

BOOK VIII

OPINIONS ABOUT THE MISSIONARY APOSTOLATE BY VENERABLE FRANCISCO JAVIER SAETA, TAKEN FROM HIS LETTERS AND RELIGIOUS CONVERSATIONS

CHAPTER ONE

Apostolic opinions bearing on the conversion of souls and reduction of the people in general

Everytime Father Francisco Javier Saeta and I saw one another we talked and exchanged ideas, whether we were on the trail or in the house. All of our conversations touched on the conversion of souls. All of his longings and eagerness were to discuss the most effective means to win the recovery of so many poor, lost peoples. He always said that as long as this most blessed goal was attained, no one should mind what he might have to suffer or what might happen — crosses, labors, set-backs, dangers, aversions, persecutions, or the opposition of visible and invisible enemies.

Since he had hardly more than passed through the missions, I greatly admired him for acquiring such a thorough and profound theory and comprehension of mission practice with such a little and so brief an acquaintance. It was easy to see that for many years his Reverence held the missions and his holy desires of founding and working in them very intimately in his ardent and apostolic heart.

I. First, he would say, all the spiritual fruit and profit for souls depends, on our part, on true Christian charity, both religious and apostolic. “In charity unfeigned” (2 Cor. 6:6). Wherever there is endearing love, divine love, strong and gentle, as the love of a father and mother, the most savage souls would be won over and the most arduous difficulties would

be easily conquered. Such difficulties should be expected in such a sublime ministry. On the other hand, he judged that inflexibility in working with new tribes, as dull-witted and vacillating as they are, is the most damaging and retarding influence; severity is bound to bring about the loss of all good. For that very reason the Father Rector of the Guadiana mission sent the apostolic Father Jerónimo Ramírez ahead to convert the rebellious, warlike Tepehuanes with his customary gentleness and endearing love.

II. Father Saeta felt that for a great advance in new conversions, after the Word of God, it is the endearing attraction of little toys and trinkets with which the hearts and souls of a new tribe are won. In the way of gifts, clothing would do much to remedy their exposure, and food and supplies would alleviate other shortages. After all, our Heavenly Master has invited and called everyone of us to his heavenly country with the allegory of the invitation to the great banquet — *ad cenam magnam* (Apoc. 19:17). Even before the wheat which his sons had planted for their sustenance was ripe, the venerable Father ordered from the Real at Bacanuchi and elsewhere some bolts of coarse cloth, small blankets, and rabbit pelts to attract and regale a greater number of new sons. He promised to pay the orders as soon as the wheat was harvested.¹

III. The venerable Father used to say that everyone praised, appreciated and esteemed the apostolic life, new missions, and glorious conversions by which souls are led to the bosom of our Holy Mother, the Church. But there are few who will put up with the hardships, shortages, crosses, and apostolic labors which are required to give such conversions substance and life, success, reward and glory. There are very few who will tolerate a spare diet which at times is even crude and very ordinary, or dwellings that are uncomfortable, or Indians who are ill-bred, unruly, sluggish and obstinate. And we must remember, especially for new missionary works, that it was said: "Go among the rejected peoples" (Isaiah 15:2), so that the missionaries will take up the strenuous task of instructing, teaching, and training in spiritual as well as temporal matters. Such work calls for hardiness, patience, and tolerance; if the missionary is to succeed in fashioning any decent, skillful, gentle, and affable children, these virtues are

demanded. Then we can say with special joy: "Through the Gospel I begot you, my joy and my crown" (Cor. 4:15; Phil. 4:1).

But this is neither well nor sufficiently achieved when one sits perched on his chair ordering subordinates or Indian officials to do what we should be doing personally by sitting down time and again with them on earthen floors or on a rock. If the undisciplined natives have not done immediately what they were commanded or asked to do, it is useless to say that an appeal will be made to Spanish authority — to the captains and soldiers. Perhaps, at times and with difficulty this is the only solution in some of the older and more stable missions which in that regard are not so apostolic. But what is needed is to "argue, implore, and persuade them with all patience" (2 Tim. 4:2). This is especially true in the beginning when their scant obedience and attention must be suffered. The Indian governors do not know how to obey the missionary fathers nor how to command their own subjects. Their rather uncouth subjects, in turn, do not know how to obey the governors or officers (since among them filial obedience is not customarily shown toward natural parents). So it will be until the missionary Father, especially through the Word of God, little by little transforms fierce tigers, wolves, leopards and lions into meek lambs and gentle sheep for the Lord's flock.

