

"Kino Biography's of Father Saeta, S.J" by Eusebio Francisco Kino, S.J. 1696
English translation from original Spanish text edited by Dr. Ernest J. Burrus, S.J. with
introduction and notes
Epilogue by Charles W. Polzer, S.J
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Burrus' notes are between []. Table of Contents at end of the file. Notes in pdf file.

KINO BIOGRAPHY'S OF FATHER SAETA, S.J" BY EUSEBIO FRANCISCO KINO, S.J.
1696

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INOCENTE, APÓSTOLICA Y GLORIOSA MUERTE DEL VENERABLE PADRE
FRANCISCO XAVIER SAETA, DE LA COMPANIA DE JESÚS, MISSIONERO EN LA
NUEVA CONVERSION DE LA CONCEPCION DE NUESTRA SENORA DEL CABORCA
DE LA PIMERIA, EN LA PROVINCIA DE SONORA, Y DICTÁMENES APOSTOLICOS
DEL MISMO VENERABLE PADRE, EN ORDEN A HAZER NUEVAS CONQUISTAS Y
CONVERSIONS DE ALMAS; COMO TAMBIÉN DEL ESTADO PRESENTE DESTAS
NUEVAS NACIONES Y CONVERSIONS, CON EL MAPA UNIVERSAL DE TODAS LAS
MISIONES, INTITULADO TEATRO DE LOS TRABAJOS APOSTOLICOS DE LA
COMPAÑÍA DE JESÚS EN LA AMÉRICA SEPTENTRIONAL 1695, POR EL PADRE
EUSEBIO FRANCISCO KINO, DE LA COMPAÑÍA DE JESUS. [1]

THE INNOCENT, APOSTOLIC, AND GLORIOUS DEATH OF THE VENERABLE FATHER
FRANCISCO JAVIER SAETA, S. J., MISSIONARY PRIEST IN THE NEW MISSION OF LA
CONCEPCIÓN DE NUESTRA SENORA DE CABORCA, OF THE PIMERIA, IN THE
PROVINCE OF SONORA, INCLUDING THE APOSTOLIC OPINIONS OF THE SAME
FATHER REGARDING THE NEW CONQUESTS AND THE CONVERSIONS OF SOULS;
THE PRESENT STATE OF THE NEW NATIONS AND MISSIONS, AND ALSO A
GENERAL MAP OF ALL THE MISSIONS ENTITLED “ THEATER OF THE APOSTOLIC
WORKS OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS IN NORTH AMERICA, 1695 ”, BY FATHER
EUSEBIO FRANCISCO KINO, S. J.

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DEDICATION [1]

Father Provincial Diego de Almonacir: [2]

On July 25 of this year, 1695, in the letter of Father Marcos Antonio Kappus, Rector of this
new rectorate or mission of Nuestra Senora de los Dolores, [3] I received the following words
that your Reverence was pleased to write to the Father Visitor Juan Munoz de Burgos telling
him: [4]

“ I realize quite well the grief your Reverence will feel for the death of Father Francisco Javier Saeta, [5] the burning of the churches, the desecration of the holy statues, etc., in that mission area. I realize also that the Fathers long with a thousand desires to gain in their zeal an equal lot with their holy companion. But the Lord is content with Father Saeta; He desires for the rest that they educate those tribes, and that they prolong their bloodless martyrdom by continually risking their lives and by clinging tenaciously to their ministry despite savage obstinacy.

“ Would your Reverence recommend me to the other Fathers and express to them my grateful appreciation for their prosperous works and my envy for their good fortune which has been well suited to their efforts and apostolic life, etc. ”

I received this letter of your Reverence while I was sick with fever. It was so consoling to me that I felt a very great relief from my ills. With divine favor and this consolation and I trust through the intercession of that most loved and venerable companion, Father Francisco Javier Saeta, I returned quickly to full health. As far as I am concerned, I remain, and will remain for as long as I live, grateful for such holy and excellent charity which your Reverence has shown me, your useless and least servant. [39]

You have comforted me through manifold sorrows and afflictions, on seeing so many setbacks in these extensive missions. With sincerest affection I offer and dedicate to your Reverence this brief treatise on the martyrdom and the innocent, apostolic, and glorious death of my holy companion (as your Reverence calls him) Francisco Javier Saeta. [6]

I have appended to this treatise his apostolic counsels together with a general map of all the missions of our Society entitled “ Theater of the Apostolic Works of the Society of Jesus in North America.” On this map, or universal theater, the positions of the new missions are noted and the places are marked with special care where another sixteen [7] missionary Fathers shed their blood for the Catholic faith in the preaching of the gospel. [8]

In another and longer book, [9] Our Lord granting His holy grace, I will treat of these new missions and of their extensive new tribes where we experience a “ bloodless and more prolonged martyrdom,” as your Reverence says. His divine Majesty preserves the rest of the Fathers so that they may instruct these peoples through the laborious task of their ministry, a task so much more meritorious, glorious, and fruitful as it is more laborious, hard, painful and prolonged.

Although in writing about Saeta’s bloody martyrdom my lack of ability could discourage me, I am much encouraged and compelled by many continual letters of our venerable and holy companion, Francisco Javier Saeta, especially by one which he wrote on the eve of his glorious martyrdom. [10] I will mention the special communications that I had with his Reverence in regard to these new missions since, by order of our superiors, I went to leave him in his new district of La Concepción de Nuestra Señora del Caborca among the Soba tribe in the western Pimeria. In a short time he worked with such fervor and apostolic charity that “he came to perfection in a short while” (Wisdom 4: 12).

His Reverence loved his own dear children most deeply, and he in turn was very well liked and loved by them, as is well-known and evident from his own repeated letters to me. I will cite them exactly in the proper place in this treatise. I affirm that his Reverence has both written and [41] said this by word to many others and to his superiors, both immediate and mediate, in the missions and outside them. But other evildoers, and not his children, removed him from this temporal life, crowning him with the immortal glory of heaven. [11]

May the Divine Missionary who came to us from heaven to preach and teach bestow this glory on us all. I commend myself together with all these new conversions to your Reverence, to your holy sacrifices and holy protection, as I desire and we need.

Nuestra Señora de los Dolores, September 20, 1695, Your Reverence's servant and subject,
Eusebio Francisco Kino

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AUTHOR'S PROLOGUE [1]

To the Kind Reader

I beg the Sovereign Lord that this small treatise will enjoy a better fortune than my *Exposición Astronómica del cometa de 1680 y 1681*. [1] Don Carlos de Sigüenza was deeply offended, [2] saying in his *Libra Astronómica* that I wrote my *Exposición astronómica* against his *Manifiesto Filosófico*. [3] Never did I think of writing or publishing a word against the *Manifiesto Filosófico*. Neither do I recall reading it nor would I have failed to have had a scruple about wasting time so precious and necessary for better and more exacting occupations, such as those which have brought me to the Americas. I have too much before me to concern myself with debates and recriminations of little value and edification. Don Carlos de Sigüenza wrote against my *Exposición astronómica* with a superfluous meticulousity inasmuch as I wrote that book at the request and insistence of some Fathers and gentlemen friends in Mexico City during the few weeks of my stay there. [4] I even received gratitude for it from Rome.

Approbations came from the learned Fathers Francisco Jiménez and Francisco Florencia, and especially, from the very erudite and able religious Mother Juana Inés de la Cruz, professed of the Order of San Jerónimo, who in her ingenious and learned volume, endorsed it with special verses, supporting and defending it with apparent sufficiency. [5]

Wherefore, I beg my kind reader to be persuaded that I do not intend to treat anyone rudely. Rather, I propose to communicate to all in a friendly way the good news concerning what His Divine Majesty is pleased to do and perform in these farthest reaches of the New World. I openly declare that, as I do not want the least expression in this book |45| let of mine to detract one bit from the holy opinion and judgment of Our Holy Mother Church, of the Inquisition or of our holy Faith, so certainly I do not desire that this work should contain the least thing, whatever it might be, that would be against the love of God or of my dear fellowman.

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BOOK ONE

THE COMING OF REVEREND FATHER FRANCISCO JAVIER SAETA, S.J., TO THE MISSIONS OF SONORA, AND HIS FIRST EXPEDITION TO THE NEW MISSION OF NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LA CONCEPCIÓN DEL CABORCA

CHAPTER ONE

Arrival of Reverend Father Francisco Javier Saeta in the Missions

In the middle of October, 1694, the venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta arrived at Mátape from Mexico City. [1] At the same time Father Visitor Juan Muñoz de Burgos had come to visit the new missions of the Pimeria. [2]

Knowing of this expedition by the Father Visitor, Father Francisco Javier Saeta hastened to overtake his reverence at this new and first mission of the Pimeria, called Nuestra Señora de los Dolores. There, after some deliberation whether a new missionary was more needed at San Cayetano in the north, or at San Ambrosio del Tucubavia in the northwest, or at La Concepción in the west, the Father Visitor assigned Father Saeta to the new mission of La Concepción de Nuestra Señora del Caborca in the western Pimeria among the Soba tribe.

This place was named La Concepción at the request of Father Rector Antonio Leal since he discovered it on the octave of the Conception of Our Lady in December, 1693, when on the 19th of that month he also sighted the nearby Californias. [3] This place or district of La Concepción is twenty leagues from the Gulf of California and forty-four leagues from Nuestra Señora de los Dolores; Mission San Ignacio and Mission San Pedro del Tubutama lie about midway along the road. [4] [49]

This new assignment to the west pleased Father Francisco Javier Saeta very much, and Father Visitor charged me with accompanying him to his new parish. [5] Meanwhile his Reverence visited the other three missions: San Ignacio, San Pedro del Tubutama, and Cocóspera, leaving the other new missionary, Father Fernando Bayerca, at the last place named. [6]

Father Visitor told me that the mission parish of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores should furnish whatever would be needed for the new mission of La Concepción; so I determined to give him one hundred head of cattle, one hundred calves, a herd of twenty mares, with the foals of the horses and mules, other beasts of burden, mules for riding and for cargo, and sixty fanegas (96 bushels) of provisions together with other furnishings for the house; such as I sent him afterwards little by little. [7]

On October 19, Father Visitor having already left two days before for San Ignacio, Father Francisco Javier Saeta and I left the district of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores for that of La Concepción de Nuestra Señora del Caborca with various necessary things. We arrived that same day at Santa Maria Magdalena, a journey of ten leagues.

The following day, after celebrating Mass at Santa Maria Magdalena, we arrived at midday at Santa Marta. Both places are on the river of San Ignacio; and that night we arrived in the valley of San Bartolomé, having traveled that day some fourteen leagues along a very good trail. [8]

Also in these two areas mentioned, as in other places on the road, we found many natives so meek, docile and affable that they gave Father Francisco Javier Saeta eight or nine children to baptize, which was for the venerable Father a thing of complete amazement, both agreeable and consoling. To the first child he baptized he gave the name of his most glorious and special patron San Francisco Javier, the celebrated Apostle of the Indies. Another he named Ignacio, another Pedro, another Maria, another Rosalia, etc.

On the twenty-first, having left San Bartolomé after Mass, we arrived some ten leagues down the trail in time for a siesta on the banks of the San Pedro del Tubutama. Another seven leagues farther, almost at evening prayers, we [51] came to the ranchería of San Diego del Pitquin. Since we found there the captain and the other officials of La Concepción de Nuestra Señora del Caborca who had come some three leagues from their pueblo to find and welcome us, we decided to continue on with them to Caborca during the cool of the evening because the fervent new missionary was so anxious to arrive at his most desired goal. All along the trail there were many crosses, set up by his new sons, with many arches as if we were in the lands of those who had long been Christians. In the new pueblo, although it was two hours after nightfall, we were received by a good number of people with great joy on their part as well as ours.

CHAPTER TWO

The beginning of the new Mission of Nuestra Señora de la Concepción del Caborca

We found more than eighty souls in La Concepción; many more arrived later, gathering from the six or seven neighboring rancherías. We spoke to all of them and preached the word of God, telling them about the holy charitable reasons for the coming of the new missionary Father who had come from the distant world of Europe. We told them also of the many long and arduous journeys over sea and land that he had made for the eternal salvation of their souls and of all who live in these regions. We advised them of the great appreciation there ought to be for such an incomparable benefit which the sovereign King and God of the heavens and the earth was offering them after so many hundreds of years, when this favor had not yet been granted to many other peoples in that region. Wherefore all these sons expressed great thanks and they responded to him with long and affectionate discussion.

In this new mission of La Concepción we also found a large and spacious hall with adobe walls and a flat roof which the Fathers had made during the preceding months to serve as a priest's residence as well as a decent place to | 53| say Mass. We also discovered that these children had just harvested the maize for the missionary Father and the church.

On October 22, I went with his Reverence, giving various instructions to the natives. We lined out the foundations for a large, spacious church and house. We discussed briefly how the cattle and grain would be brought to begin a farm. I left him the furnishings for a portable altar, wine and hosts, etc., as well as the necessary servants, an interpreter, a catechist, cook and herdsman, etc.

Father Francisco Javier Saeta felt especially comforted that his new mission of La Concepción was so near the sea and the island of California.[1] It was hardly more than twenty leagues to the sea and thirty-five or forty to California. His great, apostolic fervor and holy zeal extended even there.

On the twenty-third, I set out on the return trip to Nuestra Señora de los Dolores; I promised to send to his Reverence other necessary items, such as supplies and provisions for the house and tools with which to begin the building. I took the road via San Pedro del Tubutama where I received a most gracious welcome from Father Daniel Janusque, the missionary pastor, and his children. [2] His Reverence was so happy to hear that Father Francisco Javier Saeta was close by — only twenty leagues along a good level trail through the two new pueblos of San Antonio del Oquitoa and San Diego del Pitquin — that he decided to go as soon as possible to visit personally his dear acquaintance, now a neighboring pastor.

CHAPTER THREE

First Activities of Reverend Father Francisco Javier Saeta in his new Mission of Caborca

Venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta wrote repeatedly to superiors, to others and to me that he was very content and consoled with the more than eighty souls who |55| had taken up residence in his new parish. Very many more had given their word to his Reverence, and to me, that many from the neighboring rancherías would move there. And indeed, they were already coming to the classes of Christian doctrine, to Mass and to the chores of the church. Through the interpreter, his Reverence accomplished this with his continual gentle instruction which is so necessary in the beginning among new peoples.[1] Therefore, he was able to write, or even

report to superiors, such happy news: that he was amazed at the great hopes there were of very abundant fruit both spiritual and temporal in the new mission.

He had started construction on a good apartment joined to the already existing spacious hall or chapel. Then, too, he had begun a good garden by seeding the rich, fertile soil with almost all kinds of vegetables: cabbages, lettuce, carrots, radishes, turnips, coriander, and mustard, etc. He also had sown two fanegas of wheat, which afterward gave a very rich and plentiful yield.

