



Original Ohlone artwork still exists in the chapel.

bows and arrows. ...this fear obliged the sailing master to make known by signs to the Indian chieftain the misgivings they had in the presence of so many armed tribesmen... There were more than four hundred of them... of good height and well built."

Brother Cleary credits the Ohlone with giving California "the greatest commercial, agricultural, ranching and manufacturing enterprises seen in 12,000 years of human habitation". They practiced up to fifty different trades at one time, utilizing their traditional and newly acquired skills. The Indians lived and worked col-

lectively, and according to cultural historian Marie Duggan, it is estimated that at least 90% of the profit from goods produced at the California Missions was put back into them in the form of tools, or renovations. Their native lands were also preserved, as long as they made the conversion to Christianity. Fifty years after the arrival of the Spanish to the region, the Ohlone culture had all but

faded from existence and blended into the melting pot of early San Francisco. Today, it seems possible that these Indians may be extinct. However, a modern group who call themselves the Muwekma Ohlone, claim to be descendants of the indigenous people of the Bay Area. The evidence used to prove this is the result of forensic analysis of DNA samples compared to late 19<sup>th</sup> century Ohlone remains.

The Muwekma Ohlone declare to their detractors that they are far from

extinct. The hold up in federal recognition, they say, is due to "the so-called 'experts and authorities' that are of the colonial mindset that continues to create policies and sow discord that seeks to erode the rights of the aboriginal inhabitants of this continent."- This kind of impassioned speech reflects the

pain of their ancestors. This anger may also shape the Muwekma's version of the truth, and disregard an important possibility- that some of the Ohlone may have converted willingly.

Inside the Mission Dolores today, there is evidence of Ohlone culture. The ceiling and the chapel walls are adorned with authentic Ohlone designs, painted with vegetable dyes. A

**"the greatest commercial, agricultural, ranching and manufacturing enterprises seen in 12,000 years of human habitation"**

**Brother Cleary**

stained glass window in the basilica depicts the first Ohlone Indians married in the

Mission.

Outside, in the cemetery, stands a tule reed hut created for Mission Dolores by a descendent of the tribe. These are tributes to the enormous amount of work and soul the Indians put into building San Francisco.



Brother Cleary leading kids on a tour.

