



2010.051  
Unidentified Spanish Artist  
*Saint Toribius of Mogrovejo with Indigenous Children*  
Spain  
After 1730  
Oil on canvas, 38 ½ by 26 1/2 inches

This painting, representing Saint Toribius of Mogrovejo handing a catechism to one of two little boys dressed as Indians, symbolizes the evangelizing mission of the Catholic Church throughout the Spanish monarchy. From the early establishment of the *Patronato Real* when the Spanish kings were given the responsibility by the papacy for the conversions of the native populations in the new Spanish territories, both the secular churches with bishops leading the church hierarchy, and the religious orders (the regular clergy, bound by the rules of their orders) were devoted to that cause.

Following his appointment as archbishop of Lima, Toribio Alfonso de Mogrovejo (1538-1606) summoned the Third Council of Lima, which met from 15 August 1582 to 18 October 1583. It was the most important of the three councils celebrated in Lima during the sixteenth century, for it definitively organized the Church in the Viceroyalty of Peru. Like diocesan councils called in Spain by King Philip II following the Council of Trent, the Third Council of Lima encouraged the founding of seminaries for the training of priests and set standards for their ordination and pastoral requirements. Unique, however, to the Third Council was the decision

that priests serving indigenous parishes learn and use indigenous languages. The council produced a trilingual catechism (Spanish, Quechua, and Aymara), known as the “Catechism of Saint Toribius.” It was followed by a translation into Guaraní for use in eastern Brazil, Paraguay, and northeastern Argentina. Beyond this notable achievement, Toribius of Mogrovejo was known for his humility, for travel throughout his archdiocese to visit Indian churches, and for several miracles, fundamental to his later sainthood.

Toriobio de Mogrovejo was beatified by Pope Innocent XI in 1679, an event celebrated in 1688 by the publication in Antwerp of *La estrella de Lima convertida en sol sobre sus tres coronas* by Francisco de Echave y Assu. The engraved frontispiece by Joseph Mulder (fig. 1) probably established the iconography of the saint as a missionary. In the engraving, Saint Toribius is placed between two American-born saints: Rose of Lima on the left, and Francisco Solano on the right. Both the male saints, famous for their proselytizing of the native populations, are pictured with devout Indians, indicated by feathered headdresses, at their feet. It is likely that this composition was inspired by the widespread image of Saint Francis Xavier, the so-called “Apostle of the Indies,” who was also pictured in this way, and it may have served as the basis for the sculptural group by an by an unidentified artist that in turn inspired the the Thoma painting.



Fig. 1. Joseph Mulder, frontispiece *La estrella de Lima convertida en sol sobre sus tres coronas* by Francisco de Echave y Assu (Antwerp, 1688).

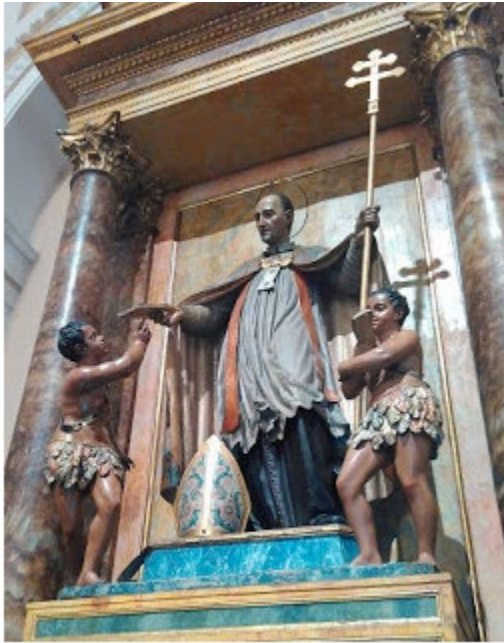


Fig. 2. Unidentified Spanish sculptor, *Saint Toribius of Mogrovejo with Two Indians*, c. 1730. Iglesia Castrense, Madrid. Photo: Graeme Williams Lubar.

Toribius of Mogrovejo was sanctified in Rome in 1726, an event celebrated throughout Spanish realms. In 1729 a group of Madrid residents from Castilla and León met to found a confraternity dedicated to Saint Toribius. The constitutions of the *Real Congregación Nacional del Glorioso Santo Toribio de Mogrovejo, Arzobispo de Lima, erigido en esta Corte por los naturales de los Reinos de Castilla y León* were approved by the Supreme Council of Castile and published in 1730. The first home of the congregation was the church of the Colegio de Agustinos Calzados, better known as that of Doña María de Aragón. Juan Nieto y Zúñiga published an *Oración panegyrica* that offered a detailed description of the mass celebrated in honor of Saint Toribius on April 27, 1730, including a description of the sculptural group. Juan Bernabé Palomino created an engraving (fig. 3) of the group that was published the same year in the *Constituciones*.<sup>i</sup>

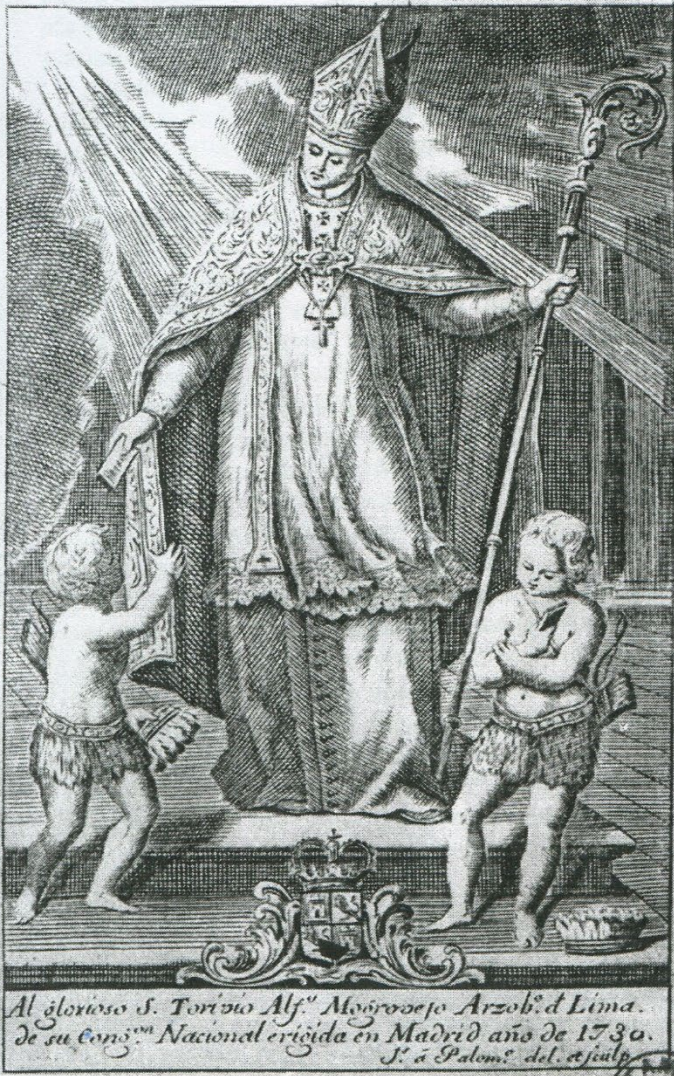


Figura 2. Imagen de Santo Toribio perteneciente a su Real Congregación Nacional. Dibujo y grabado de Juan Bernabé Palomino (1730). Biblioteca Municipal de Madrid.

Fig. 3 Juan Bernabé Palomino, *Al glorioso S. Toribio*, 1730. Biblioteca Municipal de Madrid.

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<sup>1</sup> This information is based on the author's as yet unpublished research.