Truth-Telling Task Force Report to the 44th Convention of the Diocese of El Camino Real

November 9, 2024

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Summary of the Truth-Telling Task Force's Activities in 2023-24

The Task Force conducted an audit of the relationship, financial or otherwise, between our diocese, and the history of all Indigenous peoples on whose ancestral and territorial homelands its churches and buildings now stand, including truth-telling about what happened within our diocese and its territorial predecessors.

The Task Force has been unable to find any transactions or official relations between what is now the Episcopal Diocese of El Camino Real or of its individual churches about Native Californians. The taskforce has spent most of its time and efforts this year reconstructing the history of early Episcopalians and Indigenous peoples in our diocese, region, and state.

Besides its forthcoming written report to the 2024 EDECR convention, the Truth-Telling Task Force has focused on creating an **Interactive Timeline,** *A Beginning Is Never a Beginning; there is always something that came before*. www.tttaskforce.com. While this multimedia educational project includes our taskforce's historical findings, it will do even more with links to tribal websites and other sources, highlight Indigenous persons' own voices and understanding of their history, culture and concerns. It is now on the St. Barnabas', Arroyo Grande, website. This Interactive Timeline will also appear, along with other resources, on a new Truth-Telling Task Force page being created on the Diocesan website.

After the task force's term ends in November 2024, the site is expected to evolve in collaboration with the Diocesan Archivist, along with other dioceses, ecumenical, and Indigenous partners. The recommendation for a future task force is to add a link to this site on the diocesan digital History Page, enhancing the physical Archives by improving space efficiency and accessibility. The task force highlights the need for the History Page to include:

- Land acknowledgment of the eight primary tribes within the diocese
- Support for ongoing parish research and information sharing
- Contacts with Indigenous communities
- Dialogue with other dioceses, the national church, and Christian partners on Indigenous relations

We wrote a Resolution (Resolution B: Reckoning Task Force) recommending forming a **new diocesan task force** to populate and co-ordinate the new diocesan History Page to help prepare the diocese and its churches for building relationship with descendants of the original peoples located within our diocese. Resolution B appears at the end of this report.

Research Findings and Methods

The Task Force has been unable to find any transactions or official relations between what is now the Episcopal Diocese of El Camino Real (the Diocese) or its individual parishes

with Indigenous peoples, until the Modern Era starting in 1967 (see Synoptic History below about modern relations)**.**
There are three crucial eras in the 19th Century related to the foundation of our diocese: The Spanish colonial period (1769–1821), the Mexican period (1821 to 1848) including the Secularization of the mission system (1832), and the Frontier Era - American period (1849-1890). The 1850s, referred to as the "Indian Bounty Period," were the most destructive years for the remnant of Indigenous peoples. Episcopalians started to arrive during the Mexican era. Under U.S. rule a few Sunday Schools and worshiping gatherings using the Daily Offices of the Book of Common Prayer began to be formed, most notably in Monterey, San Jose and Gilroy. Particularly the Gold Rush and "Indian" Bounty period (1848 to 1860) pre-date the formation of the first congregation in the Diocese. It was during those periods that the indigenous populations were greatly reduced, and the majority of remaining indigenous persons were removed to reservations by the Federal government.

The fourteen congregations founded in the Frontier Era, which are now in our diocese, are:

- Trinity Cathedral, San José (1863)
- St. Philip's and Academy for Color People, San José (1863)
- Calvary, Santa Cruz (1864),
- St Stephen's San Luis Obispo (1867)
- All Saints (Cristo Rey), Watsonville (1874)
- St. Paul's (San Pablo), Salinas (1875)
- St. Stephen's, Gilroy (1875)
- St. Luke's, Hollister (1876)
- St. James', Monterey (1876)
- St. Luke's, Jolon (1878)
- Christ Church, San Ardo (1878)
- St. Luke's, Los Gatos (1883)
- St. John the Baptist, Capitola/Aptos (1889)
- St John's Chapel Monterey (1891)

The formation of these congregations is distanced by at least three prior periods, and up to almost 100 years of prior interactions with the native tribes. The land owned by legacy families of these and later congregations and the land for the parishes would have been gained from Spain or Mexico during the Rancho period, at the earliest, and by typical land sales after the distribution of the ranchos. In effect, Episcopalians were "third generation" of land title changes, so did not directly dispossess native people from their land.

This is not to say that the founders and members of the parishes in what is now the Diocese of El Camino Real did not have interactions, positive or negative, with Indigenous peoples. The difficulty is finding documented occurrences of interactions such as land acquisition, slave ownership, bounty activity, marriages, actions taken by Episcopalians in positions of authority (judges, legislators, law enforcement, community leaders, etc.) etc. The Task Force believes that either the custom of the time or a deliberate silence meant that such interactions were not documented. There is simply not enough evidence of any collaborative, positive, negative or destructive interactions between Episcopalians and the Indigenous peoples of this area.

Current interactions between Episcopalians in the Diocese and Indigenous peoples include Holy Family, San Jose, St. Luke's, Hollister, St. James, Monterey, and St. Stephen's, Gilroy.

