . . .*

*Heeding his pleas [for company], I remained there for the next five days to give him as much encouragement as possible. The time was not spent idly. We were busy bringing the rancherías together to propose Su Ilustrísimo Señor Visitador General's plan. The plan, which was very much to my liking, was that a good number of families, even if it were two hundred, would move to Mission La Purísima de Cadegomó and take up residence there. There are few people at that mission and more than enough food, water, and land upon which they can plant crops for themselves and for the community. And above all, they would be guaranteed three meals a day and appropriate clothing, all of which they always lacked at their mission. Or, perhaps it would be better to say that the lack of food was due to the rugged terrain and the lack or scarcity of land for planting. Those days were spent explaining the plan, answering questions, proposing solutions, and waiting for others who could not arrive as quickly because their rancherías were situated farther away in the mountains. When I left, everything was in good order and the Padre felt consoled.*

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Serra spent the next two weeks traveling to Missions San Borja and Santa María, where he rendezvoused with Gaspár de Portolá. On the morning of May 11 they set out for Velicatá, the final staging area for the expedition. Since Santa María was the most northerly mission that the Jesuits had established they were now entering the territory of the Indians who had never been missionized. Serra's excitement at being in "gentile" territory began to mount. Serra used the term



VELICATÁ FRAY JUNIPERO SERRA DEDICATED THE 1<sup>ST</sup> OF THE NEW MISSION!  
MAY 14 1769



Mission San Fernando Velicatá dedicated May 14, 1769. By Ted DeGrazia from Father Junipero Serra: Sketches of his Life in California, Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1969.

“gentile” fairly consistently when he referred to unbaptized Indians. This term derived from the Christian scriptures, especially the writings of Saint Paul, who referred to himself as an apostle to the gentiles (Romans 11:13). At that time the

term immediately referred to non-Jewish people. Paul's use of it related to debates in primitive Christianity about whether the fledgling Jesus movement ought to be a movement within Judaism or apart from it. Over time the term came to apply to those who were the object of evangelical activity, as non-Jews were for Paul. This term, and to a lesser extent another religiously-derived term "infidels" (literally, those without the faith) were Serra's terms of choice when referring to the non-Christian native peoples of the Californias. He usually avoided another set of words that were common in eighteenth-century Spanish discourse when referring to Indians outside the orbit of empire. These terms included "bárbaros" (barbarians), "salvajes" (savages), and "indios bravos" (wild Indians). In his choice of words, as in so much else, Serra's primary frame of reference was religious.<sup>11</sup>

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*May 12.* We arrived at the place called Pozo de Agua Dulce. Along the way we saw some small rancherías of gentiles and fresh footprints, but nobody, young or old, allowed themselves to be seen by us. Their reticence thwarted the hopes I had of seeing them, of speaking to them, and of cherishing them.

*May 13.* We also saw a number of small huts and gentile footprints, but no one appeared. This entire stretch of land is much poorer than the other areas of the Californias in terms of providing for the meager sustenance of its inhabitants. From Santa María up to this point, I did not see even one pitahaya tree, neither sweet nor sour, only a cardón cactus every so often, and an occasional garambullo. Most are cirios, trees that are totally useless, even for burning.<sup>12</sup>

*May 14.* Sunday. Pentecost. Early in the morning, one of the small huts that had been erected by members in the first group of the expedition was cleaned and prepared for celebrating Mass. We were told that this very hut had served as a chapel on February 22, the feast day of Santa Margarita de Cortona. This is when Padre Predicador Fray Fermín Lasuén said the first Mass in Velicatá. He came from Santa María to give communion to the captain and the soldiers and to hear their confessions so that they could fulfill their Easter duty<sup>13</sup> and prepare for the expedition. It is said that this was the first Mass celebrated in this place. Even though the Jesuit Padre Linck had been there, as stated in his diary, the soldiers who accompanied him said he did not celebrate Mass there.

An altar was prepared in that hut. The soldiers put on their leather jackets and carried their weapons and shields. And with all of the purity of holy poverty I celebrated Mass on that great day. I was comforted knowing that this was the first of many Masses that

would continue to be celebrated regularly at the new Mission San Fernando, founded on that day. The soldiers fired their arms repeatedly, which added to the solemnity of the celebration. This time, the smoke of gunpowder took the place of burning incense since we did not have any with us. Since there were no other candles than the one that was burning, which was a small end of a candle I had found, and the candle that belonged to the Padre, only one Mass was said that day. The Padre and the soldiers assisted at Mass in fulfillment of their obligation. We then sang the third version of the *Veni Creator Spiritus*.<sup>14</sup> The gathering was made up of ourselves, the soldiers, and the Indian neophytes who were accompanying us. Not a single gentile appeared. Perhaps they were frightened by the loud noise from the firearms.

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Serra and Fray Miguel de la Campa spent the rest of the days scouting the terrain and noting the location of sources of water. The following day was quite emotional because Serra encountered, for the first time in his life, a group of unbaptized and unmissionized Indians. Serra reported that he was overcome by intense feeling. In his diary he employed images of the Garden of Eden in the book of Genesis, indicating his belief that the missionary activity of which he was about to embark involved turning the clock back and re-creating the world anew.

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Sketch of "how a wild Indian shoots three Indian women with arrows because they took away some of his bad fruit." c. 1760, from Doyce Nunis, ed., *The Drawings of Ignacio Tirsch*, Dawson's Book Shop, 1972, p. 93.

**May 15.** *Since candles had already arrived on the pack train, the two priests and I celebrated Mass in succession. For me, it was a day of great consolation. Soon after the Masses were said, while I was quiet with my thoughts in the small hut that was my dwelling place, they alerted me that the gentiles were approaching and that they were close. I praised God, kissed the ground, and gave thanks to Our Lord for granting me this opportunity to be among the gentiles in their land, after longing for this for so many years. I quickly went out and there I saw twelve gentiles, all of them grown men, with the exception of one boy who was about ten years old and the other who was about sixteen years old. I saw what I could hardly believe when I would read about it or when I would be told about it, which was that the gentiles were totally naked, like Adam in paradise before the fall. That is how they went about and that is how they presented themselves to us. We interacted with them for quite some time and not once did they show any sign of embarrassment seeing that we were clothed and they were not. I placed my hands on the head of each gentile, one at a time, as a sign of affection. I filled both of their hands with overripe figs, which they immediately began to eat. We received a gift from them and with signs we showed them how much we appreciated it. The gift was a net full of roasted mesquite and four beautiful fish, which were more than medium size. Unfortunately, the poor people had not thought to clean the fish beforehand or even to salt them, so the cook said the fish were not any good. Padre Campa also gave them his raisins, the Señor Gobernador gave them tobacco leaves, and all the soldiers received them warmly and gave them food to eat.*

*With the help of the interpreter, I let them know that a Padre was already there, in that very spot, and his name was Padre Miguel. I told them that they and other people they know should come and visit him. They also should let it be known that there is no reason for fear or mistrust. The Padre would be their friend and those men, the soldiers who were standing next to the Padre, would be very good to them and would cause them no harm. I told them that if they were in need, they should not steal the cattle that were grazing in the fields but rather come and ask the Padre and he would always give them what he could. It seems that they understood very well what I had explained and they made signs to that effect, all of which led me to believe that it would not be long before they allowed themselves to be gathered together in the apostolic and evangelical net. And, this is what happened, as I shall explain later. According to the Señor Gobernador, the person who came with them as their chief, held that position by acclaim or will of his people, but from this day forward, he was officially appointing him chief in the name of the king.*

*That same afternoon, although I was sad to have to leave the Indians and their new minister who would be staying there, I set out with the Señor Gobernador and his retinue. After traveling for three hours or so, we stopped at a spot halfway between the mission and our next stop. There was some grass for the animals, but no water.*

**May 16.** After three more hours of travel we arrived at the place called San Juan de Dios. It is a pleasant spot with plenty of water and pasture, willows, tule, and a bright sky. Sergeant Don [José] Francisco Ortega and some soldiers were here for a number of days with many of the animals that would be following us along the road. This was a perfect spot for the animals to rest and recover. It was a day of joy because all of us who were going to travel together on the expedition were finally together, except for a few Indians from San Borja who did not arrive until two days later. In order to reach this creek and this spot, it is necessary to travel down a very steep hill. But since the path is well trodden, it does not pose any real difficulties.

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As Portolá had feared, Serra's leg now began to cause him great pain. Serra began to worry that he would have to be carried on a stretcher and he was not sure that the governor would let him continue. But on the next day he received word from Velicatá that cheered him up greatly. The Indians there were seeking baptism. He interpreted this news in the context of the story attributed to a seventeenth-century Spanish Franciscan nun, Sor María de Jesús de Ágreda, that God had revealed to Saint Francis that pagans would be converted to Christianity at the mere sight of Franciscans. The possibility that Serra himself might now be participating in the fulfillment of Sor María's words thrilled him. A few months shy of his fifty-sixth birthday, he felt that he had finally encountered his life's true purpose.



Sor. María de Jesús Ágreda also known as the Lady in Blue.

