

Letter from Junípero Serra to Teodoro de Croix, August 22, 1778:

"In reference to the care we take of our converts-let me tell you, Sir, they are our children; for none except us has engendered them in Christ. The result is we look upon them as a father looks upon his family. We shower all our love and care upon them" (252-253).

Letter from Junípero Serra to Fernando Rivera y Moncada, July 31, 1775:

"Last Friday I sent out eleven adults with the servant Cypriano. They were to go to the mountains to search for my lost sheep. Last night they brought me nine neophytes of this mission. I am sending four of these to Your Lordship. They are Cristóbal, Carlos, Geronimo, and Ildefonso, all married men. Their wives are staying here at the ranchería. The first three have deserted a number of times, and although they have been punished at various times, there is no sign of amendment. This is the first desertion of the fourth, who is a new Christian; but he stayed away a long time. However, his character is such that he could well become the ringleader... I am sending them to you so that a period of exile, and two or three whippings which Your Lordship may order applied to them on different days may serve, for them and for the rest, for a warning, and may be of spiritual benefit to all; and this last is the prime motive of our work. If Your Lordship does not have shackles, with your permission they may be sent from here. I think that the punishment should last one month..." (425).

Letter from Junípero Serra to Antonio Maria de Bucareli y Ursua, the Viceroy of New Spain, May 21, 1778:

"In the morning, six or more soldiers would set out together... on horseback, and go to the far distant rancherías, even many leagues away. When both men and women at sight of them took to their heels – and this account comes from the Fathers, who learned of it from the many declarations and complaints of the gentiles – the soldiers, clever as they are at lassoing cows and mules, would catch an Indian woman with their lassos to become prey for their unbridled lust. At times some Indian men would try to defend their wives, only to be shot down with bullets....One of the two Fathers who started the [San Gabriel] mission... with his own eyes he saw a soldier actually committing deeds of shame with an Indian who had come to the mission, and that even the children who came to the mission were not safe from their baseness...." (363).

-Letters from Junípero Serra to Teodoro de Croix, 1778; to Fernando Rivera y Moncada, 1775; to Antonio Maria de Bucareli y Ursua, 1778