



The Justice System is Working in Marin County

Most Rev. Salvatore J. Cordileone

February 19, 2021

“The justice system is working. The matter of what happened on the night of October 12, 2020 at Mission San Rafael will soon rest in the hands of a judge or jury.

“We live in a time of tumultuous change and angry division. Junípero Serra lived a life of sacrificial devotion to the poor, the weak and the marginalized in the tradition of St. Francis of Assisi. To Catholics, that means that he is a great saint. It is for good reason that Pope Francis canonized him on American soil in 2015.

“While St. Junipero’s dedication to protecting the native peoples of California is documented by historians, nevertheless – sadly and falsely – to some St. Junípero has become a symbol of the terrible human rights abuses committed against California indigenous peoples by Spanish conquerors and later the genocide perpetrated on them by the Anglo Americans who governed California. To heal and unite is not easy; it requires dialogue with good will, honesty and humility, and above all putting aside violence as a response.

“If a crime caught on videotape and witnessed by the police were not to have been prosecuted, it would have sent a profoundly disturbing message to the hundreds of thousands of people of faith in Marin County: churches, synagogues, mosques and temples are at the mercy of small mobs. Even more, this would set an extremely troubling precedent in that no one could be secure that those who perpetrate crimes against them will be prosecuted for their wrongdoing.

“I want above all to thank the San Rafael Police Department and the Marin County District Attorney’s Office for recognizing that social justice requires justice: that all of us enjoy the equal protection of the laws.”

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