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Noble David Cook



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**BEYOND THE MARTYRS OF FLORIDA:
THE VERSATILE CAREER OF
LUIS GERÓNIMO DE ORÉ**

by NOBLE DAVID COOK

THE general commissioner for the Franciscan missions in Florida, Friar Luis Gerónimo de Oré, arrived in St. Augustine in 1614 where he conducted a brief ecclesiastical inspection before returning to Cuba. Oré came again to Florida in late 1616, reaching St. Augustine on November 6. Armed with powers of visitation and confirmation, he inspected the Franciscan missions in the area and confirmed hundreds of converts. He also presided over the First General Chapter Meeting of the Franciscan Order in the province. During his Florida travels, Oré collected reports on earlier attempts of conversion, and before returning to Europe he compiled a survey of the church's work in Florida. That history, *The Martyrs of Florida, 1513-1616*, remains a basic primary source for the early religious experience in the southeastern part of the present-day United States.¹ Little known are Oré's youth and religious activities in the Andean heartland of the viceroyalty of Peru, his role as a Renaissance linguist and stirring preacher in the languages of Quechua and Aymara, his diplomatic missions in Spain and Rome, and his

Noble David Cook is professor of history at Florida International University, Miami, and book review editor of the *Hispanic American Historical Review*. He wishes to thank the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies at the University of Florida for a Summer Research Grant and the University of Bridgeport for a Mellon Faculty Grant. He also wishes to thank Elizabeth Alexander and Bruce Chappell at the P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History, Gainesville; Father Provincial Lobatón, O.F.M.; archivist Anna María Vegas, Archive of the Convent of San Francisco in Lima; Alexandra Parma Cook; and the late Father Antonine Tibesar, O.F.M.

1. Maynard Geiger translated and edited Oré's history, with a biographical sketch, under the title *The Martyrs of Florida, 1513-1616* (New York, 1936). The earlier Spanish version, edited by Atanasio Lopez, was *Relación histórica de la Florida, escrito en el siglo XVII*, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1931-1933). See also John Tate Lanning, *The Spanish Missions of Georgia* (Chapel Hill, 1935; reprint, St. Clair Shores, MI, 1971); and Michael V. Gannon, *The Cross in the Sand: The Early Catholic Church in Florida, 1513-1870* (Gainesville, 1965).

experiences as bishop of La Imperial (Concepción) on the Araucanian frontier of Chile.²

Oré was born in the central Andean highlands of Peru in the city of Huamanga (present-day Ayacucho) about 1554. His father, Antonio de Oré, was not part of Francisco Pizarro's force, but he was one of Peru's early settlers. He missed the first booty of conquest (the treasure collected at Cajamarca in 1533) but reached the shores soon enough to fight in the civil wars of the conquistadores. In 1538, the senior Oré distinguished himself at the Battle of Las Salinas where the Pizarrists defeated the forces of Diego de Almagro. He contributed his personal resources, estimated at 10,000 pesos, to conquer the Guancas Chupaychos Indians. But Antonio's principal Peruvian wealth came by marriage to a widow, doña Luisa Días de Roxas y Rivera, who held the rich encomienda (grant of tribute-paying Indians) of Hanan Chilques. The couple settled in Huamanga, the Spanish city nearest their Indians (as mandated in royal ordinances), and with the tribute and labor of their charges, plus investments in nearby mines and land, they amassed a substantial fortune. Antonio de Oré and his wife were recognized as important members of the city's colonial elite.³

Most historians mention only the couple's four boys who became monks and the daughters who founded the convent of Santa Clara in Huamanga, but the family was substantially larger. The couple was fortunate that their children survived, for infant mortality in colonial Peru was high even among the Spanish elite. At least sixteen of Oré's offspring, half of whom were females, reached adulthood. Spacing of the children indicates that the family used Indian wetnurses, probably from the encomienda of Hanan Chilques. The linguistic competency of several of the children probably was due to the influence of their native nursemaids and because their first playing companions likely were children of the Andean highlands. Gerónimo de Oré, the friar's brother, inherited the bulk of the family's estate and married

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2. Brief biographical sketches can be found in José Toribio Polo, "Luis Gerónimo de Oré," *Revista Histórica: Organo del Instituto Histórico del Perú* 2 (no. 1, 1907). 74-91; Manuel de Mendiburu, *Diccionario Histórico-biográfico del Perú*, 11 vols. (Lima, 1931-1934), VIII, 247-48.
 3. Manuscript Room, file Z328, Z330, Z336, Biblioteca Nacional de Lima, Lima, Peru (hereafter BNL); and Noble David Cook, ed., *Tasa de la visita general de Francisco de Toledo* (Lima, 1975), 276-77.

doña Aldonsa de Azevedo y Guevara. The couple's son, named after his grandfather don Antomo, married doña Mariana Pisaro de Orellana, thus linking the Oré family to another distinguished line.⁴

Whether by true conviction or from fear of eternal damnation in an age of faith, the elder Oré stressed both his family's religious education and charitable works. Saint Jerome was the patron of the family, and they came to be staunch supporters of the endeavors of the Franciscan Order in Peru. Antonio de Oré is largely responsible for the founding of the Clarises Convent in Huamanga. According to tradition, the Convent of Santa Clara was constructed using silver from Oré's mine. Just as the structure reached completion in 1568, the rich vein of silver wore out.