Yet there was another level to all of this activity which Serra only dimly understood. The Jesuits had established a presence in the territory of the northern Cochimí by 1762, when they founded Mission San Francisco de Borja. They solidified that presence five years later, with the establishment of Mission Santa María de los Angeles de Cabujakaamung. As Serra noted in his diary, Jesuit explorer Wenceslaus Linck had visited Velicatá itself in 1766. Linck stated that the indigenous people there, after some hesitation, welcomed them and shared some seeds with them. Linck baptized an infant girl, who soon died. A day later he baptized an old man and placed a cross around his neck. According to Linck, the man promised that he would never



Incidents from the journey as recorded by Father Serra during May 1769, by Ted DeGrazia from Father Junipero Serra: Sketches of his Life in California, Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1969.

remove it. It appears that this group of people had already decided on their own, three years before Serra met them, that they would seek to accommodate themselves in some fashion to the newcomers.<sup>15</sup>

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**May 17.** I said Mass there even though I was already having a hard time standing because my left foot was very inflamed. I have been suffering for over a year now. Now the wounds are inflamed and the swelling has gone halfway up my leg. This is why I was laying in bed during the time we stayed here. I feared that before long I would have to follow behind the expedition on a stretcher. In the meantime, the Señor Gobernador and his people went about arranging the loads and determining the short cuts. They also allowed the animals that had arrived last, time to rest and recover in this place, which provided what was needed.

**May 18.** We continued to stay here. I was not able to celebrate Mass due to what I have already described. However, I took great comfort from the letter I received from Velicatá in which the Padre from that mission informed me that the same gentile chief whom I had seen and warmly received, along with eleven of his people, had already gone to the mission with a larger number of men, women, boys, and girls—a total of forty-four people. They all asked to be baptized. On that very same day they began to receive instruction. I was overjoyed and wrote back to the Padre, congratulating him a thousand times over. Because the chief was such an important person, I begged the Padre to baptize him first and to give him the name Francisco in honor of Nuestro Padre Seráfico. I piously believe that such a happy event has come to pass as fulfillment of the promise that the Lord Our God made to him during these last days which, according to what the Venerable Madre María de Jesús de Ágreda affirms, at the mere sight of his sons, the gentiles will convert to our Holy Catholic Faith. And I believe that it is worth mentioning that once this chief from Velicatá becomes a Christian, he, his family, and his ranchería deserve to always be treated well, because from the moment the Spaniards set foot on his land, he began to visit them, give them gifts, and serve them. He was able to interact with them and gained their trust. This is what he did with the first group of our expedition. Sergeant Ortega and some soldiers arrived after the first group had left and before we had arrived. Some Indians immediately came to welcome them and the chief arrived three days later. He explained that he would have come sooner but he was very far away on the opposite coast. When his people informed him of the arrival of the Spaniards he immediately headed back, traveling as fast as he could for two days and one night to arrive as quickly as possible. The chief gave Ortega two tercios of mezcal. He also offered to send some of his people out to fish and to help out in any way they could. He treated us in the same way that I have described. And above all, he asked to be the first person of such a large group to receive Holy Baptism. And he promised to bring more people. May God make him a saint. Amen.

## THE JOURNAL OF SAN DIEGO HISTORY

*May 19.* I awoke feeling much better and celebrated Mass. The rest of the day was spent arranging things for our departure so we could head out the next day. The Indians from Mission San Borja arrived. They were to follow behind us, together with the Indians from Missions Santa Gertrudis and Santa María who were already here.

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Because of rain and threatening clouds, the expedition did not travel on May 20.

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*May 21.* Sunday and feast of the Holy Trinity. After I celebrated Mass, for which everyone was present, I spoke briefly about the need for all of us to conduct ourselves properly during the journey. I emphasized that the main objective was the greater honor and glory of God. I blessed them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, whose trinity of persons in unity of divine nature we were celebrating on that day. . . .

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Serra spent the early morning of May 22 writing letters that were carried back by a courier. He set out at 8:00 am and spent an uneventful day on the trail. He ended his diary account that day by writing, "We saw footprints made by gentiles, but did not see the actual people."



*Former Jesuit trail followed by Serra's party to San Diego. Photo by Harry W. Crosby.*

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**May 23.** *We continued our journey. We left the river and headed toward the mountains that would take us to the opposite coast. According to my calculations, we traveled four and one-half hours today. We spent more than half the time going up and down a rocky and difficult road. The rest of the time was spent traveling through some flat plains. There were clear indications that the first group of the expedition had stopped here, so we did the same thing. Seeing that there was no water, we dug a hole in the ground and the animals drank from it. A short while later we learned that we could have avoided all that work because a league or so away we found running water and good pasture. We named this large area "Santiago" since this was the feast day celebrating when Santiago appeared to the Spaniards and offered to help them.*

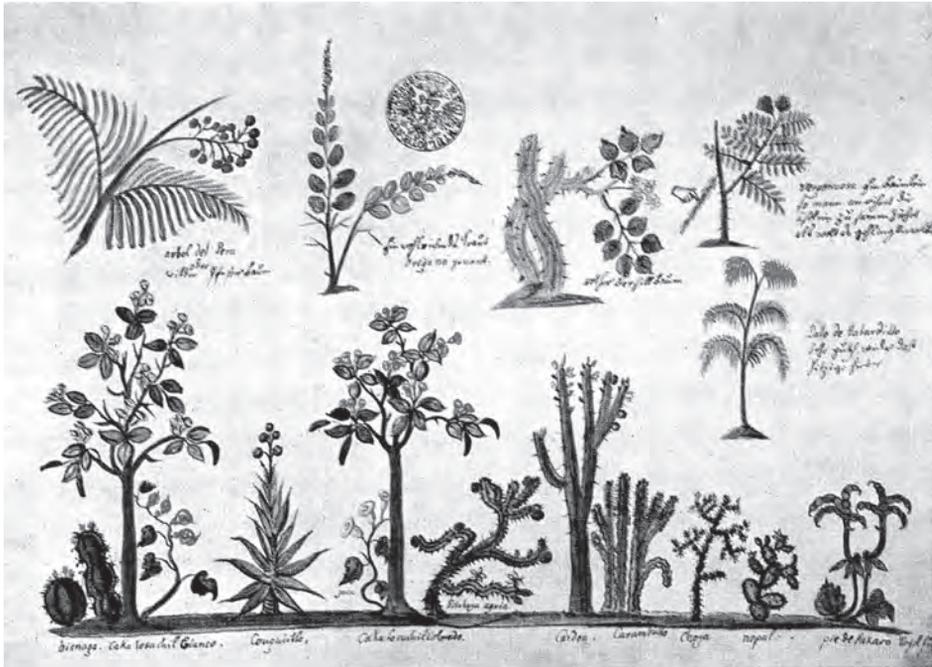
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The next day and a half was spent traveling. By this time the group was about fifty miles distant from Velicatá. On the afternoon of May 25 they spotted some Indians and tried to make contact.

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**May 25.** *Shortly after, our attention was drawn to a very tall and leafy tree, something we had not seen outside the missions. As I got closer to the tree, I saw that it was a poplar. I was quite struck by this so we decided to call this place "El Alamo Solo."<sup>16</sup> From this point on, the terrain began to be more pleasing, with a number of tall and leafy trees (but not as leafy as the poplar.) The branches and leaves of these trees are similar to a cypress. There were other trees of the same height and different types of flowers. It seemed as if we were in a different land. This afternoon, three gentiles appeared on a small hill that we could see from where we had stopped. We sent two Indians from our group to go and invite the gentiles to come down because we were their friends. But as soon as the gentiles saw them approach, they fled and nothing else happened.*

**May 26.** *We stayed here because it was an excellent place for the animals to rest and recover their strength. Over the last few days they had been overworked. Two gentiles appeared at the same hill and they were watching us closely. Our Indians were better prepared today than yesterday and went after the gentiles with caution so they would not escape. However, one gentile did slip through their hands, but they were able to tie up the other one tightly with a rope halter. It was necessary to do this because he continued to fight to keep them from bringing him to us. He put up such a hard fight that they had*



Various plants drawn and described by Father Ignacio Tirsch. Top row: pepper tree, oregano, red Brazil tree, Palo de Tabardillo; bottom row: bisnaga, cakalosuchil blanco, conguistle, juca, Colorado, pitahaya agria, cardon, carambullo, cholla, nopal, birdfoot. From Doyce Nunis, ed., *The Drawings of Ignacio Tirsch*, Los Angeles: Dawson's Book Shop, 1972, p. 93.

to drag him along the ground, which tore up his thighs and knees very badly. But they were finally able to bring him back. They brought him before me and after making him kneel, I placed my hands on his head and prayed the gospel of San Juan. I made the sign of the cross and untied him. He was extremely frightened and very upset. We took him to the Señor Gobernador's tent to try and raise his spirits. He was a robust young man, probably about twenty years old. When he was asked what his name was, he said "Axajui." The men wanted to know what that word meant in his language, but it was too much to ask to try and find a linguist among these people, so they decided that "Axajui" was his name and that was the end of it.