Research Methodology

In February 2024 the TTTF held a research seminar in which we shared best practices and tools that might be used by parishes to investigate their own history with Indigenous peoples. The practices focus on research of individuals. These practices include:

- Ancestry.com – This online resource contains census records from the nineteenth century that show the ethnicity of households and individuals. For example, the census records for Arroyo Grande in 1860 showed 55 indigenous people of which 47 were servants (often a form of slavery), one was a rancher, and one was a carpenter. By 1870 census records of Arroyo Grande showed only one Indigenous person. As another example the 1860 census records for San Jose showed only 15 indigenous people of which four were identified as servants (often a form of slavery). This tool was used to research the founders of the earlier parishes that are now part of our diocese. No data was shown linking the founders of the early parishes to Indigenous people.
- Newspapers.com – This online resource was used to look up references to the earlier parishes that are now part of our diocese. This resource was also used to look up the founders and prominent members of the earlier parishes. Many articles from 1850-80 show a pervasive culture of racism and hostility towards Indigenous People. They also show vigilante justice against Latino gangs that could have also included Indigenous People. In addition, Indigenous People were often stereotyped as dumb and made fun of. Finally, one of the founders of St. Stephen's, SLO, Benjamin Brooks, was the longtime editor of the San Luis Obispo *Morning Tribune*. In the 1890 issues--the time of the Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee [https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/immigration/native-american/disaster-at-wounded-knee/] -and the news columns were typically bigoted, but they were more than likely the work of wire services rather than Brooks or his reporters. However, a review of newspapers revealed no articles that link early Episcopalians with Indigenous People.
- Legislative records for the State of California – This resource is now online, and it was used to see if the founders or prominent members of the early parishes participated in legislation that was for or against Indigenous Peoples. A search of these records was inconclusive. We know that Episcopalians were part of the State legislative process in the 1850s, and there is good documentation about the earlier anti-Indigenous People's legislation. However, we found no records that showed which individual legislators voted for or against a piece of legislation.

- Judicial records in the State of California: Although we were unable to find connections between specific judges and decisions binding Indigenous persons to whites as laborers, those records may contain such information if studied further.
- Property records – This resource is now online, and it was used to see if any of the early parishes or their founders received or purchased land that was taken from Indigenous People. Our research showed that the taking of land from Indigenous People happened well before the creation of the State of California. Furthermore, we found no linkages between the land grants done in the Mexican era and the individuals in the earlier Episcopal parishes.
- Various books on local history and local historical societies – Of note, Jim Gregory, a member of St. Barnabas, Arroyo Grande, has researched and written about local history in San Luis Obispo County. He writes, *"We have one settler in Arroyo Grande who, as a soldier, witnessed the execution of 38 Dakota in Mankato, Minnesota in 1862 (the [current] mayor lives in his house), and two who participated in the 1865 Powder River Expedition against the Lakota and Cheyenne. Their commanding officer promised to kill "every male Indian over the age of twelve." His men wound up instead having to eat their own mounts to survive. And we have one more, a cavalryman, who, by sheer luck of the draw, was left behind with his company at a fort while John Chivington carried out one of the most brutal attacks on native people, the Sand Creek Massacre of 1864. But I think they were all Presbyterians or Catholics."* www.nps.gov/sand/learn/historyculture/index.htm
- We encourage people to go to the Frontier Era Page on "A Beginning Is Not a Beginning…" to access the oldest parish, whose website links will take you to their histories. www.tttaskforce.com
- Boarding School records – While there were no Episcopal Indian Boarding Schools in our diocesan area, in the modern era Lakota students in the St. Andrew's, Saratoga "Indian Youth Opportunity Program" (1967-1971) all came from such institutions in South Dakota. The majority of adult Indigenous living in our diocesan areas went through such, often devastating experiences. However, no linkage was found between "Indian" schools and the clergy of our area. Several members of the Santa Ynez band of Chumash were sent to an Indian school in Riverside, but this was a secular institution.
  See the history of the Episcopal Church's which ran the second largest number of boarding schools in the 19th and into the 20th Centuries: www.episcopalchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/10/IndigMin-Boarding-Schools-QandA.pdf

The following are two approaches toward reporting our research

1. History of the Original Indigenous, Spanish-Mexican, and American Frontier Eras (*c.* 12,000 BCE-1890)

This is the Truth-Telling Taskforce's best attempt to accurately reconstruct (a) the history of Indigenous Peoples in California and in and around our diocese and (b) their interactions with various Europeans and European-Americans, including Episcopalians. In this we have been informed by some of the best current scholarship. May the truth help set us free.

Original Indigenous Peoples

For over 10,000 years before contact with Europeans, Indigenous tribes existed along California's central coast and contiguous inland valleys such as Santa Clara in the San Francisco Bay Area where the churches of El Camino Real now exist. These include various Ohlone tribes -- the Esselen, Costanoan Rumsen, Mutsun, Awaswas, Salinan, Tamien, Muwekma, and Yokuts and Chumash peoples. Many of these original peoples have disappeared and become lost from memory, while some of these groups' descendants still live among us.