But such remarkable change demands, requires, and merits utterly stupendous graces from His Divine Majesty. These are only obtained by accepting crosses and labors, cooperating with the graces given, even in the face of insults, false testimony, calumnies, contradictions, hatred, persecutions, etc. These qualities are what assure and conserve the blessed fruit and apostolic advance in these new missions. In them there are outstanding missions where there is the promise of a splendid Christianity; these are the reward and consolation which we can experience in this life and in the next for all eternity.

CHAPTER TWO

Apostolic opinions of Venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta concerning the growth and preservation of these new missions

There is no doubt that just as the great charity, unquenchable zeal, and hard work of the fervent missionary has been responsible for the foundation of new missions, so too will they increase and sustain them. At times the missionary will be helped by the generous assistance of some presidio of his royal and Catholic Majesty — such as when a crime has been committed which the officials of the missions and the pueblos were neither aware of nor able to punish; this sometimes happens.

But certainly, as far as everything else goes, the venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta wanted to avoid as often as possible the entry of harsh or indiscreet soldiers into places where there is no firm government. It can and does happen that instead of calming and composing matters with the natives through the imposition of a firm, prudent, and Christian punishment, these soldiers excite, scandalize, horrify, and disrupt everything. Whole tribes have been lost by punishing some indiscreetly, whether justly or unjustly, and by inflicting severities upon them. The rest of the natives flee or hide out of sheer fear. There will certainly be uprisings and there will be worrisome, even sinister, rumors of rebellion and apostasy of whole nations. These are things which the most sensible and experienced captains and generals realize have happened and will happen.

I. If it should happen that, instead of punishing the guilty who are wont to hide, defend, and look out for their own endangered and misguided lives, some soldiers seize the first Indians they chance upon, who because of their innocence do not resist or even carry weapons, those poor souls will be made to pay for the offenses of the guilty. The soldiers merely employ this practice on the grounds that it is too much work and too risky to punish evildoers. There is no doubt that in such a case the presidio, instead of gaining, will lose; instead

of settling affairs, it will leave everything more agitated and confused; and instead of remedying the matter, it will change it radically for the worse. And, as always, this will lead to newer, prolonged expenses for even more tedious tasks affecting the very same soldiers themselves.

II. Another enormous obstacle would result if the soldiers, under the pretext of making peace, would trick the natives by inviting them to a council without weapons and under the sign of the Cross, and, then, cruelly slaughter them.

III. It would also be a great blunder if, out of pure greed, these soldiers did not want to return from their expedition without taking some slaves, and not having been able to capture any enemy Indians, they should apprehend and carry off some innocent natives. On the other hand, if the soldiers, and especially the generals and captains, perform their official duty and most Christian obligation, since they are the armed forces of his Most Catholic Majesty (May heaven increase his kingdoms and grant him a long life!), they will make the poor natives understand in words and works that their Catholic arms exist for the just punishment of the wicked as well as for the defense and protection of the good. Without doubt, there would never be an army more distinguished, more noble, more deserving, more glorious in the world, nor would any other army be better employed than this one of the Catholic presidios of America. They have always readily cooperated with the missionary Fathers for the eternal salvation of souls. It was with the greatest consolation that I watched some of them conduct affairs during the last two months of July and August when they made peace in this Pimería. They knew well how to blend the best of Christian teachings with their own glory and military valor. Their charitable works, pious words, and Catholic discussions accomplished much good, both spiritual and temporal, for these poor natives. They have also benefitted their own great merit before the world, the heavenly court of the angels and saints, and before God himself.

