

Signpost

Kateri Circles Vol. 7 Issue 4

April



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:

Spring

East

Yellow

Sin - Apathy, Sloth

Fruits of the Holy Spirit - Faith/Goodness/Modesty

Gifts of the Holy Spirit - Understanding/Piety

Gifts of the Holy Spirit - Fortitude/Fear of the Lord

Topic:**Pastoral Framework
Sacramentals**

Sacramentals are another important way to connect with cultural elements that evoke the Divine. Some Tribal communities have traditionally used sacred smoke as a purifying element to offer prayers, and as a way to recognize the presence of the Divine. As the psalmist writes, “Let my prayer be incense before you; my uplifted hands an evening offering” (Psalm 141:2). Therefore, the regular use of incense is encouraged in the Mass and other sacred rituals celebrated among Native faith communities. Likewise, because of its aroma, we encourage generous use of Sacred Chrism when the Sacred Liturgy calls for it, especially in Baptism and Ordinations, and in the dedication of churches and altars. Holy water provides a powerful connection with the elements of nature. Also, blessed salt could be used in blessings and other rituals.

All sacramentals and elements used in the sacramental rites should be fully explained, to draw the minds and bodies of Indigenous worshipers into deeper understanding of the Catholic faith. These explanations should take place in solid catechetical instruction. In this way, true inculturation and authentic evangelization are achieved. The Catholic faith has been readily accepted by many Indigenous Peoples because the rich symbolism of our faith connected with their own cultures. Indigenous Peoples have an innately sacramental worldview, as noted earlier, which acknowledges material creation as a pathway for recognizing the divine Creator and corresponds to the Catholic sacramental principle.

Commentary:

Sacramentals differ from Sacraments. The Church considers the seven Sacraments as the major way that Christ has enabled the Church to give grace into people’s lives for eternal life.

Sacramentals are ritualized prayer forms that lift up our experiences to the divine. They are all of the prayer forms that are outside of the seven Sacraments of the Church.

Like other aspects of Native life, the Framework places sacramentals into a Native cultural context. Like other aspects of inculturation, sacramentals have to be deeply rooted in the Tribal culture. Anything that is outside of the history and culture of the local Native communities may seem to be foreign and distracting. As stated before, there is not one “Native culture” but as many cultures as there are Tribes.

Keep in mind that sacramentals are just that, they do not replace the Sacrament of our Church, but in a culturally appropriate way, enhance the Sacraments and help orient and elevate those that receive the Sacraments to the divine.

Discussion Questions for the Pastoral Framework:

- 1) What are the prayer forms from your culture that enhances your faith?
- 2) What sacramentals do you use before or after Mass?
- 3) What resources are there to help you in planning Catholic community prayers?
- 4) What are the guidelines on good sacramental inculturation? Where do I find them?

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