The elder Oré knew Latin well, and he imparted the knowledge to all his children. As construction of the convent progressed, he memorized the appropriate church ritual for the convent and taught it to his daughters who founded the Huamanga house and became its abbesses. Of the sixteen siblings, eight—perhaps nine—entered the service of the church. Daughters Ana del Espíritu Santo, born 1544; Leonor de Jesús and María de la Concepción, both born 1549; Inés de la Encarnación, born 1553; and perhaps later, “la menor” (the younger), also named María de Oré, joined the Huamanga convent.⁵

Four boys entered the Franciscan Order. The eldest, Pedro, distinguished himself as a missionary in the Peruvian doctrinas (Indian parishes) and was later custodio of Tierra Firme and guardian of the Franciscan monastery in Panama.⁶ Dionisio served in many of the Andean doctrinas, including Cajamarca, Jauja, the Collaguas, and Cuzco. Antonio also spent many years in church service. But most famous in his time was Luis Gerónimo. In addition to learning Latin, the boys also learned to play the organ and the tecla (a keyboard instrument similar to the harpsichord). Many years later, Friar Diego Sánchez, who provided oral testimony for Diego de Córdova y Salinas's history of the Franciscan Order in Peru, remembered them as excellent singers of the canto llano (Gregorian chant). Antonio and Luis

4. Manuscript Room, file Z328 and Z330, BNL.

5. *Ibid.*, file Z328, Z330, C341 (originally register 35, fols. 52r-56r in the Archive of the Convent of San Francisco in Lima).

6. A custodio in the Franciscan Order is the Superior of brothers not yet organized into a province.

Gerónimo were reputed to have had such wonderful voices that “they could have sung in the Cathedral of Toledo.”⁷

The young Luis Gerónimo and his brothers and sisters learned Quechua, and perhaps Aymara, from their many Indian servants and their families. They learned Spanish and Latin from their parents, and their father probably used one or more Latin grammars, as well as classical texts, to assist the instruction. A tutor may also have been employed. The frontier community of Huamanga, with— according to royal cosmographer López de Velasco— only a handful of Spanish vecinos in the late 1560s, did not have the educational facilities for the siblings. It was necessary, therefore, for the children to travel to larger colonial urban centers to complete their formal education and training. Cuzco, the capital of the defeated Inca empire, and Lima, the coastal administrative center of the viceroyalty of Peru, were roughly equidistant from Huamanga. The young Luis Gerónimo travelled south to the highland center of Cuzco to finish the next step of his education. He was approximately fourteen when he embarked on the journey to Cuzco, and in 1568 he became a novice in the Franciscan monastery.⁸

His sojourn in Cuzco preceded only slightly the arrival of Viceroy Francisco de Toledo and the final conquest of the neo-Inca state at Vilcabamba under the leadership of Tupac Amaru. While in Cuzco, Oré probably witnessed Tupac Amaru’s dramatic execution in the principal plaza of the city. Oré’s superiors recognized his intellectual promise, and they encouraged him to travel to Lima to complete his education. He went to the University of San Marcos where he graduated sometime in the late 1570s. His studies included the typical religious foundations that were a prerequisite for his church vocation. Some sources mention that he read in theology. He must also have studied the basics of the legal profession, for he later acted as procurador (attorney) for the Franciscan missions and subsequently as legal

7. Manuscript Room, file C341, fols. 52r-56v, BNL. See Juan López de Velasco, *Geografía y descripción universal de las Indias* (Madrid, 1894; reprint, Madrid, 1971); and Steve J. Stern. *Peru’s Indian Peoples and the Challenge of the Spanish Conquest: Huamanga to 1640* (Madison, WI, 1982).

8. In 1620, the bishop of the city of Arequipa wrote the monarch that American-born doctrineros knew Indian languages best. “Born here, yes indeed it is true, that many naturally know [the native language] because they suckled it with the milk.” See Audiencia of Lima, box 309, Archivo General de Indias, Seville, Spain (hereafter AGI).

representative of the bishop of Cuzco. Oré was ordained in Lima on Saturday, September 23, 1581, by Archbishop Saint Toribio de Mogrovejo. He was then about twenty-seven years old and at the beginning of what would be a long religious career. Franciscan chronicler Friar Buenaventura de Salinas y Córdova wrote in 1630 that Oré was one of the first Creole graduates to become a bishop.⁹

The linguistic talents of Oré were well known. Members of the Third Church Council Meeting in Lima called on him, according to the testimony of other Franciscans, to help prepare a Quechua catechism. The Church Council ordered that a commission representing all the missionary orders in Peru—the Dominicans, the Mercedarians, the Franciscans, and the more recent Jesuits—be established. Historians continue to debate the authorship of the combined catechism. Each order has its proponents, and partisan historians tend to ignore the contributions of their competitors.¹⁰ It is clear that Luis Gerónimo de Oré played a role in this important church effort, although the exact nature of the contribution is still under review. Various Quechua catechisms had circulated in manuscript form in the years prior to the Third Church Council, and each religious order had a favorite version. These were reviewed and integrated into the final catechism published in Lima in 1584.¹¹