In this way the royal, Catholic forces unanimously will procure the just punishment of only the guilty and the protection of the good, so that not only will they not abandon the apostolate of these new conquests and conversions, which

it seems that some persons have feared (according to the reference Father Andrés Pérez de Ribas makes in his *History*),¹ but these Christian forces will receive the special renown from these new missions of being called apostolic presidios. These new missions are being advanced and sustained through fine cooperation and harmony in the continual administration of the sacred ministry, through the untiring and apostolic services of an evangelical ministry, and, when the occasion demands, through vigilant expeditions and Catholic visitations from the royal presidios.

CHAPTER THREE

The talents, characteristics and qualities which are useful and necessary in a missionary serving new missions

Venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta used to say that a missionary among new peoples needed special talents, temperament and vocation. There is no doubt that a keen sense of charity is worth more here than anything else. The missionary must conduct himself toward these poor natives wholly in and through Christ. He must handle new conversions with a genuine knack, being capable of accepting suffering while he works hard and maintains a sense of tolerance. These qualities are more valuable than other human talents, skills, sophistication, eloquence, ingenuity, or advanced and subtle science. It often happens that, with presumptuous wisdom and human prudence ("which are foolishness before God," Cor. 3:19), even well established missions are ruined. We see this noted in Thomas a Kempis who said that Our Sovereign Lord often chooses persons with less talent and natural skill as His special friends, just as He chose the Apostles.¹ This is how the Lord teaches the world that it is He alone, and no other, who accomplishes the great things worthy of His almighty power. And the greatest accomplishment of all is the recovery and salvation of souls — "The most divine of the most divine things" as Denis the Areopagite says.²

In our opinion the very origin of new conversions springs from where there exists a strong and loving concern for the

temporal and spiritual welfare of impoverished and destitute people, even though they may be downtrodden, misguided, and persecuted — outcasts as some generous persons have said. If the missionary's disposition is to the contrary, then the shallow concern, tepidity and even hatred for the natives will disrupt and retard the blessed goal of so high a calling; the result will be pitiful disgrace and the sad loss of souls.

Where there is the affection of a father and a mother a thousand difficulties will be overcome and there will be great consolation. But little love and concern for a sacred work will only run into a thousand difficulties, obstacles and hindrances which the common enemy of all good, without doubt, especially in new missions, will have fomented.

I. The first difficulty which some find is that we already have enough to do with the missions now established rather than to weary ourselves with newer ones.

II. The second problem is where are we going to find enough priests for so many new missions?

III. The third is who will feed them?

IV. The fourth problem is that new missions are a wearisome exile for honorable men.

But all of these objections were answered by the Venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta:

I. To the first objection that new missions should not be started for the sake of the old he would say: "It is necessary to do one thing without omitting the other" (Matt. 23:23), and if new missions are not undertaken: "How will there be one shepherd and one flock"? (John 10:16).

II. To the second objection he would respond that the one who has given a hundred missionary Fathers (and thousands elsewhere) will give another hundred or however many are necessary — and that donor is Our Lord Himself, the Lord of the Harvest (Matt. 9:38; Luke 10:2).

III. He would answer the third objection by saying that the same one who has given food to some will give food to others: "Through whom not even the birds remain hungry" (*Roman Breviary*: Vigil of Epiphany).

IV. To the fourth objection that new missions are a wearisome exile, etc., he would reply that "those who are

nourished by the inner spirit " do not say so. The restoration and salvation of the whole world consists in new missions as we ourselves have experienced in the blessed coming of the glorious Apostle St. James to the new missions of Spain. It is the same with all the rest of the Apostles who went to other provinces and kingdoms. It was the case also with St. Francis Xavier the most glorious angelic apostle to the Indies. The distinguished missionary Father Andrés Ortiz de Oruña of Vizcaya labored thirty-nine years in the new missions of Santa Cruz de la Sierra in the Province of Peru. After forty-five years in the Society he died at sixty-six years of age out of sorrow and grief seeing that these new missions among the natives were being obstructed.³

If there are two or three persons frightened by the difficulties we have mentioned, there are thousands of others motivated by generous and holy inspirations who are well disposed toward these evangelical enterprises. They will be most anxious to spend their religious lives and even their blood in them because they realize how little we have accomplished in comparison to the Son of God who became man, lived, suffered, and shed His Most precious blood in death just as much for the poor natives as for the greatest princes of the world. This is what Father Saeta said in his holy letter.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Indians or Natives, considered as a new people in the new missions