We placed overly ripe figs, meat, and tortillas in front of our Axajui so that he would eat. He ate some, but only a little at a time, since he was so upset. He grabbed a fistful of dirt and brought it up to his mouth saying "pinole." We wondered how he knew about pinole. We gave him a jug of powdered pinole and he ate some of it. He did not seem to like it. Another jug of pinole was prepared for him but this time it was mixed with water. He ate it all up. All his talking seemed to be his way of trying to apologize for having spied on us from the top of the small hill both yesterday and today. By admitting this venial sin

*he committed a mortal one. He said that his chief had sent him to spy on us. The chief and his ranchería, along with four other rancherías that would join his, were all in agreement that they would hide behind some rocks and wait for us to head back out on our journey. Then they would come out and kill the Padre and his group, even if it was a large number of people. We forgave him his murderous intentions and gave him many gifts so he could go back and tell his people how kindly we had treated him and also say what we had asked him to do, which was for all of them to come and meet us. Nobody came, even though we did see a few of them on that same hill. He was naked like the rest of them. All he had were his bow and arrows, which we returned to him. His long hair was tied back with a small cord made of blue wool. It was nicely made. We could not imagine where it came from.*

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On May 27 the expedition traveled to a place called La Cieneguilla. Here they left Linck's path, for from this spot the Jesuit had headed east towards the San Felipe desert. The Portolá expedition, following the path of Rivera y Moncada, headed north. After they departed La Cieneguilla the expedition left the territory of the Cochimí and entered the land of the Kiliwa people. The expedition noted that the clothing worn by the people they were now encountering differed from that of the Indians they had previously met. As the expedition continued north, Serra's enthusiasm, which had burst forth at Velicatá, persisted. On May 28, they had two encounters with different groups of Indians. The first one, at La Cieneguilla, was very difficult and involved gunfire. However, the second encounter, about seven miles past La Cieneguilla, was viewed by Serra as a much more friendly encounter. This group produced a staged battle in front of the Spaniards and then insisted that they would accompany the expedition out of their territory. Serra interpreted these actions simply as entertainment and friendliness, although they were likely fraught with much greater meaning than he realized. But Serra persisted in his growing enthusiasm. Indeed, he believed that God had sent him the second group of Indians so that his spirits would not lag.<sup>17</sup> And on the very next day, when a large group of native people tried to obstruct the progress of the expedition, Serra similarly interpreted their actions as motivated by happiness and their shouts as enthusiastic greetings. He believed the people were saying how much they would welcome a mission among them. Portolá and the soldiers saw things differently and had to fire a warning shot to get the group to disperse. And for the rest of the time the expedition was in Kiliwa territory, it encountered very few Indians.

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line up as a means of forcing the Indians to retreat. They refused to leave, even with this tactic. One soldier then fired a shot into the air and shortly after, another soldier did the same. The Indians then began to flee and our men loaded up the pack train so we could continue on our journey.

We left at ten o'clock in the morning. We traveled for four hours during the hottest time of the day and the trip was unbearable. A half an hour or less after leaving, we went down to a river where there was much vegetation but no water. It was situated in a beautiful plain about a quarter of a league wide and more than two leagues long. The soil was good. The first portion of the plain has good soil but the second portion is composed of rather fine sand. In the area with good soil, one can see much vegetation that starts from the base of the hills and heads toward the opposite coast. One of our neophytes told us that there was plenty of water there. If that is the case, we all deemed this beautiful place the site for a mission, Santa Humiliana. After that, the mountains get closer together. We followed a dry river bed between the mountains and arrived at a place with running water and good pasture, which the animals were able to enjoy.

It seems that the gentiles from that morning wanted to prove that what Axajui had said on May 26 was true, not only what was said but also what was done. For when we left the place where we had stopped today, the gentiles were following us through the hills of the opposite coast. During the whole day's journey we saw a large throng of them following us continuously through the hills. But for them to catch up with us meant that they had to go down to the plain, which I have already described. Since this plain was wide, we were in no apparent danger. But the situation changed when the mountains were closer together and we had to travel through a narrow pass. That is when all the soldiers put on their leather jackets. They and the mule drivers were armed and ready to fight. Everyone kept their eyes peeled but the enemy never appeared. We suspected that these Indians might be from the Bay of San Quintín. Admiral Cabrera Bueno describes these Indians in his *Navegación especulativa y práctica*, part 5, chapter 4, as being war-like and daring.<sup>18</sup> The Bay of San Quintín is located at 32 degrees on the opposite coast. But in the end, we did not see these Indians again.

In order to temper the distress we had experienced with the Indians, God quickly sent us other Indians who behaved very differently. About a league away from our stopping place, twelve new gentiles joined our group. They were very pleasant. They said they would show us how to get to the place where we were going to stop. And that is what they did. Their behavior was quite discreet, for as soon as we arrived, they retired to a hillside nearby and sat there motionless. It seems they did not want to hamper the process of unloading the pack train. As soon as we were finished, I had my page and an interpreter take them a gift of figs and meat along with a message inviting them to come and greet us without fear, for we were their friends. They responded with gestures of appreciation but

*indicated that they would not be able to come and see us until they had received the gift they wanted to give to us. They had already requested it from their rancharía, which was nearby. It so happened that after we had eaten and rested, the Indians came down to where we were with their nets filled with cooked mescals<sup>19</sup> and with their weapons, which they placed on the ground. They began to explain to us how they used each of the weapons in battle. They acted out the parts of attacker and victim so cleverly and vividly, which kept us quite entertained for a good while. We did not need the interpreters to explain what the Indians wanted to tell us in this regard. Up to this point, there were no women at all among the gentiles. I had not seen any gentile women, and for the moment, I did not wish to see any. But two women appeared during these festivities. They were chattering away inanely as women are known to do. When I saw that they were modestly covered up, which was comparable to the modesty displayed by the Christian women at the missions, I was not bothered by their arrival. They said that the youngest woman was the wife of the chief who was there. She was carrying the gift on her head, which was something I had never seen before. It was a large torte made of dough that was filled with thick fibers. When I started to place my hands on her head, she put the torte in my hands. Then she and her husband began to explain to me how to eat it. The older woman also shouted when she spoke, even more so than the others. The chief and his companions continued with the explanation. We were all so engrossed in what was being said that we did not notice that the women had left. It was not until a short while later, when we inquired where they were so we could return the favor, that we realized they had already left. May God bless them. We gave the chief a gift for his wife. Everyone else also received a gift. We said they could now leave and they obediently and happily did so. But they said they wanted to continue traveling with us and follow us as friends.*

**May 29.** *We left this place and traveled for three full hours. It was a hard journey up and down steep grades. The hillsides, all composed of soil, were steep and difficult. We finally were able to get down to the plain. It was well worth the effort because it was an excellent spot, unlike any other we had seen until now.*

*At the beginning of today's journey, we found in a small plain the huts belonging to our gentile friends from yesterday afternoon. The huts were very well constructed, just like those we have frequently seen during these last few days of traveling. And from the hillside that paralleled the plain, our Indian friends from yesterday, accompanied by even more Indians, careened down upon us, fulfilling the promise they had made to accompany us. Their actions were similar to those of yesterday. They were running, shouting, and gleefully crossing in front of our path. Since the road was in poor condition and narrow, the Indians were creating an uproar and doing more harm than good. The animals were frightened and were in danger of falling off a cliff. The Indians were told to quiet down*

*and that we were pleased with their gestures of friendship, which they reenforced by bringing more mescals for the neophytes who were on foot. But with all the ruckus, they paid no attention and understood nothing of what we were saying, so nothing changed. The situation went from bad to worse, especially the condition of the road. We summoned their chief and explained the situation to him. He tried to quiet them down and bring them all together, but he was only partially successful. Finally, the Señor Gobernador, who had gone on ahead, turned back. He exerted his influence. But seeing that it was to no avail, he found it necessary to fire his shot gun into the air in the direction of the Indians, who became frightened and stopped. That put an end to the racket. I feared, however, that this radical action would leave the Indians doubting the sincerity of our love for them. Their love for us was confirmed when three gentiles appeared before us shortly after we had arrived at this place. They came unarmed, with only a pipe in their hands. They told us that a messenger from the last place where we had stopped had come to tell them that we came in peace and for them to welcome us because we were good people. And that is what they did. May God make these Indians, and the others we met, Christians as quickly as possible. I firmly believe this would be the case if a mission were to be established here right away because this place is ripe for it.*

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May 30 was the feast of San Fernando and Serra said Mass that morning "with much consolation."

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**May 30.** ...There are more poplars and trees of all sorts here than in any mission. The land is flat. There is green pasture and water running on the surface of the land. Some plots of land are soaked in water; some look like wheat fields amidst tall green grass; others look like some type of bean field. And if one did not know any better, one would think this was a mission that has developed as the result of many years of work. The lush foliage of this place forms a semi-circle and there is a rock-ribbed hill in the middle upon which the mission or pueblo could be built. There it would be protected from the dampness and it would have a panoramic view of that beautiful area. If it is possible for the mission at Velicatá to keep the name San Fernando, separate from Santa María, then I would be happy for this place to be called San Pedro Regalado. But for now, I will only name this place San Fernando, whose feast day is today. May it be God's will that we see this place populated soon. When it is time to move the cattle currently kept at Velicatá and intended for the new missions, if they arrive at this place alive, they could stay here and take time to regain their strength before moving on.