The Franciscans had several doctrinas in the viceroyalty of Peru. Jauja, Cajamarca, and the Collaguas were the most important charges in the sixteenth century.¹² In the mid 1580s, Oré was assigned to the Collaguas doctrinas, and his legal background proved a key to his success. The rich Colca Valley, located in the southern Peruvian highlands about two-thirds of

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9. Buenaventura de Salinas y Córdova, *Memorial de las historias de nuevo mundo Pirú* (Lima, 1957), 176-77; and Toribio Polo, "Luis Gerónimo de Oré," 74-91.
 10. Enrique T. Bartra, "Los autores del Catecismo del Tercer Concilio Limense," *Mercurio Peruano* 470 (November-December 1967), 359-72.
 11. Manuscript Room, file C341, fols. 28r, 55v, BNL; and Lima Audiencia, box 126, AGI. The fact that the commission met in the Colegio de la Compañía de Jesús has incorrectly led some scholars to assume it was solely a Jesuit undertaking.
 12. For the best survey of the history of the Order's activities in early colonial Peru, see Antonine Tibesar, *Franciscan Beginnings in Colonial Peru* (Washington, 1953). Also useful is the documentary collection in Bernardino Izaguirre, ed., *Historia de las misiones franciscanas*, 14 vols. (Lima, 1922-1930).

the distance from Cuzco to Arequipa, was a corregimiento (Indian province) with two private encomiendas in the lower valley, two in the middle, and a single crown grant in the upper valley named Yanque Collaguas. The lower valley had been granted to Spanish encomenderos (holders of Indian grants) in the 1530s and Francisco Pizarro gave the upper part to his brother Gonzalo in early 1540. Gonzalo Pizarro lost both his head and Indians at the end of the revolt of the encomenderos, and Pedro de la Gasca granted the Collaguas to Francisco Noguero de Ulloa. Noguero received tributes from it until the 1570s when it was integrated into the royal patrimony. The grant was stripped from Noguero de Ulloa because of his absence in Spain beyond the authorized time limit. He was there defending himself in the court of the Council of the Indies against charges of bigamy and illegal shipment of treasure to Spain.¹³

The upper Colca Valley was the center of Franciscan activities, though they had doctrinas in the middle valley as well. Gonzalo Pizarro probably made the first efforts to convert the Collaguas and may have supported Franciscan endeavors there, but the missions were not formally organized by the Franciscans until 1561. By the time the area was inspected under orders of Viceroy Toledo in the 1570s and the Indians forcibly settled into Spanish-style towns, the Franciscans had several churches in the upper valley with a headquarters at the village of Coporaque. Franciscan work in the Indian doctrinas was disrupted in 1581 when Gerónimo de Villacarrillo, the general commissioner of the Order in Peru, called the friars back to the principal convents, removing them from the daily obligation of parish administration. It seems his purpose was religious, in keeping with original ideals of the order, but there were probably political and economic factors as well. The Collaguas doctrinas were rich, and members of the secular clergy quickly secured revenues from these Indian parishes for themselves.

In a matter of months, kurakas (Indian leaders) of the Collaguas began to voice complaints before colonial administrators about the excessive fees levied for the church sacraments, and

13. For the history of this encomendero, see Alexandra Parma Cook and Noble David Cook, *Good Faith and Truthful Ignorance: A Case of Transatlantic Bigamy* (Durham, 1991); and Noble David Cook, *People of the Colca Valley: A Population Study* (Boulder, 1982).

they began the complicated petition process to have the Franciscans restored to their Indian parishes. The requests first reached the viceroy in Lima and then were passed on to King Philip II and the Council of the Indies in Spain. A favorable response came quickly, but it was some time before the Franciscans resumed their work in all of the valley. Armed with an order from Viceroy Conde de Villar, Franciscan procurador Luis Gerónimo de Oré and guardian Luis de Sangil began the complicated process of securing the doctrinas in Arequipa on September 15, 1586.

Hernando Medel, curate of Lari Collaguas, one of the most important doctrinas in the valley, refused to leave his post. The dispute between the regulars and the seculars in the valley thus began in earnest. It was not until July 1590 that the Franciscans assumed all the lost doctrinas, save one. Reinforced with a cedula of Viceroy Marqués de Cañete and supported by corregidor Gaspar Verdugo (the official in charge of the Indian district), procurador Luis Gerónimo de Oré and guardian Pedro Román forcibly removed several of the seculars in what must have been an interesting display for the local Indian parishioners. According to witnesses, Indians wept with joy as their favored Franciscans resumed their religious duties in the valley.¹⁴

The years at the missions in the Colca Valley were important ones for Oré, perhaps the most productive of his career. In addition to acting as the procurador for the Order, he was curate in Coporaque, the Incas' capital in the valley. The normal routine of mass, marriage, baptism, confession, and preparation for death occupied much of his time.¹⁵ The hospital at Coporaque and the Indian school also may have attracted his attention. In order to be effective, Oré spoke Quechua and Aymara, the latter a language he perfected during his tenure in the valley. The corregimiento of the Collaguas, in contrast to most other Indian administrative units in Peru, was divided between Quechua and Aymara speakers. Before Oré left the Colca Valley for the last time around 1595, he had completed three important works for Catholic missionary efforts in Andean America: the *Símbolo Cathólico Indiano*, the *Rituale seu Manuale*

14. Register 13, folios 220r-22r, 451r-81v, 505r-507v, Archivo del Convento de San Francisco de Lima, Lima, Peru (hereafter ASFL).