Although there was a considerable variety among the San Francisco Bay Area and Central Coastal Indigenous peoples, especially between the coastal and inland areas, there were more basic similarities. Before contact, there were scores of independent political "triblets" of associated families of 200 to 400 people whose members dwelt in villages ranging anywhere from 40 to the low hundreds. Dancing, both within communities and at regional feasts with other tribes, was the main form of communal religious expression. People fed themselves by harvesting and managing the abundant plant, fish and animal resources of their local environments, augmenting these with food and tools received in inter-tribal trade. Besides fish and game, acorns and grassland seeds were main staples in many areas, and seed yields were extended by controlled burnings. While people had an identifiable territory, they moved around seasonally to take best advantage of timely appearances of local food sources. Tribes tended to know their natural environments intimately, and the land figured prominently in their life, culture, religion and identify.[1] For fuller information about the Indigenous tribes of our state and diocese, including from their own tribal viewpoint, visit the new website *A Beginning is Not a Beginning*, at www.tttaskforce.com.

Upon close contact with Europeans and European-Americans from the late 18th to mid-19th centuries, Indigenous California people experienced catastrophic loss of numbers from (1) disease, (2) loss of their land and culture, (3) brutal violence, and (4) enslavement. It is estimated the Indigenous population was reduced by at least 80% during this period. However, throughout this holocaust, a remnant of Indigenous people proved resilient and able to resist, adapt and, above all, survive.

Spanish Colonization in California (1770-1821)

Reacting to Russian advances down from Alaska and growing presence of English ships, around 1770 the Spanish crown moved to protect the northwest border of its American empire by establishing a string of missions, forts and towns along the coast of Alta California connected by ***El Camino Real***, the Royal Road. In the San Francisco Bay Area, the Franciscan missions included Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, San Juan Bautista, and Mission San Carlos Borromeo de Carmelo. Farther south in our diocesan area were the missions San Luis Obispo, San Miguel de Arcangel, San Antonio de Paula, and La Nuestra Senora de Soledad. In this imperial venture, the Spanish wielded the papal

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[1] Information from Randall Milliken, A Time of Little Choice: The Disintegration of Tribal Culture in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1769-1810, (Banning, CA: Ballena Press, 2009), Chapter 2. The Tribal World.

Doctrine of Discovery, whereby Europeans were empowered to claim title to any lands hitherto unknown to them and to subjugate, enslave or kill Indigenous People to advance Christianity and empire. [For more about the Doctrine of Discovery, see www.gilderlehrman.org/history-resources/spotlight-primary-source/doctrine-discovery-1493. For the Episcopal Church's position on it, see www.episcopalchurch.org/category/doctrine-of-discovery/].

This Spanish mission system proved radically disruptive and destructive to Indigenous societies. Under it, Indigenous peoples were removed from their lands and gathered into concentrated missions. The goal of the missions was to transform native people, whom the Spanish considered pagans and "people without reason," by converting them to Catholicism and "civilizing" them into becoming Spanish peasants. Theoretically, once the missionary fathers' charges graduated from uncivilized heathenism to being Christian Spaniards, they would receive the mission lands and become townspeople in *pueblos*. Underlying all of this was the economic need to build and run the missions and their vast lands.

There is debate about whether Indigenous persons initially entered missions under physical compulsion or not, but clearly, once there, they experienced exceedingly harsh conditions and lost all meaningful freedom. Upon baptism, mission *neophytes* were theoretically, in both body and soul, under Franciscan authority. Every aspect of Indians' lives and activities in the missions were strictly regimented, including their schedules, work, worship, marriage and sex lives. Runaways to Indigenous villages were hunted and returned by soldiers. Destruction of Indigenous culture was consciously and systematically pursued. Mission death rates were ghastly.[2] Close-quartered communities of oft overworked, ill fed, and physically abused people with no inherited immunities to European-borne diseases proved near perfect breeding grounds for epidemics among the Indigenous mission populations.

Given the severity of the missions' impact on Indigenous People, one might ask why any had been willing to enter them? For Indigenous tribes in the San Francisco Bay Area, it soon became a time of little choice. From the Spanish and Mexican eras, and continuing through the American conquest, the economic system changes destroyed the Indigenous way of life. The introduction of European livestock and crops destroyed local ecosystems and Indigenous peoples' food sources such as seed plants and wild game. Immediately upon establishing Missions' vast acreage, fields and pastures replaced the natural habitats upon which the local peoples had depended for food.

With loss of numbers from hunger, disease, and killings, and the movement of some persons and groups to missions, many villages, already traditionally small, fell below the minimal number of members needed to fill the work teams to function viably in their traditional mode. *Tribal disintegration was underway.* In this time of vast, complex and wrenching change, Indigenous people often held ambivalent, even contradictory attitudes. Many were attracted to the material goods the Spanish possessed and to the access to them that proximity to the missions provided. Some succumbed to feelings of cultural inferiority before their own marked decline and the apparent power and success of the newcomers and their ways. Sometimes the young were first to feel some attraction to the missions and Western ways and sometimes their elders eventually followed them. Even those who most hated the Spaniards might come to see no other option for survival. According to a leading scholar, the great majority of tribes in the San Francisco Bay Area made the decision to attach themselves to one of the missions "during a time when changes in their world seemed to leave them with little or no choice to do otherwise."[3] *By 1810, ALL the Indigenous villages in the Bay area were gone.* The former villagers had either died, moved to more distant tribes, or entered a mission.