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The march on May 31 traversed a series of hills. Serra recounted meeting a group of Indians, the first they had seen in a couple of days. But this encounter was exceptional, for they met no more Indians while they went through Kiliwa territory. Most likely, the two consecutive days (May 28 and 29) of Spanish gunfire suppressed the willingness of these people to meet the expedition.

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*May 31. ...We stopped at a small, high plain that offered us at its edge an abundance of water and grass where the animals were able to wander and feed. In the middle of the afternoon some gentiles appeared. Two arrived first and then up to eleven. They were very gentle and humble. We welcomed them warmly and gave them food to eat. And when they took out their roughly-made pipes, we gave them tobacco. After a good while they left, very happy. And I praised God for allowing me to encounter such humble creatures for whom there appear to be no obstacles that would prevent them from receiving the light of the Holy Gospel.*

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The expedition marched steadily during the first five days of June without encountering any native peoples. On June 2 they came across the grave of Manuel Valladares, an Indian from Mission San Ignacio who had died during the Rivera y Moncada expedition. The grave had been disturbed, so they gathered what bones they could and performed a reburial. Towards the end of this series of marches, they entered Pai-Pai territory. On June 6 an Indian came into their camp and told them that the first group of the expedition had come this way and that the expedition was camped farther north at a spot close to the ocean. The news energized Serra, although its major significance, underappreciated at the time, was in indicating how effective were the communication networks among the native peoples of northern Baja California.

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*June 6. ...Shortly after we arrived, we noticed that a few gentiles were on a small hill nearby keeping an eye on us. Then one of them started to come toward us, leaving the rest behind to keep watch. We received him with much affection and gave him a gift. He stayed with us all afternoon and night. He told us that the first group of the expedition had*

*come this way and that some of the Indians from here had accompanied the expedition as it continued on. He said that the group was now camped at a spot close to the ocean.<sup>20</sup> At that place the Padre was handing out rosaries and clothing to the Indians and was pouring water on their heads. The Indians from that place had sent messengers to the Indians here, to see if they wanted to take part in any of this. This news was of great consolation to me and to the others as well. We asked him how far that place was from here and he said it was still far away. May God allow us to arrive there. Amen.*

*Even though today I am praying on the eighth day after the feast of San Fernando, who seems to have wanted to spread out his blessings over these eight days, we have named this place "Los Santos Gorgomienses" among whom San Norberto has two sons and Our Padre San Francisco has eleven.<sup>21</sup>*

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On June 7 the expedition remained where it was to give the animals some rest.

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***June 8.** ...Today three gentiles came to see us without being invited. They were unarmed, which was a great sign that they have confidence in our friendship. But we have not been able to persuade them to eat any of the food we have put before them. Nor were we able to get any information we wanted from them regarding the route ahead and how to proceed.*

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They left on the morning of June 9 and marched for four hours. On June 10 they encountered a man they called "The Dancer." Serra told the story in a whimsical, almost bemused fashion: the man said that he had to dance around the food he was offered before he could eat it, and then, after they had placed some food in the center, he widened his circle of dancing and even began to dance around their provisions and animals. Was he planning to eat everything the expedition had? And then, after having done all of this, he inexplicably left. Maybe someone had inadvertently said something untoward to him, Serra thought.

But on April 16, in this same territory, the first leg of the expedition had captured an old man who said he was some sort of shaman. José Cañizares, who was on that first leg of the expedition and kept his own diary, described him as "arrogant," and said that his actions disgusted the members of the expedition. Another man with him became so angry that "he yanked out bits of his hair." Juan

Crespí stated that he did not know “how this [old] man might be distinguished from the ugliest demon ever depicted... For a single glance at his face with its bands of white, yellow, and red paint was enough to horrify one.” Since the Baja California Indians accompanying the expedition did not understand the man, communication proved impossible. Rivera y Moncada sent him away with some beads and ribbons, and he and those with him “left well pleased.” The Spanish thought that the gifts of beads were establishing a generalized reciprocity with the Indians. It is not clear that the native people shared this understanding.<sup>22</sup>

Such sketchy descriptions make it difficult to ascertain what actually occurred, let alone its significance to the native peoples involved. It seems reasonably clear, however, that the Spanish had captured and insulted one of the group’s leading figures and it is doubtful that they actually “left well pleased.” There is no reason to assume that the old man who visited Serra was the same person who had been captured by Rivera y Moncada but it seems that, whoever he was, the object of his dancing was perhaps to purify the land that had been contaminated by this new group of interlopers, to engage in a ritual that would protect the people from them, or to effect some kind of damage upon them. In common with many other indigenous groups in the Californias, for the Pai-Pai, song and dance were an integral part of the way in which the core identity of the group was expressed. Whatever the man was doing, he was hardly dancing for food.<sup>23</sup>

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*June 9. In terms of water, I only know that it can be found in a few places. What we have drunk in this area is very good. Of the two days that we spent in the last place, if we had spent one of those days here, we would have had the opportunity to see what type of irrigation these watering places could offer. But since there is no time to examine this, those who come to found the mission will see this copious field of gentiles. It seems that the only thing needed is workers, since all signs indicate they are ready for reaping. Rogate ergo Dómiium mesis, etc.<sup>24</sup> In the language of the gentiles this place is called Matiropi. We named it Santa Margarita.*

*June 10. During the morning, while preparations were underway for our departure, one of the gentiles who allowed themselves to be seen from a small hill nearby, approached us with a club in one hand and a rattle in the other. After welcoming him with much affection, we tried to get him to eat without being afraid. It is a long story how we tried everything imaginable to get him to eat. First we would eat some of what we had given him so he would not be afraid, but it was to no avail. He did swallow a few gulps of pinole as if forced to do so and then vomited it all up. He finally explained his behavior,*



*Oasis near Cataviña. Photo by Harry W. Crosby.*

*saying that he was the dancer of that region and that he could not eat anything until he had performed a ceremonial dance around the food. He said that if we wanted to give him something, we should put it on the ground and allow him to do his dance. Then he would eat. We gave him permission and freedom to proceed. He then began to dance and sing around the offerings. While this was going on, a soldier would come with a piece of tortilla, sugar, or meat and try to put it in the Indian's mouth, but he always resisted,*

*making signs that they should put the food on the pile so he could dance around it. The pile of food seemed small to the Indian, so after asking us for permission he danced around all of our provisions and animals. It seemed he was preparing himself to eat everything we had brought. After that he was very happy and said he was no longer afraid. He ate and began to answer very frankly the questions from our interpreters. He told us we were four and one-half days away from arriving in San Diego. There we would find the other Padre and his people who days previously had passed through this area whose name I mentioned above [Matiropi]. He told us that if we wanted, he could accompany us up to that place [San Diego]. And, if it suited him, he would stay there, and if not, he would return to this area, but under the condition that we allow him to dance along the entire route. We were very pleased to agree to his terms and I had high hopes of baptizing him there [San Diego]. From that point on we referred to him only as Baylón, saving the name Pascual for the day of his holy baptism.<sup>25</sup> But all was lost. When we were ready to leave this place, someone from our group said something to him, which he misunderstood. He ran off to the hill as if he were a deer, leaving everything we had given him behind, except for the club and rattle he had brought....*

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The expedition continued north for the next five days without encountering any other local inhabitants. But a number of the Baja California Indians on the expedition decided to leave on June 14. Serra's response was a generous assessment of their unsung contributions to the expedition.

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**June 14.** *We got up early because we really needed to find water. After traveling for two hours we arrived at the first watering place where the animals were able to quench their intense thirst to their heart's delight. The road wound through continuous canyons and hillsides of pure soil, like all the hills we have seen, not only today but everywhere we have been. There are so many that we have lost count. Shortly before arriving at our stopping place, one of our mule drivers happened upon a silver mine that everyone says is very rich. May it bring them good fortune. In addition to water, this place abounds with beautiful pasture and plentiful shade from the abundance of trees—enough for a fine ranch. We called this place San Basilio.*

*We talked about heading on to our next stopping place today since it was supposed to be close by, but we thought it over carefully and decided to stay here all day so the animals could rest. After midday and after everyone had eaten, nine of the Indians who*

*had accompanied us up to this point abruptly deserted us. Six of them were from Mission San Borja and the other three were from Santa María de los Angeles. We realized they were missing in the middle of the afternoon and sent men out to find them. But no trace of them was to be found. We questioned the Indians who had remained as to what would have prompted such unexpected behavior from the others, considering that we gave them food, treated them well, and they had always appeared to be happy. The Indians responded that they did not know. They could only surmise that since we were getting close to San Diego, the others may have feared that they would be forced to stay there without the possibility of returning to their missions. May God bless them, not only for how well they have served us but also for how much we will miss them in the future. We only have five Indians left from Santa Gertrudis, three from San Borja, two from Santa María, and two boys who ride their mules and act as mule drivers of the pack. May God keep them safe and free from all harm. Amen.*

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On June 15 the expedition marched for only an hour or so and stopped to inspect various sources of water.