He was working, personally, at times with his own hands, “working with our hands” (1 Cor. 4:12), to prove what the Apostle says: “it is necessary for me that these hands assist” (Acts 20:34). Easing everything by his holy example, he helped his poor and dear children by his works no less than by his words. At times he tilled the soil, cut and fashioned wood, made adobes and walls with mud: “he became all things unto all men that he might win all men to Christ” (1 Cor 9:19-22). In this manner all was done with much joy and consolation for his children, who were growing more numerous day by day as more natives arrived who were attracted by his fervent, gentle, untiring and affectionate charity. With a love more affectionate and tender than a father’s and mother’s he provided for each one, personally sharing the little food he had. And it followed that, as I learned from the natives on repeated occasions, they came to love him most affectionately. They thanked me once and again for helping them to obtain a very good Father, just as I had promised.

wrote me from his new mission of La Concepción to that of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores on the 29th of October, 1694:2

“Venerable Father, do not think that I am sad, although I am sufficiently in need, because, as I often said to you personally, nothing will divert me from a good beginning. By God’s mercy, I have sufficient strength to suffer all for His love and to do it joyfully. The children, with their good conduct, are for me a thousand spiritual consolations, which is what I consider important, as your Reverence can read in the letter enclosed for Father Visitor. From it, too, can be gleaned the rest of the news and the little report of our expedition to this new mission. The men have made five hundred adobe bricks. If I only had an assistant, I could confidently expect all the help I need from my sons.”

Thus far the first letter of the venerable Father after eight days on the Mission.

CHAPTER FOUR

Visit of Reverend Father Francisco Javier Saeta, with the good wishes of his superiors, to other older missions to seek and secure alms and help for his new mission

In the middle of November, 1694, the Venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta came from his new mission of La Concepción to that of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores. He was accompanied by native servants from his own parish who were very contented and pleased with his Reverence, just as he spoke and wrote to everyone about those joys which he experienced with his very dear children. All of Ours as well as the laity were consoled and edified in the highest degree on seeing and hearing his Reverence. For which reason many benefactors, both priests and laity, gave him with much charity and generosity a very good assistance for his new mission of La Concepción — furnishings for his church, clothing for his children, and cattle, mules, and horses for the whole district. [59]

He then left Dolores and made a swing through the three closest rectorates: San Francisco Javier de Sonora, San Borja, and Los Santos Mártires del Japón. [1] He made the rather long round trip (more than two hundred leagues going and coming) with a determination that this

would be the only prolonged absence from his beloved mission that he would permit. Afterwards, he would not leave his cherished retreats or the territories of his most sweet La Concepción — nor would he be separated from its most soothing delights.

On the trail he wrote several letters to various distant places about the great hopes that he had of being able to produce much fruit, with divine assistance, in this new vineyard of the Lord. So his Reverence told me when I chanced on him toward the end of December in the parish of Arizpe (where three of us Fathers convened at the house of the mission of the Rectorate of San Francisco Javier; all three of us bore the same name of San Francisco Javier — that is, his Reverence, the pastor of Arizpe, Francisco Javier de Mora, and myself, without meriting it). [2] I had left my mission of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores to journey on to Mexico City; but afterwards my journey was suspended because of the expedition which the Lord Military Governor [3] of these provinces intended to make together with many natives of this Pimeria against our declared enemies — the Jocomes, Janos, and Sumas. [4] Already in two other recent encounters, it had been seen how fine and loyal to our side these Pima warriors were during the defense and battle at Cochuta, and afterwards at Batepito.

I will not be able to review the admirable and excellent reports, nor the very sincere compliments that came to me vocally and in writing from many of Ours as well as the laity. They repeated their congratulations for the coming of so distinguished, fervent, affectionate and angelic a worker to this Pimeria. They remarked that in his Reverence I had what this Pimeria needed and wanted. And so I also believe. I trust in his holy intercession in heaven, inasmuch as we have already been privileged for much time to enjoy his holy and personal help and assistance on earth; furthermore, his admirable instructions and the lessons of his apostolic [61] and fervent, living examples have helped us very much in this world, for temporal life as well as eternity. It is well known to all how his conferences, discourses, letters, dreams and desires were either about advancing the new missions or about divine and heavenly things; this was especially evident to the most devout layman.

CHAPTER FIVE

Return of Reverend Father Francisco Javier Saeta to Caborca and the prediction of his Martyrdom.

Towards the end of January, 1695, Father Francisco Javier Saeta returned through Nuestra Señora de los Dolores from his pilgrimage in order to pass on as quickly as possible to his mission of La Concepción. In his concern and in his heart he had never been absent from it as can be clearly understood from various letters which he wrote me. One of those letters, among others which I still keep in my care, seems not only to show his apostolic zeal, love and great charity for his beloved sons at La Concepción de Nuestra Señora del Caborca, but also, at the same time, he seemed to predict the glories of his bounteous martyrdom.

This letter he wrote me from Huépac in Sonora, from the district and house of Father Visitor on January 19, 1695, using these formal words:

“ I am sending your Reverence two enclosures, so you can do me the favor of saving them until my return through there, which will be toward the end of this month. Tomorrow I leave for Mátape, and I go in haste since my great desire is to give a thousand cordial embraces to your Reverence and to see myself once more among my most dear children. With all my heart and

love, I salute and embrace them for I feel these labors are well undertaken which I have done for their benefit. “ Blessed be the name of the Lord ” (Job 1:21).

“ The Lord Governor, Captain Don Pedro de Almazán, and Father Rector Manuel González recommend themselves much to your Reverence. [1] Pardon my poor handwriting; [63] I am writing with the strokes of an arrow. God be with you, my most beloved Father, etc.

“ Most humbly from my heart, “ Xaverius Saeta ” Thus far the venerable Father Saeta who clearly gives us to understand his loving, charitable, and apostolic desire of being with his beloved children. It seems he was predicting the stroke or strokes of the arrows which brought about his fruitful and holy martyrdom when he said that he was writing with arrow strokes, as it is evident from his original letter and on other occasions as well. [2] Even in his conversation he would often mention the “ strokes of arrows.” How many times was he wont to say, speaking of his own name “ Saeta ” (which in Italian means “ arrow ” just as “ sagitta ” in Latin): “ He placed me as his chosen arrow.” Also, he had as his particular patron St. Colette, who is represented in paintings with arrows of divine love coming to her from the crucified Christ and with a lamb which holds in its hand a crown of gold bearing this inscription “ Coronaberis ” — “ You will be crowned.”

His parchment' of the saint, depicting her in this way with arrows and a crown, came to me as a memento from the hand of Lieutenant Juan Mateo Manje. [3] After the glorious martyrdom of the venerable Father, it was found at La Concepción among the rest of his holy things. I have saved it and venerate it as a special relic.

A few days after the date of the above letter, his Reverence arrived with his servants now very well clothed. He gratefully uttered a thousand thanks to his benefactors, as he carried with him various furnishings necessary to outfit his new parish. There was enkindled in him a completely consuming charity, an apostolic love and zeal for his new mission. He was most anxious to move on, and no sooner had he arrived, than he journeyed on through mission San Ignacio and San José de los Imuris where Father Agustín de Campos was ministering. [4] Then he went to the mission of San Pedro del Tubutama where Father Daniel Janusque was living. During February he arrived in good health at his mission of La Concepción de Nuestra Señora del Caborca which he had missed so much.

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BOOK TWO

SECOND EXPEDITION OF REVEREND FATHER FRANCISCO JAVIER SAETA TO HIS MISSION NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LA CONCEPCIÓN DEL CABORCA; HIS HOLY FERVOR, ZEAL, AND APOSTOLIC WORKS — TAKEN FROM HIS OWN LETTERS

CHAPTER ONE

Letter in which the Reverend Father writes of the spiritual and temporal condition of his new mission : his apostolic fervor in working and providing for the good of these souls

Toward the middle of February, 1695, the venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta returned to his beloved mission of La Concepción de Nuestra Señora del Caborca, going down the Río del San Pedro del Tubutama (Rio Altar). He passed through the two recently begun pueblos of San Antonio del Oquitoa and San Diego de Pitquin. The natives of La Concepción in receiving their beloved Father and his well attired companions (who had left almost naked) felt most comforted.

Yet, on the other hand, the two other pueblos mentioned above felt somewhat less consoled and many were displeased to see that they were not enjoying the same good fortune.

Among other letters that the venerable Father wrote, on March 4, 1695, his Reverence told me the following:

“ By way of Father Daniel, with many other letters from several friends outside of this area, I received your letter of the fourteenth of last month and with it the manual, etc. Arriving at the mission, I found your servants, Martín, José, and Juan; but they still had not made the corrals for the cattle. They went to work immediately after my arrival; and they have already finished them, thanks be to God. [67] One is about a half a league from the house alongside a shallow pond with abundant water, in a good field where there is plenty of grass of good quality. [1]

“ Also, I received the two shipments which I left in your mission, and twenty-three pack mules and horses. Also I received twenty-nine head of mares with their foals which your Reverence gave to the mission of La Concepción. All my children place themselves at your feet. I can only report good news as far as they are concerned. The officials ran down the trail to receive me with a joy and comfort equaled only by that which I experienced in seeing and embracing them as my beloved children.

“ The adults as well as the children continue to assist each morning at Mass and twice a day at Christian doctrine. They work with all love and have been helpful to the other three rancherías in the area: i.e., Unuicat, Bopoota, and Actum, whose chiefs promised me that they would come down with their people to live with us in this pueblo, as I have encouraged them to do. [2] If they do, there will certainly be much glory to God, for they would form one of the larger pueblos of the province. It won't fail through any omission on my part.

“ The house has been plastered and I am whitewashing it now. I have cleared a most delightful plot for a garden, where I have planted some small trees and sown some vegetable seeds to refresh the California sailors. [3] The wheat crop is tremendous and growing fast. The labors and shortages are such that your Reverence would be convinced that here are the ends of the earth. But, thanks to the Lord, I have passed through it all very happily and pleasantly, because I have left magnificence behind and conveniences with them. All is little in comparison with whatever merits the redemption of a soul by the most precious blood of the Son of God, etc.

“ I commend myself to your holy sacrifices and prayers, La Concepción, March 4, 1695,

“ Your servant and brother from the heart, “ Javier Saeta ” [69]

CHAPTER TWO

Two more letters of Reverend Father Francisco Javier Saeta which show his great apostolic fervor in desiring also to procure new missions in neighboring California

In the preceding letter, the Reverend Father spoke of the fresh garden crop which he was growing in his new garden at La Concepción to provide nourishment for the California sailors. Certainly he was always heartened by the nearness of his mission to the Californias and always was most desirous to be able to ease the passage by helping those poor souls, so forsaken on that greatest island in the world. The two following letters express even more keenly his holy and apostolic fervor; one is dated the fifteenth and the other, the twenty-first of March, 1695.

In the first he wrote me thus:

“ Yesterday, the fourteenth of the month, I received your letter of the second instant from the Indian Santiago, who brought me eighty head of sheep and goats to help with this new mission. With the thirty-five previously donated the total is now one hundred and fifteen head. Fifteen of

them will be for our dear California, as you implied. May God reward your charity: meanwhile, for my part, I thank you with all my heart, etc.”

In the other letter of March 21, he said:

“ With inexplicable consolation for me and my children, the vaqueros arrived yesterday, Passion Sunday, March 20, with more than 100 head of cattle which your Reverence sent for the provision of this mission.

“ The five spotted cows which bear your brand are being applied to our beloved and holy hermitage of Rosalia of the Californias, as you wished.[1] I am continually asking her to be for us, as it were, a favorable breeze bringing us to a safe harbor (“ sit portus et aura suis ”), where we may pass one day to place with our own hands her portrait and, in time, her statue on that simple and fortunate little hill dedicated to her. [2] |71|

I also received the six loaves of bread, the load of maize, the iron for the blacksmith of the district, the candles, the three horses, etc. With all my heart I thank you for your infinite kindness.

“ I am very pleased about the three Fathers or subjects who you mentioned are coming through there, destined for these missions. They are very wonderful persons and well known to me. Father Antonio Astina is Irish or English; Father Antonio Pérez is a Sardinian, very strong and capable; Father Ordaz is a Castilian. [3] The former two were my companions when we came from Cadiz to this province. If they arrive at your house, I would appreciate it if you embraced them in my name. Tell me where I can write to them and give them my welcome on their arrival.

“ The relics, etc., which I have set aside for you from my trunks, I will send with Father Daniel who will spend Holy Week at Cucurpe.

“ Please advise me when the time will come for the campaign and war against the Jocomes so that I can send the men whom you have requested.

“ I remain at your orders ready to obey you at once. I pray that you do not forget me in your holy sacrifices and prayers.

“ Concepción, March 21, 1695, “ Sincerely your servant and brother, “ Javier Saeta ”

CHAPTER THREE

Another letter of Reverend Father Francisco Javier Saeta, showing his determination not to leave his mission so he might remain to receive the crown of martyrdom during Holy Week

Already in two letters I had invited the venerable Father to visit us, and on March 9, 1695, he wrote me the following: “ I received your last most welcome letter of February 24 from the muleteers who brought my trunks. They arrived on the fourth of March, etc. I appreciate very much your keen concern in inviting me to relax a bit, but I confess, my |73| dear Father, that I will not be able to enjoy your favors, for in reality, I am swamped both spiritually and temporally. Foreseeing the difficulties that I would have in leaving again, I endeavored to free myself, for once, of all the business that I could. Then I would not have been missed, but now I see that I would be missed very greatly. Indeed, I have declined invitations for Holy Week in other places; I will hardly be able to go to San Pedro del Tubutama to fulfill my obligations to the Church.

“ Occasions will not be wanting as time goes by to kiss your hands. I find myself needing some ordinary tobacco, which my sons are accustomed to ask for. I do not have courage to refuse

them. Therefore, I am planning to send Francisco, my courier, trusting you could provide this assistance, etc.

“ I am very pleased about the six Fathers coming from the Province to these missions. [2] If they arrive at your mission, I would appreciate it if you told me their names so I could fulfill my obligations in writing to them. I am still gathering some relics among the few that arrived in my trunks. I will send them to you at the first opportunity as a small sign of my appreciation for the great deal I owe you. Meanwhile I recommend myself entirely to your holy sacrifices.