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[2] The death rate at the missions, particularly of children, was very high and the majority of children baptized did not survive childhood. At Mission Santa Cruz for instance, three of four children died before reaching the age of two.[36]

There is a common misperception that the mission experience entirely destroyed Indigenous people's culture. Yes, the mission experience certainly was a time of tremendous suffering, upheaval, and change for Indigenous Californians. Recent scholarship, however, stresses that Indian peoples and societies were not ended, but rather reconstituted in the missions. Many more different tribal groups than before (a) lived together, (b) inter-married, and (c) formed new communities within the Missions. While such changes were greatly condensed and accelerated by mission life, current scholarship stresses that multicultural re-grouping, usually through inter-marriage, had always been part of Indigenous life. Re-shaped relations regularly occurred, as Indigenous societies historically had not been static but fluid and dynamic. Former Mission Indians often lived together in communities near their Missions or on their homelands where, however reconstituted, they maintained community and a strong sense of their Indigenous heritage and worldview.[4]

California's Mexican Era (1821-1845)

After Mexican independence from Spain in 1821, the mission system, at first, continued. But in the mid-1830s the new Mexican government began to "secularize" the Missions and transfer the churches' vast land holdings into private hands. The Mexican government gave large land grants (7,000 acres on average) mostly to local landowners but also to soldiers and others for past services.

Former mission Indians were largely left out of this gigantic land giveaway--even though in the missions' original plan the *neophytes,* when they were sufficiently civilized and Christianized—which the friars never deemed their workers to be—were to receive the mission lands for themselves. *The great majority of Indigenous people, after emancipation, never received any land.* In **Mission Santa Cruz**, for a short while a few Indigenous groups and individuals did receive access to land, some even with legal title. Interestingly, two of the Indigenous individuals to receive land were church musicians. But lacking enough paperwork and legal knowledge, by 1866 all Indigenous persons in Santa Cruz had lost title to any former mission land.[5]

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[3] Milliken, Time of Little Choice, xiv.

[4] One of many scholars arguing for the post-mission continuation of Indigenous cultures and communities is Kent G. Lightfoot, Indians, Missionaries, and Merchants: The Legacy of Colonial Encounters on the California Frontiers (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), xiii.

In the **Mexican** era, one-time mission lands became great ranchos owned mainly by locally born *Californios*. Despite visible changes, there were major underlying continuities between Spanish-era and Mexican-era California. Mexicans inherited the Missions' deeply ingrained racial hierarchy, with Indians at the bottom and Whites on top. Furthermore, landowners continued the missionaries' reliance on Indian labor. Ranchers and settlers "obtained" Indigenous men to tend cattle, till fields, and build their businesses and used females as domestic servants and concubines. Settlers and soldiers raided and stole people from villages as well as scooped up landless Indians near old mission lands. Despite the central Mexican government's new prohibition of slavery, enforcement was ineffective in distant California, where multiple forms of involuntary Indian servitude swiftly developed, with debt peonage being one of the most common. Moreover, in the 1830s and early 1840s, the Mexican government encouraged immigration so that a growing number of Anglo-American and European enterprises became as dependent on Indigenous laborers as any *Californio* ranchero. Rancher and businessman John Sutter was a 19th Century Mexican and then American who is best remembered for founding Sutter's Creek, where gold was discovered. A historian who writes of slavery in California states that Sutter "thrived from the profits of human trafficking, kidnapping Indians and then leasing or selling them to other ranchers."[6]

While no one is certain, it is estimated that, before European contact the Indigenous Californian population may have been as high as 310,000, then under Spanish rule it declined to around 250,000. Indigenous de-population accelerated in Mexican California. Acute epidemics in the 1830s killed roughly 60,000 California Indians while another 40,000 died from disease, armed conflict, and destroyed food supplies. On the eve of American conquest and occupation, the Indigenous population was still near 150,000.[7]

American "Frontier Era" (1846-1890)

Although significant numbers of Anglo-Americans, including individual Episcopalians, began to enter Mexican-California in the late 1830s and early 1840s, it was the Gold Rush immediately following the U.S. conquest of Mexican Alta California in 1846 that brought an avalanche of newcomers to California. A new frontier for White Americans was opened. From the immigrant perspective, going to California meant having the opportunity to make a new life for oneself and lift one's economic and social standing. From the viewpoint of Indigenous Californians, American annexation and mass migration further despoiled their land and brought new destruction upon them but at a much more accelerated rate than during the previous two eras.

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[5] Martin Rizzo-Martinez, *We Are Not Animals: Indigenous Politics of Survival, Rebellion, and Reconstitution in Nineteenth-Century California* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2022), 187-189. Asisara and Xuclan were Indigenous mission musicians who received land immediately following the end of Mission Santa Cruz.

[6] Jean Pfaelzer, *California, A Slave State* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2023),163-164.

[7] Population figures from Benjamin Madley, An American Genocide: The United States and the Californian Indian Catastrophe, 1846-1873 (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2016), 3, 39-40.

