

First Family . . .

Chavez Of State Gather

The Chavezos of New Mexico held a clan rally in Albuquerque yesterday, and elected Supreme Court Justice David Chavez Jr., Santa Fe, as head of the newly-organized San Fernando Rey Society, official organization for the Chavez clan.

The annual meeting was held in conjunction with a mass at the Sacred Heart Church, and was attended by about 200 adult Chavezos plus some 150 children. San Fernando Rey is the patron saint of the Chavez family and the feast of San Fernando Rey is celebrated May 30.

Five Chavezos presided at the mass. Fray Angelico Chavez, Cerrillos, celebrated the mass, and was assisted by Father Arturo Chavez, Villanueva; Father Miguel Baca y Chavez, San Fidel; and Father P. Enrique Chavez, New Orleans. Father Enrique was born and raised in New Mexico.

The sermon, which appropriately enough, concerned the Chavez family, was preached by Msgr. D. Albert Chavez, of the St. Bernadette Parish, Albuquerque and formerly of Taos.

"Our new society is open to all Chavezos in New Mexico," said Judge David Chavez, president. "I estimate there are about 5,000 in the state. We welcome them all—those who spell the name with a 'Z' on the end, and those who do it with an 'S' on the end."

Judge Chavez said the name was originally spelled with an 'S' ending but most family members have switched to the 'Z' down through the years.

Other officers of the Society are: vice president, Paul Chavez, Albuquerque; secretary-treasurer, Marino Chavez, Santa Fe; and executive committee members: Sen. Fabian Chavez, Santa Fe; George Beach y Chavez, Albuquerque; J. R. Gallegos, Albuquerque; Epifanio Chavez, Belen; and Danny Chavez, Albuquerque.

Judge Chavez said the family is concentrated in Albuquerque.

The Albuquerque phone directory has 12½ pages of Chavezos listed. Belen, and the community of Los Chavez just north of Belen. Last year, the clan held its first meeting in Cerrillos.

Aim of the new society, Judge Chavez said, is to aid Chavezos and others who plan to enter the priesthood and the religious life. "We might assess enough to make an annual donation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary here," he said. The seminary, he said, gives initial religious training to boys aged 8 to 17.

"Eventually we'd like to hold an annual meeting at Los Chavez," Chavez said. He said the society would hold its annual meetings on May 30 each year.

Fray Chavez, a Franciscan missionary who is well known for his scholarly researches into New Mexico's Roman Catholic past, believes all the Chavez families in the state are descended from one man—Don Pedro de Chavez, who came to New Mexico with the Spanish explorer Juan de Onate in 1598.

Some Chavezos regard themselves as the First Family of America. They point out that their ancestor, Don Pedro, came here nine years before the founding of Jamestown, Virginia, and more than 20 years before the landing of the Pilgrims in Massachusetts.

And Fray Chavez says, the family's leading genealogist in Spain, Dona Maria Flora de Chavez, duchess of Nublajas, traces Don Pedro's ancestry back to Ferdinand III, King of Leon and Castile (1188-1252), who was sainted by the Roman Catholic Church.

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