



**BLACK AND INDIAN MISSION OFFICE
AND THE
USCCB SUBCOMMITTEE ON
NATIVE AMERICAN AFFAIRS**

LISTENING SESSION

MARCH 26 - 27, 2019 PHOENIX, AZ



PARTICIPANTS:

BISHOPS:

Bishop Liam Cary - Bishop of Baker
Bishop John T. Folda - Bishop of Fargo
Bishop Robert D. Gruss - Bishop of Rapid City
Bishop Eduardo Nevares - Auxiliary Bishop of Phoenix
Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted - Bishop of Phoenix
Bishop Steven J. Raica - Bishop of Gaylord
Bishop James S. Wall - Bishop of Gallup
Archbishop John C. Wester - Archbishop of Santa Fe
Bishop Chad W. Zielinski - Bishop of Fairbanks

PRESENTERS:

Fr. Maurice Henry Sands - Executive Director, Black and Indian Mission Office
Mr. Benjamin Black Bear III - Diocese of Rapid City
Mrs. Jennifer Black Bear - Diocese of Rapid City
Deacon Roy Callison - Archdiocese of Oklahoma City
Mr. Billy Charles - Diocese of Fairbanks
Ms. Maryanna Harstad - Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis
Ms. Julienne Montour - Archdiocese of Detroit
Dr. Rose-Alma McDonald - Diocese of Ogdensburg
Deacon Andrew Orosco - Diocese of San Bernardino
Ms. Agnes Sweetsir - Diocese of Fairbanks
Ms. Lucetta Toby - Archdiocese of Seattle
Mr. Bill White - Diocese of Rapid City
Mrs. Shirley Zuni - Archdiocese of Santa Fe

OTHER PARTICIPANTS:

Mr. Carl Anderson - Supreme Knight, Knights of Columbus
Mr. Graydon Nicholas - Supreme Warden, Knights of Columbus
Mr. Patrick Mason - Supreme Director, Knights of Columbus
Mrs. Elizabeth Njai - Black and Indian Mission Office
Fr. Michael Carson - Associate Director USCCB Subcommittee on Native American Affairs
Fr. Antony Tinker, F.H.S. - St. John the Baptist - Diocese of Phoenix
Deacon James Trant - Director of the Diaconate - Diocese of Phoenix
Sr. Martha Mary Carpenter, O.S.F. - St. Peter Indian Mission School - Diocese of Phoenix
Sr. Thereselle Arruda, O.S.F. - St. Peter Indian Mission School Diocese of Phoenix

INTRODUCTION

Fr. Henry Sands started the 2019 Listening Session by welcoming everyone to the meeting. He expressed his thankfulness to the bishops and the Native American presenters from across the United States for making the effort to attend this very important and historic meeting.



Bishop James Wall welcomed everyone to the 2019 Listening Session and thanked both the participants and the observers in attendance for making time to attend the event. He noted that the idea of the Listening Session came out of the November 2018 meeting of the USCCB Subcommittee of Native American Affairs – of which he is the Chair.

This meeting was organized for the purpose of inviting Native American Catholic leaders from around the country to make presentations to the attending bishops about issues that are important to them. This would enable the bishops to listen to their voices, hear their perspective on various issues, learn from their shared wisdom, and in the future, be able to provide better pastoral care to the Native American Catholics in their diocese. Bishop Wall expressed his thanks for everyone who set aside time to come together to share their experiences and insight into Native American Ministry. He also said that it is important for everyone to remember that what really unites us is Jesus Christ, our Catholic faith and our rich traditions.



He thanked all his brother bishops who could attend, noting that six of the attending bishops are members of the USCCB Subcommittee on Native American Affairs. He highlighted that it was a minor miracle to be able to get a total of nine bishops together on such short notice because their schedules are very busy. On behalf of the bishops, Bishop Wall said that they were happy for the opportunity to engage the Native American participants in conversation and to listen to them.

LISTENING SESSION 1

LISTENING SESSION 1 –

BEN BLACK BEAR

POVERTY AND SOCIAL ISSUES

My name is Ben Black Bear III and I want to extend my hand out in a warm welcome to everybody. My Lakota name is “Sharp Fish”. In our culture we have our Lakota names, and I want to share mine with you.

I will speak with you about poverty on the Rosebud reservation. I am from the Rosebud Sioux Tribe where I was born and raised. I am the son of Ben Black Bear Jr. He has been a deacon for 44 years, and my parents have been married for over 52 years. My wife Jennifer and I celebrated our 19th wedding anniversary last week. I served in the United States Army and spent a year in Iraq in 2007.