“ La Concepción, March 9, 1695, “ Your sincere servant in Christ, “ Francisco Javier Saeta

CHAPTER FOUR

The last letter of Reverend Father Francisco Javier Saeta April 1, 1695, which he wrote to me a few hours before his glorious death, with his most affectionate farewell, and which was received twenty-seven hours after his holy martyrdom

I recognized in previous letters from the venerable Father that he was not disposed to come to Nuestra [75] Señora de los Dolores where I wanted him to receive whatever he might have needed for his comfort and where we might see each other to chat and console ourselves in the Lord. I suggested to him that, if he wanted, we might meet halfway down the trail at Santa Marta, until, having relieved myself of some work, I could go to see him and his sons at his holy mission, and some other poor persons farther on, as we had planned. On April 1, 1695, in the afternoon, he answered me with these tender words in what was his last reply:

“ Your most welcome letter arrived with the loaves of bread and the cookies, etc., for which I thank you most warmly. As far as I am concerned, so that we can see one another one of these days, you could advise me through an Indian when it would be agreeable that we journey to Santa Marta. Since I am so greatly needed here, every minute I am gone I am so much the more swamped; nevertheless, I will steal a while, and like a swift arrow I will fly to put myself at your feet, to receive your orders, and to discuss many things. [1]

“ I would be delighted, if in addition to the enclosed request, I could receive the discarded items of clothing we mentioned from some of these towns for my children. These items are the following: sackcloth, some blankets, coarse cloth, and tobacco. [2] I will pay the cost later on, when we harvest the wheat, which here will be early. I will pay either in wheat or in silver, with complete punctuality. Since the work is done fervently — *fervet opus* — I recognize that these attractions help a lot both spiritually and temporally.

“ I cannot delay longer on this letter; the runner wants to return. Very obediently, I remain always at your orders.

“ Goodbye, dear Father, and I beg that you do not forget your most unworthy servant in your sacrifices.

“ Concepcion del Caborca, April 1, 1695, “ Your least servant and brother in Christ,
“ Javier Saeta ”

“ P.S. I. For lack of vinegar I have not as yet tried my [77] very fine fresh vegetables. With all my heart, I appreciate your kindness in writing favorably to superiors in my behalf, even though I have not merited anything but all kinds of confusion; for what I have done is nothing in comparison to the infinite debt I owe Almighty God and to the souls He loves so much; therefore, I cannot omit my expression of gratitude. Goodbye again, most gentle Father; live happily ! ”

“ P.S. II. The runner from your mission has deeply unsettled me with the news that the Jcomes have attacked San Pedro de Tubutama and killed poor Martin and the boy Fernando who were returning from driving the cattle for me. For God’s sake, dear Father, let me know what has happened and also how Father Daniel is faring.”

Thus the venerable Father’s last letter as it reads on the inside. After the letter was sealed, he wrote on the outside the following:

“ I will be very relieved when you will have received the package of relics and odds and ends which I sent with Father Daniel. Two sacks of corn arrived for me from the hand of the governor of Bosna. [3] The corn could not be brought from Santa Marta because of the enemy. The death of Martin and his boy have been confirmed; please don’t let me be lost from view.”

Thus far the venerable Father.

This most tender letter, written on the afternoon of Good Friday, April 1, I received on Easter Sunday, April 3, at about eleven o’clock in the morning. Some two hours before, about nine a.m., I received the sad news of his holy death, which occurred on Holy Saturday, April 2, at sunrise. The arrival of his sons with the news of his death came in twenty- seven hours (over a trail of forty-six leagues) — a thing that to me and the new Father Rector Marcos Antonio Kappus of the rectorate or mission of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores, and to others, created some doubt about the certainty of the news of his death, especially with the arrival of such recent letters from the venerable Father. Whereupon I ordered an immediate investigation to discover the facts through new messengers and letters.

[79]

BOOK THREE

THE INNOCENT AND GLORIOUS DEATH AND BURIAL OF THE VENERABLE MARTYR, FATHER FRANCISCO JAVIER SAETA

CHAPTER ONE

The circumstances and causes of the death of venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta and what motivated the deaths of the seven other Christians, servants of the Fathers, the pillage and burning of their houses and even of the holy images

There has been a great variety of opinions spoken, written and reported about the circumstances and causes of these eight deaths.

These variations are founded either on the diversity of the individual events and motives, or from not having heard the facts or from living far away from the happenings. This was the situation of the informers who were, perhaps, badly informed — as when they reported that all the Pimeria (which has over ten thousand souls) was rising in rebellion and apostacy; [1] actually only seven or eight rancherías or locales were the delinquents and evildoers. The rebellion hardly involved more than two or three hundred malefactors and accomplices. If, at the start, there would not have been such mistaken and disgraceful leadership, many or all of the evils, which later befell San Ignacio and San José de Imuris, would have been avoided.

I will recount here the circumstances and causes which, before God and my conscience, I have witnessed at close range. Using these clear and very particular sources of facts, I desire in Our Lord to propose necessary and useful remedies for the future in matters which are so much for the service of the two Majesties and for the common good of so many souls. [2] I am convinced that, if evils are never manifest, they [81] remain unknown; if they are unknown, they

are irremediable; if they are irremediable, we are left always with the same burdens, misfortunes, set-backs, and miseries. We lose time and, perhaps, the glory of eternity. Such matters elicit very serious concern.

1. Many would say that the circumstances and causes of these deaths have been simply the barbarity, ungratefulness, cruelty, and hate of the Faith by the natives. As this is an evil which is usually found in all new and barbarous nations, this cause would apply to the glory of the holy martyrdom of our venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta.

2. The second circumstance or cause was that, days and months before these eight deaths occurred during Holy Week, there had been many various disorders, severities, and cruel and rigorous punishments in San Pedro del Tubutama; the Captain, Governor and the natives had given notice of these things.

3. The third, and most special, cause was the hotheaded temperament and the cruelty of a servant of the parish of San Pedro del Tubutama. This servant, named Antonio, was an alien from the Opata tribe; [3] he was very harsh and had dealt maliciously with the Pimas, often beating them severely. In particular, he left the foreman of the farm badly injured and half-dead on the day that eight killings were initiated, as will be related in the next chapter.

4. The fourth circumstance or cause that has contributed to these deaths, riots and outbreaks has been the constant opposition to the Pimas which in turn has been founded on sinister suspicions and false testimony as well as on rash judgments because of which many unjust killings have been perpetrated in various parts of the Pimeria.

The Pimas have been viciously and unjustly blamed for the thefts of the livestock and the plunder of the frontiers. Such was the widespread opinion particularly until last June when General Juan Fernández de la Fuente and General Domingo Terán discovered the booty among the Jocomes and Janos; it is evident that the treatment of the natives in the Pimeria has been very unjust — leading as it has to mistreatment, torture and murder. [4] |83|

5. The fifth circumstance or cause, particularly for the five killings and the sacking of the mission of La Concepción de Nuestra Señora del Caborca, was the mistreatment, envy, hate and somewhat justifiable grief of the justices or chiefs of the very newly established pueblo of San Antonio del Oquitoa, which, after more than eighty baptisms were performed, had been promised a resident Padre. This was some five years ago when Father Visitor Juan María Salvatierra visited there. [5] Seeing that a Father had been provided for permanent residence, together with all kinds of provisions, clothing, cattle and supplies to the people farther down river, that is to La Concepción, many departed from San Antonio to go there. This left San Antonio depopulated with hardly more than its officials, who then felt they had been tricked and cheated, as they said, by lies. Hearing of the murders and pillaging at San Pedro del Tubutama, they took advantage of the occasion to do the same as the other malcontents, killing and robbing just as much at La Concepción. [6]

6. The sixth circumstance or cause was without doubt the hate that the common enemy has for new missions, seeing in them the loss of his dominion over so many souls, who for so many years he has held under the tyranny of his secure power.

Some of the malefactors were moved by one cause; others, by other causes; and in many ways, all concurred. The evils were permitted by the Most High in His Divine Providence; for He knows that even from evils He can draw much good, as in the case of the immense glory and heavenly crowns of the holy martyrs — “The blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians.” [7]

We must not for any reason fail to try to remedy our own errors, faults, defects, harshness or severity, and our narrowness, displays of temper, and foolish resentments. Our common sense,

prudence, and Christian charity has to solve and overcome these difficulties in dealing even with these most barbaric peoples, winning them for our most Catholic King and for our eternal God. |85|

CHAPTER TWO

The death of the three Christian Opatas Indians, in the pueblo of San Pedro del Tubutama, and the burning of the house of the missionary Father.

From the beginning of March, 1695, and even some months before, there was in the pueblo of San Pedro del Tubutama some punishment or other involving in particular two Indian chiefs and pagan officials who had come to the pueblo from nearby rancherías. One of them died from the harsh whipping that he received. After disappointments and disorders broke out in several places at different times, the mistreatment which Antonio, the alien Opatas, who was a servant at the parish, was inflicting on the natives was deeply felt. But the action he undertook on Monday of Holy Week, March 28, was especially harsh and disagreeable. On the farm of the mission he furiously beat the foreman of the vaqueros, who was still a pagan; he drove him to the ground, kicking him with spurs and lacerating him all over his body, particularly in the ribs and flanks; he left him half-dead.

The foreman, seeing himself in peril, told his Pima companions :

“ Look, my brothers; this Opatas is killing me, protect me ! Defend me ! ” At that the other pagans wounded Antonio with two arrows. But even then he managed to mount a good horse and fled to the pueblo where he entered the house of a friend who was still unbaptized (and who is today the governor of the pueblo). His opponents followed and, advancing on him, killed him and two other Opatas Indians who were by chance in the pueblo. They had only arrived a little before from the pueblo of La Concepción. One, who was named Martin, was a native of Los Alamos near Mátape. [1] He was terribly sick from fever and had stopped to make his confession to Father Daniel just before he left for San Ignacio and Cucurpe. The other was a boy about twelve years old, named Fernando.

When they had killed the Opatas, they stripped their bodies |87| and also robbed the priest's house. Father was gone, so they burned his house with all the holy images. They divided the valuables and even the sacred vessels among themselves, profaning many things and shattering them to bits. Contributing to all of this were the very evil tlatoles which on the preceding day, Palm Sunday, the deeply irritated and discontented fiscal mayor had given out. Many boasted that they would do the same or order the same to be done within two or three days at the other mission of La Concepción further away, in order to rid themselves of ill-treatment by aliens.

Many in this pueblo took almost no notice of what was occurring until it had already happened. At the farm, where there were about eight hundred livestock, a great crowd from the vicinity convened to slaughter them and feast on the meat.

Two other alien Indians, one called Angelo together with his wife, and another called Lorenzo, both natives of Ures, were sent away during the night by the Governor of the Pueblo and other good Christians.

CHAPTER THREE

The most innocent death of Venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta, S. J., and of his four Christian servants

The news of the murders committed in the pueblo of San Pedro del Tubutama, and of the pillage and burning of the house of the missionary Father, together with the explanations for the evil deeds, soon arrived at the recently begun pueblo of San Antonio de Oquitoa, only seven leagues southwest along the same river as San Pedro del Tubutama (Rio Altar). Because of the disquiet, unpleasantness, hatred and grief which some of the inhabitants harbored for many months and days, particularly the alcalde of the pueblo, they determined to go down to the pueblo of La Concepción del Caborca to perform the same atrocities — killing and plundering even more than in San Pedro del Tubutama.

The disorders and dissatisfactions which the natives harbored were, primarily, that, seven years before, the Alcalde Bias del Castillo and the army had come in search of some [89] horses and mules. [1] But not finding any, they killed eleven of their relatives and carried off four prisoners, etc.

The rest of the hatred, hard feelings, jealousy and grief which they harbored can be seen in those things I mentioned in Chapter I of Book III. In particular, five years ago, when Father Visitor Juan María Salvatierra came in 1690 to visit the western and northern parts of the Pimeria, the Alcalde of San Antonio de Oquitoa and his followers had been promised a priest. Each and every year thereafter they had sought a priest for their eternal salvation. [2] From that same time, and before, they appointed officials — a governor, a mayor, a legal officer, a clerk, minor judge, sheriffs, etc. There were over eighty baptisms of children on two or three different occasions. Among them was baptized the little son of the principal captain and chief of all this tribe, named Soba, and this little boy they named Francisco Javier. Nevertheless, the promised Father who would say Mass, hear confessions, and care for everyone the year round in their pueblo was never given to the people of the pueblo of San Antonio de Oquitoa. Although they were close to the rest of the Christians, on the contrary, a resident Father was given to others at an even more remote place at the mission of La Concepción of Nuestra Señora del Caborca. He brought such a great supply of temporal goods and spiritual benefits — inner and outer clothing, cattle, sheep and goats, horses, mules, a farm, cow-hands, pack-trains and drivers. The natives of San Antonio were stunned since they considered themselves to be the most ancient and most deserving. It was as if a joke were being made of them, or as if they were the objects of some hate or bad will, perhaps because of some sinister accusation against them. Together many inhabitants of San Antonio left their pueblo and went to live in La Concepción, leaving the officials almost alone, etc., with all their dissatisfactions and other grievances.

So the Alcalde of San Antonio del Oquitoa with some 50 or 60 Indian followers from the area joined together and, once armed, they went down river on Holy Thursday and Good Friday to the new pueblo of San Diego del Pitquin, a journey of some 10 leagues, with the evil determination to execute their designs at La Concepción. On Good Friday at night they went down the three leagues along the trail from [91] one pueblo to the other. [3] At sunrise on the morning of the following day, Holy Saturday, April 2, they arrived at the priest's house. They appeared friendly and affable when they went in to see Father Francisco Javier Saeta. After his Reverence spoke a little with them, he dismissed them from the house. As they were leaving, the good Father, standing in the doorway, realized that they had come with evil intentions which they immediately executed. When he saw that these savage enemies were drawing their bows to kill him, he shouted for the Captain and the Governor of the pueblo. He fell to his knees with arms open in imitation of the crucified Christ to accept the blessed and innocent death that he received first with two arrows, and then many more, etc.

Although the Captain and the Governor of the pueblo responded immediately, the Father was already in agony. They were defenseless while their enemies were well-armed; so they turned and fled in fear with all the people of the pueblo, the officials, etc. They could do nothing more than be angry and grieved to tears, and to censure their cruel enemies by word. Whereupon the malefactors asked the Captain who had charged him with the Father's defense, or was he, perhaps, a relative ?

Meanwhile, the Venerable Father, having been shot twice in the chest with arrows, got up mortally wounded and staggered into the house. He clutched in his holy hands a carved crucifix; he slumped for a moment over a box and then fell on the bed. As he was already losing consciousness, he lay down. Then the savages entered the house. With more arrows and a club they finished killing him; the innocent victim gave his most glorious soul to the Redeemer, etc.

Leaving venerable Father Francisco Javier dead, with the sculpture of Christ lying at his head, the cruel savages ransacked the house, pilfering the chests, boxes, and taking all the ornaments and furnishings — whatever could be of use to them. Having also murdered four of the Father's Indian servants who were from a different tribe, the miserable, sacrilegious murderers left with their spoils.

The four servants of the venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta who on this occasion gave their lives were: first, Francisco Javier, a native of Ures, who served as his interpreter. [93] He was married to an Indian girl named Lucia, a native of Motocachi, a large rancharía in the Pimeria from where about two hundred men in 1688 were taken as hostages to the Real de los Frailes. [4] Although they were innocent, they were falsely accused of the hostilities and robberies which had been going on along the frontiers of these provinces of Sonora. Afterwards, by order of His Excellency, freedom was restored to those who remained alive, although more than fifty Indians had already been beaten to death.

