

# SERRA STATUE DEFACED

In two instances recently, a statue of Saint Junípero Serra was vandalized. Both crimes were committed in California.

In the first offense, “Murder” was written on a statue of Saint Serra near the San Fernando Mission, outside of Los Angeles. His hands were painted red and a swastika was depicted on the statue of the child standing next to him. Fortunately, everything was quickly cleaned up.

The second statue was defaced at the Old Santa Barbara Mission. Saint Serra’s statue was decapitated and splashed with bright red paint. It was also restored.

Pope Francis canonized Father Serra in 2015. The 18th century priest personally founded six missions, baptizing more than 6,000 Indians. He did more to defend the natural rights of Indians against Spanish conquistadors than any other leader at the time, secular or religious.

The assault on this revered priest comes on the heels of many attacks on historical figures, all stemming from the Charlottesville tragedy. As with those episodes, the persons involved in this barbarism have accepted the hate-filled propaganda of extremists, misrepresenting history to serve a radical agenda.

After Charlottesville, we predicted that the anarchists would vandalize the missionaries next. A week later, they targeted Saint Serra.

We are involved in a frontal assault on Western civilization, and the Judeo-Christian ethos that defines it. That is why the Catholic League is opposing these attempts at cultural cleansing—the ultimate goal is to undermine our religious heritage.