Coming back home from the Army, and with the support of my wife Jennifer, I was able to get back into the Church and grow in my faith. Being able to reintegrate myself into the community was hard, but reconnecting with my Catholic faith helped me out a lot. I believe God gave me the call and the opportunity to help the members of my community, especially the youth, and the pastoral work that we are doing on the reservations is helping a lot.

On the reservation, my wife and I offer sacramental preparation classes for both children and adults. We see the impact these classes have, especially on the children who take their faith back home to share with their families. There are 20 communities on the reservation and we see a lot of poverty. I am the chairman of my local community and oversee a community business.

There are many families who do not have a steady income to provide their basic needs such as food, clothing and a safe and comfortable home. The poverty on the reservation is devastating and there is a true need for various types of help and support.

As the chairman of the St. Francis School Board, I see children from elementary school all the way through to high school who do not have the basic educational tools they need to learn; things such as pens, paper, and books. We recently had a flood back home and the lives of people who live in trailers have been disrupted because they have been placed in temporary housing at the Community Center. All the community chairmen on the reservation meet once a month and we see that a major challenge throughout the Rosebud reservation is that there are not enough resources to help all of the families. I always try to ensure that we get our \$1,200 monthly allocation from the tribe, which is not enough for over 300 community members who need help to purchase food and supplies, but we do what we can.

We also try to educate committee members to become more financially knowledgeable so that they have a better understanding of how to spend their money wisely. In summary, there is widespread poverty on the reservation and it is important to understand how this affects the social fabric of the community and that there is a great need for additional financial support.



**LISTENING SESSION 1 –
JENNIFER BLACK BEAR
RACISM IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
AND INCULTURATION.**

All my relatives: I greet you with a good heart and a handshake. My Lakota name is “Woman with a good attitude” and my English name is Jennifer Black Bear. We are from the Rosebud reservation, which is one of the nine tribes in South Dakota. Our tribe is very big and spread out over four counties. My presentation today is about racism and inculturation.

We attended the Catholic Social Ministry Gathering (CSMG) in February and I read the USCCB Pastoral letter Against Racism which is entitled “Open Wide Our Hearts, The Enduring Call to Love – A Pastoral Letter Against Racism.” The USCCB urges all Americans to acknowledge the scourge of racism that still exists in our hearts, words, actions and institutions. Racism is rooted in a failure to acknowledge the human dignity of people of a different race. It does not reflect the inner life of God, which we are called to be like and imitate.

Fr. Henry Sands was on the CSMG panel and talked about racism against Native Americans. This discussion helped open the eyes of the people sitting at our table and they talked about the ways they wanted to go back to their homes and do something about it.



My experience or knowledge about racism starts with the boarding school in St. Francis, which was named after St. Francis of Assisi. The school was started in 1886 by the Jesuits and was turned over to the tribe in 1972. There is serious generational trauma as a result of these boarding schools and it still affects many people to this day. We see the impact on our reservations on a daily basis. Many times whatever the parents and grandparents experienced at the boarding schools resulted in a lot of anger towards the church. This negativity and anger from the parents and grandparents carries down to the next generation and the next generation and it is an unending cycle.

Our parents attended boarding school, but we were brought up in both our Catholic faith and Lakota spirituality. I was never taught to separate between being Catholic and Native American and I believe we all prayed to one God. We did not experience the negativity that many others experience on the reservation. Our parents talked about their experience, which were not as bad as other peoples, and about how they overcame their challenges. Ben’s father has been a deacon for over 40 years and my mother is a devout Catholic.

We are of the generation who grew up in the Church and who are trying our best to make a positive difference despite the challenges we face and because our culture is very important to us. Ben and I do a lot of sacramental preparation and religious education work on the reservation, and our job is made more challenging by the negativity that has been channeled through the generations up until today because of people’s negative experiences with the boarding schools. We try to bring these families back to the Church. We need to find ways of reconciliation and healing for the members of the tribes who have experienced

multi-generational damage because of the boarding schools, and then find a good way to move forward. We are very interested in finding ways to help our people.

LISTENING SESSION 1 – DEACON ROY CALLISON EVANGELIZATION AMONG AMERICAN INDIANS

Good afternoon. My name is Deacon Roy Callison. I am the Coordinator of the American Indian Catholic Outreach for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. I will be meeting with Bishop Konderla next month to discuss the possibility of our Outreach establishing an office in the Diocese of Tulsa. That means that I and my wife Susan, who is an instrumental part of the Outreach, will possibly be covering the entire state with our Outreach ministry. Both of my talks today are so closely related that I'm sure you will be able to see how they overlap. I hope you will bear with me when I repeat some of the same things in both talks, because they are important and therefore, warrant repeating.