Although massacres of Indians did occur in Mexican California, it was during the early American era, specifically between 1845 and 1873, that murderous events became so numerous, wide-spread and organized that the slaughter of Indigenous Californians turned outright genocidal. In less than three decades, by 1873, hunger and violence had reduced Indigenous numbers by at least 80%, from 150,000 down to 30,000. Causes of Indigenous decimation were destruction of food supplies, disease, and settler violence involving the destruction and separation of families. White American miners, ranchers, vigilantes, and governments are estimated to have killed outright some 16,000 people and took another 24,000 to 27,000 as forced laborers. The lowest Indigenous population ever in California was in 1900, bottoming out at an estimated 16,000 people.[8]

The entry of tens of thousands of migrants into the gold fields wrought havoc on Indian economies in and around the mines of Central and Northern California, rapidly undermining local Indigenous people's very ability to feed themselves. Heavily armed men often brought with them from their places of origin inherited animosity toward Indians and showed no tolerance for what they saw as Indigenous interference, threat, or provocation. During U.S. military rule, the Army had little ability, nor incentive, to constrain the rising tide of violence by individuals and vigilante groups against Indians. As miners and other Whites acted with impunity and without effective external restraint, inner moral constraints also fell away.[9]

Denying Indigenous People Civil and Political Rights: After California achieved statehood in 1850, many of the new State's policies proved highly damaging to Indigenous people. The State's constitutional convention denied Indigenous People the right to vote or to testify in court, laying the groundwork for a political system that afforded Indigenous persons no effective protection by government or law and leaving them vulnerable to abuse by Whites who could mistreat and murder them with impunity without needing to fear any likely punishment. Building on these unjust constitutional provisions, California's first elected governor, Peter Hardeman Burnett and legislature session of 1850-52 added further oppressive policies.[10]

"Indian Expeditions" (Armed Hunts/Massacres): California's first civilian governor, Peter H. Burnett, set the genocidal tone in his 1851 Annual Address to the Legislature declaring that "a war of extermination will be waged . . . until the Indian race becomes extinct." *Extermination* was the word most often repeatably used by 19C Californians to describe what they saw as the inevitable result and desired goal of using martial force against Indigenous People. Twice the governor asked the new legislature to authorize and fund Indian Expeditions to punish Indians for alleged crimes and attacks against Whites, and twice the legislators did so. In reality, these "expeditions" were hunts that usually culminated in massacres, with any survivors sold into servitude. This was the start, during the 1850s and 1860s at the state, federal and local vigilante levels of what the leading historian of genocide in California has labeled a state sponsored "Killing Machine."[11]

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[8] For population numbers, see Madley, An American Genocide, 346; Pfaelzer, CA, A Slave State, 163; and Rizzo-Martinez, We Are Not Animal, xiv.

[9] On rising unrestrained violence toward Indigenous people during California's Goldrush, see Madley, American Genocide, Chapters 3 and 4.

[10] For comprehensive examination of early state measures harming Native Californians, see Kimberly Johnston-Dodds, Early California Laws and Policies Related to California Indians at https://library.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/crb-reports/02-014.pdf

The most frequent reason given for forming punitive expeditions was alleged theft by Indigenous persons of Whites' horses, cattle or other livestock. From Spanish colonization to the American period, the greatest single cause of the decimation of Indigenous Californian populations was the rapid destruction, upon introduction of European livestock and crop field crops, of local ecosystems and Native peoples' traditional food sources such as seed plants and wild game. Ironically, once European and Euro-Americans' livestock had destroyed Native Californians' ability to feed themselves, while facing starvation, they often turned to that livestock for food—which then often led to genocidal anti-Indian expeditions being launched against them.

Moreover, any Indians charged with theft or accused of attacking Whites were presumed guilty--and if the specific accused Indians proved elusive, any Indigenous people at hand would do as a substitute on whom merciless punishment was unleashed. Almost all White voices of the day (political leaders, military authorities, newspaper editorials, *etc.*) agreed on the "pedagogical" value of Indian killing-- that it would teach surviving Indigenous peoples not to tamper with Whites' property or lives.[12]

The depths of savagery to which Indian killers sank in the frontier era is shocking. Massacres and atrocities were so commonplace as to be normalized. At various times, both state government and local communities paid bounties for Indigenous persons' scalps.[13] At other times whole heads were collected. Moreover, one did not need 21C standards morally to condemn this era's gruesome assaults on Native Californians; contemporary voices of the day called out its barbarism. Although atypical for the time, not everyone lost their moral compass or minced words about what was occurring. One newspaper headline simply announced a "Horrible Slaughter of Indians in Napa and Sonoma." An eyewitness described vigilante rangers' encirclement and surprise attack on a village as a "work of devilish butchery," writing:

> *The attacking party rushed upon them—blowing out their brains, and splitting open their skulls with tomahawks. Little children in baskets, and even babes, had their heads smashed . . . Mothers and infants shared the common fate . . . The children, scarcely able to walk, toddled toward the squaws for protection, crying with fright, but were overtaken, slaughtered like wild animals and thrown into piles.*[14]

Act for the Protection and Governance of Indians (1850-63): This misleadingly named law was another harmful act enacted by the state's first legislature (which included Episcopal law makers), as it built the legal foundation for the continuation and expansion of coercive Indigenous labor system in California. According to a recent state government report, this act "facilitated removing California Indians from their traditional lands, separating at least a generation of children and adults from their families, languages, and cultures." It *"provided for the 'apprenticing' or indenturing Indian children and adults to Whites and punished 'vagrant' Indians by 'hiring' them out to the highest bidder at a public auction*."[15] From passage of this Indian Act in 1850 until its repeal in 1863, between 10,000-20,000 Indigenous Californians were kidnapped, indentured, and forced into bondage. By 1852, *"one-third of the Native boys in California were indentured and 65 percent of Native females were bound over before they were fifteen years old*."[16]

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[11] Madley, *American Genocide,* Chapter 6, "Rise of the Killing Machine."

