

Signpost

Kateri Circles Vol. 7 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

1. NATURAL RESOURCES

In many cases natural resources are misused and do not benefit the Native Peoples who live on the land. “This is especially clear when planning economic activities which may interfere with indigenous cultures and their ancestral relationship to the earth. In this regard, the right to prior and informed consent should always prevail, as foreseen in Article 32 of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Only then is it possible to guarantee peaceful cooperation between governing authorities and indigenous peoples, overcoming confrontation and conflict,” Pope Francis said in his greeting to Indigenous participants in the 2017 International Agricultural Development Forum.

Concerns About the Changing Environment

Native communities who are dependent upon the land, the seas, and the rivers are especially vulnerable to environmental changes. Every year, drought, wildfires, flooding, and blizzards add to the financial and personal toll paid by many Indigenous Peoples whose livelihoods depend on reservation land.

Further, many Native communities are dependent on the natural resources within reservations, including water and mineral wealth. Leaders identified a continuing need for wise stewardship and partnership with Native authorities and leadership, so that continuing exploration and use of these resources avoid a high environmental cost.

*As Pope Francis wrote in his encyclical *Laudato Si'* about the environment: It is essential to show special care for indigenous communities and their cultural traditions. They are not merely one minority among others, but should be the principal dialogue partners, especially when large projects affecting their land are proposed. For them, land is not a commodity but rather a gift from God and from their ancestors who rest there, a sacred space with which they need to interact if they are to maintain*

their identity and values. When they remain on their land, they themselves care for it best. Nevertheless, in various parts of the world, pressure is being put on them to abandon their homelands to make room for agricultural or mining projects which are undertaken without regard for the degradation of nature and culture.

Commentary:

Land, its use and how it is managed, plays a central role in many Native lives. Studies included in the Pastoral Framework show that Native communities are more likely to be threatened by changes in the land or environment than any other cultural family. This dependence on the land fosters a spirituality that embraces Mother Earth, but also put into peril the well being of many Native communities that have to adjust to changing realities such as climate change. Adding to this concern is that many Native communities might have the lack of resources to bounce back from the increasing natural disasters caused by climate and environmental changes.

St. Katri Tekakwitha is the patron saint of ecology. In this role, she is a reminder that one of the core spiritual connections that many Native communities is a special relationship with the land. This thousands of years of relationship is put into jeopardy when land and environmental issues become separated from our faith. Further, one of the great gifts of the Native Communities is the connection between faith and the environment. It is this faith that leads to action to protect the environment for future generations.

Discussion Questions for the Pastoral Framework:

- 1) Why are the Native communities at risk from the change in the environment?
- 2) How can I get involved in working to protect Native communities and the enrollment?
- 3) What are the specific issues of the management of the land and resources where I live?
- 4) What are the competing interests that place the environment at risk?

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:

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Rev. Mike Carson

