

CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR

A brave missionary

By Janaan Manternach
NC News Service

Jose grew up on beautiful Majorca, an island in the Mediterranean Sea off the coast of Spain. His parents were farmers. He spent many hours as a child helping his parents on the farm.

He also loved to study. As a teen-ager he felt called to join the religious community founded by St. Francis of Assisi. When he was 16, he left home to become a Franciscan in Palma, the capital city of Majorca.

He then took Junipero as his name. He began to study to become a priest. He was so good at his studies that he became a teacher of other Franciscans.

Junipero Serra was ordained a priest in the year 1738. He became a professor of theology and a famous preacher.

Father Serra could have stayed all his life in Majorca. He would have held important positions in the church.

But he wanted more and more to serve as a missionary. He volunteered to leave his homeland

to go to Mexico. The trip to Mexico took more than three months in those days. There was little water and less food. Many travelers became sick. Some died.

Father Serra survived. He arrived at Vera Cruz, on Mexico's east coast and walked to Mexico City, several hundred miles away.

It was a long, dangerous journey. But Father Serra refused to give up even when his foot and leg became infected. The pain from the wound never left him the rest of his life.

For nine years he worked with Indians in a rugged area known as Sierra Gorda. He taught them about Jesus Christ. He also taught them how to grow crops, make clothes and build houses. The Indians loved him very much.

The time was to come when Father Serra would move north to California. The road was rough. His foot and leg caused him constant pain. But he was determined to make it on foot.

He reached San Diego, where he built a small chapel. He rang bells to attract the Indians' attention.

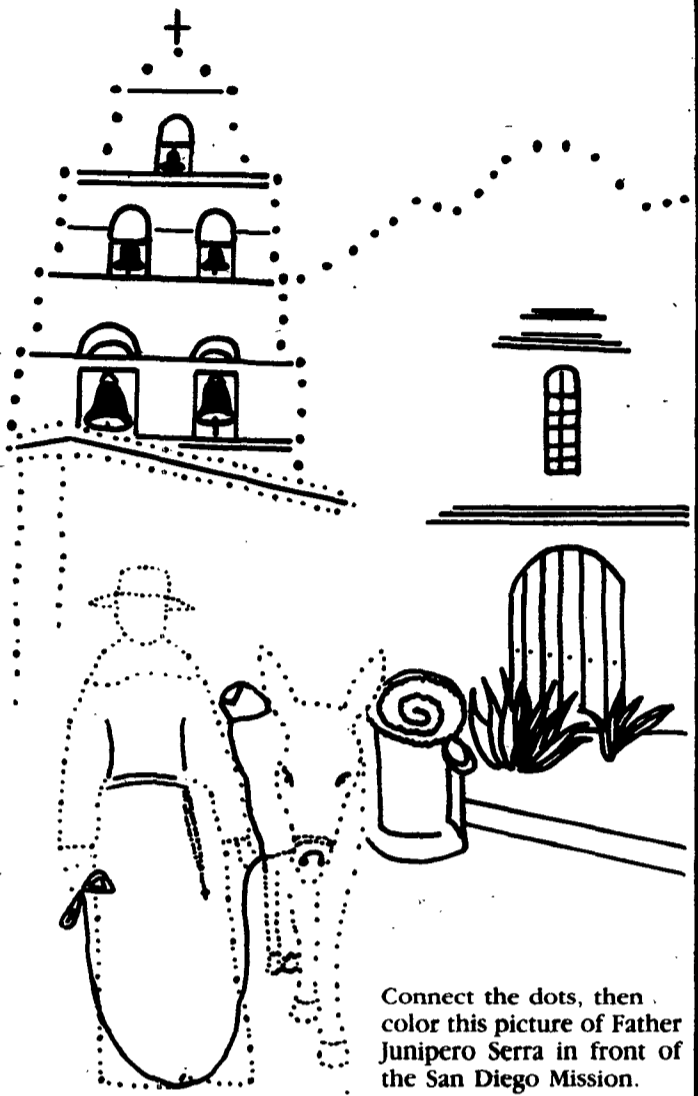
During the next years, Father Serra founded eight more missions. His favorite was at Carmel, by the sea. Perhaps it reminded him of his homeland.

From Carmel he traveled by mule or horseback to his other missions, even though he suffered from asthma.

Father Serra baptized more than 6,000 Indians. He did much to improve their living conditions and to fight for their rights. When he died, Indians and whites alike considered him a holy man.

His statue stands in the U.S. Capitol.

And his missions still stand in California.



Connect the dots, then color this picture of Father Junipero Serra in front of the San Diego Mission.

(Ms. Manternach is the author of catechetical works, scripture stories and original stories for children.)

Missing Vowels

Fill in the vowels in the names of the nine California missions founded by Father Junipero Serra below. (Hint: a map or a book about California may help.)

1. S _ n D _ _ g _
2. S _ n C _ r _ l _ s B _ r _ r _ m _ _
3. S _ n _ n t _ n _ _
4. S _ n G _ b _ r _ _ l _
5. S _ n L _ _ s _ b _ s p _ _
6. S _ n F r _ n c _ _ s c _ _
7. S _ n J _ _ n C _ p _ s t r _ n _ _
8. S _ n t _ _ C l _ r _ _
9. S _ n B _ _ n v _ n t _ r _ _

Answers: 1. San Diego, 2. San Carlos Borromeo, 3. San Antonio, 4. San Gabriel, 5. San Luis Obispo, 6. San Francisco, 7. San Juan Capistrano, 8. Santa Clara, 9. San Buenaventura.

HOW ABOUT YOU?

Father Junipero Serra was a missionary. What is a missionary? What do missionaries do? Are there still missionaries who go to foreign countries? If you want to do what missionaries do, is it always necessary to go to a foreign country?

Children's Reading Corner

"The First Hard Times" is a story by Doris Buchanan Smith. Children and adults might enjoy reading it together. Afterward, they might talk about how valuable it is to show love for another person who wants and needs love. In the story Ancil's mother remarries. But Ancil does not want to believe her real father, who has been missing in action for 10 years, can really be presumed to be dead as has been said. Therefore, she decides that she is not going to show any love for her stepfather. She refuses even to be polite to him. Things go from bad to worse, until one day on a beach she begins to see things differently. (The Viking Press, 40 West 23rd St., New York, N.Y. 10010. Hardback, \$10.95.)



Befriending

Caring for the sick, comforting the bereaved, providing food for the hungry are all part of the job of befriending the poor and lonely in East St. Louis.

Joe Hubbard is a "living saint" who cares for everyone. No limits stop his desire to help and love others. As Joe says, "No one should go hungry, or unclothed or unloved in America."

Like Joe, many people reach out to others through the American Home Missions. Making a gift to The Catholic Church Extension Society through your will is one way.

There are other reasons for making a will, however. Protecting your rights, distributing your property as you choose, and sharing your possessions with friends and loved ones are just a few.

For information about the importance of making your will, send for our helpful booklet, "How To Plan Wisely and Exercise Your Will Power."

The Catholic Church EXTENSION Society
36 East Wacker Drive, Room 400 F • Chicago, Illinois 60601 FT 7207

Dear Father Slattery:

Please send me a complimentary copy of "How To Plan Wisely and Exercise Your Will Power."

Rev./Mr./Mrs./Miss _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Birthdate: / / Male Female

CONFIDENTIAL