[12] On Whites' notion of "pedagogic killing," see Madley, *American Genocide,* 48, 95, 128, 137, 180, 181, 216.

[13] For state and local scalping bounties, see Madley, 197-98 and 205-06.

[14] Headline from *Humbolt Times*, March 1850; George Lount's account of a ranger massacre appeared in The *Daily Alta Californian*, January 26,1860, 1.

Although legislators created this act, it was implemented by **judges** at the county and township levels (including Episcopal judges or those who would become part of the Episcopal Church as our denomination was established in California). For example, County Courts of Sessions and township Justices of the Peace determined which Indigenous adults were indentured and children "apprenticed" to White persons. (Bearing in mind that California Indians could not testify), any White person could bring an Indian or Indians before a Justice of the Peace and -- on such grounds as that the Indian lived on the White's land, owed him money, could not provide for themself, was orphaned, or followed an immoral lifestyle—the Justice could legally bind the Indigenous person(s) to the applicant. Given that numerous **Episcopalians** were **judges**, it is likely that some early local Episcopalians played their parts imposing this act's unjust measures on Native Californians.

Two Episcopalians associated with founding families of the future Trinity Cathedral of **El Camino Real**, Elisha Oscar Crosby and Benjamin Cory, were members of the 1850-51 legislature that passed the aforementioned measures so harmful to Indigenous people. Crosby was additionally a delegate to the constitutional convention that decided against recognizing any Indigenous rights. [For more on Crosby 's role in California's Constitutional Convention and on he and Cory in the First Session of California's Legislature that created ani-Indigenous policies, go to *A Beginning Is Not a Beginning* website at www.tttaskforce.com/projects-6 and scroll far down in its **Resources** section to its last entry, on *Early Episcopal Legislators*].

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[15] Johnston-Dodds, *Early California Laws*, 1.
[16] Pfaelzer, California, A Slave State, 175.

2. A Synoptic Historic View of Regional Tribes and the Episcopal Church, 1848 to Present, in the Geographic Boundaries of the Diocese of El Camino Real

Before the founding of the Episcopal Church in California, the land had a human history spanning over ten thousand years. This report provides a historical framework to understand the context in which the Episcopal Church began its presence in the state.

The Truth-Telling mandate is synoptic; it intertwines the history of the Episcopal Church with that of the tribes on whose ancestral lands the Diocese of El Camino Real's churches were established. The report covers the tribes' experiences, from their first contact with the Spanish in 1769, through the Mexican Era (1832-1846), and into the Frontier Era (1846-1890), when Episcopal congregations started forming. The Episcopal Church, rooted in Jamestown in 1607, has always been centered in congregational life, with dioceses and bishops introduced later.

The report's first part identifies the social, spiritual, political, and economic conditions of the land as Episcopalians began gathering in worship communities in the late 1840s and 1850s. These conditions shaped the Diocese of California (1857 onward) and, later, the Diocese of El Camino Real (1980 to present).

Only two references to contact with Indigenous peoples were found. These references appear in the diaries of 19th-century Episcopal clergy, Bishop William Ingraham Kip and Rev. James McGowan. [For these early Episcopal clergymen's comments on Native Californians, see *A Beginning Is Not A Beginning* website at www.tttaskforce.com/copy-of-1800s found under the "Frontier Era" Part of the Homepage's Timeline].

No references to Indigenous people were found in the minutes or documents of local parishes or the Diocese of California during a period historians refer to as genocide.

The initial condition of this audit is silence—a void in the Indigenous - Episcopal ledger from 1848 to 1967. We cannot rewrite history or hastily ask, "Can't we say something positive?" Instead, we must objectively examine what actually happened.

An interactive website, "**A Beginning Is Not a Beginning**," has been created with resources and links to tribal websites, regional history, and parish histories. Start your exploration at St. Barnabas, Arroyo Grande and go to www.tttaskforce.com.

Frontier Era 1848-1890 - Tribes and the Establishment of the Episcopal Church

There are eight primary clusters of tribal bands in the area that is now the Diocese of El Camino Real. The first displacement of the tribes came during the Mission Period (1771-1732). With the ceding of California to the United States in 1848, the first Governor, Peter Burnett, declared a "war of extermination" against all tribes (1851). Survivors were absorbed into the "Mexican" identity, forced into servitude, and became invisible for safety. Subsequently, the 1850s was the most brutal period for all the tribes in the diocesan area.

While treaties were signed by all the tribes, the US Senate failed to ratify California tribal treaties mandated by President Lincoln.

Congregations began formed as early as 1848 by Episcopalians immigrating to the "new frontier," wanting services of worship (Morning Prayer) and Sunday Schools for their children. William Ingraham Kip elected as Missionary Bishop to California in 1853. He found it difficult to entice clergy to come to most of the areas because of the lawlessness during the 1850s. Notable congregations were those forming in Monterey (1854) and the founding of Trinity Church, San Jose (1861) in the region of the Diocese of El Camino Real. Go to the "A Beginning Is Not A Beginning" for a full list and links to the parishes founded in the Frontier Era www.tttaskforce.com.

