

**Signpost**

**Kateri Circles Vol. 7 Issue 2**

**February**



**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:**

**Winter**

**North**

**Black**

**Sin - Hopelessness/Despair**

**Fruits of the Holy Spirit - Joy/Gentleness/Redemptive suffering**

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

**Topic:**

**Pastoral Framework**

Part Four: A Call to Holiness

**Sacraments and Worship**

Sacraments, worship, and popular piety can play a central role in religious formation of Native Peoples when proper celebrations according to the Church are connected with Indigenous sensibilities and cultures.

It is important to remember Native American communities were the first to share in sacramental celebrations in the Americas and have helped to inform and shape many forms of popular worship today.

Sacramental preparation provides an excellent opportunity to deepen evangelization and catechesis among Indigenous Peoples. As Native families approach the Church to receive the sacraments, an extended conversation on matters of faith and life will help them better understand church teachings and the implications of living life according to the Gospel and will strengthen their relationships with Christ and one another.

For many Native communities, both healing rituals and those honoring the dead are meaningful. The Church can use these beliefs to deepen Indigenous understanding of how Christ is present and active in the sacraments. Through embracing the sacraments, many communities have experienced the profound hope of reconciliation, healing, and eternal life.

We all need authentic inculturation in the liturgy to deepen our relationship with Christ. The Church must emphasize the gift of all our senses—including sound, smell, taste, sight, and touch—so that celebrating the sacraments becomes a means to teach the tenets of the faith. In all cases, the inculturation of the liturgy must conform to the directives of the Holy See, the episcopal

conference, and the diocesan bishop. At the same time, traditional rituals that complement and are compatible with Catholic doctrine and liturgical practices enhance the prayer life and religious experience of the people.

### **Commentary:**

The Forth Section of the Framework turns toward the subject of liturgy and prayer. This is the introduction to the section that points out why liturgy and prayer has been important not only for Native communities in the present age, but has always been an important factor in their lives and spiritual lives. The Holy Spirit was alive and active throughout the new world. The Church bases all of its work on that foundation of Native spiritualities.

Further, we recognizes the great gift that Native spiritualities bring to the Church. The challenge is not the virtue of the importance of the Divine within the Native communities, but how we conduct proper inculturation in prayer and liturgy to bring about their fullness.

Liturgical inculturation is just touched on as a subject of the Framework, but it highlights the importance of the need and expression of authentic Native liturgical expression. Therefore the work and effort needs to be one of the next steps of the Framework.

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

- 1) What is authentic Native inculturation of the Roman liturgy and how is it expressed?
- 2) In what ways do Native spiritualities predate Colombus?
- 3) What are the ways in which liturgy can match the needs of the Native communities?
- 4) What are the next steps that can be taken in authentic cultural implementation of the Pastoral Framework?

### **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