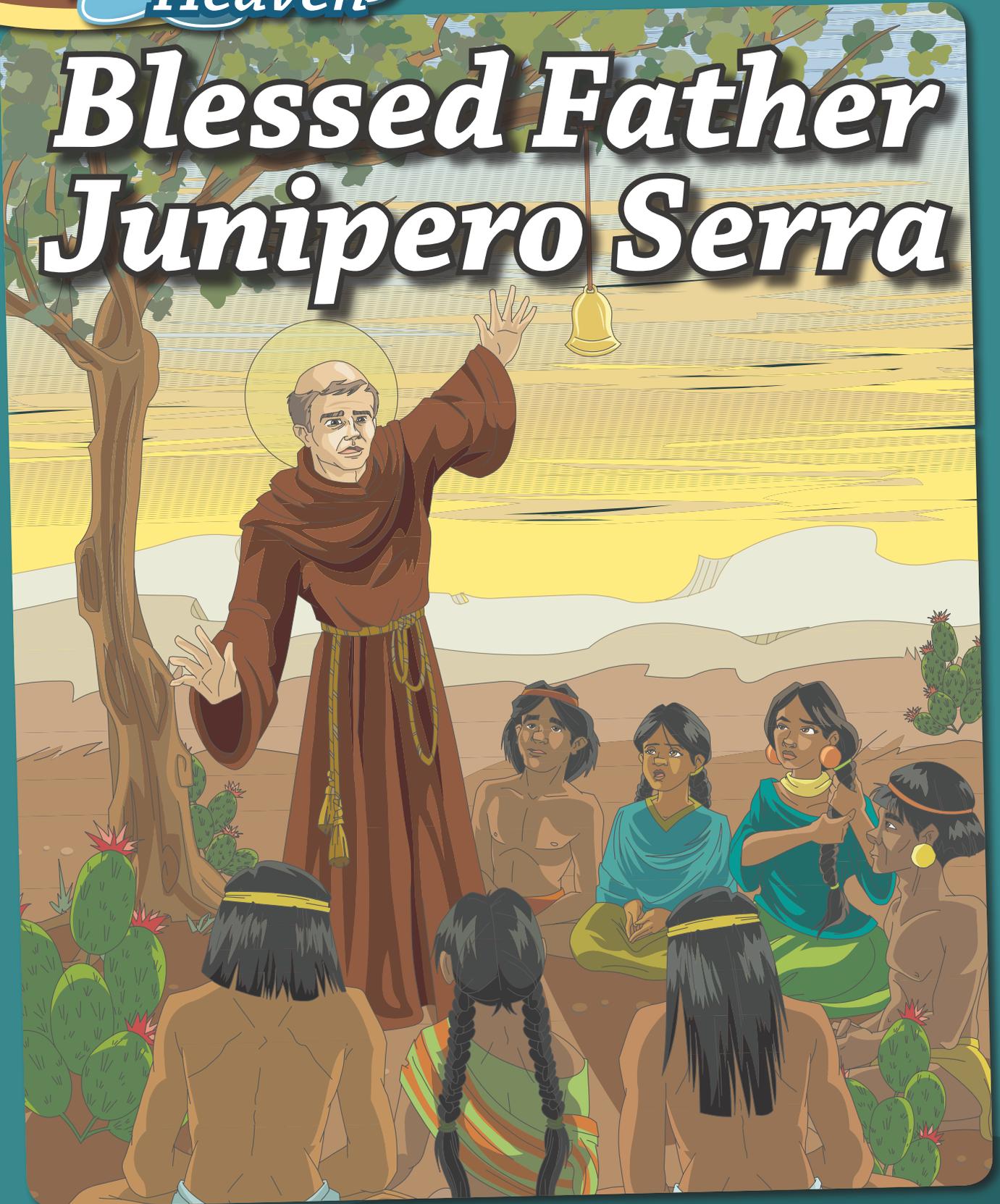


# Blessed Father Junipero Serra





# ***Blessed Father Junipero Serra***

***A Catholic Vacation Bible School Program***

***By Tammy Gabrelcik***



# Table of Contents

## **Saint Lesson**

*Lesson Plan* . . . . . **3**

## **Crafts**

*Film Canister Indian Necklace (Preschool, Grade K)* . . . **6**

*Father Serra Drum (1st Grade & 2nd Grade)* . . . . . **7**

*Tie-Dye (3rd Grade & 4th Grade)* . . . . . **9**

*Blessed Serra in a Jar (5th Grade & 6th Grade)* . . . . . **10**

## **Music**

*Blessed Father Serra Song* . . . . . **11**

## **Snacks**

*Serra Trail Mix* . . . . . **12**

## **Games**

*Bean Bag Toss* . . . . . **13**

## **Extras**

*Father Serra Memory Verse* . . . . . **14**



# Blessed Father Junipero Serra

## Lesson Plan

- Objectives**
- To introduce the life of Blessed Father Junipero Serra to children 4-12 years old.
  - To show how evangelizing is an important part of our faith.
  - To give children a role model for their Christian pilgrimage to Heaven.

- Supplies**
- Large cardboard cutout of the United States with California marked with a cross
  - Rosary
  - Small bell on a string to tie in a tree
  - 2-3 American Indian costumes, child size
  - Brown priest costume, child size
  - Large cardboard ship
  - American Indian weapons (bows and arrows...)
  - Cloth with Blessed Mother image
  - Large cardboard mission church with bell

- Characters**
- 2-3 American Indians
  - Blessed Father Junipero Serra
  - 1 child to carry cardboard props onto stage area
  - Narrator (adult or teen)

### Lesson

### Act 1

*Props: Large cardboard cutout of the United States with California marked with a cross.*

*Characters: Child volunteer to carry the prop into the stage area for a visual aid to story.*

**Narrator:** "Father Serra was a Franciscan priest. He came to California in 1769. At this time many Indians lived there. They had never heard about God and His great love. Besides knowing nothing about the one, true God, these Indians had a very uncivilized way of living. They did not know how to build very good

# Lesson Plan (Continued)

homes for themselves. They did not know how to grow food from the land. Father Serra planned to build missions for these Indians and to help them learn about civilized life and the one true God."