The Episcopal Church's founding conditions, driven by the Gold Rush, land opportunities, and Manifest Destiny, contrast sharply with the struggles of Indigenous peoples, with no recorded moral reflection on this divide by Episcopalians.

The New Century 1900-1979 - Tribes and the Diocese of California

Tribal land loss and cultural suppression intensified with the Dawes Act (1887), with tribes in the diocesan area declared "extinct" but the 1930s, because they had less than three hundred surviving members and no land where upon which they had continually been living. Records show that no villages existed in our diocesan area after 1810 – during the Mission Era.

By the 1960s, urbanization led to a significant Indigenous presence in California, with the Diocese of California supporting the Civil Rights, Black Power, and Chicano movements. In what is now the Diocese of El Camino Real, St. Philip's, San Jose, became a center for these efforts. In general, the 20C saw silence on Indigenous issues in the Episcopal Church until the 1960s, with initiatives largely driven by relocated Native American Episcopalians.

1980 - The Formation of a New Diocese to the Present
Tribes and the Diocese of El Camino Real

Land reclamation, federal recognition, cultural preservation, and environmental advocacy are ongoing struggles for local tribes. Before El Camino Real was formed, St. Andrew's, Saratoga initiated a partnership engagement with Episcopal Indians on reservations and in urban areas with the Lakota Student Opportunity Program (1967-1971). During that period thirty-six high school students were brought from the Cheyenne River Reservation to live with families in the parish and attend school for a year or more. In 1971, a fuller ministry partnership gradually emerged at St. Philip's, San Jose. By 1989, an Indian Ministry would be formed, eventually becoming a hub for

Indigenous ministries throughout the dioceses of the West, Hawaii and Alaska. In 1990 a sweat lodge was constructed.

The 21C brought new challenges and opportunities for intersection with Indigenous peoples, with a focus on technological innovation, sustainability, and social justice. The 21C is marked by a more integrated representation of the Episcopal Church's relationship with Indigenous peoples, moving away from separate narratives.

The 21C is marked by challenges and innovations which have provided opportunities for intersection with Indigenous peoples. Our diocesan area leads the nation in technological innovation. The Great Recession of 2008 recovery has focused on green technology and sustainability, both of which provide common ground for working inter-culturally. The whole state continues to grapple with issues of housing affordability, homelessness, and climate change, again, all areas of common concern that potentially could be the intersection with concerned Episcopalians and tribal people. The accelerating cost of housing has forced many parishes to provide for only part-time clergy support, with several parishes either merging into a new parish or closing. In September 2023, the Diocesan Social Justice Committee hosted a Diocesan Conference on the Doctrine of Discovery (1452) www.gilderlehrman.org/history-resources/spotlight-primary-source/doctrine-discovery-1493 , inviting local and national Indigenous leaders to explore this foundational papal proclamation (bull) which defined the attitude of "Christian Nations" in their conquest of "heathen lands."

Outcome of Truth-Telling Task Force

- We are at a turning point in history and must carefully consider what we want to take from the old world into the new, still unknown world. Let us consider the significance of this report. The formation of the Truth-Telling Task Force is the first official diocesan act to explore possible relationships with Indigenous Peoples and the tribes on whose ancestral lands the Diocese of El Camino Real exists. No such initiative has been attempted since its founding (1980) and the founding of its parent Diocese of California (1857). Consider what has happened in some places at this turning point in the history of our diocese:

- The partnership with the **Indian Health Services** continues to be a part of the inter-cultural ministry of (now**) Holy Family Parish (**blending of the parishes of St. Philip's, Holy Child and St. Joseph's, Milpitas). **Common Ground: a Native Garden of Healing Plants** is a new cooperative venture with Mandala Children's House (preschool at St. Philip's/Holy Family, established 1975) and the Indian Health Center. Expanding the area around the sweat lodge, plans are underway to develop a garden of native California plants, especially those which are used in healing. The garden will include an open-air classroom and space for additional ceremonies and family gatherings. The partnership is growing with interests from community colleges and universities as well as various Indigenous Groups.

- Parishes of the diocese were encouraged in 2024, to develop local **History Research Teams,** to investigate the history of the local tribes, the relationship, if any, with the parish and the tribes and to assess how this history and potential future relationships might be developed. Research resources were suggested by the Task Force with the aid of the **Diocesan Archivist,** Bill Whobry**,** Curator of Mission San Carlos Borromeo de Carmelo. Among those congregations engage in this effort have been **Calvary (Santa Cruz), St. James (Monterey), St. Dunstan's (Carmel Valley), St. Philip's (Scotts Valley), St. Jude's (Cupertino), St. Luke's (Hollister), St. Stephen's (San Luis Obispo), and St. Barnabas (Arroyo Grande).** In several cases there have been forums, book discussion groups and initial conversations with local tribal groups exploring ways to become allies and advocates for their efforts.

In the spring of 2024, the **Indigenous Nations Diversity Network** was formed as a new nonprofit coming out of **St. Luke's, Hollister**, initiated by its Senior Warden, **James Whitebear**, and other **Indigenous leaders in San Benito County.** They sponsored the **Second Annual Indian Gathering** in Hollister (September 7-8, 2024) This network is inclusive of Indigenous whose roots are throughout the Americas.

A Beginning is not a beginning, there is always something that goes before.

To explore in depth the research of this report go to: St. Barnabas, Arroyo Grande
www.tttaskforce.com

Where Do We Go from Here?