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**June 15.** ...*On our way to inspect the third source of water, we saw some gentile women. We pretended that we had not even seen them and went on ahead without speaking to them. As we got closer to the end of the plain that ends at a hill, a group of armed gentiles appeared on top of the hill. One of the gentiles started screeching at the top of his lungs. His actions seemed to be telling us to turn back. We gestured and shouted for them to come down to us but it was to no avail. If we had proceeded forward, we would have found ourselves under their feet. The sergeant who accompanied me had already put on his leather jacket and was ready to fight. He asked me if we should continue on or turn back. I feared this was not the time to break off relations with these poor people and cause any sort of trouble. I believed, although with great difficulty, that it would be best to allow them to be victorious on this battlefield. That is why we did not have a good look at the source of the water supply, which is the only thing we were looking for. The mere sight of the soldiers, who later went there on horseback, scared off any gentiles in those hills who might start shrieking. The soldiers tell me they saw many bushes of the Rose of Castilla, an abundance of water, and thousands of other lovely things. Thanks be to God.*

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The expedition rested on June 16, but a scout party brought back some Indian artifacts, which Serra judged to be well constructed and comparable to the workmanship of central Mexico. As had previously been the case, Serra's enthusiasm for the native peoples he was encountering was mirrored in his enthusiasm for their material culture.

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*June 16. ...They have found piles of delicious seeds that the gentiles eat, which I have tried and find very tasty; a large and very strong tray made of clay and woven grass, and other small pieces of fine broken earthenware that were very smooth and delicate, similar to what is found in Guadalajara. But the gentiles have not allowed themselves to be seen.*

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After a day of marching on June 17, two more Baja California Mission Indians left. Serra made a point of emphasizing how dependent the expedition was upon the consistent and unpaid labor of these Indians.

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Cook killing the mule. Drawn by Ted DeGrazia from Father Junipero Serra: Sketches of his Life in California, Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1969.

*June 18. We left after eating. As we were leaving, two of the three Indians from San Borja who, as I said on June 14, had remained with us, ran away without our knowing why. Little by little, companions who are more necessary to us than what some people may think, are drifting away from us. Only someone who sees the situation firsthand can attest to how hard they work and how little they are fed without receiving a salary....*

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The expedition was now entering the land of the southern Kumeyaay people. On June 19 a series of hills and creeks made progress difficult.



Indians sitting in a circle around Father Serra holding a baby. Drawn by Ted DeGrazia from Father Junipero Serra: Sketches of his Life in California, Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1969.

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**June 19.** On today's journey, one of the Señor Gobernador's servants, a Genoese cook, showed the strength of his sword by thrusting it through the hindquarters of a she-ass because the animal had the audacity of cutting in front of the cook when he was riding, thus

*slowing him down. The she-ass died at the cook's feet. The Señor Gobernador was convinced a crime had been committed based on the statements of eyewitnesses and the confession of the man who committed the "burricide." The governor fired the cook and ordered that he be stripped of his weapons. He sentenced him to following the expedition on foot and fined him forty pesos, which is four times the value of the animal. A mare gave birth to a pretty little mule here. Since the young animal would not be able to keep up with the pack train, it was given to the Indians who quickly slaughtered it. They cooked the pieces over an open fire and then began to feast on the fresh and tender meat. May they benefit from it.*

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The expedition was now at Ensenada de Todos Santos, site of the modern Mexican city of Ensenada. They were now among the Kumeyaay, whose territory stretched from slightly south of where the expedition was, to north of San Diego. The Kumeyaay had developed a sophisticated and effective communication system. It is extremely likely that every Indian group they encountered for the rest of the journey knew some days in advance that they were approaching.<sup>26</sup>

Serra's enthusiasm for the native peoples he encountered between here and San Diego was generally quite high, for he interpreted their behavior as indicating that they were friendly and anxious for the gospel. But the situation was not so simple. These people had behaved very differently when the first leg of the expedition passed through their territory seven weeks before the second leg did. For instance, Serra was rhapsodic about the native peoples he encountered on June 23 around Punta de San Miguel just outside of Ensenada. But when the first expedition had been in that vicinity on May 4, the native peoples were hostile. Cañizares reported:

While we were in the mountains during the afternoon, we saw nineteen natives who were shouting at us from a hill. They were armed with bows and arrows, and this put us on our guard. The captain deployed the men, in case anything should happen, but the natives went away, and we made camp and erected a barricade. The watch was doubled in case of danger."

On the next day he added, "in the afternoon some Indians appeared on the same hill. They were armed as on the day before and they indicated a desire to fight and then withdrew."<sup>27</sup>

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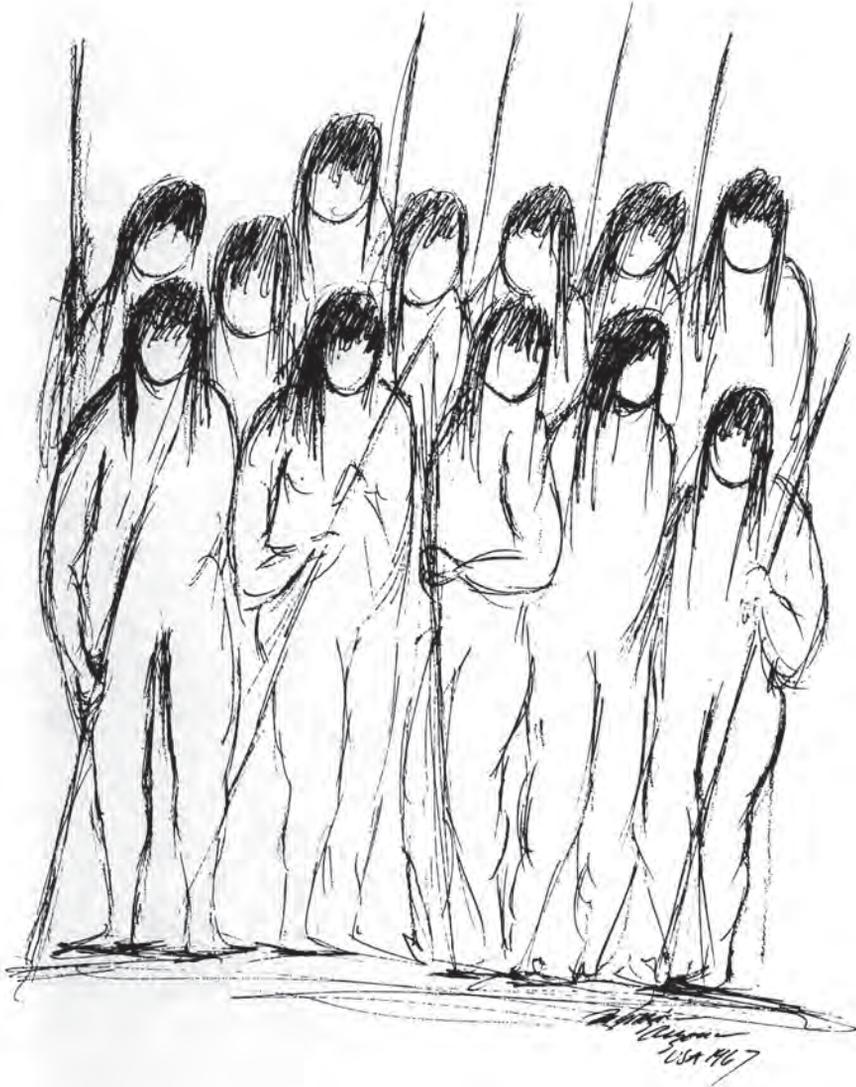
**June 23.** We left this place and turned toward a row of hills that form this side of the cove. After less than an hour of traveling we found ourselves back at the edge of the ocean. We followed the shore for the rest of our journey, which lasted about three and one-half hours. The road is good, flat, and firm until it meets up with a hill that ends in the ocean itself. At the foot of the hill there is a very green area with a number of pools of good, sweet water. We spent the night here.

A large *ranchería* of gentiles lives right here. The time we have spent with them has been most pleasurable. Their beautiful physique, comportment, friendliness, and happiness have won all our hearts. They presented us with fish and clams. They went out in their small canoes to fish just for us. They danced in their own way for us and told us to sleep here for two nights. When we would say things to them in Spanish, they would repeat what we said very clearly. In short, all of the gentiles have pleased me, but these gentiles in particular have captured my heart. The only thing that has caused them great fear and amazement are the mules. When the gentiles are in our midst, they feel very secure. But if they see the mules approaching, they all tremble and shout "mula, mula" (since they had heard us call the animals by that name) and want to run off until somebody gets up to shoo the animals away. This spot does not appear to have any other use than that of serving as a *ranchería*, therefore, for the record we shall call it the *Ranchería de San Juan*. The women cover themselves up discreetly but the men are naked, like all the other men. They carry their quivers, which are usually painted, on their shoulders. Most of them wear on their head a type of crown made of otter skin or some other fine fur. Their hair is cut in the shape of a short wig and is covered with white mud— all done very cleanly. May God grant them such cleanliness of the soul. Amen.