15. Franklin Pease, ed., *Collaguas: I* (Lima, 1977), 132.

peruanum, and a massive dictionary and grammar guide in Quechua and Aymara.¹⁶

In 1595 Luis Gerónimo de Oré returned to Lima, the administrative capital of the viceroyalty, where he was assigned guardian of the Jauja missions in the central highlands above Lima. From his new post he supervised the publication of his *Símbolo Cathólico Indiano*. This work, as with all other publications in the Spanish empire, needed the approval of a commission to ensure that it included nothing contrary to the faith. Viceroy Marqués de Cañete established the commission charged with the review and approval of Oré's "sermones del año" and an "Arte y gramática en romance y en las lenguas generales deste reyno quechua y aimara." The evaluation of the bishop of Tucumán, Fernando de Trejo (who was in Lima in 1595), is similar to others. He said that Oré's work was already being used extensively in manuscript form in the dioceses of Cuzco and Tucumán and recommended its publication. The commission authorized publication of the work, and the printing house of Antonio Ricardo issued the book in 1598.¹⁷

By 1600, Oré had left Jauja and was serving in an Indian parish in the booming and rich silver-mining center of Potosí, then one of the largest cities in the western world. The Jeronimite friar Diego de Ocaña, who travelled throughout the viceroyalty between 1599 and 1606 extending the cult of the Virgin of Guadalupe, met Oré and left an account of his work: "And he preached to all the Indians in their own language. . . . On each of the Sundays that he preached to the Indians he would relate to them one of the miracles included in the Book of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe. And with this he gave end to the octavario, and he placed the image in the High Altar, above the Sagrario where it now is, with much veneration."¹⁸

Success in Potosí led to Oré's appointment to a parish in Cuzco. Such a placement was unusual for a member of one of the orders, for the richest benefices tended to be given to members of the secular clergy. Here, too, Oré's persuasive preaching

16. Luis Gerónimo de Oré, *Símbolo Cathólico Indiano* (Lima, 1598), 36-39; and Marcos Jiménez de la Espada, ed., *Relaciones geográficas de Indias, Perú*, 3 vols. (Madrid, 1965), I, 326-33.

17. Oré, *Símbolo Cathólico*.

18. An octavario is a religious period of eight days. Diego de Ocaña, *Un viaje fascinante por la América Hispana del siglo XVI* (Madrid, 1969), 178.

style led to local fame. Bernabé de Fuentes related that bishop of Cuzco Antonio de la Raya's decision to grant the friar an Indian parish "had never been done before, nor seen in this realm." It was done "so that he might preach in all the Indian parishes that there are in the city of Cuzco, as he has done already, with such notable concourse of them, and he was preaching to the greatest number in the cemeteries, because they could not all fit into the churches."¹⁹ The bishop, impressed by the erudite Franciscan, appointed Oré to travel to Spain "with license from the prelates, and letters for the King, and His Holiness [the Pope], in which it was asked that the said friar Luis Gerónimo de Oré be accepted as his coadjutor."²⁰ On the last day of January 1604, Oré presented to the bishop of Cuzco three manuscripts— a "sermonario" (collection of sermons), a manual for the administration of the sacraments in the Indian languages, and an "arte y vocabulario"— and requested permission to go to Spain to print the works.

By March 1605 Oré reached Spain, and at a session of the Council of the Indies in Valladolid the publication of the *Rituale* was formally authorized. Father Oré may have been present at the time, for before leaving Peru he had been charged with two important tasks by the bishop of Cuzco: to defend the interests of the diocese of Cuzco in a territorial dispute with the bishop of Charcas and to secure royal support for the establishment of a university in Cuzco, the old capital of the Incas.²¹

Bishop Antonio de la Raya's appointment also included salutations for the pope, and Luis Gerónimo quickly continued on his journey to Rome. On December 3, 1605, Pope Paul V issued an order directly related to Oré's presence. In "De salute Dominici gregis," the pope granted an indulgence for all those who in the Lima cathedral participated kneeling during the Salve and Litanies. Jesuit Peruvian church historian Ruben Vargas Ugarte believes Oré himself may have composed the document, which originated in the actions of the Third Church Council in Lima and the "Consulta o Ritual de la Iglesia Met-

19. Manuscript Room, file C341, fol. 28r-v, BNL.

20. A coadjutor is an ecclesiastical official with the legal power to assist a cleric.

21. Roberto Levillier, ed., *Papeles eclesiásticos de Tucumán: documentos originales del Archivo de Indias*, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1926), II, 377-78.

ropolitana de Lima."²² In the city of Naples one of the most famous of Oré's volumes was issued. Printers Iacobum Carlinum and Constantinum Vitalem completed the 418-page work in 1607; it carried the title *Rituale, seu Manuale peruanum*. The Quechua and Aymara sections of this work, which provided a complete manual for the administration of the sacraments of the church for Andean America, were prepared directly by Oré. While in Peru, he had consulted the Salamanca manual, the manual of Sevilla, both the old and new Mexican manuals, the one used in Portugal and Brazil, that used by the Catholic church in France, and also those of Italy. Oré took care not to stray from official Catholic doctrine, and he received the full support of Rome. Short versions of the basic doctrine in other languages, some no longer spoken, were included in the volume. Jesuit Alonso de Barzana prepared the Puquina text; secular clergy of Peru's north coast composed the Mochica; Friar Luis de Bolaños penned the Guarañi version; and the Franciscans, Benedictines, and Jesuits jointly issued the "Brasilica."²³