Father Francisco Javier Saeta with much reason was of the opinion that whoever wanted to convert a backward and barbarous people, as is ordinarily the case in a new mission, has to be somewhat like a trainer of colts, wild asses, and broncos: " You will save men and beasts " (Psalm 35:7). We realize that to tame such wildness it is indispensable to have more endurance, tolerance, and mastery than it takes to control animals already broken in and trained, which anybody can do. And so it is with the missionary. In order to sur-

vive and overcome the continual mass of problems arising from the savage stubbornness of a new tribe the missionary needs greater endurance, more skill, tolerance, ingenuity and perseverance than if he were working among established missions with gentle and educated people. He might even need a measure of holy stratagem as the Apostle says of the Gentiles: "I took you by trick" (2 Cor. 12:16). Even when wild colts and broncos are broken in, some take more work than others to tame and train. It is usually the case that when a cowboy finds a stubborn, rebellious, and wilder colt, he knows such an animal can be tamed to be a most valiant, elegant, and sprightly mount. These animals can often be given as presents to princes and kings. Similarly we have noticed in our own experience that the natives who have resisted most, delaying and postponing their conversion, usually become the firmest and most constant in their faith and the practice of Christianity. This is what happened in the case of Spain herself when that heroic and Catholic nation showed such little docility in the beginning to St. James the Apostle. But afterwards it showed itself to be the most skillful disseminator of the faith in all the world. Fortunate are we if we share in such a happy lot, as happened in particular to our venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta and others.

Indians in a new mission are great newsmongers. Whatever good or evil they learn is immediately spread far and wide. This is precisely why among these people more than any others a great deal of caution must be taken not to antagonize or discourage them. Indians who live far away, even in the more remote sectors, inquire about the missionary priest. They want to know what he does, what he says, what he gives, what he wears and carries, what he teaches, how he speaks, etc. Very many Indians who live a great distance from the Fathers know who they are. They know whatever they do and say, and they form their own opinions and ideas about them. They will say that a certain Father is good, another is liberal, or that this is the style of this one and that one. "I will take my sons to be baptized by him," etc. I have traveled deep within the Indian territory where I have met Indians who claim that they have already come to know me in places still farther away, although we certainly have never seen one another before.

Many of these poor souls, because of their shyness and humble disposition, if they recognize that they will be well received and kindly treated, assist a missionary priest with remarkable devotion, giving him the best of what they have in food and possessions. And little by little they come to offer their families, their souls and whatever they have to the disposition of the Father for their eternal salvation. These Indian tribes are characterized by a remarkable simplicity, and they have less evil habits than other Indians and older Christian peoples. Usually they appreciate things more because, never having heard of them before, they are seized by a great admiration. There are many mysteries concerning our Holy Faith which have struck them with wonder, such as that after death we will rise again or that under the earth there is an eternal fire for the wicked and perverse which never consumes or there is glory and eternal reward in heaven for the good or that God has created the whole world — all men, the sun and the moon, the heavens and the earth, etc.

CHAPTER FIVE

The means which are conducive and necessary in making new conquests and conversions of souls

Father Francisco Javier Saeta and I were accustomed to say:

I. The first requisite for a new missionary in new missions is that he have a deep love of God for God's own sake, and that through his love for God he have an inclination and love for poor natives.

II. The second requirement is that the missionary frequently pray and commune with God and the saints.

III. The third requirement is an unslacking devotion to work and a flight from idleness.

IV. The fourth requirement is that the missionary give good example through a well disciplined and religious life.

V. A fifth requirement is an unflinching patience and tolerance for the impertinences and dullness of the poor natives.

VI. A sixth requisite is a firm and vital confidence in God.

I. In regard to the first requirement for charity, a good disposition, and a paternal love for the natives as our brothers in Christ, see Chapter Three of this Book (VIII) where it has already been treated.

