

Signpost

Kateri Circles Vol. 7 Issue 10

October



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:

Fall

West

Blue

Sin-Self Centeredness/ Greed/ Covertness

Fruits of the Holy Spirit- Charity/ Kindness/Chasity

Gifts of the Holy Spirit- Good Counsel

Topic:

Pastoral Framework

2. HOUSING AND ACCESS TO FINANCING

The lack of adequate housing on many Native reservations is a big concern. This lack arises, in part, because many Native Americans do not meet the requirements to obtain home loans from traditional lending institutions. To develop and maintain housing loan programs, funding for Native Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) must increase. Faith communities also need to develop an awareness of Native CDFIs.

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) has been at the forefront of developing and implementing CDFIs for the benefit of many Native communities. CCHD operates two grant programs for community development and economic development.+

Since 1994, CCHD has provided more than \$11 million in funding to dozens of Native-led organizations. Three such examples are as follows:

- **Citizen Potawatomi Nation Community Development Corporation — Shawnee, Oklahoma**

Jason Glasgow's construction firm (Glasgow Paving) received much-needed new equipment when it joined a growing number of Native American-owned businesses securing loans from the CCHD-funded Citizen Potawatomi Nation Community Development Corporation (CDC). The Potawatomi Nation set up this CDC in 2003 to provide business development services and make commercial and consumer loans to Tribal members and other Native Americans across the United States. The Citizen Potawatomi Nation CDC also provides financial education to Tribal members.

- **Four Bands Community Fund — Eagle Butte, South Dakota**

In the area served by the Four Bands Community Fund, only 1 percent of businesses are owned by Native Americans, but Native Americans make up nearly 80 percent of the population. Four Bands incorporated in April 2000 to lend money to businesses and entrepreneurs who are Tribal members. The organization takes its name from the Four Bands of Native Peoples living in their reservation. The Four Bands Community Fund provides training, technical assistance, marketing support, and access to Made on the Rez, a retail and e-commerce business that sells Native-made products. Participants can receive microloans of up to \$5,000 or can qualify for larger, revolving small business loans of up to \$50,000. As part of the larger loans, Cheyenne River Entrepreneurial Assistance Training and Education courses guide members by teaching personal finance, business planning, and the basics of writing a business plan. In an area with some of the highest poverty rates in the country, Four Bands Community Fund is helping residents to feel pride in their accomplishments and to hope for self-sufficiency.

- **Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation — South Dakota**

Oglala Lakota established Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation to build sustainable communities. Thunder Valley CDC, which has received grant funding from CCHD, has the overall mission to “empower low-income Lakota youth and families to improve the health, culture, and environment of their communities through affordable housing, youth leadership, social enterprise, Lakota language [classes], food sovereignty, [and] workforce development, and to create systemic change through part

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partnerships with a variety of organizations and stakeholders in the region.”

These examples should encourage Catholics and others to support microlending opportunities and programs that reinforce Native agency in developing and improving their local communities.

Commentary: The reason loans are hard to obtain by Natives is the problem of using land as loan collateral. The federal government owns the land where there are reservations, therefore individual Tribal members are excluded in anything that requires title to the land including bank loans. The lack of the ability for traditional banks to help out Native communities means that we need to find non-traditional ways to get funds to where they are needed.

The other aspect of a closed cycle of poverty is continued unemployment or underemployment. The land that many Native Tribes were forced to occupy was the worst land for development. If natural resources were found, often Native Tribes would be forced off of the land once again. Or outsiders will develop the land leaving very little for the Native communities.

One of the key treaty obligations is to the wellbeing of many Native communities. These obligations often include development for the well-being of Natives and of the continued support of Native communities. Because of the unique nature of the institutions that are tasked with these objectives, there needs to be a creative approach to the fundamental Catholic value of promoting the dignity of human life.

Discussion Questions for the Pastoral Framework:

- 1) What are the continued causes of poverty with some Native communities?
- 2) What are some of the creative responses to end poverty?
- 3) What are the resources that can be drawn upon?

Discussion Questions for the Church and Indian Country Podcast:

Closing prayer:

From the Black and Indian Mission Office:

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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