During Oré's Italian sojourn, the Quechua and Aymara dictionaries and grammars disappeared from the record. A religious work, *Tratado sobre las indulgencias*, was published in Alexandria, Egypt, in 1606. Oré dedicated it to his friend Maestro Vestrio Barbiano, the datario of Pope Paul V.²⁴ If Oré travelled to Alexandria at the mouth of the Nile River to oversee the manuscript's publication, he may have continued on to the Holy Land. Unfortunately, as with the dictionaries, Oré slipped from sight in the documentary record until 1611 when he was once again in Spain. In the latter part of that year he received an appointment from the crown and the general commissioner of the Order for the Indies, Antonio de Trejo, to select a group of missionaries for Florida.

In order to recruit the friars, Oré travelled from Madrid to Cadiz in early 1612. The route took him through the city of Cordova where he met the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, a well-known Peruvian Renaissance scholar and translator who had

22. Rubén Vargas Ugarte, *Historia del Culto de Maria en Iberoamérica y de sus imágenes y santuarios mas celebrados* (Buenos Aires, 1947), 80-83.

23. Luis Gerónimo de Oré, *Rituale, seu Manuale peruanum* . . . (Napoli, 1607).

24. A datario is the prelate presiding over the Tribunal of the Roman Curia. José Toribio Medina, *Biblioteca Hispano-Chilena (1523-1817)*, 3 vols. (Santiago, 1897-1899), I, 103, 129.

written *La Florida del Inca*, a volume that would be of utmost importance for the friars on their mission. Garcilaso was born the mestizo son of a Spanish conquistador and an Inca princess in the imperial city of Cuzco some fifteen years before Oré. The two men were practised in the art of translation and must have exchanged words in Quechua during their Andalusian conversations. Garcilaso knew of Oré's 1598 *Símbolo Cathólico Indiano*, and he borrowed excerpts for his history of the Incas. Garcilaso reported that Oré asked for a copy of the history of Florida so the friars "could carry it along to know and have notices of the provinces and customs of those pagans." Garcilaso then "served him with seven books, the three were of Florida, and the four of our *Commentaries*." Garcilaso reports that Oré was pleased and further prayed that "His Divine Majesty be served in aiding in this request, in order that those idolaters leave the abyss of their ignorance." Garcilaso asked Oré, who had spent so much time in the Lima monastery, what had happened to the skulls of Peru's famous rebels—Gonzalo Pizarro, Captain Francisco de Carvajal, and Francisco Hernández Girón. Garcilaso thought the skull of the infamous Carvajal was still in the iron cage with the inscription ordered at the time of his execution, but Oré reported that the remains had mixed together, making it impossible to identify anyone.²⁵

Oré's recruiting efforts for the Florida missions in late 1611 and early 1612 were successful; most of the twenty-four men collected came from various monasteries in Old Castile. The missionaries set sail from the port of Cadiz that same year, however; Oré did not accompany them. The friar's recruiting successes led to an appointment to enlist men to serve among the Indians of Venezuela. On June 20, 1613, the Casa de Contratación in Seville authorized Oré to embark with the new missionaries on board the ship *La Esperanza* with the fleet of Antonio de Oquendo, bound for Santo Domingo on the island of Hispaniola. Once again, Oré failed to join the expedition he had

25. Garcilaso de la Vega, *el Inca, Obras completas*, 4 vols. (Madrid, 1960), IV, 124; and Medina, *Biblioteca Hispano-Chilena*, I, 115. For Garcilaso's role as translator and Renaissance scholar, see Margarita Zamora, *Language, Authority, and Indigenous History in the Comentarios Reales de los Incas* (Cambridge, 1988).

helped prepare.²⁶ Before his departure Antonio de Trejo, now the Franciscan general commissioner of the Indies, ordered him to collect testimony on the early Andalusian years of Friar Francisco Solano. Solano's exemplary missionary career in the Indies had led many contemporaries to advocate beatification.

This task was relatively simple. Solano, also an accomplished linguist, had died in the Lima monastery on July 14, 1610. He concentrated his major missionary work in the unstable and dangerous lowland frontier region of present-day Bolivia, and he reportedly performed many miracles in healing and in conversion. Oré's task in Andalusia was one important step in a long process that might ultimately lead to sanctification. He applied his talents with care and thoroughness, beginning to take testimony in Seville on July 11, 1613. He travelled to the places where Solano had lived and preached, took oral and written testimony in Marchena, Baeza, Arrizafa, Adamuz, San Francisco del Monte, Perabad, Montoro, and Montilla, and he finished the first part of the report on August 9. Oré was in Cordova on October 21, 1613, and then returned to Montilla, the birthplace of Solano, to collect the final forty-four oaths of witnesses who knew him during his early years. Again, Oré conversed with fellow Peruvian Garcilaso de la Vega. The material he collected and supplemented with testimony from the bishops and archbishops of Seville, Granada, Lima, Cordova, and Malaga provided the foundation for a work published in Madrid in 1614: *Relación de la Vida i milagros del Venerable Padre Fr. Francisco Solano de la Orden de San Francisco. . .*²⁷