II. Since the second requirement mentioned regards prayer, who can doubt that in this matter, which is more pleasing to God than anything else, as Scripture has it "Ask and you shall receive" (Matt. 7:7), we will receive as much as we ask from the Lord "Who draws the nations under us" (Psalm 143:2). He knows how to gain hearts and souls of whole nations, so will He not enlighten us and take the necessary steps for the best accomplishments and success in everything? Most important of all, He will enlighten the darkened minds of the heathens so they can listen attentively and believe in the Word of God through the missionary Fathers and their interpreters. They will come to understand the incomparable good that God our Lord is sending them by means of the preaching of the gospel.

It would be most helpful to procure the most useful assistance of the holy prayers of other pious, virtuous and charitable persons. Although they physically remain in holy retirement in their religious and secular houses, they can and often do provide help, aided by the power of divine grace ("The Spirit prompts them" Matt. 26:41), thus assisting in the gathering, conversion, and winning over of great numbers of souls who live in the remotest corners of the world. Just as God punishes an evil intention, even though it never sees completion, so too does His infinite goodness reward the good with liberality. Then he hears the prayers and pious aspirations of dear ones who ask for what He Himself desires so strongly to grant — that is, the eternal salvation of souls which He has made in His own likeness and which have cost Him so dearly. I confess most gratefully that I am very deeply indebted to other religious persons for their holy assistance and for their wealth of prayers. Such help has come especially from Europe as I have learned in some very religious letters sent to me from overseas. And others are remember-

ing us in their prayers although they have remained in holy silence about it. We experience all these supremely productive and efficacious prayers in the daily works which Our Sovereign Lord so wonderfully permits us to perform in so many places. God will give to each one a generous reward by granting a blessed portion of the good and the gain which will be reaped.

III. The third requisite for a missionary is to work untiringly. Now we know that "the gods sell everything for the price of work" and that the Lord will not deny anything to the good workers in His vineyard. There is much work to a new mission. Nothing is to be found there; everything must be made or sought out since, at times, it is difficult to find anything more than the shade of a tree or a mat in place of a house or church. Even the language with which to speak is lacking at first and it is necessary to work hard to learn it. Learning the language is the first and foremost task because without it one cannot teach his children the divine law, the Gospel, or anything about political and social organization. At times one has to struggle to teach these backward natives to work: "We must work with our own hands" (I Cor. 4:12), as the Apostle says.

The missionary must expect to put his own manual labor into the building of his house and church, into sowing the fields and reaping the harvest. He will have to handle his own wardrobe and his own living quarters as well as those of the other political officials and artisans. He will have to pay particular attention in teaching them our holy customs and ecclesiastical ceremonies. Sometimes, in the beginning, he will have nothing to eat, either for himself or for his children; everything has to be searched for and procured. All of this calls for work, and no missionary who expects to succeed can afford to abandon such a glorious employment — "Work conquers all." Hard work will overcome and resolve all difficulties. Even among the natives themselves the flight from idleness will be very beneficial: "Whatever work you can do, do now" (Eccles. 9:10).

IV. The fourth requirement is the good example that comes from a well disciplined and religious life. Good example and friendliness mellows and attracts the most stubborn

and savage hearts. Little by little they are convinced by the works which they see with their own eyes as these are more effective than the words which they hear. As we said before, everything that is good or bad travels rapidly throughout the whole Indian territory. They ask one another: "How are you getting along with the Father?" If the answer is that "all goes well — that our Father teaches prayer and doctrine and that he preaches about the Word of God and the path to heaven; that he celebrates Mass for us; baptizes us; confesses us; marries us; visits our sick; administers the holy oils; buries our dead; provides us with food and clothing; likes, takes care of us, defends and protects us; that our Father has not come to seek chocolate or silver, but only our souls, and that he is willing to live and die with us in order to take us to heaven with him," once reports like these are made very many new conversions follow in a short time, all of which verifies what St. Gregory said — if every Christian were what he should be by example and through a disciplined life, the whole world would soon be Christian.