I want to speak to you about evangelization, specifically among our American Indian people. However, I can only speak on this topic from the perspective of an American Indian deacon from Oklahoma. Oklahoma has 39 federally recognized tribes. That's more than any other state in the entire country. Oklahoma has the second largest population of American Indian people in the country: 482,760, according to the 2010 census. However, Oklahoma is unique in the fact that there are no reservations. I know that's something that always shocks and surprises people. Our tribes do have tribal boundaries, but they are simply for tribal services.

There are a few small pockets of American Indian people scattered throughout Oklahoma. These are mostly in rural areas. Of course, we do have areas of Indian housing, but no reservations. This makes evangelization extremely difficult. Because our Indian people are scattered throughout the entire state, and remember, we're talking about almost half a million people, you see Indian car tags of the various tribes from one end of the state to the other. What my wife Susan and I have found from speaking with people from various tribes as we do our Pow Wow ministry, is that they are hungry for the Good News of Jesus Christ. There just needs to be someone to bring it to them.

There's a great need for the Church to reach out again with more emphasis concerning evangelization among our American Indian brothers and sisters. The Church needs to put more focus on what will bring them to the Church or in many cases, as we have found while doing our Pow Wow ministry, what will bring them back to the Church.

Many have left the Church for different Protestant faiths and for the Native American Church. They've left because those faiths are reaching out to them. Many of those faiths have American Indian churches so the people are flocking to them. They feel more welcome there. Some of the churches, most notably the Native American Church, incorporate American Indian Spirituality into its services and this attracts the people. It makes them feel like those churches recognize the importance of their Indian Spirituality.

The Church's mission is to spread the Good News, but it must be done in a way that's inviting to the var-

ious American Indian cultures. For instance, just as one example, the incorporation of American Indian cultures into the Mass. I know this one thing isn't a cure all, but it will help. I know this is already being done in many areas of the country, but many areas don't do it, especially those states that don't have reservations, such as Oklahoma. States with reservations are just more likely to incorporate American Indian spirituality into their masses. Throughout the country, we have numerous Masses that incorporate the spirituality of various cultures. We have Spanish Masses everywhere in the country. We even have Vietnamese masses and Korean masses, and that's just to name a few. But, still yet, there are areas with high Indian populations that don't have any American Indian Masses.

I pray that the Church will be more encouraging to all the clergy, to the bishops, to the priests and deacons, to the religious orders and to the lay people, especially those who reside in Indian country, to take a more active role in addressing the issue of evangelization among our American Indian brothers and sisters. It's both amazing and encouraging, when you think about the fact that these listening sessions are taking place here in Phoenix. After all, this is where, in 1987, Saint John Paul II spoke to the native people and all those in the Catholic Church. He said, "I wish to urge the local Churches to be truly "Catholic" in their outreach to native peoples. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is at home in every people."

I pray that through these Listening Sessions we will find ways to reach out to our American Indian brothers and sisters. They need to know that they are welcome in the Catholic Church and that the Church is their home, too.

LISTENING SESSION 1 – BILLY CHARLES SPIRITUALITY AND CULTURE

We just had a celebration last week for the people that have passed on in our community. During this celebration, we use an instrument called a Cauyak – which is an instrument that causes one to turn. About forty days prior to the celebration, we start to practice and gather in the Qasgiq. A Qasgiq is a communal place where if someone chooses to participate, they must be able to provide food, whether it be food for the physical body or for the spirit. One has to be ready if they are going to speak in the Qasgiq.

The word Qasgiq is derived from Qasgirarneeq which means to encompass, encircle, comprehensive. The Cauyak is used because during the celebration, we are calling and preparing to encounter the spirits of our ancestors who have passed on. Along with the use of the Cauyak is a special song and dance and process called Curugaq which means to do something to make the encounter happen. The song and dance are performed by the Yuraq which means to appear. This celebration is still practiced in our communities today and shows that the spirituality of our culture is still alive and the teachings and knowledge of our ancestors still relate to the teachings of the church.



I want you to know that there are several spiritual concepts in the Native American community, such as: being spiritual on the land; being careful with how one conducts oneself in the community; trusting that God provides, and believing that the man of the universe and the one that cannot be seen is watching over the people and the land.

In my Native community we try to keep the songs and dances during our celebration as authentic as possible and we still depend on one another. We still make the effort to encounter different cultures, to learn different things from one another, to learn how we can relate well with each other.