The second Indian servant was José, a native of Chinapa, a good vaquero. He came from Cocóspera to the pueblo of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores. Having been married in the Church, he went with great delight in the company of the venerable Padre to La Concepción to care for his cattle.

The third was an unmarried Indian named Francisco, a native of Cumupas, a herdsman of excellent character.

The fourth was another boy, about fifteen years old, named Tomás, a native of Ures, and very desirous to serve the new Fathers in the new missions.

CHAPTER FOUR

The expedition by the Presidio of the Province to remove the holy body of Venerable Francisco Javier Saeta and to punish the evildoers

So far this is what we have learned with certainty about the innocent death of venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta and his four servants, just as we have come to know about the three killings in the pueblo of San Pedro de Tubutama. Together with these reports there were rumors (although false ones) of what would come, namely that a large enemy force was building up to attack the rest of the neighboring missions. Notice was sent to the Lord Military Governor and the Alcalde Mayor of these provinces (at the Real de San Juan), Don Domingo Jironza Petris de Cruzat, so that he might rush to remedy such evils.

At that same time the hostile Jcomes and Janos held the districts of Guásavas and Oputo in great peril; in fact, they [95] were on the verge of being lost. The enemy had taken a large herd of

cattle, killed three soldiers and taken another, named Juan de Ochoa, prisoner. Afterwards in their own territory they tortured, mistreated and brutally killed this prisoner who underwent horrible torments. It is said they feasted on his flesh so they could be as valiant as the Spaniards. They sent his head as a present to the Apaches. [1]

Nevertheless, the Governor immediately mustered his presidial force and summoned all available manpower from Sonora. The inhabitants of the Real de Opodepe joined the Tepoqui Indians who had already come as far as the mission of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores and San Ignacio. All these forces joined together to inflict a punishment on the malefactors and to recover the body of the venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta.

The army together with many friendly Pimas from Dolores, San Ignacio, Cocóspera, and El Tupo, etc., arrived at the farm of San Pedro del Tubutama, which is about twenty-five leagues from Dolores. They discovered that all the people of Tubutama and all those from the rest of the nearby rancherías had fled in fright. Nearly all the cattle, horses, and mules were scattered about, dead, except one drove of mares and about five hundred head of sheep and goats that had previously been taken to safety.

At the farm they found only twenty-three head which they consumed on the trail the following days. They also found a sick Indian squaw whom the Tepoquis immediately killed without her being able to resist. The people from all the surrounding rancherías of Tucubavia and Sáric, like those of San Pedro del Tubutama, had fled to the hills, especially into the Cocori range. Others escaped from Sicoli and Moicaqui to another range of hills without the army being able to catch them or inflict any punishment. [2] They then considered going to La Concepción. Some days before, I had asked the Governor of Bosna to find out for certain about the murders of the Christians at La Concepción, particularly about the venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta and about the circumstances of his death. Having found the pueblo deserted, he burned the bodies of the dead which were already decomposing. He was bringing back to me the carved crucifix that [97] he found alongside the head of the venerable Father's corpse. While on the return trail, he met a squadron under the command of the Lord Military Governor who was accompanied by two Fathers, Fernando Bayerca and Agustín de Campos. They were moving in to punish the malefactors at La Concepción.

The Governor of Bosna entrusted to them the crucifix and told them everything he had seen and found in the aforementioned, deserted pueblo of La Concepción.

In San Diego del Pitquin, three leagues before coming to the pueblo of La Concepción, the friendly Pimas and the soldiers captured an Indian woman and three little girls whom they took with them to La Concepción. They found no more than an Indian with two boys who were his sons. He was clearing a plot of land for planting. The squadron killed one of the boys named Eusebio, captured the other named Antonio; but the father escaped.

The officers questioned the Indian woman taken prisoner in San Diego and the boy, Antonio. It was learned that it was not the natives of La Concepción who had murdered Father Francisco Javier Saeta and the four Opata servants, but other Indians from the north and from Oquitoa. They catechized the woman, baptized her and flogged her.

Also they collected the ashes, bones and dried blood of venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta, placing them with decency and veneration in a box. They found various books, papers and holy cards, sheets of paper and parchment, many arrows, but the rest of the vestments and furnishings had been taken by the malefactors. They found the wheat very high and ripe. It was only April and already the spikes were developed. The squadron returned to San Ignacio and then to Nuestra Señora de los Dolores on May 2, 1695.

CHAPTER FIVE

The burial of the holy body of Venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta

Afterwards, on May 3, 1695, the Lord Military Governor, Don Domingo Jironza Petris de Cruzat, made his confession [99] and received communion with much edification to all. This is something he was accustomed to do every year, thus solemnly celebrating the feast of the Finding of the Holy Cross. This he did in the Church of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores.

On the afternoon of that same day he left with the holy body of the venerable Francisco Javier Saeta. Father Fernando Bayerca and I accompanied him to the neighboring pueblo of Cucurpe, a trip of some five leagues, to see to the burial of the holy body which was placed in the church that same day. On the following day besides the many natives, Opatas or Eudeves, Pimas, and the whole squadron, there were four Fathers of the Society gathered there. [1]

Father Rector Marcos Antonio Kappus, who administered the district of Cucurpe, sang the requiem Mass. All the officials, the gentlemen, soldiers, and neighboring folk from Opodepe and Sonora, and the whole squadron assisted at the High Mass as well as at the burial of Father Francisco Javier Saeta with much edification and devotion. Especially edifying was the Governor who, even on the trail, wanted to lead the mule on which the box containing the bones and ashes of the venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta was being carried.

At his burial a very beautiful and new retable for a new altar, dedicated to the souls in Purgatory and to the dead, was unveiled. It had arrived only a few months before from Mexico City. The whole presidio and the gentlemen of the neighborhood fired their guns a number of times in salute. The burial of the holy body was on the epistle side of the main altar of the church of Cucurpe inasmuch as on the third of January of the preceding year, 1694, we had buried the body of Father Juan Bautista Barli on the gospel side. [2] Barli had been the missionary for the new districts of San José de los Imuris and of Cócóspera which he had left during his last illness; he died in the parish of Cucurpe.

[101]

BOOK FOUR

VARIOUS LETTERS FROM SEVERAL IMPORTANT PERSONS, PREDICTING THAT THE GLORIOUS DEATH OF VENERABLE FATHER FRANCISCO JAVIER SAETA PROMISES VERY COPIOUS SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL FRUITS FOR MORE NUMEROUS AND MORE CONTINUAL CONVERSIONS OF VERY MANY SOULS

CHAPTER ONE

The First Letters Written Immediately By Persons Nearby Concerning The Glorious Death Of Venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta Foretell The Good Fortune And Predict Happy Results

I am omitting here the distinguished letter of edification from the new Father Rector of this mission (or the new rectorate of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores), Marcos Antonio Kappus, who wrote, as is customary, to the whole Province. [1] Also I am omitting the very holy and affectionate letter of Father Provincial Diego de Almonacir with which I began this little treatise, and various letters of the three Fathers Provincial and the three Fathers who had been Visitors to these missions of Sinaloa and Sonora during the past eight or nine years since the new missions of the Pimeria were begun. [2] These letters unanimously affirm that the common enemy always tries to set every possible trap, so that the domination of the many souls he has tyrannized for so

many years will not be terminated. And they add that our eternal Father is much more powerful. Out of all the opposition and contradictions He will accomplish incomparably greater good as He is well able and is accustomed to do.

I am only including here some recent personal letters that have just been written to me casually, during the first weeks and months immediately following the glorious death of the venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta. [103]

On April 7, five days after the propitious death of the venerable Father, when we still had some doubts about whether he had been killed or not, Father Rector (Marcos Antonio Kappus) wrote me from that new mission (or new rectorate) of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores, in these words:

“Constantly and gradually a greater and greater admiration grows in me for our glorious protomartyr. I trust in the divine goodness that Our Lord will look on this innocent victim with favor for the conversion of very many souls.” And immediately his Reverence added: “I have the greatest hopes that all these evils will bear greater and greater fruit. May the divine goodness make it so, as it will be for our protection and benefit.”

Returning from the visitation he had begun, Father Visitor Juan Muñoz de Burgos wrote me various letters from the Real de San Juan through which his Reverence was passing. He said:

“May Our Lord reward your Reverence with the holy zeal that is required to quench the fire in a people so ungrateful. As a father of those poor souls, may your Reverence help them with your counsels and holy sacrifices. I trust in the Lord that for the future this watering by the blood of that angel will serve the Lord by producing much fruit in the Pimeria for the greater glory of God. May his divine Majesty keep your Reverence with much consolation, etc.” [3]

In another letter of April 15, his Reverence told me:

“May your Reverence be of good heart! For I trust in the Lord that all that has happened will be for the greater glory of God, as we have seen in the other conquests where Ours have shed their blood.”

In another letter from Huépac, May 11, 1695, his Reverence wrote me:

“Your Reverence’s health has me somewhat concerned ever since those who have seen you tell me that you seem rather ill. I am inclined to believe, in the present case, that your heart and holy zeal will probably suffer more because of the revolution of that new Christian mission. Our Lord knows well that I want to see you filled with some lively hopes, in [105] our God, that we will shortly see those poor misguided persons brought back once again into the fold of our Holy Mother Church.

“In what new missions have we not seen that the spilling of the blood of various apostolic men has irrigated and fertilized a crop of many souls? May you, for the love of God, take courage in the Lord, be optimistic, and with the same zeal follow on to win and bring back those ungrateful souls, etc.” Thus far the Father Visitor.

On the same day, May 11, 1695, Father Rector Manuel González wrote the following letter from Oposura. He also had been Visitor to these missions when, eight years ago, they began the foundations of these new conversions:

“With your Reverence’s letters I received another from the deceased Father Francisco Javier Saeta (May God take him into His holy glory!). It was a very edifying letter, written only a few days before his death. I have felt and still believe that your Reverence is disconsolate because such a sorrowful and unfortunate event has taken place among our children, the Pimas. I wish I could make it known with tears of my heart’s blood rather than ink. Yet I am consoled by the

knowledge that your Reverence is fully aware how profound and obscure are the just and holy judgments of God Our Lord whom we ought to venerate and adore with all our heart and soul.

“Take heart, my dearest Father, that God Our Lord knows how to draw good from evil. How much you have worked for the good of these poor people, how well that holy enterprise was going and how far it has advanced, the whole world knows.”

Afterwards he continued:

“I beg your Reverence, for the love of Jesus Christ and His most holy Mother, Nuestra Señora de los Dolores, to place yourself at the most holy feet of Our Lady and offer her everything conforming in every way to the Divine Will and trusting strongly in the Divine Goodness, so that when it pleases the Divine Majesty he will arrange everything for His great honor and glory, and for the good of those poor souls, the children of our heart. |107|

“God have mercy on them and preserve your Reverence.”

Thus far, Father Rector Manuel González and the local Fathers Superior charged with these new missions.

CHAPTER TWO

Other letters from our Fathers and even from secular gentlemen that assure the same bounteous success and very copious fruit in the conversion of souls through the holy intercession of Venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta

On June 9 of the present year, 1695, Father Rector Antonio Leal wrote me from his holy college of Guadiana:

“I have been greatly comforted to have received such good news, out of the charity of Father Visitor, concerning the progress and increase of Christianity in the Pimeria and about your expedition of one hundred and five leagues to the north, where a great number of pagans are most anxiously asking for the waters of holy baptism. How is it possible not to envy so great a joy? How could the devil permit so many souls which were once his to escape without utilizing his powers to impede its happening? I am very sorry, as everyone is, that there has been a rebellion among these poor souls. I trust in Our Lord that it did not spread everywhere else.

“Nevertheless, my Father, when has the Faith of God not suffered similar set-backs? But the Faith has not been destroyed by them. Even the Apostles, the disciples of Christ, died; and in every century since then, their successors who still remained — although the flesh is weak, the spirit is willing³ — have returned to enkindle the fire of the Holy Spirit, raising it from the cold ashes of the dead.

“Reverend Father, because of who you are, don’t give up! The blood of our brother has to be the irrigation with which more new plants will grow in heaven; he will be the intercessor for those poor souls. You have been and will be |109| their apostle. It would be a great pity if a few suffered for the rest.

“Take heart, Father, the blood of Christ will not have been shed in vain. You should not be discouraged by what has happened. This is God’s own cause and He will be served by it. And I ask Your Reverence inasmuch as I have always been your companion that you make me a participant in your glorious efforts which I have desired but Our Lord has not granted, etc.” [2]

Thus far Father Rector Antonio Leal with his holy encouragements.

Father Rector Marcos de Loyola at Mátape wrote me almost the same in repeated letters.[3] As an experienced missionary, both in newly established missions as in the older ones, he said: “Our Lord must want this Pimeria for something great, for He has permitted it to be afflicted and

beset by so much opposition, etc.” In one letter, February 26, 1695, somewhat before these troubles, he spoke out of an early premonition :

“ The fact is that executioners are not lacking who may fashion for you a crown in eternity. You are fortunate to have opportunities to win so great a heavenly reward. I am filled with envy of you since, as things are going, you should be consoled by everything, for you are on the side of God and doing His work. There is no cause for discouragement, but only for trust in God who draws the greatest good from everything.”

Thus far, Father Rector Marcos de Loyola. Many other Fathers wrote or spoke in much the same way.

I am adding also a few letters from some laymen. Captain Pascual de Picondo, who has been the lieutenant in charge of this Pimeria since May 30, wrote me the following:

“ I consider the death of the venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta as one of the greatest glories that could be desired. Many have desired to die for Christ in similar ministries, but they did not achieve these desires. A thousand and one times fortunate is the venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta who [111] received from Our Lord the gift of having his stole bathed in blood. Today I consider that all the Pimeria is flourishing and that its fruit is ripening for the storehouse of the Church.

“ May the reverend Pima Fathers rejoice and felicitate themselves, for they have as a companion a martyr in heaven who is and will be their intercessor with Our Lord Jesus Christ so that their holy desires and holy works may find success, etc.” [4]

Other similar letters have been written to me by his successor in the lieutenantancy of the Pimeria, Captain José Romo de Vivar, from Bacanuchi. [5] Captain Don Pedro García de Almazán also wrote from the Real de San Juan; he was a great admirer and intimate friend of venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta. [6] Father Saeta stayed at the captain’s house at San Juan only four months before his blessed and holy death. After I received these many fine letters about this matter, the commanding Lieutenant of this Pimeria, the nephew of the Lord Military Governor of these provinces, wrote me most recently on September 19: “I was pleased to know of your impending trip to Mexico City. [7] May the Sovereign Lord grant you a good trip and success in everything. And may you return safely accompanied by apostolic and fervent ministers for this Pimeria and the vineyard of the Lord. Its crop of souls is going to be fertilized by the blood of that most fervent Father and martyr Francisco Javier Saeta. In time it will flourish, as happens in the fields where the earth is fertilized by means of irrigation so it can raise in exuberant growth crops of wheat, etc. Nor will this innocent blood of our venerable martyr be like that of Abel which cried out for vengeance. Rather it will become a flood of supplications and clamors for the conversion of these pagans and for their repentance. They do not know what they have done, as those others who crucified the Lamb, Jesus Himself; they have turned again to crucify Him by opposing and hindering these conversions.