V. The fifth requisite is much patience, suffering and tolerance. Only with these virtues can the numerous impertinences of these rude and ill-bred natives be borne. Here is where "charity is patient; it sustains all; it suffers all" (I Cor. 13:4). When these pagan Indians or new converts are asked questions, they sometimes do not reply; when they are commanded, they do not obey; when they are looked for, they do not appear; when called, they do not answer. This is where the insuperable patience, endurance, and tolerance of the missionary Father little by little removes the problems and eventually wins out: "Patience conquers all;¹ patience is necessary so that you may obtain what has been promised; those who suffer well will be those who will be praised." These verses particularly pertain to the missionary, for they are the ones "who will bear fruit in patience."

Sometimes during the initial stages of a new conversion the Indians who come to church, assist at Mass and catechism, or who join in the preparations for planting, and even at meals which are provided for them, are so sluggish, slow and phlegmatic that all these matters seem to be nothing more than an exercise in patience for the ministering priest. It appears that

there is almost no hope for good results. But eventually, with virtuous endurance and tolerance, with the "argue, implore, and persuade in all patience" (2 Tim. 4:2) of Scripture, at the end of a year they will usually see such harvests and so many good works that they will know the Sovereign Lord has cooperated admirably in them by bestowing His heavenly blessing. But the missionary cannot fail to be constant in his reprehensions and punishments of the Indians on the excuse of being patient. He must be firm with the Indians through their officials so that what is evil and blameworthy is properly punished.

VI. The sixth requirement is a most firm hope and lively confidence in the divine providence of our most faithful God. As that magnificent Apostle of the Indies, St. Francis Xavier, teaches, it is the providence of God that will be the security for the missionary who engages in a new mission.² After all, the salvation of souls is the concern of God Himself who has told us: "Behold, I send you" (Matt. 10:16), and "Feed my sheep" (John 21:17). The flock is His, and therefore in the face of contradiction, opposition, difficulties, turmoil, and vehement disturbances, there is no alternative but to remain steadfast and hopeful in the secure and certain knowledge that Almighty God will unfailingly come to the aid of the apostolic missionary.

This is exactly what happened to St. Francis Xavier. When the worldly Portuguese captain, Ataide de Gama, who valued temporal gains more than the eternal salvation of souls, tried to block Xavier's voyage to Japan, he should have been trying to assist him. Inasmuch as he was a Christian, a son of the same holy, Roman Catholic Church, he furnished the missionary with a sufficient reason to make the charge that "the sons of my mother fight against me" (Cant. 1:5), and that "I am made an outcast among my own brothers" (Psalm 68:9). So it happened that he who should have been of great help merely opposed and upset the good of many souls. But Xavier retained his firm confidence in God, and he has left us a practical lesson in his divinely inspired way that we missionaries in new conversions, who strain under similar heavy crosses, should say with Xavier: "More, oh Lord, more!"³

Only where there are crosses and the thorns and thistles of adversity and opposition will we find assurance of an abundant harvest of souls. Then we can face new conversions with a firm conviction of certain success and great benefits which the divine Power grants to His workers. To the extent that the situation humanly seems to be harassed and shattered, to that extent and more will God be favorable. Sometimes the virtue of confidence in God can be so powerful and wondrous that, in the midst of crosses, adversity, and persecution, one can thank his persecutors for allowing him in some way to be able to imitate the Redeemer of the world. He can carry on joyfully saying "More, oh Lord" because he knows the incomparable reward, the extraordinary benefits, the copious fruit, and the glorious increase in the number of new Christians which are certain to result. With joy the pains of birth are endured as new children are born in Christ. The sufferings of a bloodless, prolonged martyrdom are gladly accepted in lieu of a sudden shedding of blood for the faith. The laborers of the Lord desire such crosses and sometimes plead anxiously for them: "for to the willing there can be no injustice." ⁴ Thus they live and die as cheerfully as prosperously.

CHAPTER SIX

Motives and sublime goals to make new evangelical conquests among these new conversions and missions

The same spiritual motives and divine ends that God had in creating the universe and man, who was made in His image and likeness, God also had in coming down from heaven to become man. He lived among us, He suffered and died for love of us. Thus we were to come to know, love and serve and enjoy Him for all eternity. And these same motives of God can and should be held by the missionary Father who enters into a new mission. He must want to achieve the eternal salvation of souls that have been lost. No motive on earth can excell these motives. They endow a new mission with such value and excellence that no other human

works offer or equal their advantages. New missions are greater than the conquest of huge cities, citadels, or whole kingdoms. They count more than distributing great haciendas and wealth among the poor; more than the founding of churches, convents, and hospitals; more than mastering languages or curing the sick; more than working miracles or reviving the dead.

