

**Signpost**

**Kateri Circles Vol. 6 Issue 9**

**September**



**St. Tekakwitha Opening prayer:**

God of all nations and peoples. You have filled Your Creation with

Your mighty presence. Through Your handiwork You speak to our heard words that satisfy our every desire.

You called Your servant the Mohawk maiden Saint Kateri Tekakwitha to embrace the Gospel of your Son Jesus Christ to do Your will and to serve others with the gifts You gave her.

May she who held tight to the cross of Your Son through her short life marred by sickness, suffering and persecution, be our intercessor during our own trials. May her embrace of the Catholic faith and her openness to sharing Jesus with others inspire us to be new evangelizers to all cultures and peoples.

Amen

**Who do we need to bring in the circle?**

Who do we need to pray for:

Family members who are sick. Family members who have died. Struggles that we are facing.

Let us bring our joys and sufferings into this circle.

**Direction:**

**Summer**

**South**

**White**

**Sin - rage/anger/lust**

**Fruits of the Holy Spirit - Patience/Peace/Self-control**

**Gifts of the Holy Spirit - Wisdom /Knowledge**

**Topic:**

Pastoral Framework

## *A Living Testimony*

*The survival of Indigenous communities is a testament both to Indigenous Peoples' enduring strength and to the power of God's grace. Drawing upon their innately sacramental worldview and reverence for Creation, Indigenous Catholics in the United States have embraced the Gospel despite these tragic stories, which could easily have hardened their hearts against God and those in his Church. Healing and reconciliation can only take place when the Church acknowledges the wounds perpetrated on her Indigenous children and humbly listens as they voice their experiences.*

*The means by which our brothers and sisters heal from these traumatic experiences, as well as how that healing takes place, should be led by Indigenous communities themselves. Finally, inculturation—the authentic, wholesome blending of faith and culture—should be a process of collaboration among Indigenous Catholics, Church leadership, and wider communities. This process must respect personal freedom and conscience while inviting Indigenous Catholics to discover the seeds of the Gospel already present in their cultures and to grow in their knowledge of God's love and his divinely revealed plan of salvation for all humankind. In the end, this process will convey a most important truth: that the Indigenous Peoples of the United States have a rightful place at the table.*

### **Commentary:**

This section delves deeper into Native spiritualities. The great gifts of what Native cultures are to the Church is the starting point on how to enhance Native cultures within the Church. The Pastoral Framework puts the emphasis on not only dialogue with Native communities, but also the vital importance of making sure Natives themselves chart their own way forward. This empowerment is crucial not only in developing ways to enhance the Native liturgical experience but the transforming aspect of the mission of the church as well.

It is important to underscore that this is a different way of doing things in the Church's work with Catholic Native communities. Natives themselves know what their concerns are, what they need, and who can help. This synodal process not only is far more effective than what has gone on in the past, the process of listening to Natives also goes a long way in restoring trust with the Church. Not only does the Pastoral Framework weave this thread of listening to and respecting Catholic Natives throughout the document, but throughout the document's history, the bishops of the Subcommittee wanted to make sure the Catholic Native leaderships concerns are given a voice.

Further, this part of the Pastoral Framework underlines the importance of inculturation with the Native communities. This initiative to inculturate is the responsibility of the Church. Inculturation only works in dialogue with Native communities. The Church holds on to what is common to all cultures throughout all time and adapts to symbols, rituals and meanings that are holy to different Indigenous communities.

### **Discussion Questions for the Pastoral Framework:**

- 1) What are the gifts that Catholic Natives give to the Church?
- 2) How do I enhance the dialogue between Catholic Natives and the Church?
- 3) What is the most important aspect of Catholic Native synodality?
- 4) How do I help empower Catholic Natives within the Church?

### **Discussion Questions for the Church and Indian Country Podcast:**

#### **Closing prayer:**

From the Black and Indian Mission Office:

God of all nations and peoples. You have filled your creation with Your mighty presence. Through Your handiwork You speak to our hearts words that satisfy our every desire.

You called Your servant, the Mohawk maiden Saint Kateri Tekakwitha to embrace the Gospel of your Son Jesus Christ, to do Your will and to serve others with the gifts You gave her.

May she who held tight to the cross of Your Son throughout her short life marked by sickness, suffering, and persecution, be our intercessor during our own trials. May her embrace of the Catholic faith and her openness to sharing Jesus with others inspire us to be new evangelizers to all cultures and peoples. May she who sought our Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament lead up to similar reverences for the Eucharist so that, like Saint Kateri, our last words may be, "Jesus, I love You." Amen.

**Notice:**

Although this was composed by Rev. Michael Carson, the USCCB and the Subcommittee on Native Americans is not responsible for the content. You may use any or all of the “Signpost” for the benefit of the Tekakwitha's Circles. This is only a suggested guide. Use what you find useful. Each addition has been reviewed by the Tekakwitha Executive Board. If you have any feedback on how the “Signposts” can be improved, I would love to hear from you at [mcarson@usccb.org](mailto:mcarson@usccb.org) The Tekakwitha Conference holds the copyright.

Rev. Mike Carson