“ But I am comforted to know that by going to Mexico City you will arrange for ministers, etc. I am happy about the coming of the governors from the western tribe of the [113] Soba to Nuestra Señora de los Dolores; even now I see the blood that was shed is beginning to bring forth fruit, etc.”

This, and much more, was written by Captain Juan Mateo Manje, the acting lieutenant of this Pimeria, who on various occasions has accompanied me on expeditions to view the Californias, etc.[8]

CHAPTER THREE

Another letter exemplifying that other new missions also began with the shedding of the blood of their ministers

Father Antonio Menéndez, the Rector of the mission of San Ignacio de Mayo y Yaqui on July 2, 1695, wrote me as follows from the college of Conicari: [1]

“ I received your message while on the Rio Yaqui with a grief that you can hardly imagine. I was already aware of what had happened in that apostolic mission, and, all by myself, I thought of your most lamentable condition since the common enemy is intervening in every way to disrupt and embarrass what is for the glory of God. It is a good sign, Father, that all those missions begin with the blood of a minister to cultivate it since it is a sign of their perseverance and good stability. So it was in Sinaloa with Father Tapia; in Chinipas with the two Fathers Julio Pascual and Manuel Martinez; among the Tepehuanes, with seven glorious Fathers; among the older Tarahumaras with the blood of Father Cornelius and of Father Jácome Basilio, and now in the new Tarahumara mission with Father Foronda and Father Manuel Sánchez. [2]

“ Therefore, be consoled, Father; God was pleased that the fervor of Father Francisco Javier Saeta should be the first fruits on that mission, etc.”

Thus far Father Rector Antonio Menéndez. At the suggestion of this letter, I will add on the overall map of all these missions (entitled “ The Theater of the Apostolic Works of the Society of Jesus in North America ”) the letter “ M ” [115] in the locations or locales where the Fathers mentioned in the letter shed their glorious blood in imitation of the Divine Lamb. [3] In the following chapter, I will note the year in which they died and with what kind of death they were crowned, specifying a little more their very exemplary, evangelical, apostolic, and holy lives, and their most blessed, heroic and glorious deaths.

CHAPTER FOUR

The other sixteen missionary Fathers of the Society of Jesus who gloriously gave their blood for the Faith here in North America, in what place or mission, what year, what day, and what kind of death they suffered and at the hands of which savages

The general map of our missions, titled “ The Theater of the Apostolic Works of the Society of Jesus in North America,” will be entered below in Book VII, chapter One. The letter “ M ” on it will signify the places where our glorious soldiers of Jesus gave their lives for the Catholic faith.[4]

I. Father Gonzalo de Tapia, July 11, 1594 {2}

Father Gonzalo de Tapia was a native of the city of León in Castile. He was well known in the chair of philosophy and theology and in preaching; but he set all aside for new, apostolic missions. He was a distinguished missionary to the Tarascan tribe, and afterwards among the wild and nomadic savages of northern Mexico. [3] He knew, moreover, the Tarascan, Caribe and Nahuatl languages, as well as the three other dialects of the province of Sinaloa. After he settled in Villa de Sinaloa and after four years of apostolic work there, he was clubbed to death with a macana and stone hatchets. [4] Clutching the holy cross, he was killed by Nacabeba and his followers on the eleventh of July, 1594. He was just thirty-three years old. Following his holy

martyrdom, [117] what had been impossible to achieve for many years with presidios was quickly achieved — the pacification of Sinaloa, etc. This account is from Father Ribas.

II. Father Hernando de Tovar, November 16, 1616 [5]

Father Hernando de Tovar was a native of Culiacán. He had gained the reputation of being an angel for leading such an angelic life from his boyhood. From his childhood he predicted his martyrdom and gave his life's blood for the faith in the mission of Santa Catalina (Sinaloa). He was shot with arrows and finally struck down by a lance thrust into his chest by the rebellious Tepehuanes. He died at thirty-five.

III. Father Diego de Orozco, November 17, 1616 [6]

Father Diego de Orozco was born in Plasencia; from his boyhood he said he would be a martyr of Christ. As he left the church of Santiago Papasquiario with the monstrance and carrying the Blessed Sacrament, the savage Tepehuanes shot him through from front to back with arrows; with an axe they severed the body from top to bottom. He died at a flourishing age with his holy companion Father Bernardo Cisneros, on November 17, 1616. On the same occasion, about one hundred Spaniards, men and women, were also killed.

IV. Father Bernardo Cisneros, November 17, 1616 [7]

Father Bernardo Cisneros, a native of Carrion de los Condes, in Castille, was killed in Santiago Papasquiario on November 17, 1616, by the apostate Tepehuanes with a spear and a blow of a macana on the head. He died apostolically at thirty-four years of age. Years before, he had suffered three wounds, but the most patient Father kept them secret. Even with advance notice of the coming of the enemy, the wolves, those two holy companions did not want to desert their beloved flock. [119]

V. Father Juan del Valle, November 17, 1616 [8]

Father Juan del Valle, from Vitoria, was a model of religious perfection. By means of his evangelical preaching throughout the whole province of the Tepehuanes, he baptized many thousands, he founded many churches. After twelve years of his apostolic labors, the savage Tepehuanes murdered him with arrows and macanas in the village of San Ignacio del Zape.

VI. Father Luis de Alavés, November 17, 1616 [9]

Father Luis de Alavés was a native of the city of Oaxaca. Even in the book of baptism his name was written in red letters. It seems that the Holy Virgin revealed and promised to him the martyrdom which he asked for. She spoke to him three times about his martyrdom and that of his holy companions. He was pierced with arrows and clubbed with macanas by the Tepehuanes in revolt at San Ignacio del Zape, November 17, 1616.

VII. Father Juan Fonte, Superior, November 17, 1616 [10]

Father Juan Fonte, superior of the mission of the Tepehuanes, was a native of Tarrasa near Barcelona and the successor to Father Jerónimo Ramírez, who first founded these missions. [11] Father Fonte penetrated fifty leagues deeper into the new Indian territory of the unbelievers, preaching the good news of our holy Faith; he did this five times at the petition of his children. He changed his pueblo so as not to discourage them, but to make the law of God more attractive for them. After sixteen years of very apostolic missionary works, he succumbed to the arrows

and macanas of the treacherous Tepehuanes, only a half league outside San Ignacio del Zape where he was going on November 17, 1616.

VIII. Father Jerónimo de Moranta, November 17, 1616 [12]

On that same occasion Father Jerónimo de Moranta, a native of Majorca, lost his life. He had expended much effort [121] in the preaching of the Gospel; for ten years he labored apostolically on the Tepehuán mission. Then, in the company of his own Father Superior, Father Juan Fonte, he was killed on November 17, 1616, a half league outside San Ignacio del Zape.

IX. Father Hernando de Santarén, November 20, 1616 [13]

Father Hernando de Santarén was born in Huete in the diocese of Cuenca. He was an apostolic missionary to the Chichimecas and founded the missions of the Sierra de Topia. He labored incessantly and apostolically for nineteen years, baptizing around 50,000 souls. He built more than forty churches and donated over 40,000 pesos in alms to the poor. The rebellious Tepehuanes killed him by smashing his skull with a club and inflicting other injuries on November 20, 1616. His life has been written by Father Eusebio Nieremberg. [14]

X. Father Julio Pascual, February 1, 1632 [15]

Father Julio Pascual came from Brescia in the seigniorship of Venice. He never failed to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass every day since he always carried the necessary vestments and vessels. He never used chocolate. For two years he helped very fervently in the new missions of Zuaque, Sinaloa, Tehuaco, and the Yaquis. He entered into the new mission of Chinipas, where after four years of fervent work, even though warned of the deadly danger he was in, he did not want to flee. He and his companion Father Manuel Martinez passed half alive and half dead through the torments of a burning house, the smoke of torches, and wounds by arrows, knives and macanas. Father Pascual and Father Martinez achieved the glory of martyrdom just as the Lord had indicated to them fifteen days before when the corporals at Mass were stained with blood. Father Pascual died at the hands of the savage Varohios and Guazapares. [16]

XI. Father Manuel Martinez, February 1, 1632 [17]

Father Manuel Martinez, a Portuguese national from Tavira, Algarve, was a relative of Saint Anthony of Padua. The [123] most holy Mary defended his purity. His penances were constant and rigorous. When he left for the mission, he said he would shortly die for Christ. When he arrived at the missions of Sinaloa, he foretold the same, and only ten days later in the missions of Chinipas, he died among the Varohios in the company of his friend Father Juan Pascual.

XII. Father Cornelio Beudin Godinez, June 4, 1650 [18]

Father Cornelio Beudin Godinez, from Flanders, visited the Blessed Sacrament seven times daily. A virtuous woman, a servant of God, predicted that he would come to the Indies to die for the Christian faith. When he was among the Tarahumaras, he was hanged by a rope before the holy cross; and they finished killing him by two blows to the head for having baptized some children. He died at forty years of age, fifteen in the Society.

XIII. Father Jácome Antonio Basilio, March 3, 1652 [19]

Father Jácome Antonio Basilio, an Italian, had worked admirably in the archdiocese of Mexico, and then carried on the missionary labors of Father Cornelio Beudin. The pagans of Papigochi

hanged him by the neck from the holy cross when he was there hearing people's confessions. The day he died, the natives saw a little boy accompanied by two angels leave his mouth. He was forty-three years old and had been in the Society twenty-two.

XIV. Father Diego Ortiz de Foronda, April 11, 1590 [20]

Father Diego Ortiz de Foronda, born in Guadalupe, Spain, about 1655, entered the Society of Jesus when he was twenty years old. He taught at the college of San Luis Potosí (1681), and he was a missionary to the Indians of Tarahumara, Parral and Guadalupe. He made his religious profession on February 2, 1687. With all the previous news [125] that a revolt was underway among the Tarahumaras, he could not resolve to abandon his congregation. The apostates, immediately after attacking Yepómera, set fire to the poor hut of the missionary. The Father came to the door to inquire the reasons for the unusual hubbub; but scarcely had he begun to exhort them when he was covered by a cloud of poisoned arrows. He fell right on the threshold begging God's pardon for those who were so unworthily and sacrilegiously wounding him. His death came on April 11, 1690.]

XV. Father Manuel Sánchez, April 11, 1690 [21]

Father Manuel Sánchez, a native of Marchena, in the province of Seville, Spain, entered the Society of Jesus about 1659 when he was twenty years of age. He taught grammar in the college of the Holy Spirit (Puebla, 1681).

He had served in the missions of the North since 1684; he was at the mission of Los Santos Mártires del Japón and Guadalupe in Tutuaca from 1687 to 1690. He made his solemn profession on October 10, 1688. On April 11, 1690, returning from the Real de San Nicolás, where he had gone to preach to his mission of Tutuaca, he and Captain Manuel Clavero, who was accompanying him on the trail, were killed by the Tarahumaras. The Captain tried to persuade the Father not to press on any further, but nothing could divert him from his zealous determination. The Father protested that he could not leave his flock and the sacred vessels of the church to the mercy of impious Indians. Fathers Diego Ortiz de Foronda and Manuel Sánchez had been companions of Father Juan Bautista Zappa throughout their calling and on the trip to the Americas; they resembled him very much in fervor and apostolic spirit.

XVI. Father Francisco Javier Saeta, April 2, 1695 [22]

Father Francisco Javier Saeta, a native of Piazza Armerina, Sicily, Italy, was born on September 22, 1664, and entered the Society on September 25, 1679. He came to Mexico in 1692 and to the missions of the Pimeria in 1694. Father [127] Kino accompanied him to the mission of La Concepción de Nuestra Señora del Caborca. The overruling pride and harshness of the three Opatas Indians, servants at the neighboring mission of San Pedro del Tubutama, so irritated the patience of the Pimas and abused the authority which their positions carried, that the Pimas resolved to suffer no more. On the first occasion that arose, while the Father in charge was absent, the Opatas tried to punish one of the Pimas. His family took up arms and avenged the assault with the blood of one of the Opatas. With the same fury they immediately attacked the two other Opatas whom they left pierced through with many arrows. The attackers swiftly formed a coalition with the Indians of Oquitoa and some unbelievers in the vicinity. Then they moved on Caborca. At day-break on Holy Saturday, April 2, 1695, they entered the humble dwelling of the Father, who, ignorant of everything, received them with his customary pleasantness. He wasn't long in discovering their evil dispositions and he summoned the Governor of the pueblo; but the

Governor, fearing that the savages had come in greater numbers, did not want to expose himself to the same danger. The good Father, now deserted, sank to the ground on his knees, and he was immediately shot with two arrows. Seeing himself so wounded, he rushed to embrace a devout image of the crucified Jesus that he had brought with him from Europe. In a few minutes he died.]

Not on account of all these or even more murders would the apostolic missionaries of the Society of Jesus abandon their flocks, as Father Andrés Pérez de Ribas says in his History, Book X, Chapter XXIII; nor were they even discouraged from continuing their evangelical undertakings. [23] As he remarks, about the time of the death of the eight Fathers killed in the Tepehuán rebellion, a new spirit was recognized among all the missionary priests — a spirit of dedicating their lives to God and of assisting the souls whom they were teaching.