## Act 2

*Props: Rosary, bell*

*Characters: child dressed as priest, 3 children dressed as Indians.*

**Narrator:** "Father Serra began by tying a bell in a tree. He rang the bell so that everyone nearby could hear."

*Child priest ties bell in tree and rings bell.*

**Narrator:** "Then he waited to see what would happen. Soon a lone Indian appeared. The kind priest gave him a present, which the Indian treasured. Then the Indian left. He came back with some of his Indian friends. Fr. Serra then taught the Indians to pray."

*Indian timidly enters and priest gives Indian a Rosary. Indian leaves and comes back with timid friends. Three Indians return and kneel to pray with priest.*

## Act 3

*Props: cardboard ship*

*Characters: priest*

**Narrator:** "After six months of many kinds of hardship of disease and famine, some of the Indians became unfriendly and cruel. There were few supplies left for the missions. These troubles upset the soldiers at the establishment. They decided to go back to Mexico. Fr. Serra begged them to stay for at least nine days more. In the meantime Fr. Serra prayed and prayed to God for help. Still there were no signs of help. Fr. Serra prayed on."

*Child Priest kneels and prays.*

**Narrator:** "At sunset on the ninth day, a ship was seen on the horizon. It was bringing food and help. Fr. Serra's prayers were answered. The mission was saved."

*Child with cardboard ship walks behind praying priest.*

**Narrator:** "This was the beginning of the great mission system of California started by Fr. Serra."



# Lesson Plan (Continued)

## Act 4

*Props: bell, Indian weapons, cloth with Blessed Mother image*

*Characters: 2 priests, 2-5 Indians*

**Narrator:** "The next year Fr. Serra started a mission at a new place in California called Monterey. Soon a third mission and then a fourth was started. In 1771 Fr. Serra founded a mission to honor St. Gabriel the Archangel, called San Gabriel. Two priests came from far away to help in this mission. As soon as they arrived, Indians appeared with spears and bows and arrows. The Indians were going to fight the priests."