If anyone thinks that the distinguished chairs of famous universities or the celebrated pulpits of cathedrals amount, or even could amount, to more than these missionary works, let him attend to what Father Master Francisco de Florencia wrote in his printed *Life* of the distinguished apostolic missionary, Father Jerónimo de Figueroa.¹ That learned scholar of our holy Company, who himself was so well known as a preacher, and who had written outstanding books, showed how tenderly and affectionately he loved the work of new conversions. He told of Father Figueroa who went to Mexico City at the request of his superiors to take the chair of the arts. But on his arrival he proposed various reasons to his superiors for working in the missions — in imitation of Father Velasco, the evangelic missionary to Sinaloa who had done the same thing years before.² He proposed for the consideration of his superiors the grave harm that would result to the heavenly doctrine which the Son of God taught and which His apostles and disciples repeated if they ceased to teach or to repeat it to the needy Tepehuanes while they occupied their time, instead, in the worldly maxims of pagan philosophy. For him it would be a genuine mortification to leave the book of the Gospel for the works of Aristotle, or the preaching of Christ for the predicables of Porphyry.³ He would not leave the explanation of the catechism with its solid and eternal truths for the categories of vain and futile sophistries. He asked them to consider before the eyes of God if it would be good to employ him in teaching subjects in the classrooms which many others in the Province could do as well. They should recall that he had learned Indian dialects which no one else had been able to learn as quickly and that he was able to utilize them in catechizing the heathen and in instructing the Christians. Would it not be for the spiritual ruin of countless souls if he were occupied in doing what many others could do while there was no substitute for himself? After all he had

come from the missions not to abandon them, but to represent their need and his holy desires to return to them. But naturally he would be quick to do what obedience determined before God. Thus far the venerable Father Pedro Velasco.

If Christ, our Savior, would come down again, a second time, to this world and live among us, He would do what He did the first time. With particular care, He would employ himself in opening new missions among destitute and lost souls "so that he might save what was lost" (Luke 19:10). And when he would return to heaven, the very special command which he would leave behind would be: "Go into the whole universe and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Convert the whole world by means of new reductions for only in this way can there be one flock and one shepherd: "That there may be one shepherd and one flock" (John 10:6).

The missionary who deals with poor, uneducated, and timid savages does not lose the value accruing to a profound ministry. For God himself has assured us "That he who does something for the least of mine, does it for me" (Matt. 25:40). Whatever we do for his little ones, we do to God Himself; thus we serve and please God through his poor. As the Psalmist says "The poor and needy will praise your name" (Psalm 73:21). And according to Saint Augustine "The illiterate will rise up and seize the kingdom of heaven."⁴ "His preaching will be to the simple" is what Scripture says. "If anyone is ignorant, let him come to me, and to those wanting in judgment I (Wisdom) say: Come! eat my bread and drink the wine I have mixed for you" (Proverbs 9:45)! Thus speaks heavenly and eternal Wisdom, confirming the divine oracles that say that the grandeurs, the glories, the crowns and the kingdom of heaven have been especially prepared for the poor, the destitute, the abandoned, the insignificant, and those little esteemed in this life.

But the greatness of new missions will shine not only in the eternity of heaven, but also in the most desolate and remote regions of the world. It will live on in the splendid construction of temples, churches, buildings and houses. It will reflect in the solemnities of the saints, in gay fiestas, and in the treats of religious banquets; it will be heard in music and the choirs of singers. It will be seen in the bountiful,

spiritual and temporal wealth of opulent missions which, with reason, will be a source of pride. But it will be the target of gossip if in the abundance of the old and rich missions there is no holy, charitable assistance for the newer and needy missions.

