

Very Rev. Fr. Guradian Fr. Joseph Antonio Bernad

We are very ~~gratef~~ grateful for the special love and zeal with which Your reverence looks after the best interest of these missions. This lightens our conscience and encourages us and urges us on to bother you with the following account and request, since we are confident that we will find in you the ~~bee-ess~~ necessary support and assistance, which we seek with all our heart.

We understand the many disappointments the missionaries experience, since they are responsible for instructing and guiding the souls when they themselves do not know the language required to preach, hear confessions, etc.

In the six missions under the jurisdiction of this holy College there are different languages in all the missions except in San Antonio, whrere there is only one language spoken throughout the mission, <sup>pueblos</sup> except for a word or two found in the various tribes. Experience has shown that two years after entering the mission, the Bozales, who speak a different language, at least those under twenty-five years of age, generally understand and speak the language well. There are many who speak it but if the missionaries could speak the general language, they could help the entire population living in the mission, even the Mission of San Antonio whre there are no Indians who speak the native tongue. Under such circumstances the missionary could help many more people because of the common bond which exists because of long-standing dealings and communications rather than with t-ose of other groups.

These three missions have been administered by this holy College for 26 years and more. They are the most modern of the six the College governs. We do not know the origins of the other three. Your Paternity could easily find out the beginnings of these and also Mission de la Punta, which was the first. We the missionaries have heard the native language of the primitive Indians of these missions, but the poor Indians from the start till now and from the present time on have been, are and will be ( if Your Paternity is not acquainted ? with them) unable to understand the missionaries, for the instructions have been well given and the educated Indians have been well trained. By nature they are Indians (though they may be the least ignorant) and like us who dislike their language, since it is not native to us just as our language is not native to them.

It is therefore very danferous for the missionaries to entrust the salvation of the Indians to those translators or interpreters. Experience has taught this to the few zealous missionaries who have unceasingly tried to understand their tongue. This could be made clear by citing cases in which the most competent and able interpreters have erred. We shall omit that story so as not to tire you and also because it is not necessary to move your zeal to correct such harm, which only pressing need would make bearable; there is no such need to risk the salvation of these souls.

The main reasons from which those errors flow are the following ( in our opinion): first: that the common language is