*Two priests enter stage and Indians enter with weapons for fighting.*

**Narrator:** "The priests prayed for God's help."

*Priests make the Sign of the Cross.*

**Narrator:** "The Indians came closer and closer. The priests had a beautiful painting of our Blessed Mother. They unrolled it before the threatening Indians."

*Priest unrolls picture of Blessed Mother. Indians freeze.*

**Narrator:** "A strange thing happened. The Indians stood still, as if someone had cast a spell over them. They laid down their bows and arrows. Then they became friendly with the missionaries and even helped them set up their mission bell on an oak tree nearby."

## Act 5

*Prop: Cardboard mission church with bell*

*Characters: 2 Indians*

*Enter stage missionary church held by 2 Indians.*

**Narrator:** "Fr. Serra went on to establish many more missions across California. Ever afterwards, when the mission bells rang, the natives answered the call and came to pray with Fr. Serra. Before long twenty-one mission churches rang their bells in California thanks to Fr. Serra."



Appropriate for:  
**Preschool, Grade K**

## ***Blessed Father Junipero Serra***

# **Film Canister Indian Necklace**

- Supplies**
- Small film canisters with lids, one per child
  - ¼ inch red ribbon one per child
  - ½ yard Indian print fabric
  - Tacky glue
  - Small plastic paint brushes
  - Small paper cups
  - Small picture of the saint (size of film canister lid)
  - Small feathers assorted colors
  - 1 permanent marker for teacher
  - Small container of wet hand wipes
  - Hole punch
  - Optional: newspaper

- Set Up**
1. Fill small cups ¼ of the way full with glue and place plastic paint brush in cup.
  2. Place newspaper at each work area.
  3. Pre-cut fabric to fit around the film canister. Pre-cut ribbon 32 inches long.
  4. Punch 2 holes on film canister lid for ribbon to loop through.
  5. Place one piece of pre-cut fabric, ribbon, two feathers, one film canister and one small picture of Blessed Father Serra at each child's work area.

- Directions**
1. Paint the film canister with glue. Do not paint the lid.
  2. Let children clean fingers if needed with wipes.
  3. Wrap pre-cut fabric around film canister.
  4. Slide the feather tips under the fabric with feather plumes hanging out at the bottom of the canister. Place canister upside down to dry. Feathers should stick in glue under fabric and be secure when glue is dry.
  5. Write child's name on inside of canister lid with permanent marker.
  6. Glue Blessed Father Serra's picture on lid. Re-punch hole through picture. Make sure the holes are lined up with the holes already on lid.
  7. Lace ribbon through holes and tie the two ends of the ribbon into a knot.
  8. Let lid dry separated from the canister.
  9. Teacher may obtain small religious items to let children put inside of canister.





Appropriate for:  
**1<sup>st</sup> Grade & 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade**

## ***Blessed Father Junipero Serra***

# **Father Serra Drum**

- Supplies**
- One empty oatmeal box (canister type) with lid per child
  - Assorted small colored feathers
  - Assorted colors construction paper
  - Brown acrylic paint (1-2 small bottles per 10 children)
  - Paint brush per child
  - Glue
  - Small paper cups
  - Water available for washing paint from paint brushes
  - Picture of Blessed Father Serra
  - Prayer for canonization of Blessed Father Serra
  - Black permanent marker
  - Scissors
  - 1 roll of paper towels for clean up
  - Optional: Newspaper

- Set Up**
1. Remove lid from oatmeal box and wipe clean. Measure from the bottom of the oatmeal box up 2 ½ inches and draw a guide line around the box. Cut along this line with scissors or exacto knife. Around the new top of the oatmeal box snip ¼ inch cuts about ½ inch apart. When snipping is complete, bend the cut edge down away from the center of the box. This will create a ledge for the plastic oatmeal lid to fit snugly. Check to see if the lid fits and make any adjustments needed.
  2. Place a small amount of brown paint into paper cups for children to share. Place 2 paint brushes in each cup of paint. Place a paper towel near each work area for quick clean up or spills.
  3. Pre-cut red, yellow and orange construction paper into small triangles approximately 1-inch in size. It will take 12 to 16 triangles per drum depending on which size of oatmeal box you are using.