Oré likely was on board a ship for the Caribbean as printing was being completed, for in 1614, the new general commissioner of the Indies, Friar Juan Vibanco, ordered him to inspect the Florida missions as well as the Franciscan houses on Cuba. Armed with a royal license and orders from the Council of the Indies, Oré apparently made a quick inspection of the Florida missions under the administration of Governor Juan Fernández

26. Lino Gomez Canedo, *La provincia franciscana de Santa Cruz de Caracas: cuerpo de documentos para historia, 1513-1837*, 3 vols. (Caracas, 1974), I, 63-64, 206, II, 73-76; and Oré; *Relación de la Florida*, I, 118. Medina attempted to prove that Oré failed to reach Florida. See Medina, *Biblioteca Hispano-Chilena*, I, 115-17.

27. Luis Julian Plandolit, *El Apostol de América San Francisco Solano* (Madrid, 1963), 340.

de Olivera. He wrote that he had not seen as much as he had intended and that the population was very dispersed.²⁸ The need to inspect the Franciscan houses in Cuba probably required his quick return to the island.

Oré's major activities in the Florida missions date from his second trip. On November 6, 1616, he entered the harbor at St. Augustine following a harrowing voyage from Havana. It had lasted twenty-five days, and rough seas and contrary winds blocked entrance through the difficult inlet. When the group finally entered St. Augustine, they were met by Governor Juan Triviño de Guillamas, members of the local clergy, and soldiers stationed at the fort. Following a scant ten days in St. Augustine, Oré set out by foot and canoe with three religious companions to inspect the vast territory. He spent an average of three to four days at each mission station, carefully examined the quality of indoctrination, and recorded the number of natives baptized. The work of the mission at Santa Cruz de Tarihica was impressive; the natives had been taught to read and write in just four years. In Taraco he recommended the use of native converts to teach the doctrine and catechism.

The First General Chapter Meeting of the Franciscan Order in the province of Santa Elena of Florida was held in late 1616 at San Buenaventura de Guadalquini, situated roughly on the missionary boundary between the Guale and Timucua linguistic groups. The Order drew up statutes and elected Friar Francisco Pareja, an excellent linguist with twenty-two years missionary experience, first definitore.²⁹ They chose Friar Lorenzo Martínez as the custodio of the province. When Oré returned to St. Augustine, he conducted an ecclesiastical inspection of the cathedral of the city. The Franciscan also called for an end to conflict between secular and religious authorities in the frontier settlement and urged that soldiers stationed at the fort lead an exemplary life.³⁰

Oré's brief stay in Florida resulted in publication of a work that became a standard source for the history of the church in the present-day southeastern United States. The *Relación de los mártires* appears to have been written shortly after Oré returned

28. Oré, *Relación de la Florida*, I 119, 124.

29. A definitore is a high-ranking administrator in the Franciscan Order.

30. Oré, *Relación de la Florida*, I, 116-23.

to the island of Cuba from Florida.³¹ The history was based on a collection of manuscript accounts and oral testimony taken while Oré was in Florida acting in his capacity as commissioner of the province. He had asked each friar in the Florida missions to provide information in *verbo sacerdotis* on where they were from, the year they had left to work in the Florida missions, how long they had worked in the field, what they had accomplished, what noteworthy events had taken place, and what martyrs there had been.³² In addition, Oré asked a series of questions about the Indians under their jurisdiction— what they ate, how they had been indoctrinated, and so forth. He included in the history an account by Father Avila detailing his capture by the Indians that was deposited in the Franciscan convent archive in Havana.

Oré incorporated various secular reports in the history, including several referring to the new English settlements to the north. Here and elsewhere Oré advocated removal of the foreign threat.³³ He made several references to the Indians in Peru in his history of the Florida missions. His interest in the native languages is apparent throughout, and he lauded the important contribution that Francisco Pareja's *Arte de la lengua Timuguana* (1614) made to conversion efforts in Florida.³⁴ On January 14, 1617, Oré and other Franciscans in St. Augustine wrote the king reporting that they had sent the history of the Florida missions to him. The churchmen also requested support for royal treasury official Juan Menéndez Márquez who had often assisted the Franciscan missionaries during troubled times in St. Augustine.³⁵

Oré returned to Cuba where he probably finished the Florida manuscript, and then he sailed to Spain. At some point, perhaps as he conducted his normal religious tasks or during the longer sea voyages, Oré prepared a long work of poetry in praise of the Virgin Mary. Oré's devotion to the cult of Mary is noted in both the *Símbolo* and the *Manualum* and in Diego de Ocaña's record of his activities as doctrinero in Potosí. Seville was at the center of the Marianist movement when Oré passed through, and the religious fervor of her adherents likely in-

31. *Ibid.*, 91.

32. *Ibid.*, 112.

33. *Ibid.*, 86, 91, 95-97, 112-17.

34. *Ibid.*, 58, 77, 93, 117-18.