It was then that Father Andrés Tutino wrote to Father Provincial:

“ I give unending thanks to God for placing me in such circumstances; I have never been so well employed since coming to America as I am at this time. It is true that my faults and sins are so great that there is doubt of my receiving so blessed a death. But, at least, I will pass through this life with extraordinary consolation because of the fragrance of so sweet a memory as that which lingers from our brothers who so gloriously spent their life’s blood. Blessed are they and those who hope to be able to follow them by the grace of God. May it please His divine Majesty to be served by the shedding of my blood as He has been by those who shed theirs for His honor and for His most holy faith.” [24]

Thus far Father Tutino. And immediately after Father Andrés Pérez added:

“ The whole Province of the Society of Jesus in New Spain, and even other provinces, were so far from being dismayed or disheartened at the martyrdom of so many of their brothers, in this one undertaking alone, that, besides those in New Spain who offered themselves to carry on the work, Father Provincial wrote Father General that he might send new assistants from among his sons who would all be employed at the risk of their lives in such glorious endeavors. There were even some from very distant provinces who offered themselves for this work.” [25]

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BOOK FIVE

SECOND AND THIRD EXPEDITIONS OF THE PRESIDIOS TO THE WESTERN PIMERIA AND THE TREATIES OF PEACE

CHAPTER ONE

Second expedition by the Presidio of Sonora which went as far as El Tupo to punish the malefactors

Although the Lord Military Governor and Alcalde Mayor of these provinces, Don Diego Jironza Petris de Cruzat, had determined, agreed and arranged that the captains, governors and other officials from the Indian pueblos should capture and mete out the merited punishment on the persons of the principal leaders and instigators of the crimes and murders committed at San Pedro del Tubutama and Nuestra Señora de la Concepción del Caborca, they had failed as yet to punish the responsible persons, so he could not grant pardon and make a general peace. The chief authorities and leaders of the Pimeria had entered ready and willing into that agreement; but nevertheless, when the presidio returned in view of this arrangement, some held contrary

opinions that it would not be convenient for the squadron to return on a second expedition or to leave the Pimeria without first setting an example by a very rigorous punishment.

In virtue of the Lord Governor's first plan of action mentioned above, the Governor of Bosna during the middle of May brought to me at Nuestra Señora de Los Dolores two sets of vestments which the people of Tubutama had brought him. These he handed to me on his knees; they were wrapped in a finely finished and well dressed lion's pelt. One set of the vestments was red and the other, which I used while singing Mass on Sunday, the feast of San Isidro (May 15), was white.

Everything else was being arranged peaceably as far as [the surrender of everything which had been taken from the parish of San Pedro del Tubutama, and the punishment and surrender of the principal leaders, etc. Particularly helpful were the captain and the governor of this pueblo of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores who are the most experienced officials and Christians. Since the said Lord Governor and Alcalde Mayor in word and writing had promised and assured us, I, at his order and on his behalf, promised the leaders that once the persons responsible were surrendered for the merited punishment there would be both peace and general pardon.

But because others had strongly insisted and were still insisting, a second expedition was prepared — this time with many more soldiers, colonists, friendly Indians, cavalry and supplies. This left the Pimas very perplexed and they doubted that they should place trust in us or our friendly promises. In fact, at the end of May the captain and the governor of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores and I invited the leaders of the pueblos of San Pedro del Tubutama, Bosna, Sáric and Tucubavia, who had returned to their pueblos from the hills, to tell us if they would come to meet and receive, in peace and unarmed, the squadron which was staying at San Ignacio. We promised them that no harm would come to those who were good and innocent; we only wanted punishment to fall on the heads of the malefactors. They answered that out of fear they would not dare to come. Perhaps we would trick them. The soldiers and the Tepoqui Indians, their enemies, would attack and kill everyone — the good as well as the bad.

Recognizing these difficulties, I left Nuestra Señora de los Dolores and went to San Ignacio where we held a procession and a fiesta on the feast of Corpus Christi.[1] We dispatched the alcalde of Tupo a second time to summon in peace the people mentioned. He did this with such finesse that he brought the Governor of Bosna back to San Ignacio within two days. Later, accompanied by the Governor of Bosna and his brother, the captain brought over one hundred Indians down the trail to the marsh of Tupo; he summoned Indians from San Pedro del Tubutama, Bosna and Araupo, for which services he received the staff of governor.

All the natives came halfway down the trail, eight leagues beyond San Ignacio, just as he had suggested. The guilty and the innocent arrived peacefully, without arms and carrying crosses with much humility. It seemed certain to us that there would be a just and adequate punishment of the delinquents, and this would leave the rest of the innocent and the whole Pimeria quiet and content. Farther ahead, at the ranch of the pueblo of San Pedro del Tubutama, a goodly number of natives were awaiting the squadron, just as they had been advised, in order to surrender their criminals. But a tremendously evil misfortune obliterated all of those hopes as will be seen in the following chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

The unfortunate death of many natives, good and bad. New skirmishes. The pillage and burning of the pueblos of San Ignacio and San José de los Imuris.

It still seems that this misfortune, this extremely heavy cross, or this last annoyance or effort by the common enemy could have been avoided because the natives from Tupo, Bosna, San Pedro del Tubutama, Araupo, and Doagsoma came very peaceably, unarmed and carrying crosses. On June 9, after having dismissed the natives of Tupo and Doagsoma, eighteen out of some sixty natives who remained were singled out as guilty because they possessed some signs and small items from robbing the house and little church or of the vestments taken from the pueblo of San Pedro del Tubutama. It was understood that the punishment would be meted out to the guilty alone.

Meanwhile, the Governor of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores dragged the leader of the criminals forward by the hair and said to the army captain, Antonio Solis: “ This is one of the murderers.” And the Captain suddenly slashed off the accused’s head with a cutlass; the rest were terrified and became excited — the innocent and guilty alike attempted to escape. As the inflexible order had been given that he who permitted anyone to escape would have to take his place and die, the guards indiscriminately killed the good and the bad who were mixed together. Almost instantly the soldiers, the militia and [139] the Tepoqui Indians (who all were armed for this purpose) killed forty-eight Pimas. Eighteen of them were the criminals who had been separated from the others. It was the misfortune of the thirty others, although innocent, that they became involved in the escape attempt of the other eighteen although they had been told not to mix with the guilty.

Among the innocent victims was the recently appointed, excellent Governor of Tupo who with such great skill had worked to bring peace to this nation. Also there was the Captain of Bosna whose little son had been baptized that very day; the Captain of the squadron, Antonio Solis, had been pleased to be his godparent. For that reason he grieved very much for his death, for that of the fine Governor of Tupo and all the other innocent men. Everyone — the very ones who killed the innocent men, the whole Pima nation and even the palefaces — felt their loss very deeply. [1]

Inasmuch as there were very few Pimas who survived, bows were distributed and given to them and those who had come with the squadron were released. Without going any farther down the trail, the army returned immediately that afternoon to the Río San Ignacio. They left afterwards for Cocóspera, intending to move against the hostile Jocomes. The army did not lack some who thought that they had turned a simple success into an heroic deed. But revenge did not delay more than eleven days. On June 20 a numerous band of natives gathered, particularly from among the pagans and the relatives of the thirty innocent victims.

With the bows that had been distributed on June 9 when the Indians were released and with many other weapons, a great throng of Indians came to burn the two closest pueblos: San Ignacio and San José de los Imuris. They all remembered that, a few weeks before, the ranchería and the entire corn crop of Bosna was burned although they had not been guilty nor even aware in any way of the evil deeds at Tubutama.

The only piece of good luck was that the governor of the ranchería of Siboda, although still a pagan, came quickly with his natives to warn San José and San Ignacio of the planned attacks. On account of this warning the people were able to retreat from both pueblos, and Father Campos with five soldiers who were acting as his bodyguard was able to escape. [139] The Indians sacked and burned the houses and store-rooms; in San Ignacio they burned three sets of vestments, but they killed no one in either pueblo. They took a few sheep and goats with the rest of the things they carried off. They took some horses, but they left the greater part of the

cattle behind. Because of these attacks most of the inhabitants of these two pueblos came to live at Nuestra Señora de los Dolores for a few months. As soon as the warning had been received from the people of Siboda, help was requested from the soldiers who were still at Cocóspera. But when they arrived on the following day the raiders had already left San Ignacio with the spoils, and Father Campos with his five soldiers had gone on to Cucurpe. Not a single thing could be remedied.

CHAPTER THREE

Third expedition with three squadrons totaling over 150 men, together with many friendly Indians from the whole province, among them many Pimas from this same Pimeria, and the preliminaries of the peace

Because of the great misfortune that occurred in the burning of the pueblos of San Ignacio and San José de los Imuris, help was sought from and given by the Lord Governor of Parral, by the presidio of Janos and the presidio of Sinaloa, by many Spanish colonists from throughout the whole province, by friendly tribes of the Opatas and Eudeves, and by Pimas — both Christian and non-Christian. Help came even from this Pimeria itself, from Cocóspera and its surroundings, from the Sobaipuris, etc., and even from sixty Yaquis.

More than two hundred loads of supplies and a large quantity of cattle were stockpiled so that the army could remain on the campaign for six months or more. All the forces gathered at Cocóspera, where all the units passed muster. They left there for the pueblo of San Pedro del Tubutama on July 20, 1695. Three generals had joined in — Don Domingo Jironza Petris de Cruzat, General at Arms of these provinces; Juan Fernández de la Fuente, Captain of the presidio of San Felipe and Santiago de Janos; and Don Domingo Terán de [141] los Ríos, Captain in perpetuity of the presidio of Gallo.[1] With the cavalry, twenty-four soldiers from the presidio of Sinaloa and many more colonists of the province, the whole force numbered more than one hundred and fifty men.

The officials of San Pedro del Tubutama sent ahead to El Tupo, which is almost mid-way along the trail, to find the army and to ask if the Chaplain would come in advance to see and to talk matters over with them without any soldiers whom they feared. But instead of sending the Chaplain, the soldiers, in two groups, circled through backroads that night. Among the first Indians who ventured down the trail, twenty-one were killed. Therefore all the natives disappeared out of fear and fled so far away that even after many days it was impossible to accomplish anything of consequence. As the Lord desired, we waited until August 7, the octave of our Holy Father Ignatius, when the Governor of San Ambrosio del Tucubavia came down in response to various messengers. General Juan Fernández de la Fuente explained this in a letter to Fernando de Borjas at Cocóspera:

“God was served last night when about nine o’clock the Indian whom we freed arrived at this Real; with him came the Governor of Tucubavia and three other Indian insurgents. All were unarmed and carried crosses. They were very repentant, from all appearances, for what they had done. Tonight everything has been tlatoles on our part and on that of the friendly Pimas; so all night things went very well. I trust in God that everything will soon be very well arranged and even sooner than we had expected.

“From the ranch of San Pedro del Tubutama, August 7, 1695, “Juan Fernández de la Fuente.”

In another letter that His Excellency wrote me on August 15, he said that on that day there

were at the Real over fifty Indians at peace, including 16 squaws, some children, and many officials from various places.

Then in another letter which he wrote to the Lord Military Governor who was in Cucurpe, he said that he considered that peace had been made. [2] He would even risk his head for the evil these Pimas might do from now on, for he himself had seen and experienced how repentant they were.

In yet another letter — very Catholic, noble and zealous — he urged his Lordship and others to make provision so that matters would remain settled. This would be a great benefit to the Fathers in assuring the progress of their preaching and in the spreading of the Holy Gospel and our Holy Faith which is the principal thing we are doing and accomplishing in America and in the whole world.

And finally, in another letter which he wrote about the very fine spiritual and temporal disposition of this Pima nation, His Excellency said that, if necessary, he would swear that this is so.

CHAPTER FOUR

The general and particular terms for the peace concluded in this Pimeria [1]

In the initial days of August, there seemed to be many difficulties and little hope of achieving the desired goals of the peace. The army reported that they had been stalemated without doing a single thing. Where once there had been no problems, now from these same places greater obstacles were arising. Nevertheless, it pleased God that immediately afterwards, through methods that cost me dearly, everything remained very peaceful and well disposed. On August 17, General Juan Fernández de la Fuente wrote me in these words:

“ I make no excuse to tell your Reverence that an Indian who had been captured asked me to free him so that he might bring all the people down from the mountains. Having been freed, he returned with all his people and with the governor of San Ambrosio de Tucubavia and many other officials. Everyone came from the pueblos and rancherías roundabout, except those from La Concepción and Bosna, none of whose people came down. I have dispatched tlatoles that the men from Tupo, Bosna, and Doagsoma can proceed to the marsh of the Matanza. Your Reverence should not forget to send out tlatoles to come to see us. They will be very well received as those have been who have already come down. They are so [145] humble and repentant that one is moved to pity them. They promised to be very quiet in their pueblos and rancherías, saying that they had enough of war and that the Spaniards were very valiant since they had conquered their lands. Everyone placed the blame on the mador and on the foreman of San Pedro del Tubutama. But these did not show up. Everyone said they fled among the naked ones. [2] Since they felt so guilty, they had not dared to stop among them.

“ Nevertheless, one by one and all together, they proposed that immediately after we left they would try to trick them into coming to their pueblos. They would arrange to kill them and bring their heads to the pueblo of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores. Likewise they would bring all the valuables that had been taken from the churches. All this would be accomplished without fail within two months or sooner. This is what they proposed many times on the day of the conferences, which were rather lengthy. I made the governor of San Ambrosio de Tucubavia captain-general of this nation since he was a good Indian. The governorship of San Pedro del Tubutama I gave to the Indian who lead the people back. To another Indian of Moicaqui I gave a captain’s staff. I did this because all three had worked very hard; and I trust in God that in the

future these men and everything they do will work out very well. Having told them that I was moving on to La Concepción de Caborca, each one offered to travel with me. But I told them there was no need. Nevertheless, the captain-general and five others came with us as far as this place. Tomorrow, if it please God, we leave for La Concepción with eighty men, but without our Indian friends, because there are none here. The army is going to the marsh of La Matanza where I hope to return from La Concepción within six days.

“ God keep you for many years.

“ The farm of San Pedro del Tubutama, August 17, 1695, “Juan Fernández de la Fuente”

Meanwhile in various letters, it was implied that I should come, if possible, to visit the squadron and the children who also desired this very much. So, on August 21, I went to El Tupo, to the nearby marsh where the army was camped. [147]

And as I sent the captain of this pueblo (Nuestra Señora de los Dolores) and of its missions ahead of me, at his coming and mine a great number of natives came to the marsh to see me, the army and the generals. And likewise from La Concepción. The natives were from the six or seven principal rancherías of El Tupo, Bosna, Araupo, Santa Marta, Tucucot, Arituaba, Doagsoma, etc. [3] All of these had retreated in fear. Also the Governor of Bosna himself came to see me; everyone judged that without his coming the treaties would be unsatisfactory.

On the following day, August 22, while we thought the two Generals with their eighty men were coming from La Concepción, a sergeant came to bring the whole army there in order to force the people to come down. At this, I told him that in order to bring the natives back down peacefully, it would be better not to have so many soldiers around. With their arrival the fear of the natives would be increased all the more — since that had been the very reason for their flight in the first place. I offered to go myself to bring them back in peace which was the only thing the Generals really sought. The army remained behind and I took the sergeant with me to join the contingent at La Concepción. By the time I arrived, two Indians had already been killed and two Indian squaws and three little girls had been captured.

I persuaded them to dispatch one of the two Indian women to notify the natives of my arrival and to summon the people. One of them went, and on the following day brought seven or eight Indians back to us. After two more days, those who came with her brought us various natives from the seven ranches. Unarmed, they came in peace and carried crosses. They were the inhabitants of La Concepción del Caborca, San Diego del Pitquin, Santo Domingo del Unuicat, San Antonio del Oquitoa, Actum, Moicaqui, etc.