We continue to do this through the celebration of the Curugaq, which we share with neighboring villages. During the celebration, the members of the villages observe one another's conduct, share their thoughts with one another and ask questions. We ask one another about our different ways of doing things and offer recommendations about how something could be done differently and share how to do it. We really watch out for one another, just as the right hand and the left hand do. So we still practice our Native American spirituality in our communities and our culture is very much alive.

Thank you for the opportunity.

LISTENING SESSION 1 – MARYANNA HARSTAD INCULTURATION IN THE LITURGY

I am from the Church of Gichitwaa Kateri, where we embrace and live out inculturation. In every celebration of the Mass, before the proclamation of the Gospel, we sing - have mercy on us Lord Jesus. Our Chapel, much like the one downstairs, is oriented to the four cardinal directions. In the north, there's a beautiful piece of art that represents the significance of Ojibwe culture and tradition. It portrays the Spirit Tree that overlooks the north shore of Lake Superior.

In the South, we have a lodge that we rebuild each Holy Week and the Eucharist is contained there. In the West, we have beautiful art representing our patron saints - Our Lady of Guadalupe and Saint Kateri Tekakwitha. The presider's chair is also in the West, which orients the direction of their prayers to the East, which is an Ojibwe tradition and also a Roman Catholic tradition.

In the East, we have a crucifix that we commissioned to be carved by Charles Carrillo. It was carved during Lent, as a meditation on death and resurrection, and the Corpus is made from the root of the Cottonwood. The pigments are from ancient sources and the imagery represents suffering and oppression.

The altar is a buffalo hide; a symbol of all that is good in God's creation. It was an intentional gift to our community while the Buffalo was living. The community reflected for a year to determine that it met the requirements of an altar, considered a place of a sacred feast in both the Ojibwe and Dakota traditions.

Our Eucharist is celebrated in an Anishinaabe way. We smudge with sage before Mass begins, as a prequel to our gathering. Our general intercessions include a tobacco offering, which shows us giving our prayer back to God. The Ojibwe language is used for multiple refrains and for the mystery of faith.

The actions of bishops are integral to our practices. Back in the 1800's, Bishop Frederick Baraga was a missionary in the Lake Superior region and he translated many of our hymns into the Ojibwe language. In



1975, the Minnesota bishops issued a statement calling for a new beginning in Native American ministry, and our community was established shortly thereafter. Bishop Florence Welch dedicated our chapel and altar, and Archbishop Flynn and Archbishop Roach have celebrated the Eucharist in our community.

Over forty years ago, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a statement on American Indians which stated, “The Gospel Mission must take root and grow within each culture and each community. Faith finds expression in and through the particular values and customs and institutions of the people who hear it. It seeks to take flesh within each culture, within each Nation, within each race.”

Fifteen years later, the USCCB affirmed that document and went beyond it. “The church is called to bring the saving word of the Gospel to every people and culture. Our goal must be an authentic enculturation of Catholic faith within the Native American community.”

The Liturgy remains an expression of Catholic life and faith and we are working to follow this calling for authentic inculturation.

LISTENING SESSION 1 – FEEDBACK SESSION

Bishop Robert Gruss – This is a question from the Diocese of Rapid City regarding inculturation within the reservations. There is a document within the Diocese of Rapid City that allows for inculturated liturgies with Native American spirituality, with Lakota spirituality. There are very many Native American parishes in the diocese but there are not many that have an inculturated liturgy. From what I have seen as I go around the diocese, there are some parishes within the Native American communities that do not want to use it. From what has been shared today, it is clear that inculturation is important in the Native American communities, but in some places, from what I have seen, it is not very welcome. I don’t know if it is because some people see their Native American spirituality and Catholic spirituality being in conflict with each other, or if they just want to keep them separate. How would you respond to that?

William White - I think some of the conflict is from the older people who were brought up in a strict Catholic faith and find it difficult to accept the inculturation. Inculturation is drawing the newer generation into the church, but not the older generation.

Ben Black Bear - What I see on our reservation is negativity towards the Catholic Church. There are those who are following their Catholic faith, and who may want to bring their culture with them into the church, but they are afraid of being reprimanded by the elders for doing so. The next generation is advancing the inculturation process, and we have found that this is helpful in bringing the people together. However, the past still kind of lurks in the background and it affects people’s decisions about what they can and cannot do. There are also others who, out of respect for the faith, do not want to make any changes. They are primarily the older generation. There are also other places where the priest decides that this is how it is going to be done, and there are no changes. We are working towards change that includes more inculturation.