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June 24 offered another example of the different ways in which the local people reacted to the two expeditions. Serra found the people so friendly that he thought they wanted him to stay with them. But the first expedition, passing through the same area on May 7, had reported hostility and a distinct lack of friendliness. Crespí wrote about a "good sized throng" of people who approached the expedition and "shouted at us a great deal."

All of them naked, heavily armed, with their large quivers on their backs and bows and arrows in their hands, and all went running along the crests of the hill in view alongside of us; and they kept following us in this way nearly the whole day's march with loud shouting and hubbub.



*Naked Indians as Father Serra saw them. Drawn by Ted DeGrazia from Father Junipero Serra: Sketches of his Life in California, Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1969.*

Cañizares added that the native peoples shot at least one arrow towards the expedition's animals, "so we kept our weapons handy until they went away."<sup>28</sup>

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**June 24.** *Feast day of the Holy Precursor, San Juan. After Mass, the soldiers and the gentiles began to banter and swap small pieces of white cloth, which the gentiles really want, for a few baskets of fresh fish. The gentiles were quite astute when it came to exchanging goods. If the piece of cloth was small, then the fish they gave in return would be equally small. There was no use arguing the point or trying to barter. If the piece of cloth was double the size, they would double the amount of fish. After we bid farewell to these good people, we continued on our way.... We slept under the protection of a sprawling oak tree. Here we did not have the California advantage of being free from fleas. We were covered with them and also with some ticks. We met many gentiles along the way. When we would pass by a ranchería, they would all come out to greet us, without being asked to do so. After arriving, gentiles from another ranchería near where we stopped, would come to see us. These gentiles and the ones we met along the route were as friendly as those we had met previously. When I asked them, among other questions, if they wanted me to stay with them there, they said they did. It pained me terribly to have to leave so many gentle souls.*

**June 25.** *After Mass and other matters that needed attention, we continued our journey along a very difficult road. Most of the time we could see the ocean. Today's trek lasted three and one-half hours. We found the valley where we would be stopping, but the path down to it was very long and extremely steep. It seemed as if we were sliding down the hill instead of walking. The soil was not tamped down—it was basically dust and all the animals would get stuck. We finally made it down the hill and stopped at the lower part of a verdant plain. It looks like a mission that has already been established, not only for the beauty of the place but also because of the many gentile huts that are scattered around the area. There is a great deal of vegetation on the land, much water, and many trees. In the middle of this place there is a very large pool from which an estuary flows to the ocean. The ocean can be seen through a pass formed by the hills in front. The beach appears to be about two leagues away. Much of the ground is filled with sedge and tule. There are many climbing vines among the willows. From the north side a canyon begins to form. It then branches off in various directions according to the location of the hills. The canyon is filled with large trees. Everyone felt this was an excellent site for another mission. I named it San Juan de Capistrano.*

*Along the way we saw hares, rabbits, and herds of antelope. But we saw even greater numbers of poor, lost sheep, that is, so many gentiles of both sexes and of every age. They do not run away from us as did the gentiles whom we met at the beginning. Instead, they stay close to us along the road, as well as when we arrive at a stopping place. They act as if they had known us and interacted with us their entire lives. This is why I do not have the heart to leave them like that, so I invited them all to go with us to San Diego. May God help bring them there. Or may He send ministers who can guide them to Heaven in their own fertile and blessed land, which they have already been given.*

*June 26. We pressed on and the first thing we were faced with was a very steep hill. This was followed by long stretches of flat lands, but they were so high that it seemed as if all of the very high hills we could see in every direction were beneath our feet. We saw low ridges, steep slopes, and ravines. After five hours, the length of today's trek, we saw that we had to go down an incline that was so steep, practically a sheer drop, that just looking at it set our teeth on edge. Everyone dismounted. Half walking, half crawling, falling and getting up, we made it down to the valley, which was no less verdant than the previous one. And it is close to the ocean along a rugged coast. A bit further up, there is a cove where the waves come in and break gently.*

*This is also a beautiful spot. However, because the land is so untamed, it would take an enormous amount of work to make the land suitable for agriculture. The tules and sedge alone cover large areas of land, not to mention the large groves of trees. A large part of the land is filled with green reeds, willows, and many other plants I do not recognize. The vegetation is so tall that one would not be able to see a man on horseback, even if he were to raise his arms high in the air. Because there was so much vegetation, we were not able to examine this place well. We did, however, find a good watering hole for the animals and some water for the men.*

*Aside from that, we only examined the area near the ocean where there are a number of large pools of water. Some of the pools are salty, others are brackish, and some have sweet, good water. If this place is going to be settled, bringing water down to the area from up above is going to be very costly. There is no doubt that water can be found there. Everything in this place is so green because of the pools of fresh water and the tule swamps higher up. This place has a small flat hill that is quite large and very well suited for the establishment of the pueblo. It is away from the dampness and there is plenty of water close by for irrigation.*

*We named this beautiful place San Francisco Solano trusting that with the support of this Holy Apostle of the Spanish Indies, the many gentile Indians who have gathered here with us will be led to the pale of the Church. It seems to me that even though we have seen many Indians, we have not seen so many gathered together in one place as we have here. And as to their friendly nature, I cannot find the appropriate words to describe it. In addition to the countless number of men, a large group of women and children sat around me in a circle. One of the women wanted me to hold the infant she was nursing. I held him in my arms for a while, so wishing that I could baptize him, but I then returned the child to his mother. I make the sign of the cross and bless each of them. I have them say "Jesus and Mary." I give them what I am able to give and cherish them in the best way I can. We manage to get by like this since there is no other work we can do at the present time. A person must use some caution when with these poor souls because they cannot be trusted. They have an intense longing or craving for articles of*



*The mountainous terrain leading to San Diego. Photo by Harry W. Crosby.*

*clothing or any sort of bauble they imagine they could use to adorn themselves. Food is not that appealing to them. They are fat, so it seems they have enough. The majority of them are tall and would be useful to the Señor Gobernador as grenadiers. But they are capable of flying off the handle, as they say, over a small piece of cloth or some rag, and not give a damn about anybody. When I give them something to eat, they usually tell me with very clear gestures that they do not want that. Instead, they want me to give them my holy habit and grab me by the sleeve. If I had given the habit to all who requested it, I already would have a large community of gentile friars. What I would like to instill firmly in their hearts is the Induimini Dominum Jesum Christum.<sup>29</sup> May the most generous Lord and Padre who clothes the little birds with feathers, the mountains with grass, etc. Amen.*

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On June 27 the expedition was just south of Rosarito. Serra reported that the people offered him and Portolá some very fine tasting fish and some spices in a basket. They had a meeting with a number of people who were quite friendly and who dealt with the Spanish with an air of familiarity. Serra gave a man his glasses, which were passed around from hand to hand and returned to him only with difficulty.

Six weeks earlier Crespí had reported a much more aggressive approach by the indigenous people. The Indians refused to share their fish unless the Spanish bartered for it. The leader of the group was “rummaging through our entire camp” and spurs and blankets were stolen. In all, Crespí summarized, the Indians were “great thieves.”<sup>30</sup>

On the whole, the Kumeyaay demonstrated considerably more public friendliness to the second leg of the expedition than they did to the first. Because of their communication system, every leader who interacted with Portolá and Serra knew that the first expedition had arrived at San Diego and that it had demonstrated no sign of leaving. This new expedition was most likely destined to reinforce that first outpost. The Kumeyaay had no reason to believe that this second expedition would be the last incursion into their territory. The situation therefore called for caution and an appearance of friendliness while the indigenous people tried to decide how most effectively to deal with the newcomers whose numbers were increasing. But, carried away by his own enthusiasm for the missionary task upon which he was embarking, Serra interpreted their behavior much as he had interpreted the behavior of the northern Cochimí he had met at Velicatá at the beginning of the expedition. He was absolutely convinced that they were eager to receive the gospel.

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**June 27.** We set out very early because our sergeant had already warned us that today's trek would be a long one. All of the gentiles were present when we left and they followed us along the road, both men and women. We traveled along the seashore. Even though the ground was level there were just as many ravines or gullies as on dry land. These were probably formed by the water that runs off from the nearby hills and ends up in the ocean. For me, this was one of the hardest journeys we have had. It lasted more than six hours. Along the road I have described, besides the place I mentioned that has an estuary, we saw that the land was covered with many fine mescals, which we had not seen for a long time. I do not think the mescals are of much interest to these gentiles because there is an abundance of fish and other food. At this place and also at the previous three, there is an abundance of good nopales and tunas,<sup>31</sup> which we saw very little of before. We also saw far out in the ocean two and sometimes four or five tule balsas, which are small Indian canoes used by the gentile fishermen. The first time we saw one was on June 21 at the place called Visitación de Nuestra Señora, but it was beached on shore.

Along the route today the gentiles gave us reason to fear they might be plotting something. They followed us in great numbers and acted in a friendly manner toward us, but they would engage in skirmishes after which they would divide up into two groups, one on each side of the road. And since they were always armed with bow and arrow, it was possible for them to attack in some fashion. But at the same time, they would leave their women with us. The women would wander in and out among the mules, soldiers, and mule drivers. There was no way of keeping them away or containing them because they would respond with cackling laughter and just continue running around like deer. During all of this there would not be a single gentile man in sight, but then all of a sudden a throng of them would appear shrieking as they do. In the end, the men and women would tire and then we would continue on our journey. These gentiles and those from the last two stopping places were either not afraid of the mules or quickly lost their fear of the animals.