Finally, let the blessed crown of a prolonged bloodless martyrdom be the distinguishing motive and special goal of these new missions wherever a sudden and bloody martyrdom like that of Father Francisco Javier Saeta is wanting. It was the pious letter of Father Provincial Diego de Almonacir which brought us such happy news of this glorious and more protracted martyrdom. And as this little work concerning the innocent and glorious death of Father Francisco Javier Saeta was begun with that letter, so I would close with that same letter. It should be noted at the same time that the devotees of Saint Francis Xavier ascribe to him the crown of a prolonged martyrdom in his apostolic ventures. Thus he added to his other two crowns — the golden one of a doctor and the lilies of virginity — a third crown of the roses of martyrdom. And the Sorrowful Mother, the special patron of the missions of this extensive Pimería and of its first mission rectorate, entitled Nuestra Señora de los Dolores, can now take on the surname of Mary the Most Holy Queen of Martyrs, although no blood has been shed: "What was named before in the womb will be conceived" (Luke 2:21). That name was given even before these missions were founded.

This happy and bloodless martyrdom, although more protracted, consists for us missionaries in the continual risk of our lives, in the wearisome toil of service, in the instruction of countless peoples and in conforming ourselves to the massive undertakings of an apostolic life.

May this glorious and blessed crown be our most happy goal here in these sweet lands and in our heavenly country. May we be happily accompanied by the many, many souls who have come to the true knowledge, love, and worship of his Divine Majesty. May we worship and praise Him for the whole of eternity — for as long as God will be God. Amen. All to the greater honor and glory of God and the Mother of God and for the cult of the entire heavenly court and for the eternal salvation of all souls.

⁴ See above Book III, Chapter 1, note 1. For the background of the Indian relations, see the Epilogue of this work.

⁵ See Burrus, *Kino and the Cartography of New Spain*.

⁶ The River of Santa María del Pilar is today the Santa Cruz River which has its source in the Patagonia Mountains east of Nogales, Arizona. The San José del Terrenate is an upper tributary of the San Pedro River drainage south of Fort Huachuca, Arizona. For the background on the changes of the names in this area see John Kessell, "The Puzzling Presidio: San Phelipe de Guevavi, alias Terrenate," pp. 21-46.

⁷ The Opa and Cocomaricopa lived west and south of the Gila drainage from where it curves around the Sierra Estrella.

The "Río Grande del Corral," or "Río del Coral," as it appears on the early Kino maps, is the Río Gila. The early New Mexico accounts, such as Oñate's and Zárate-Salmerón's, mention the river that the Indians described as having coral deposits along its banks.

Book VI, Chapter II

¹ Father Ambrosio Odón: a native of Zaragoza, Spain; born in 1642; entered the Society when he was 17 years old. In 1665 he came to Mexico with the Procurator of the Mexican Province, Father Lorenzo de Alvarado. He taught philosophy and theology in the colleges of Puebla, Guatemala, and Mexico City. He was made a rector various times of these same places. He was also the superior of the Professed House (1696) and served twice as Provincial (1689-1693, 1703). He died in Puebla on August 27, 1716. See ABZ 4:93, n. 30.

² San Javier del Bac was always known as the largest center of population among the Sobaipuris Indians.

³ According to the data compiled by Costa (*The Jesuits in the Philippines*, pp. 456-57), between January 21, 1671, and July, 1685, twelve Jesuits perished in the Marianas. See also, Astráin, *Historia* 6:804-835.

⁴ Gregorio Alvarez Tuñón y Quirós. See *Kino's Historical Memoir* 2:328.

⁵ Although Kino intended to include the *cédula* in Book VII, this book was apparently never written. See the Introduction by Father Burrus.

Book VI, Chapter IV

¹ Father Jorge Hostinsky: a native of Valasské Klobouky, Czechoslovakia; born about 1654; entered the Society when he was 15 years old. He arrived at Veracruz, Mexico, with the well known missionary, Father Adam Gilg, on September 15, 1687. He went immediately to the Tarahumara missions. He made his solemn profession on February 2, 1688. He lived out his life on the northern mission frontier until his death on November 16, 1726. ARSJ: *Mexicana* 6, f. 16v; *Mexicana* 7, f. 22v; *Historia Societatis* 50, f. 124; Huonder, *Deutsche Jesuitenmissionäre*, 109; Odložilík, *Czech Mission-*

