

WHITE SUPREMACIST MADE A SAINT BY POPE FRANCIS

by Carlito Rovira
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There is much that can be said about Pope Francis' (Jorge Mario Bergoglio) visit to the United States and the constant news sensationalism by the capitalist owned mass media. One cannot avoid being amused by observing the hypocrisy that has surfaced as a result of this visit, with special emphasis on the use of phrases that allude to charity and the poor. Greedy giant bank and corporate executives as well as top government officials, eager to increase police powers and eliminate social programs for the poor, were anxious to project themselves as being in harmony with the overtures of "goodwill and peace" in the world.

But despite the theatrics involved, nothing can point best in the direction of what was the real purpose of Pope Francis' visit than the canonization of the notorious Junipero Serra, an 18th century Franciscan priest who continues to be a hated historical figure by Native Americans. He was responsible for the enslavement, torture, murder and rape of tens of thousands Indigenous people from various tribes throughout the region of what is now the U.S. state of California and the Mexican state of Baja California.

Ironically, Pope Francis proceeded to make Junipero Serra a saint without following the Vatican's own criteria required in canonizations – four "miracles" that occurred in the lifetime of a person being proposed for sainthood. Pope Francis chose to use only one. Also, a special mass was held at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. on September 23 where Pope Francis conducted the canonization, the very first time a ceremony of this kind took place in the United States.

While many vainly cheered the Pope's arrival on the streets of Washington, D. C., Philadelphia and New York City, many Native Americans justifiably protested Junipero Serra made a saint at many of the most visited missions throughout California. Many voiced outrage to the Pope for adding insult to injury.

Considering the entire history of the brutal European conquest of the Western Hemisphere from which the ruling class benefited, it wouldn't take much imagination to figure out why government officials embraced the symbolism of this ritual. What Pope Francis ended up doing was legitimizing white supremacy and the genocide of Indigenous people.

Junipero Serra's appointment by the Spanish Crown merits inquiry, that is, if one were serious enough to desire knowing Pope Francis' motives in turning a criminal into a saint.

Bourgeois and clerical historians may describe Serra as a "man of peace" but his title as Inquisitor was equivalent to a high rank in Nazi Germany's SS. Serra reported to the Council Of Inquisitions in Madrid and to the Viceroy in Mexico City, the highest ranking Spanish official for all of occupied Mexico.

The same Spanish monarchs that appointed the Spanish Army's officer staff with the task of engaging in the techniques of violence for the purposes of colonization also appointed Junipero Serra to perform

his own particular part in the same quest that aimed to subjugate the native inhabitants. Serra could not have been anything but another colonizer with a different uniform. Anyone who believes that Pope Francis was unaware of these historical facts pertaining to his own church is living in a world of denial.

The torture inflicted upon Indigenous people in that region back then is a memory that has been passed down from one generation to the next. Native people were hunted down by Spanish soldiers and brought before Serra for “conversion” to the Catholic religion.

Many Indigenous people were used as slaves for the construction of churches and military fortifications; anyone who resisted was tortured or executed immediately in public for all to witness; Indigenous women were held in separate quarters and were routinely raped by Spanish soldiers; and women who were caught attempting to abort the fetus of a rape were usually beaten and humiliated by being forced to stand at the church altar holding a figure of a baby made of wood during Sunday mass services.

Shamefully, many political Left (“socialist”) and progressive circles have tended to back away from providing critical analysis about what was behind the Pope’s visit. They have instead chosen to approach the matter as if it were a taboo, either by remaining virtually silent or taking on a posture of indifference.

Pope Francis and the Roman Catholic Church are no friends of the working class and oppressed people of color. On the contrary, the Roman Catholic Church as well as other organized religions have historically been ideological weapons in the hands of tyrants, conquerors, exploiters and racists. The Church was first used by feudal monarchs and today by ruthless imperialist powers, especially the United States, as a means to defuse mass resistance against oppression.

The Roman Catholic Church & the Capitalist System

Let’s take into consideration that the Roman Catholic Church is the third largest land owner in the world, a status which it obtained not through “prayer & faith” but as a result of its complicity in conquest, thievery and colonization. It is no wonder why the feudal monarchs of Spain assigned Junipero Serra the task of destroying Indigenous people’s religious customs — a harsh tactic aimed to break the fighting spirit of the native inhabitants and ultimately create the scenario for stealing their lands.

Today the Vatican’s largest financial investments in foreign countries, ranging in billions of dollars, are made in the United States. The wealth of this church is intertwined with giant corporations like J.P. Morgan Chase and the First National Bank of New York. The Vatican also has billions of shares in the most powerful international corporations such as Gulf Oil, Shell, General Motors, Bethlehem Steel, General Electric, International Business Machines, T.W.A., etc., as well as large investments with the Rothschilds.

It is quite obvious that the Roman Catholic Church has a special interest in the preservation of the capitalist system. Nothing else can best explain why this institution once provided the ideological justification for the African slave trade and the murderous onslaught against Native Americans.

It is very likely that Pope Francis was chosen as the head of the Church for his skillfulness in demagoguery, especially when the church hierarchy was in the midst of a political crisis triggered by sex scandals. He has also distinguished himself from previous Popes with his charisma and his usage of

liberal terminology and formulations that has won him popularity across a spectrum of public opinion, including recent remarks made about the “evils of capitalism” in interviews given when referring to the plight of the poor.

But let’s keep in mind that Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini also made such self-serving pretentious references. It is a blatant contradiction to address issues that people are drawn by, such as the environment, homelessness, the death penalty, etc, and yet say nothing about the colossal wealth the Roman Catholic Church possesses while social and economic inequality is on the rise.

Oppressed and exploited people cannot rely on the empty and charitable-sounding language of an institution that has shown repeatedly to answer solely to the privileged and wealthy. The capitalist system has built many walls for it’s own protection and preservation—the police, the courts, prisons, as well as organized religion of which the Roman Catholic Church blatantly stands out for serving this purpose.

There is no doubt that the attainability of justice will require a mass revolutionary struggle which will force open the coffers of the capitalist class as well as the Roman Catholic Church. It is only when the have-nots of this society are finally compelled to rise up to take back all that was robbed from us, and bring to justice villains like Junipero Serra, that real change will occur in this world.