We finally arrived at the stopping place which is a valley that is neither very large nor very small. A good-sized creek runs through it among the tules. The entire valley and its surrounding hillsides are richly covered with good grass. The valley is close to the ocean and it is a beautiful place. We named it San Benvenuto.

We had barely arrived when two gentiles from a large ranchería nearby came to greet us, after which one of them ran off and quickly returned with a large piece of grilled fish artfully arranged on some greens. The Señor Gobernador and I tasted the fish. It was very good. We continued eating. At the same time the man presented us with a cup-shaped basket they made from grasses. In these parts they call them coras. It was filled with a large amount of a powdery substance, which at first glance looked like dark soil to me.

*Seeing that we did not seem to appreciate the powder, the gentile put the basket up to our noses so we could smell it. The fragrance was so pleasing and it tasted like a mixture of ground spices. We then sprinkled some of the powder on the fish, which gave it the flavor of cloves and pepper.*

*After awhile, more and more gentiles— men, women, and children— gathered together with us. There were so many that I could not count them. Their friendliness transformed into a comfortable form of familiarity. If we placed our hand on their head or back as a gesture of affection, they would do the same to us. If they saw that we were seated, they would sit down and cozy up next to us with the hope that we would give them anything they asked for. They were not pleased with mere trifles. They would ask me for my habit and the governor for his leather jacket, waistcoat, breeches, and anything else he was wearing. They would do this to everybody. They pestered me quite a bit to give them my spectacles. The actions of one of the gentiles led me to believe that he just wanted to borrow the spectacles so he could see what they were. So I handed them to him. God knows how hard it was for me to get them back because he ran away with them. Finally, after much difficulty, I got them back, but only after the women, and anybody else who wanted to, had handled them. The only thing they refused was food.*

*In the afternoon we could see in the distance that the two gentiles were returning. One of them was wearing a blue shirt, which was something new. Up to this point we had not seen any gentiles wearing a stitch of clothing. We anxiously awaited his arrival because all signs indicated to us that he was bringing good news. And that is what happened. He told us he had come from San Diego where they had given him that outfit. The reason it took him two days to get here was because he had stopped to do some fishing. He explained everything to us, but much of what he told us seemed implausible, for example, that the two boats and many Padres were there. What pleased us most was when he said he had met the sergeant and his companion on the road. As I mentioned before, the sergeant had gone on ahead to scout out stopping places with ample water so we could plan our daily treks. The gentile said that the sergeant probably had been in San Diego since yesterday, which was the case.*

**June 28.** *We remained here so the animals could rest. Around mid-morning we were told that many people on horseback had been spotted heading our way. Sergeant Ortega arrived soon after with ten more soldiers from the first group of the expedition. Señor Capitán Rivera had ordered them to come from the port of San Diego to meet the Señor Gobernador and his retinue. They brought fresh animals and letters for me from the two Padres, Fray Juan Crespi and Fray Fernando Parrón. We were very happy. We found out what had happened to the boats and how and why both of the boats were there, as well as news about the four Padres, and everything else that had transpired. This news invigorated us and made us that much more anxious to arrive at our destination.*

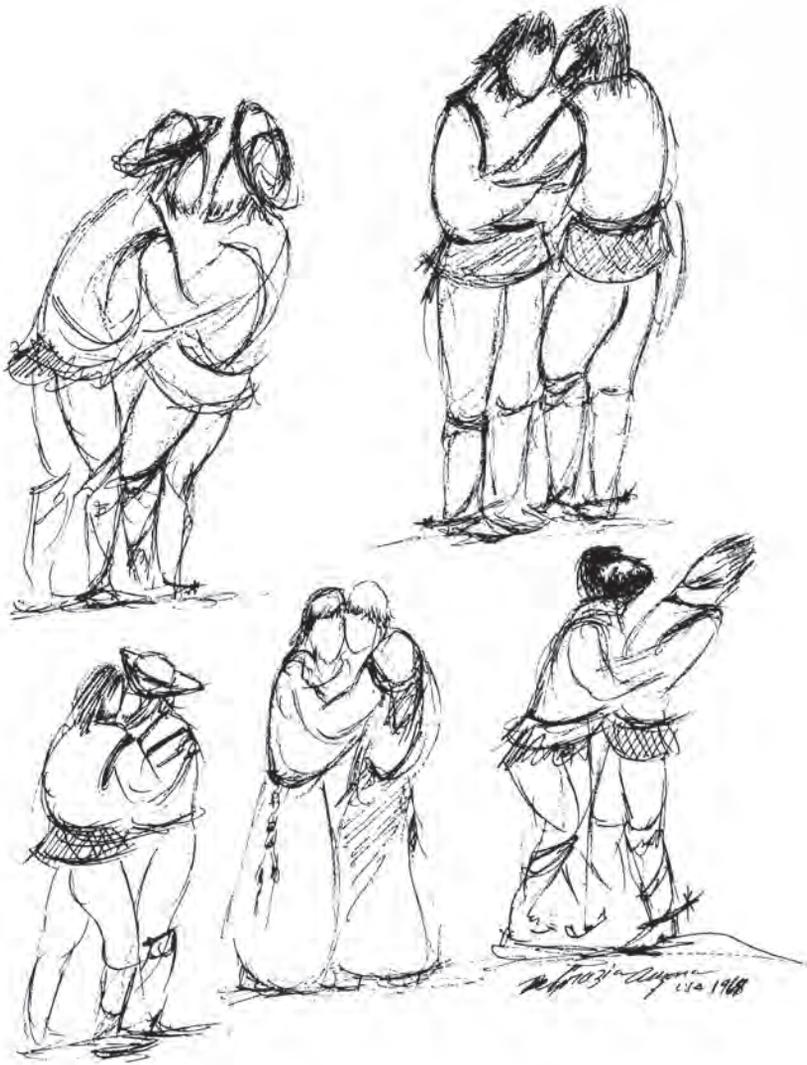


*Sighting of the ships on June 28, 1769. Drawn by Ted DeGrazia from Father Junipero Serra: Sketches of his Life in California, Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1969.*

**June 29.** *Early in the morning, the Señor Gobernador, his servant, and eight soldiers quickly started out ahead of us to reach the port of San Diego on that same day. I said Mass on this day of celebration for those who stayed behind. Quite a few gentiles paid close attention to the Mass. In the afternoon we traveled for two and one-half hours with the assistance of two guides who had come from San Diego. We traveled along the edge of the shore. The only trouble we had was with a number of ravines, similar to what we had experienced the day before, but there were not as many. We stopped near a gentile ranchería located on a beautiful plateau that looks like an island. It is surrounded by a ravine except for the area where the ocean washes up.*

*As soon as the gentiles saw us they came over and begged us to go and stay at the plateau near their huts. But it seemed to us that it would be better to set up camp on the other side of the ravine where there is another flat area large enough to accommodate us. Later they all came to visit us there. They were very happy and did not bother us at all. Among these gentiles was the man with the shirt from the last stopping place. He told us that his home was there and that he had only left in order to give us the news. But now he was as naked as the rest. This place within the ravine and next to the ranchería has a medium-sized spring of good, sweet water from which the gentiles drink. Even though our animals could have drunk from there, we did not allow it since they had already had enough to drink that day, and also because we did not want to contaminate in any way the watering place of these poor gentiles. High mountains rise on each side of this place, on the side where we are camped as well as where the Indians live. The manner in which we are enclosed is why I named this place "La cárcel de San Pedro", whose feast day we celebrated today.<sup>32</sup>*

**June 30.** *We left in the morning and the first thing we had to do was cross the ravine and climb up the opposite hill. After going up and down several times, a very long stretch of flat land appeared before us, upon which we would travel with the hills to the right of us. . . . After traveling for a little over three hours, we arrived at a ranchería populated by many gentiles. We were inclined to stop there because we were so tired, but the sergeant informed us that these gentiles were insolent. They liked the clothing the sergeant was wearing and tried to obtain it by tempting the sergeant, and his companion Cota, with women and encouraging them to sleep there. When the sergeant and Cota resisted, they found themselves in grave danger and were forced to give the gentiles any loose articles of cloth they had, such as napkins, handkerchiefs, etc. Because of that situation, as well as wanting to arrive in San Diego as rested as possible, we forged ahead the following day, with the intention of stopping at another ranchería a few leagues away. They said there was enough water at that place. However, it was very inferior in quantity and quality to the water supply that belonged to those troublesome gentiles we had left behind. But since*



*Rejoicing in camp on July 1, 1769. Drawn by Ted DeGrazia from Father Junipero Serra: Sketches of his Life in California, Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1969.*

*the road was flat and the guides already knew how to get to the port by the way the wind was blowing, we headed straight for it, leaving the beaten track behind and to our right. After traveling for about an hour we found a beautiful creek of good water flowing through the verdant pasture land. We stopped there instead of going on to the next ranchería. This was the third time the sergeant had traveled this route. But neither he nor the others*