- Directions**
1. Write names on the bottom of each child's drum.
  2. Allow the children to paint the drums brown. Put away paint cups and wash paint brushes. Distribute new cups and place small amount of glue in each cup. Use clean paint brushes for glue. While brown paint is drying on the



# Father Serra Drum (Continued)

drum, read the prayer for the canonization of Blessed Father Serra and have a brief discussion about it.

3. When paint is dry glue construction paper triangles and feathers to decorate the side of the drum.
4. Write on the top edge of the plastic lid "Father Serra Pray for Us" with permanent marker.
5. Glue picture of Blessed Father Serra on the center of the plastic lid. Glue prayer for canonization onto the underside of the plastic lid.
6. Let dry. Place lids on drum. Container can hold prayer cards, Rosary or other small objects.



## ***Prayer for the Canonization of Blessed Junipero Serra***

Heavenly Father, we ask you to look lovingly on the missionary journey of your faithful servant, Blessed Junipero Serra.

His steadfast efforts in founding nine missions in California and the conversion of thousands of Native Americans have inspired the formation and work of Serra International.

This ministry in Father Serra's name is to encourage and affirm vocations to priesthood and vowed religious life.

We pray that you bless this holy and courageous Franciscan missionary and grant him the ultimate honor of Sainthood in your heavenly kingdom.

We ask this in the name of thy Blessed Trinity and of Mary, Queen of Vocations.

Amen.



Appropriate for:  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Grade & 4<sup>th</sup> Grade**

## **Blessed Father Junipero Serra**

# Tie-Dye

- Supplies**
- 20-inch x 20-inch white cotton fabric per child
  - Red, yellow, and orange RIT Dye
  - Large buckets or pans for dye (empty kitty litter buckets work well).
  - Small clothesline with clothes pins
  - Water
  - Stirring sticks
  - Package of rubber bands
  - Black permanent markers, 1 per child
  - Samples of Indian border designs
  - Newspaper

- Set Up**
1. Place a pre-cut piece of white cotton fabric, one permanent black marker, and handful of rubber bands at each child's work area.
  2. Place layers of newspapers at each child's area. This will prevent the permanent marker from bleeding onto the tables.
  3. Follow directions on package of RIT dye and mix in buckets. Keep next to table.
  4. If a sink is not available, fill two buckets with clean water for rinsing.
  5. Hang a temporary clothesline with clothes pins for drying.

- Directions**
1. Show children Indian border designs. Spread cloth out on newspaper. Begin drawing a border around the cloth.
  2. Write child's name in corner of fabric.
  3. When design is finished, write "SEMPER ORA" which means "pray always" in Latin in the middle of the cloth square.
  4. Pinch areas of fabric and twist rubber bands tightly around fabric.
  5. Dip fabric with rubber bands on into one color of dye.
  6. Soak fabric making sure all parts are submerged into the dye.
  7. Check fabric for desired color.
  8. Take fabric out and rinse in clear water.
  9. Remove rubber bands.
  10. Hang to drip dry.