On August 25 the twenty soldiers that General Juan Fernández de la Fuente had sent to scout the terrain found an Indian. But he did not want to surrender his weapons so they split his thigh bone with a musket ball. As he seemed to be dying the soldiers returned him on a horse. After being instructed, he received baptism with much pleasure. He was named Luis because it was the saint's feast day. He grew [149] better and spoke well of the soldiers to his relatives. The soldiers, he said, warned him in a friendly way and asked him many times to surrender his weapons. He took the blame for not surrendering them, thus exposing himself to the risk of injury.

Every day they held very good tlatoles and gave lessons to the natives. The subjects were Catholic and spiritual as well as political and military. After various investigations they discovered that these Indians had not been guilty of the murders that were committed in their pueblo. Rather the malefactors had come from San Antonio de Oquitoa. We told them they could gather in their pueblos, as before, in La Concepción as well as in San Diego de Pitquin. For the latter place a fine and very affable Indian was appointed governor since he had cooperated with much interest in the complete pacification of all the natives.

On the twenty-eighth, we left them very peaceful and content. After we two Fathers, Agustín de Campos and I, celebrated Mass, we returned with the two generals and the whole contingent as far as San Pedro del Tubutama.

On the twenty-ninth we arrived at the army camp at the marsh near El Tupo, where for five or six days the Captain of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores, the governors of El Tupo, Bosna, and Doagsoma, and many other natives from all the nearby rancherías were awaiting us. On August 30, the feast of Santa Rosa de Santa Maria, that most glorious Indian patroness of the Indies, I said Mass in the nearby pueblo of El Tupo, and Padre Agustín in the army camp at the marsh. Various captains, governors, and many people of all the surrounding areas met together for conferences. After several very lengthy discussions, general and particular treaties were arranged for all parts of the Pimeria.

The principal officials and the rest of the natives obligated themselves to search out and seize all the leaders of the rebellion, dead or alive, who were still missing and were being sought, such as the fiscal mayor and the foreman of San Pedro del Tubutama.

The captains and governors of the Pimeria were so loyal that these same persons, of their own free will, said that they also would add the head of the Alcalde of San Antonio and of [151] some others who they knew had helped and cooperated in the murder of the venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta. One of the other guilty ones had just been killed in the war.

It is impossible to describe the day the peace was concluded; it was so pleasing, consoling, and satisfying for everyone — for the captains and the native governors as well as for the generals of the Spanish forces. The good feelings were indicated by the numerous, warm embraces between the Spanish generals and captains and the Piman captains and governors. The natives felt very grateful for the Christian charity shown them by the generals. From the generals they learned that the royal forces had not come to kill or molest the good, but only to help and defend them. They also recognized that the deaths of their relatives had been occasioned by those first few Piman murders — that is, the eight others who were killed during Holy Week (three in San Pedro del Tubutama and five at La Concepción del Caborca) as mentioned before. It was for that reason that almost eighty of their relatives had been killed. Now, however, they were most desirous of receiving with every affection the missionary Fathers for whom they asked and who had been promised to them. Surely they will be truly devoted to them, loving them and bringing to them the incomparable good of their eternal salvation. The Indians will immediately set about the reconstruction of the houses and churches that had been burned or destroyed. Everyone took his leave with a great display of friendliness.

On August 31, General Juan Fernández de la Fuente left with the armed forces for Cocóspera. General Don Domingo Terán came with twenty men to Nuestra Señora de los Dolores where on the following day the Military Governor, Don Domingo Jironza Petris de Cruzat, arrived. There was quite a crowd with all the troops, Pimas and other friendly Indians.

On September 9, they left Cocóspera on an expedition against the Jocomes and Janos, who were still then stealing herds of horses from Bacanuchi, Teuricachi, etc.

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BOOK SIX

STATE OF THE NEW CONVERSIONS IN THE EXTENSIVE LANDS OF THIS PIMERÍA

CHAPTER ONE

Beginning and progress in the reduction of this Pimeria

At the beginning of March, 1687, having been sent by Father Provincial Bernabé de Soto, I arrived in this province of Sonora, having passed through Cumpas to see Father Visitor Manuel González. It pleased his Reverence, with all holy zeal, to come in person to leave me in this place among the extensive pagan peoples of the Pimeria. On March 13, 1687, we entered the first ranchería, called Bamotze. [1] We placed this ranchería under the protection of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores in honor of the distinguished painting of Our Lady of Sorrows which the excellent artist Juan Correa had given me some months before in Mexico City out of a very Christian piety.

Father Visitor returned; and I went on with Father José de Aguilar, the missionary from the neighboring district of Cucurpe.[2] We visited the nearby rancherías of San Ignacio, San José de los Imuris and Nuestra Señora de los Remedios. I baptized some infants and looked for a good interpreter and a good temastián (catechist). I learned much about the whole tribe and sent friendly invitations everywhere for holy baptism, which would be for the great good of those who had been thinking about and considering it. First, I began construction on two ramadas in which to live and say Mass; and then a house, church, garden and seed-plot. Every day, morning and evening, I taught Christian doctrine and the manner of prayer with special care. My children soon learned through their docility how to recite and sing the prayers. |155|

The following year Father Visitor Manuel González came on his first visit to see the new converts. His Reverence was delighted to see the good beginnings that had been made on the house and church, and the learning and understanding of the prayers. By then we had begun a chapel choir, with notable progress both spiritual and temporal. Already a good group of families had come together to begin a populous pueblo.

His Reverence consoled and encouraged all of us; and out of his great charity, zeal, and holy love he not only visited San Ignacio, San José de los Imuris, and Nuestra Señora de los Remedios, but also he went on farther to Cocóspera, where no priest had ever gone before. He had wanted to explore as far as the lands and nations of the Soba, but the Río San Ignacio was swollen with rain and there were many mires that hindered us.

Then, afterwards, because many natives from various regions to the west and north came seeking baptism, his Reverence asked for and obtained four more missionaries for the Pimeria. Yet there was much opposition from those who said and wrote that so many were not needed. In fact, the coming of these four aforementioned Fathers had to some degree been impeded. During the later visitation of his successor, Father Visitor Juan María Salvatierra went as far as San Pedro del Tubutama, where one of the new Fathers already was stationed.[3] He also visited San Ambrosio del Tucubavia and San Cayetano del Tumacácori, from where the Indians had come to summon his Reverence with a cross. He visited Santa Maria del Pilar, leaving the Pimeria by way of Cocóspera, having made a circuit of more than 100 leagues through the very level and pleasant Pimeria. Everywhere his Reverence saw many docile people who pleaded with him for missionaries and for Holy Baptism. He himself began baptizing the children who were offered to

him in various places. His Reverence, who spoke from much experience and out of a prudent and holy zeal, said that not only were the previous four missionaries needed but that four more were also needed for such a plentiful and ripe harvest of souls as in the Pimeria.

Yet afterwards this Pimeria was held responsible through treacherous informes (reports) for the hostilities and the cattle rustling on the province's frontiers. All of these evils were [157] rather being perpetrated by the Jocomes and Janos, etc., as is well known today. So the coming of these Fathers was blocked, and in their place a request was made for a presidio of soldiers. The natives of the west and north still remain constant and fervent, asking for missionaries and Holy Baptism. At times some of them have travelled over 100 leagues to Sonora for this purpose. The Indians come not only from the places mentioned, but from the whole Pimeria. There are more than 10,000 souls in a region that extends over 100 leagues from north to south and 100 leagues from east to west. [4] I have discovered and travelled over this territory on several expeditions, especially on three entradas to different places which I made later.[5]

The first expedition was made during August and September, 1692. I travelled over eighty leagues to the north to some Pimas and Sobaipuris along the river of Santa Maria del Pilar and along the river of San José del Terrenate.[6]

On the second expedition during December, 1693, I went to the west with Father Agustín de Campos, over seventy leagues through the lands and nation of Chief Soba as far as the sea of the Californias. This was far enough to get a clear view of the extensive shores of the greatest island of the globe.

The third expedition during November and December of last year, 1694, took me to the north and northeast, much farther than the Sobaipuris. I went over one hundred fifteen leagues as far as the Casa Grande and the great river of the Coral, and I visited the new tribes of the Opa and Cocomaricopa who have a very different but clear and beautiful language.[7]

Always and everywhere, I found many people who were meek, docile, affable, and very friendly. They listened with great pleasure to the word of God, and I left them most desirous of eternal salvation. They have good lands; the fertile plains are rich with many groves cared for by the industrious Indians. The rivers and valleys are very attractive. [161]

CHAPTER TWO

Many obstacles encountered in the new missions of this Pimeria

This Pimeria and its new conversions have suffered more vehement and perfidious objections and oppositions than, it seems to me, have ever been seen or heard in the American world; and those rumors were so much more regrettable, as Father Provincial Ambrosio Odón said a few days ago, because they were disguised with zeal and founded on erroneous judgment.[5]

Nevertheless, time, efficacious reasons, clear observations and expeditions, the evidence of experience, the letters and testimony of leading citizens who are legally knowledgeable and especially the Lord Himself who has permitted or sent these objections — now it seems that all of these are going to squelch and flatten these rumors. In the following chapter, I will include one of those well reasoned letters mentioned.

The objections have been:

- I. That the Pimeria has no Indians nor any tribe, but only a sparse population;
- II. That there are no useful lands;
- III. That the Piman people are not industrious;

IV. That these Indians are the robbers who have continually stolen herds of cattle and horses and left the frontiers of the Province of Sonora in ruins, or at least that the Pimas were cooperating with the hostile Jocomes and Janos, etc.;

V. That royal expenses have increased and therefore the missionary Fathers they seek cannot be supplied.

I. Against the first objection it can be said that this Pimeria has more than ten thousand souls, as has been made clear to us from the various expeditions we have made. This can be certified any day by whoever enters into the very populous Soba tribes to the west or the Sobaipuris to the north, etc. At the ranch of San Ambrosio del Tucubavia alone, Father [161] Visitor Juan María Salvatierra saw and counted over five hundred souls. Last year I saw and counted at San Francisco Javier del Bac five hundred and fifty-three natives all together. [2]

II. To the second objection, that the Pimeria has no good land, it can be answered that for many years the Province of Sonora has received and continues to receive maize from the Pimeria. For four years now, as Alcalde Mayor Bias del Castillo noted, if it had not been for the products and maize from the Pimeria, the Province of Sonora would have been depopulated by famine. Here in the original parish of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores alone (which is not the most prosperous), more than nine hundred fanegas of wheat have been harvested this year, 1695. In other places it would be possible, if so desired, to harvest that and much more. There are prudent men who are convinced that this Pimeria is one of the most fertile and productive lands in all of New Spain. So there need not be omission in the work of its conversion because of any fault in the lands.

The intense zeal, great charity and apostolic fervor of the Society has never been, is not, and never will be as attentive to the overall productivity of the soil as to the harvesting of souls, just as we see in the Mariana Islands where in thirteen years there have been eleven martyrs or apostolic deaths among Ours.[3]

III. To the third objection that the Pimeria has no working people, we reply that it is clear from many royal and judicial reports that this Pimeria is and has been a nation which even in its pagan state has had Indians as industrious as most of the rest of the better Indian tribes after their reduction. The works, buildings and plantings of this new parish of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores as well as other pueblos can clearly demonstrate this.

IV. The fourth objection is that the Pimeria is a robber nation and that it is responsible for the hostilities, treacheries, and thefts of the herds from the frontiers of these provinces. A presidio has even been requested on account of the Pimeria. But in the first place, although there have been many expeditions and many killings in the Pimeria, to the west and to the north, no horses, no mules, no flocks, and no corrals have ever been found of those that were said to be here [163] in the Pimeria. Secondly, during the month of June, 1695, General Juan Fernández de la Fuente and General Don Domingo Terán de los Ríos found among the Jocomes, in the hill country of Chiricahuas, clear evidence of all these hostilities which have been going on for the last fourteen years (for that is how long it has been) on the frontiers of this province of Sonora. Among the Jocomes, then, and not in the Pimeria, they found the muskets, swords, armor, shields, machetes and daggers, saddles and horses, bridles and reins, and all the spoils taken from more than twenty soldiers who on different occasions had been brutally murdered by those declared enemies. They even found some little knives which had been made from pieces of the bugle which they took from the bugler of General Quirós. [4] They also discovered the seven Christians taken prisoners from the pueblo of Bavispe and from Santa Maria Baceraca. Those same Jocomes confessed to

General Juan Fernández de la Fuente that the Pimas had never taken part in the robberies, and that the Pimas were their enemies. At various times they had engaged in battle against one another. Thirdly, the Pimas had been providing for themselves with their own crops. But the Jocomes, Janos, and Sumas were not industrious enough to sustain themselves, so they provided for their needs by rustling horses and cattle, etc.

V. The fifth and special objection against the Pimeria, which is also generally leveled against all new missions, is the great expense to the royal treasury which is caused by these new missions. But in his very recent royal cédula, contained in the following book (VII), his Royal Majesty (may God keep him) heroically recognized that all that is being spent for these purposes will be compensated for by the Sovereign Majesty who will bestow on the Royal Crown abundant increases. He dismisses general and particular difficulties; and then in a very Catholic way, he orders and charges all his royal ministers not to excuse themselves from expenses incurred in these matters.[5] |165|

CHAPTER THREE

A very recent letter of September 8, 1695, from General Juan Fernández de la Fuente to Father Provincial Diego de Almonacir concerning the present state of this Pimeria

“ My Father and Sir:

“ I know that you have been notified of the death of Padre Francisco Javier Saeta (may God take him in glory), who was killed by Pima rebels in his mission at the pueblo of Caborca, a place very close to the shore opposite the Californias toward the west — the sea is eighteen leagues away and from the beach the land of the Californias is easily seen. Since I know that you as the provincial of the holy Society of Jesus will be very delighted to know about the condition this nation is in, I cannot excuse myself from giving you a briefing on present conditions and what has been discovered up to now. Having entered the territory of this nation on July 11, we found many populous rancherías whose people came out to receive us peaceably and with much delight. On the 20th we began the campaign against the rebellious Pimas. We killed eighteen Indians in various encounters and captured a few alive along with some women and children. They never grouped for battle since they are not a warlike people. Rather they went about divided into bands, deserting their towns and rancherías and fleeing through the more rugged woods and peaks which are their asylum. They found no security in their retreats. Both war and hunger attacked them, moving them to sue for peace, which we conceded them in the name of his Majesty (God save Him) and our own.

“ We saw that, from the time they rebelled, more than seventy Indians were killed in the war; they appeared very repentant for taking up arms against the Spaniards, and in several places they made treaties of peace. The last treaty was made on the feast of Santa Rosa (August 30) at El Tupo where we found four governors and many men and women from different pueblos and rancherías. We returned to them everything we had seized. They surrendered all the valuables they |167| had carried from the churches; and they also offered to present the heads of the two Indians who were the instigators of the rebellions, whom everyone blamed for the trouble. They were not surrendered to us right away because, as they felt guilty, they were hiding and would not enter the rancherías. The leaders explained that once we had gone, it would be easy to capture the guilty ones, because they would come down to the pueblos. No doubt the leaders will do so because they are very sorry for the deaths, the hunger, thirst and labors they have suffered. They want peace.