35. *Ibid.*, 41-45.

fected him. The title of this work indicates its religious character: *Corona de la sacratísima Virgen María madre de Dios nuestra señora, En que se contienen ochenta meditaciones, de los principales misterios de la Fé: que corresponden a setenta y tres Ave María y ocho vezes el Pater noster, ofrecidas a los felices años que vivió en el mundo . . . Dedicada a la misma virgen sacrosanta, concebida sin pecado original en su imagen y Santuario de Copacavana*. The theological arguments were orthodox, and the manuscript found sympathetic censors. The Franciscan chapter in Madrid authorized publication on July 19, 1618, the Jesuits gave permission on August 25, and the king in the Escorial palace issued a ten-year license to print on September 22. The completed version became available in June 1619. Sadly, Oré's dictionaries and grammars failed to receive similar support from secular and ecclesiastical authorities.³⁶

Oré maintained an acute interest in the Florida missionary venture while in Spain. Around 1620 he wrote the king and Council of the Indies referring to his earlier work on the peninsula. He argued that thirty new friars were needed for the mission posts to teach some 30,000 Indians in Apalache and others in Sancta Helena, Machagua, and Latana. He also mentioned his planned participation in the General Chapter Meeting of the Order in Salamanca.³⁷ Oré's impressive career had been long noted within the Franciscan Order, and his activities were known at the court, particularly as he had come to serve as vice-commissioner for the Indies before the Council of the Indies.³⁸ His administrative skills dated from the conflict between seculars and regulars in the Colca Valley in the 1580s the mission to represent of the bishop of Cuzco in the first decade of the 1600s and finally his role in helping establish order and good relations between missionary friars in Florida and frontier soldiers in St. Augustine.

These impeccable qualities led to Oré's selection by the crown as bishop of La Imperial on August 17, 1620.³⁹ In spite

36. Luis Gerónimo de Oré, *Corona de la Virgen* (Madrid, 1619). A copy exists in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid. See also Medina, *Biblioteca Hispano-Chilena*, I, 129.

37. Oré, *Relación de la Florida*, I, 41-45.

38. Levillier, *Papeles eclesiásticos de Tucumán*, I, 405-06.

39. Rubén Vargas Ugarte, *Historia de la Iglesia en el Perú*, 5 vols. (Burgos, 1953-1962), II, 443; and Medina, *Biblioteca Hispano-Chilena*, I, 129.

of Chile's location at the opposite extreme of the continent of South America, the region had much in common with Florida. Each was a frontier establishment surrounded by "less advanced" and often hostile Indians, and Dutch and English intruders threatened both areas in the early seventeenth century. The turmoil of garrison life greatly influenced the two provinces. There were few European wives present and a meager number of successful local Spanish settlements.

It took Oré almost three years to reach his post in Chile. The fleet from Spain took him into the Caribbean and on to Nombre de Dios, where it was necessary to cross the isthmus to the city of Panama. He then took another vessel on the slow southward voyage down the South American coast. Oré disembarked at the Peruvian town of Trujillo, travelled on foot into the highlands, and headed directly for the land of his birth, the city of Huamanga. On the journey he reportedly confirmed some 14,000 people. In Huamanga the bishop-elect visited his remaining family, including his sisters, the founders of the Convent of the Clarises. The nuns gave their brother power of attorney on November 7, 1622, to represent the convent before the Royal Audiencia in Lima. Oré transferred the power on January 5, 1623, to Friar Gerónimo Serrano, the acting procurador for the Franciscans in Peru.⁴⁰ Shortly thereafter he initiated his trip to Chile.

Oré sailed southward from Callao with the Inspector General Francisco de Villaseñor, accompanied by a fleet that included 300 soldiers sent to defend Chile against both internal and external enemies. The diocese of La Imperial had been created from the bishopric of Santiago roughly one-half century before, and there was continuing friction between the two, perhaps the consequence of lost benefices and revenues. The unit was one of the most difficult to administer in the Indies because the Araucanian frontier cut through the center and divided the diocese into halves separated by the indomitable Indian warriors. The town of Concepción, little more than a military fortress when Oré arrived, was in the northern section of the diocese not far from the Bío-Bío River, which marked the boundary between European and native zones. The southern half of the unit began hundreds of kilometers to the south

40. Register 10, fols. 29r-31v, ASFL.

and extended to the very tip of the continent and the Straits of Magellan. Small posts and missions on the exposed southern coast were easy prey for the Dutch and other interlopers who occasionally dared the difficult passage into the calmer waters of the Humboldt Current that swept northward along the Pacific fringe of South America.

As he had done in Florida, Oré intended to initiate a pastoral inspection as quickly as possible and planned to examine and confirm converts. The most difficult and pressing concern was to reach the southern missions on the island of Chiloé, and this was accomplished with two Jesuit companions at about the time Oré celebrated his seventieth birthday. By small boat they visited various posts, including Carelmapu, Maullin, and points north of the Canal de Chacao. Oré hoped to reach Osorno and Valdivia on this tour, but he failed to do so. He may have been disappointed by the small number of potential Indian converts and their resistance to conversion.⁴¹ During the visit, and probably without Oré's knowledge, he was nominated to fill the vacant office of bishop of Tucumán. A report was filed in Madrid on December 15, 1624, that detailed his accomplishments and career, but the four votes he received were not enough for his election to the post.⁴²

Following his inspection of the missions, Oré took measures to improve the quality of missionary activities. He convinced royal treasury officials in Santiago de Chile to provide the funds to send four more Jesuits to the Castro mission on the island of Chiloé— an important step in ensuring the persistence of this “city” of a mere fifty houses. Due to Oré's efforts, missionaries reached the Guaytecas and Chonos Indians.