Appropriate for:  
**5<sup>th</sup> Grade & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

## **Blessed Father Junipero Serra**

# **Blessed Serra in a Jar**

- Supplies**
- Small glass jars used for bouillon cubes or other spices, one per child: approximately 2 ¼ inch diameter and 5 ¼ inch tall.
  - 1-inch ribbon with Indian motif
  - Spanish moss
  - Small bottles of glue for two children to share
  - 3-inch small twig that looks like a tree
  - Small bell (½ inch. If wooden craft bells cannot be found, use Sculpey clay and fashion a small bell with copper-colored clay. Bake as directed on package.)
  - Statuette of Franciscan saint. Statues of St. Anthony holding the Child Jesus are easy to obtain. Use dry brown tempera paint powder to brush over child's face and arms creating an Indian child. Add a small head band with yarn if desired ([www.catholicdirect.com](http://www.catholicdirect.com)).
  - Thread
  - Inexpensive clay

- Set Up**
1. Place glue bottle, small pinch of Spanish moss, precut ribbon to fit around jar in two pieces for top and bottom, twig with small bell tied on it to look like a tree, and a small piece of clay.

- Directions**
1. Write child's name on outside of lid.
  2. Take lid off of small jar. Fashion a small mound out of the clay. Stick clay on the inside of the lid. Press twig with bell into clay. This creates a base for the tree to stand.
  3. Apply generous amounts of glue to the rest of the lid. Place statuette of Blessed Father Serra next to tree and bell. Carefully add moss to cover mound of clay. Set aside to dry.
  4. Turn small jar upside down. Glue Indian ribbon around jar for a border.
  5. When items in lid are dry or at least stable, screw the jar onto the lid. When lid is in place, glue last piece of ribbon around base of jar, covering lid.
  6. Place in a safe area to dry undisturbed.





**Blessed Father Junipero Serra**

# Blessed Father Serra Song

*Sung to the tune of "I've Been Working on the Railroad".*

Blessed Father Serra  
Lived so long ago.  
He loved preachin' to the Indians  
In Cal-i-for-ni-a.

Don't you hear the bell ah ring'n  
Father's callin' Indians.  
Don't you hear Father Serra  
Preachin' all the day.

Father Serra preach  
Father Serra preach  
Father Serra preach  
For the Indians today.

Father Serra preach  
Father Serra preach  
Father Serra preach today.

Times got bad for Father  
Times got bad I know  
Times got bad for Father  
Prayin' for help to show.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit  
Father Son and Holy Spirit  
Prayin' for help to show.



*Blessed Father Junipero Serra*

# Serra Trail Mix

- Ingredients**
- 4 cups salted or unsalted peanuts
  - 1 cup raisins
  - 1 cup M & M's
  - 2 cups sunflower seeds

- Directions**
1. Mix together in large ziplock bag.
  2. Serve in small paper cups.



## *Blessed Father Junipero Serra*

# Bean Bag Toss

- Supplies**
- 3 medium-sized bean bags
  - Board with 12-inch circle cut out of middle, with a board prop
  - Medium size cow bell
  - Short rope

**How to Play** Set up board with bell tied to center of the circle in the board.

Lay a rope on the ground spaced appropriately for age group. Younger groups should be closer, larger groups should be farther back.

Have children line up behind the line. Each child has 3 tosses. The object of the game is to get the bean bags through the circle and ring the bell like Blessed Father Serra did for the Indians.

## *Easy Alternative*

**How to Play** Tie a bell on a tree branch and toss bean bags to hit the bell.



# Blessed Father Junipero Serra

## Memory Verse

### Blessed Father Serra



Matthew 28: 19

*“... go, therefore and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”*

–St. Joseph Edition NAB

### Blessed Father Serra



Matthew 28: 19

*“... go, therefore and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”*

–St. Joseph Edition NAB

### Blessed Father Serra



Matthew 28: 19

*“... go, therefore and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”*

–St. Joseph Edition NAB

### Blessed Father Serra



Matthew 28: 19

*“... go, therefore and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”*

–St. Joseph Edition NAB

### Blessed Father Serra



Matthew 28: 19

*“... go, therefore and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”*

–St. Joseph Edition NAB

### Blessed Father Serra



Matthew 28: 19

*“... go, therefore and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”*

–St. Joseph Edition NAB