Given the traumatic past for Indigenous Peoples in our diocesan territory, state and nation, how might we Christians in the Diocese of El Camino Real most appropriately respond? We can never undo the past wrongs done to these peoples, but we can work together to build bridges, tell the truth about the past, and begin the work needed to heal deep wounds.

One thing we should **not** do is feel **guilty or defensive** about any of this. None of us lived during the genocide, and **we are not the perpetrators**. Certainly, we do not need to leave our current homes and return to Europe or elsewhere! Nobody's asking for anything like that (so relax.)
The Truth-Telling Taskforce recommends the following:

- **Ponder what advantages we may have received,** and still possibly possess, from the results of this tragic past.
- **Teach California history accurately**. E.g., don't give genocidal campaigns innocuous names like "Indian Expeditions." Don't call murderous assaults on Indigenous Californians "wars" or "battles;" rather call them what they were, **massacres**. Learn this history, as much as possible, from the memory and viewpoint of the Indigenous survivors and their descendants.
- Acknowledge that **Indigenous people are still here** and are our neighbors. They suffered but also adapted and many have survived. They never disappeared.

- Recognize **Indigenous people's unique relationship with ancestral homelands**. They usually no longer have ownership and *legal* authority over that land, but they still have *moral* authority for that land. Therefore, when they speak about issues affecting the wellbeing of those lands, we should listen closely to what they say and advocate and, when appropriate, support their positions on local environmental issues.
- Spend time learning about Indigenous tribal groups in and near our diocese. Read books, watch documentaries, listen to podcasts, or other forms of education to better understand the true history of colonization and its impacts on Indigenous Peoples.
- Get involved with issues that affect Indigenous Peoples
  Understand the local issues in your area that effect the Indigenous People and contact your local representatives to advocate for change. A valuable resource for such learning is www.tttaskforce.com which includes links to many local tribes' own websites, including the Muwekma, Tamien, Amah Mutstum, Awaswas, Rumsen, Esselen, Salinian, Xolon, and Chumash.
- When we have done enough of our own work learning about these peoples and their and our history, and are prepared, respectively **seek contacts and relationship** with neighboring Indigenous peoples' tribal representatives. **If** they desire a relationship, ask **where they need and desire our help, and try to provide it.** Go to the Resource Page of www.tttaskforce.com and scroll to "**Ask First: A Better Guide to Indigenous Engagement"**.
- **Spend time learning about Indigenous tribal groups** in and near our diocese. Go to the Smithsonian Website to find the tribal lands on which you were born, live, go to school, work and worship. www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/interactive-map-shows-you-what-indigenous-land-you-live-on-180980920.
- Read books, watch documentaries, listen to podcasts, or other forms of education to better understand the true history of colonization and its impacts on Indigenous Peoples. Many of these can be found www.tttaskforce.com.

From: *A Beginning Is Not a Beginning* Mission Statement

We seek to help restore the memory and history of the land and its original people, who lived in harmony with Creation and each other. Restoring this history lays the foundation for developing relationships that have been absent for centuries. Our goal is to amplify the voices of descendants of the original people, honoring their resilience and integrity, and to help reconnect non-Native and non-Indigenous communities with the land's true history.

Land Acknowledgements

Consider Using the Episcopal Church Land Acknowledgement Resource: www.episcopalchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/06/IndMin-Land-Acknowledgment-Resource-EN-1.pdf

Appendix: Reckoning Task Force Resolution

Presented to the Convention of the Diocese of El Camino Real, November 9, 2024.

RESOLUTION B: RECKONING TASK FORCE

Resolved, that the Bishop charter a Reckoning Task Force to explore our diocesan and local-congregation responsibility with historical and current Indigenous Peoples in our part of California.
Resolved, that the Reckoning Task Force emphasize establishing diocesan relationships with local Peoples and Tribes and focus on listening to the stories and needs of those same people.
Resolved, that the Reckoning Task Force report back to the 46th Diocesan Convention in 2026 about its work.

Explanation In 2022, General Convention of the Episcopal Church received several reports and approved a number of resolutions about Truth-telling, Reckoning, and Healing as we look at our Episcopal Church's historical and current actions around racial issues. General Convention encouraged dioceses to begin this work in their own ministry context.

In 2022 and again in 2023, the El Camino Real Diocesan Convention approved a resolution to have the Board of Trustees create a Truth-telling Task Force to complete a forensic audit of our church's history with Indigenous Peoples in our part of California. In this way, we began a reconciliation methodology established by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry in which a truth-telling stage leads into a reckoning stage, which then leads into a healing stage.

As we transition to the reckoning stage, this proposed resolution is a result of that truth-telling work. Reckoning is defined as the action or process of estimating something and more specifically assessing our responsibility with past or current actions.

As a result of its work, the Truth Telling Task Force has applied for a diocesan missional grant to fund a part-time Missioner for Indigenous Ministries, reporting to the Bishop, to guide the Diocese in its reckoning work and any subsequent actions of our Diocese with Indigenous Peoples.

Proposed by
The Truth-Telling Task Force
David Howard-Pitney (chair)
The Rev. Mary Blessing
Ann Clarke
The Rev. Ian Delinger
The Rev. Jerry Drino
The Rev. Rob Keim
The Rev. Greta Ronningen