As bishop, Oré established new parishes in the diocese, and he set up a seminary for the training of priests at Concepción.⁴³ Staffing the seminary proved a challenge in this frontier setting. There were few candidates for the priesthood, and those that came forward often lacked the character traits deemed neces-

41. Audiencia of Chile, box 60, 61, AGI; Carlos Silva Cotapos, *Historia Eclesiástica de Chile* (Santiago, 1925), 74-85; Vargas Ugarte, *Historia de la Iglesia en el Perú*, II, 443-44; and Medina, *Biblioteca Hispano-Chilena*, I, 130. See also Luis Olivares M., O.F.M., *Provincia Franciscana de Chile* (Santiago, 1961).

42. Levillier, *Papeles eclesiásticos de Tucumán*, I, 405-06.

43. Silva Cotapos, *Historia Eclesiástica de Chile*, 83; and Vargas Ugarte, *Historia de la Iglesia en el Perú*, II, 443-44.

sary. Demands placed on clergymen at the garrisons and among the Indians required special training and time, and neither was in abundance at Concepción. Occasional complaints surfaced that Oré had hastened to ordain men unfit for the priesthood and that the seminary was unprepared for its educational role. Oré defended himself, arguing that the majority of his parishes were well attended to spiritually and that some vacant benefices had been restored. Further, in a letter to King Philip IV, dated March 4, 1627, Oré stressed that his curates “know perfectly the language of the Indians, with the end of being able to teach them the doctrine and the catechism and to preach to them.” Once again Oré stressed the need for the priests to be able to communicate with the Indians in their own languages.⁴⁴

Bishop Oré clearly formulated his Indian policy in Chile. Had it been consistently followed, many lives might have been spared. He called for a withdrawal of Spanish military forces from Araucanian-claimed territory, and he advocated that both groups accept the Bío-Bío River as the natural boundary in order to minimize potential armed conflict. He recommended an increase in missionary efforts in order to bring the Araucanians to the faith and prepare them for a peaceful existence within the Spanish system. During Oré’s tenure at Concepción, relations between the Araucanians and the Spanish, although often tense, were reasonably good. Peace was largely the consequence of his admonitions to both sides, particularly his attempts to persuade the garrison’s military leaders to maintain order. His death on January 30, 1630, resulted in a break in this uneasy informal truce. The bishop of Santiago sent a message to the king three months later, on April 16, 1630, lamenting the loss of the posts of Angol, Purren, and Paycaui. He feared the extension of the war zone deep into the diocese of Santiago and requested not clergy but some 2,000 soldiers, preferably reinforcements from Spain.⁴⁵

Luis Gerónimo de Oré’s legacy is not to be found in the urban center of Concepción where uprisings, earthquakes, and other natural disasters erased the physical presence of this

44. Audiencia of Chile, box 60, AGI; and Vargas Ugarte, *Historia de la Iglesia en el Perú*, II, 443-44.

45. Audiencia of Chile, box 60, AGI; and Medina, *Biblioteca Hispano-Chilena*, I, 131.

peripatetic friar. Oré's historical addition lies in his writings. His work, primarily religious in nature, remains a useful source for modern historians. The *Símbolo Cathólico Indiano* (1598) is an important, yet largely ignored, contribution to the history of Andean America. Originally designed as an introduction for new parish priests in the Indian doctrinas, it includes a survey of the history and geography of the region and information on native religion. A modern edition would reach a wider audience. The massive *Rituale, seu Manualum peruanum* (1607) was a complete manual for the cleric, with texts of special value for linguists in Quechua, Aymara, Mochica, Puquina, Guarani, and "Brasilica." Much can be gleaned from his work on native religious concepts and marriage practices, particularly in the sections of the text dealing with confession.

Perhaps Oré's two most important contributions are the missing grammars and dictionaries in Quechua and Aymara. Yet all might not be lost. It is likely that other Andean clerics integrated parts of the manuscripts into dictionaries printed in the early seventeenth century. More than one manuscript copy existed, and several church linguists reviewed Oré's dictionaries and grammars before authorizing publication.⁴⁶ Oré's biographical report on Francisco Solano was a significant historical and religious work that led ultimately to the canonization of the man. Finally, *The Martyrs of Florida* (1619) is an important source for the ecclesiastical history of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and it includes important ethnohistorical information on Florida that is of great value to the research scholar working in the First Spanish Period.

46. It is interesting to note that the year after Oré died, Juan Pérez de Bocanegra published the *Ritual Formulario, e Institución de Curas . . .* (Lima, 1631). According to Vargas Ugarte's *Historia de la Iglesia en el Perú*, I, 228, Pérez Bocanegra included some Oré material in his text. See also Cipriano Muñoz y Manzano Vinaza, *Bibliografía Española de lenguas indígenas de América* (Madrid, 1892; reprint, Madrid, 1977), 90.