*who, counting this trip had passed by here five times, had ever seen this spot. We felt this would be a wonderful place for a good-sized mission that we would call San Pablo. It is a very large plain. It seems to me that it is about one league, more or less, from the ocean. The animals were able to travel easily through the area. And we had no other care in the world than our strong desires to arrive at the port of San Diego and embrace everyone who was waiting there for us with open arms. All that was left was this last day's journey.*

***July 1.** Saturday, the eve of the eighth day after the feast day of San Juan Bautista. In our order it is the feast of the Visitation of Nuestra Señora María Santísima. We began our last day's journey very early in the morning. We can already see where the port we were looking for begins. Because our guides had already informed us about the entrance to the port and its boundaries, our journey along this road, which was totally flat, was much easier than what we were accustomed to. Along the way we came upon three gentile rancherías but we only interacted with those from the first one, which is where we had intended on stopping yesterday. The second ranchería is a bit out of the way and the third one, (although it was well developed and surrounded by a wall of thorny chollas,<sup>33</sup> which we had not seen for quite some time) was now uninhabited. The last half of the road twists and turns to avoid the many estuaries that more or less go into the land from the sea. This is why our journey lasted more than five hours when it should have been no more than three. At the end of the road we found ourselves at the edge of the shore of the port, not far from its mouth, where the two packet boats, the San Carlos and the San Antonio, were anchored. People came over on a skiff from the first boat, which was closer, to welcome us. We did not stay long because we had been informed that we were still about a league away from where the members of the land expedition were camped, along with the four Padres and almost everyone from the boats. We therefore continued on. Shortly before noon we finally arrived at the camp site that they already were beginning to call a mission. This was how we arrived at the famous and desired port of San Diego with everyone in good health, happy, and content. Thanks be to God.*

## NOTES

1. Serra usually referred to Gálvez as *Ilustrísimo*, literally "Most Illustrious" and as "*Su Ilustrísima*," literally "His Most Illustrious-ness." These were normal, polite, and deferential phrases of the day. But in contemporary American English these sorts of translations inevitably connote an air of aristocratic stuffiness which was not part of their eighteenth-century meaning. Therefore, we have left them in Spanish. We have generally done the same with titles for the same reason.
2. The four notes at the beginning of the diary refer to the four successful stages of the expedition, two by sea and two by land.
3. La Pasión was the shorthand method of referring to Mission Nuestra Señora de los Dolores.
4. Palóu's account of the meeting is in Francisco Palóu, *Palóu's Life of Fray Junípero Serra*, ed. and trans. Maynard J. Geiger (Washington, D.C.: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1955), 61-63.
5. An Indian village or settlement. The Spanish usually used the term to refer to non-Christian Indians. It is now a common term in English for small communities of Alta California Indians.
6. Atole is a cooked mixture of water and ground, dried grains; a staple mission food.
7. A station attached to a mission that a priest would occasionally visit to administer the Sacraments.
8. "Ladino" meant "latinized," or assimilated. The boy died at San Diego in February 1770. *Writings of Junípero Serra*, ed. Antonine Tibesar, 4 vols. (Washington: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1955), 4: 343.
9. Harry Crosby, *Doomed to Fail: Gaspar de Portolá's First California Appointees* (San Diego: Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias, San Diego State University, 1989), 8-9; Francisco Palóu, *Historical Memoirs of New California*, ed. Herbert Eugene Bolton, 4 vols. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1926), 1: 39-41, 166-168; Harry Crosby, *Antigua California: Mission and Colony on the Peninsular Frontier, 1697-1768* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1994), 388; Francisco Palóu, *Cartas desde la península de California, 1768-1773*, ed. José Luis Soto Pérez (Mexico, D.F.: Editorial Porrúa, 1994), 88-89, 423-433; Rosa Rodríguez Tomp, *Cautivos de Dios: los cazadores-recolectores de Baja California durante el período colonial* (Mexico, D.F.: CIESAS; Instituto Nacional Indigenista, 2002), 185, 206; Francis F. Guest, *Fermín Francisco de Lasuén (1736-1803): A Biography* (Washington: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1973), 43.
10. Fermín Francisco de Lasuén, *Writings*, ed. Finbar Kenneally, O.F.M., 2 vols. (Washington: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1965) 1: 17-20.
11. David Weber, *Bárbaros: Spaniards and Their Savages in the Age of Enlightenment* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 15-16, 282; Alfredo Jiménez, "El bárbara en la mente y la voz del ilustrado: la frontera norte de Nueva España (s. xviii)," in *El gran norte mexicano: indios, misioneros y pobladores entre el mito y la historia*, ed. Salvador Bernabéu Albert (Sevilla: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2009), 363-398.
12. Technically speaking, the pitaya and the cirio are not trees but types of cactus. Garambullo is called the "Old Man Cactus" or *myrtillocactus geometrizans*.
13. Catholics were required to go to confession and receive communion at least once during the Easter season.
14. The Spanish we have translated as "third version" is "*de tercera*." According to Professor Craig Russell, this may well refer to a unique musical arrangement of this hymn that was reserved for special occasions. Since this was the first mission Serra had ever founded, this day was a deeply extraordinary one for him. We thank Professor Russell for his generous assistance in helping us understand this part of Serra's diary.
15. Ernest J. Burrus, ed. and trans., *Wenceslaus Linck's Diary of His 1766 Expedition to Northern Baja California* (Los Angeles: Dawson's Book Shop, 1966), 58-59; Carlos Lazcano Sahagún, *La primera*

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*entrada: descubrimiento del interior de la antigua California* (Ensenada: Fundación Barca; Museo de Historia de Ensenada; Seminario de Historia de Ensenada, 2000), 205; Luis Sales, *Observations on California, 1772-1790*, ed. and trans. by Charles N. Rudkin (Los Angeles: G. Dawson, 1956), 63; Harry Crosby, *Antigua California: Mission and Colony on the Peninsular Frontier, 1697-1768* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1994), 348-349.

16. The Lone Poplar.
17. Carlos Lazcano Sahagún, ed., *Diario de fray Junípero Serra en su viaje de Loreto a San Diego*. (Ensenada: Provincia Franciscana de San Pedro y San Pablo de Michoacán; Gobierno del Estado de Baja California; Fundación Barca; Museo de Historia de Ensenada, 2002), 71-72, note 60; Harry Crosby, *Gateway to Alta California: The Expedition to San Diego, 1769* (San Diego: Sunbelt Publications, 2003), 69. Serra, *Diario*, 71-72, note 60; Crosby, *Gateway*, 69.
18. José González Cabrera Bueno, *Navegación especulativa y práctica* was published in Manila in 1734. The descriptions of California in this volume were generally taken from the accounts of Vizcaíno's chief pilot, Francisco de Bolaños.
19. A Náhuatl word that means "cooked agave."
20. The Rivera y Moncada expedition arrived at San Diego on May 14.
21. "The Holy Martyrs of Gorkum." This was a group of nineteen Dutch Catholic clergy who were executed on July 9, 1572 in the town of Gorkum in Holland.
22. José de Cañizares, "Putting a Lid on California: An Unpublished Diary of the Portolá Expedition," ed. by Virginia E. Thickers and Margaret Mollins, *California Historical Society Quarterly* 31, no. 3 (1952): 268-269; Juan Crespí, *A Description of Distant Roads: Original Journals of the First Expedition into California, 1769-1770*, ed. by Alan K. Brown (San Diego: San Diego State University Press, 2001), 211; Dennis H. O'Neil, "The Spanish Use of Glass Beads as Pacification Gifts Among the Luiseño, Ipai, and Tipai of Southern California," *Pacific Coast Archaeological Society Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (March 1992): 1-17.
23. Roger C. Owen, Nancy E. Walstrom, and Ralph C. Michelsen. "Musical Culture and Ethnic Solidarity: A Baja California Case Study." *Journal of American Folklore* 82, no. 324 (1969): 99-111.
24. The Latin text means, "Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest." It is found in Matthew 9:38 and Luke 10:2. In both cases Jesus says, "The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few. Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into the harvest."
25. Saint Pascual Baylón was a sixteenth-century Franciscan mystic. Baylón (bailón) means "dancer," and Serra was making a play on words here.
26. Rodríguez Tomp, *Cautivos de Dios*, 193; Carlos Lazcano Sahagún, *Pa-tai: la historia olvidada de Ensenada* (Ensenada: Museo de Historia de Ensenada; Seminario de Historia de Ensenada, 2000), 96.
27. Cañizares, "Putting a Lid on California," 349.
28. Cañizares, "Putting a Lid on California," 350; Crespí, *Description of Distant Roads*, 233.
29. "Clothe yourself with the Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 13:14.
30. Crespí, *A Description of Distant Roads*, 245.
31. Nopal, tuna: commonly referred to as "Prickly Pear" or "Indian Fig."
32. "The Jail of St. Peter" refers to Peter's imprisonment by King Herod and his miraculous release that is recounted in Acts 12.
33. Chollas are a genus of cylindrically-stemmed cacti.