“ Everything was agreed on in accord with the views of our Fathers Eusebio Francisco Kino and the royal chaplain of this army Agustín de Campos. They expressed great pleasure in the discussion that had been held. They were satisfied with their replies, their contrition and their return to the pueblos and rancherías which once again are populated. And the Indians desire greatly to have the missionary Fathers come and minister to them. It will be a pity if the holy Society of Jesus would abandon a matter of such importance and of such service to the two Majesties. Through the propagation of the gospel throughout this extensive mission, one can expect the reduction of thousands of souls and the useful opening of a passage to the Californias. All that we have experienced, particularly myself after sixteen years in this region, have been wars and truces with this nation. I have penetrated to every place in which they live, which are fruitful enough to be able to support very large missions with many conveniences, particularly in the valley of Huachuca and Quiburi, at Santa Maria, Guevavi, Beradéhuachi, San Lázaro, and here at Cocóspera, and San Ignacio. All are very well populated and of a good quality. It would be easily possible to attract the many rancherías in the surrounding areas to these places for the people are gentle and industrious. With a little help on the part of the captains, a splendid Christian life could develop because all the people are amiable, good workers, and inclined to live in farming centers. Most rancherías would have from fifty to sixty families.

“ The places mentioned above are very pleasant, with plenty of water, pastures, fire wood and land suited for growing wheat. They have been well cultivated even by their [169] heathen owners. Everyone normally has in his house a sufficient amount of corn, beans, squash and other grains to use throughout the year. They also plant cotton for their clothing.

“ From the time they are born they usually sustain themselves by their work and not by theft. I have found very good customs among them and in their speech they are more polite than many other barbarous nations I have seen. They have been civilized by their apostolic ministers. And to do this many difficulties have been overcome. Although the murder of Father Francisco Javier Saeta and other Christian Opatas who were with him recently happened in the interior, we must try to understand that God has permitted this innocent blood to be shed as the first fruits of what, after the punishment and the return of the Indians, will be for the spread and propagation of the holy gospel. Now there will be more devotion at divine worship, respect for the missionary priests, and fear of the Spaniards since those who rebelled had not experienced war before, nor had they ever had contact with the Spaniards as the Indians in the valleys mentioned above have had for so many years and continue to have. Once these Indians have gathered and returned to the missions, it will be easily possible to colonize the Tubutama River which also is very adequately populated and where there are many rancherías, numerous haciendas, farms, etc. These Indians are also hard workers.

“ There is not a hand’s width of land along this river that has not been cultivated with many dams and ancient canals. The whole region has sufficient resources to open both missions and Spanish colonies.

“ Finally, Father Provincial, I assure you that after the twenty years I’ve been at this job, I find myself sufficiently informed; I have explored, visited, and dealt with many nations, but none with the civility of these Pimas. Up to now it still is not known how far this nation extends either to the west or the north. But I assure you with all truth, from what I have seen there are many places where apostolic ministers can be employed; and there is plenty of work for many years in the service of the two Majesties and the common good. We have every reason to hope that there will be a very bright future for Christianity. [171]

“ And for myself, as I am so interested in these important matters and as I am so close to these regions as a minister of his Majesty (God save him), I offer my personal assistance with the forces under my command for whatever may be in the royal service, omitting nothing — works, risks, or disbursements from my treasury since it is very much my duty. And, if it were in my power, I would immediately set to work because it grieves me that time is being lost in a matter of such importance. I hope that for Your Reverence’s part you will apply yourself with every energy so that there will be no failure because of omission by the Fathers of the Society of Jesus. We have experienced that, where there are more martyrs and native rebellions, there the Fathers apply themselves with greater effect because they have always endeavored to sacrifice their lives in the service of the Majesties. May it please God that this be accomplished, for what pleases God is what all Christians ought to desire, etc.

May God preserve you, etc., “Cocóspera, September 8, 1695 “ Juan Fernández de la Fuente ”

CHAPTER FOUR

The new district of the mission of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores and the new redórate of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores

Pueblo of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores

This new mission or parish of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores was the first one founded in this Pimeria with the coming of Father Manuel González. On the 13th of March, 1687, he left me at this place which then had three rancherías with twenty-five families and one hundred fifteen souls. I immediately started this pueblo which has since grown to over ninety families with more than four hundred baptized souls. The pueblo has a large and spacious house and its own church which was dedicated on April 26, 1693. Dolores helps the other missions.

As Father Jorge Hostinsky said in the sermon at the dedication of the church, this mission has been the mother of [173] four other new missions. [1] Furthermore, last year and this year, 1695, it provided for the foundation of the new mission of venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta. Since Dolores has an abundance of everything, it gave cattle, sheep, goats, mules and horses, furnishings, clothing, supplies, etc., that were valued at over 1000 pesos to the mission of La Concepción de Nuestra Señora de Caborca. It was for this reason that we endeavored to found Dolores in such a way that it would be able, as the older mission, to assist many others which would be established later on. I have seen it happen in California and in other places that great spiritual benefits, such as conversions and the eternal salvation of souls, were abandoned and lost because of the lack or short supply of temporal goods.[2]

The district has a sufficiently well equipped church, with vestments, chalices, choir gowns, bells, chapel choir, etc. There are also many cattle, sheep and goats, oxen, cultivated fields, a garden with various types of vegetables, fruit trees from Castile, a vineyard, peaches, quinces, figs, pomegranates, pears, apricots, etc. It has a forge for the black-smiths and carpenters, a pack-train, a water-powered mill, etc. There is much grain on hand as is evident from the rich and abundant supply of wheat and corn. With its horses and mules, the mission has everything that is useful and necessary around the house as well as for expeditions, new conversions, and conquests. All this abundance enables us to purchase some little gifts and trinkets which the Indians are wont to seek after when we preach the word of God, thus helping to win over their hearts and souls.

This new district of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores has besides the customary officials a captain, governor, alcalde, fiscal mayor, alguacil, topile, and other fiscales. It also has a teacher

for the chapel and school, a foreman, and other servants who are called “ pajes ”, cowhands, mule-drivers, ox-handlers, bakers, millers, gardeners, painters, etc.

The pueblo of Nuestra Señora de los Remedios

To this parish or pueblo of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores is attached a second pueblo called Nuestra Señora de los Remedios. It is seven leagues away toward the north. It was [175] begun a few years ago along with two other pueblos of San Ignacio and San José de los Imuris, which also pertained to Nuestra Señora de los Dolores, and which were given over to the other new Fathers when they arrived.

There are over thirty families already gathered together at Remedios. Many others will congregate here once they are removed from other areas less fertile or comfortable, for this is a much more pleasant place. A church has been begun with a large house and an ample compound. The church has its vestments, etc., for Mass and divine services, bells, etc. About one hundred baptized souls live here. There are cattle, sheep, goats, horses, and fields planted with wheat and corn. Since last November, 1694, these two districts or pueblos of the Pimeria, with those that are named in the following Chapter (V) and also those in the nearby and older district of Cucurpe, have been consolidated into a mission or new rectorate, called Nuestra Señora de los Dolores, with its own Father Superior or rector. This rectorate is separate and distinct from the rest of the older missions or rectorates.

CHAPTER FIVE

The other missions recently begun in the new rectorate of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores in this Pimeria

Pueblo of San Ignacio

San Ignacio, the second mission or district of the Pimeria, is located ten leagues west of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores. Over forty families have gathered there and many more who live in the environs could be brought to the mission. There is a sufficient herd of cattle, sheep, goats, and horses. The church and house are only half-finished. [1] Although the roofs were burned during this uprising, everything has been repaired and is better now than before.

This mission, which is one of the most fertile of these provinces, is an excellent site, having an admirable and most picturesque landscape with extensive pastures. All these are joined to a very good river, thickly lined with trees. The [175] begun a few years ago along with two other pueblos of San Ignacio and San José de los Imuris, which also pertained to Nuestra Señora de los Dolores, and which were given over to the other new Fathers when they arrived.

There are over thirty families already gathered together at Remedios. Many others will congregate here once they are removed from other areas less fertile or comfortable, for this is a much more pleasant place. A church has been begun with a large house and an ample compound. The church has its vestments, etc., for Mass and divine services, bells, etc. About one hundred baptized souls live here. There are cattle, sheep, goats, horses, and fields planted with wheat and corn. Since last November, 1694, these two districts or pueblos of the Pimeria, with those that are named in the following Chapter (V) and also those in the nearby and older district of Cucurpe, have been consolidated into a mission or new rectorate, called Nuestra Señora de los Dolores, with its own Father Superior or rector. This rectorate is separate and distinct from the rest of the older missions or rectorates.

CHAPTER FIVE

The other missions recently begun in the new rectorate of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores in this Pimeria

Pueblo of San Ignacio

San Ignacio, the second mission or district of the Pimeria, is located ten leagues west of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores. Over forty families have gathered there and many more who live in the environs could be brought to the mission. There is a sufficient herd of cattle, sheep, goats, and horses. The church and house are only half-finished. [1] Although the roofs were burned during this uprising, everything has been repaired and is better now than before.

This mission, which is one of the most fertile of these provinces, is an excellent site, having an admirable and most picturesque landscape with extensive pastures. All these are joined to a very good river, thickly lined with trees. The very fertile bottom land is provided with canals to irrigate the plantings of wheat and corn. There is enough here for whole cities. If the Indian uprising had not delayed and hampered everything, this year they would have harvested over three hundred fanegas of wheat.

The Pueblo of San José de los Imuris

The other pueblo attached to San Ignacio is San José de los Imuris which is about three leagues to the north. This pueblo enjoys many other conveniences and amenities: fine lands, rivers and streams, level fields, woods, many groves, and even a pine forest nearby which provides timber for buildings.

When Father Juan María Salvatierra made his visitation, the pueblo had over sixty houses or families of natives. [2] A large and spacious church with a transept has been started. The house, which was burned down the same day they burned the one at San Ignacio, is being rebuilt. Already very rich crops of wheat and corn have been harvested. And the cattle and sheep grow so fat on the extensive and delightful mesas of ample pasture, which are watered by three rivers, that all year round even the bulls provide tallow and lard.

The Pueblo of Santa Maria Magdalena and San Miguel del Tupo

Up to now a third district called Santa Maria Magdalena has been attached to San Ignacio. It is on the same river as San Ignacio but four leagues to the south. Very close by is the great ranchería of San Miguel del Tupo with over two hundred persons; it is a part of Santa Maria Magdalena. Everywhere there are many baptized natives.

The Pueblo of San Pedro del Tubutama

A third district or mission was begun or founded by Father Antonio Arias, assisted by the religious liberality and charity of Father Pedro Castellanos, a missionary from the [179] parishes of Acotzi and Baviácora in the Sonora valley. [3] San Pedro del Tubutama is twenty-five leagues from Nuestra Señora de los Dolores and about ten from San Miguel del Tupo. It is on yet another river different from that of San Ignacio although farther down stream they join at San Diego del Pitquin. [181]

At various times this pueblo of San Pedro del Tubutama has numbered over four hundred souls. Last year we counted one hundred and sixteen boys and girls at catechism class. There is a house with three or four good rooms which are being reconditioned. There are many fertile

fields, a garden, and crops of wheat, corn, beans, etc. Many rancherías in the vicinity contain large numbers of people who have stayed where they are but who ought to be united into some good pueblos along this same river of San Pedro del Tubutama. About two hundred persons have been baptized in this pueblo. A second pueblo is San Antonio del Oquitoa, seven leagues down the same river. Here in the last four years more than eighty have been baptized — most of them small children. Among those baptized was the little son of the highest ranking chief of the whole tribe named Soba; it is in this pueblo that this tribe begins. Both pueblos were extensively damaged by the pillaging and burnings of 1695. Now, thanks be to God, they are returning to peace.

The Pueblo of Santiago de Cocóspera

The fourth pueblo which was begun was Santiago de Cocóspera which is located fourteen leagues north of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores. Over two hundred souls have been gathered here. A house and small church have been erected and they are now being roofed over. There are cattle, sheep, and goats as well as crops of wheat and corn. The pueblo will comprise about one hundred baptized natives. There are many fields situated through the delightful valley which contains numerous poplars, pines, and other wooded grooves.

Its second pueblo could be either at San Lázaro, once the large number of people in the vicinity gathered together, or at Santa Maria del Pilar where there is already a house and a crop of wheat and corn. Many baptized Indians live there.

At the following sites there are a flat-roofed adobe house and crops of wheat and corn. Many baptized Indians await the Fathers for whom they have been asking a very long time. The Fathers Visitor, other priests, and various royal officials — alcaldes mayores, generals, captains, and lieutenants — have all promised them priests for many years. But none have been sent to them, especially to the following:

San Cayetano del Tumacácori

San Gabriel de Guevavi

San Francisco Javier del Bac de los Sobaipuris

San Cayetano del Tumacácori and San Gabriel de Guevavi are thirty or so leagues north of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores. San Javier del Bac de los Sobaipuris is nearly sixty leagues to the north of the same parish. All three mentioned are located on the river of Santa Maria del Pilar. Numerous groups of Indians live in the surrounding area, particularly to the west which is in the direction of the sea of California.

Downriver from Santa Maria Magdalena is the pueblo of Santa Marta. A house has been begun there for the missionary they have requested and have been promised. This is also the case at San Ambrosio del Tucubavia. Already many infants and even some adults have been baptized.

The Pueblo of La Concepción de Nuestra Señora del Caborca

The fifth district or mission of this Pimeria is that of La Concepción de Nuestra Señora del Caborca — the last to be founded, but the first and the foremost in glory because it was so preciously bathed in the blood of its holy and apostolic missionary, the venerable Father Francisco Javier Saeta. How many countless times did I hear him say “ He has made me as a chosen arrow ”, alluding piously to his name Saeta which in Latin (*sagitta*) signifies “ arrow ”. Indeed, so much was he “ chosen ” that he has softened the obstinate bickering with his own blood — bickering that during these past years has impeded the arrival of much needed priests. It

will yet be verified in sorrow that “ the children asked for bread and there was no one to break it for them. ”

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BOOK EIGHT

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

Every time 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 |185| 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 |187| 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.

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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 |191| 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 Pimeria. 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 |193| 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 [195] 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 [197] 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 survive| 199| 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. |201|

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. |203|

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 remembering [205] 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 [207] 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 [209] 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] [211]

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 excel these motives. They endow a new mission with such value and excellence that no other human [213] 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 [215] 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 [217] 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 Pimeria 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. |217|

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