Deacon Roy Callison - I see the same thing in Oklahoma. There are those that have been raised in the mainstream Catholic faith and it feels comfortable to them. They will participate in Pow Wows and in their culture, but they do not support the inculturation in the Church because they are just comfortable with how they grew up in the Church. They are not necessarily against inculturation. They are just comfortable with things as they are.

Billy Charles – Sometimes we need to remind ourselves who this is for. We might not want the change but we need to ask, who is it for? I will say that it is for the next generation. Right now, our young people are really hungry for the Word. In my communities, we are so spread out and we have corporations, cities and the tribe all working in their own silos. I mentioned a moment ago that we are a comprehensive communal place, but we still find ourselves working in silos. Our young people are really hungry for more unity and meaning in life, and we need to work on this together.

Bishop Robert Gruss - Some of the most moving liturgies I have ever celebrated on the reservations have been when cultural expressions such as drumming have been incorporated into the liturgies, and it has actually been very powerful and moving and done very well.

Bishop James Wall - One of our missions had a conflict regarding the practice of the drums. There was the desire to have the drums, and they brought in people from a different nation, instead of using the chant or prayer of the local tribe. Some of the people really reacted negatively against that. Some of the reasons that inculturation is not supported is because the older generation does not want it. But, it's not just that. Sometimes, the local members of a congregation do not like the fact that other tribes are being brought in to do the drumming and other things.

Fr. Sands - If the community brings in people from another tribe, it is often because those people have lost



the connection to the culture. They want to reconnect, but they do not have the experience and knowledge to promote their own culture. Also, the intergenerational challenges that you see are a lot like the intergenerational challenges being faced in the mainstream Church.

Julienne Montour- In our parish there were many people who did not like the idea of a Spanish Mass. So, there was a conflict between the cultures. However, those who liked Spanish Mass could go to the Spanish Mass and those who liked the English Mass could go to the English Mass. It's the same thing with Latin Mass. In my childhood, we said Mass in Latin. It is beautiful to hear the Mass in Latin, and I am comfortable with that. However, for my children and my grandchildren, everything is lost because nobody speaks that language. It is not necessarily feeding the next generation because Latin is a dead language. But, we hang on to it and embrace the Latin Mass because it is part of the culture of the Church, which is the Body of Christ. So as you incorporate certain tribal affiliations and connections with the tribal people, as some of you sound like you have, you may end up with something that some of the people will like and something that other people will be uncomfortable with. When the Church made changes with Vatican II, my parents were apprehensive about it. But, then they came around and realized it was something positive. Change takes some time in the Church. But there is room for opening the wings a little bit and welcoming people who want things that feel like home for them, and who will still be able to worship God in the true sense of Catholicism. We have done this with Italian, Polish, Spanish and other languages, and there is room for diversity in our Catholic Church.

Deacon Andy Orosco – When Bishop Gerald Barnes was instituted as the bishop of San Bernardino, they invited the natives to come in. However, he did not invite the local Natives. He invited the Natives who happened to be part of the diocesan staff. They started beating drums, and the local Natives are not people of the drums. They are people of the rattle. He said that he learned right away that this was not correct, and that it was an education. It is important to be familiar with the tribal leaders when you go to an area, and to understand their traditions. Secondly, I was invited to three parishes in San Diego, and I asked whether they would like to have Mass in their Native language. Two of the parishes said yes, they would love to. The mass is beautiful and is done in their Native language. The third parish said no. They said, “You took away our language, so we don't want you to even say it.” Basically, it is important to reach out to the elders and ask these questions: What do you think about this? Can we do this? Just be aware that this is important.

Shirley Zuni – In the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, we have been celebrating a Native American Mass for 29 years. It is held at the Cathedral. We have 17 pueblos in the Archdiocese and they are invited to the Mass. The people dress in their native clothes, and there are choirs from the different pueblos that join the cathedral choir. We have been focusing on bringing in the youth and young adults. We have a scholarship, thanks to Fr. Sands, for children who attend Catholic schools. We started offering a blessing of the people with water blessed by the Archbishop that is administered by the young adults and children. We also have the young adults serve as lectors. We have been trying to increase participation of the Native American community, and at the last Mass, several tribal leaders attended and served as gift bearers. They return because they want to be a part of the Mass. The governors from the different pueblos attend, and I realized that I had to develop a relationship with the governors of the other pueblos in order to increase participation. Each year, we sponsor a lunch with the governors. This provides them with the opportunity to meet our Archbishop and to get more involved. Our Native Mass is always well attended. At this Mass, the Native American community can show others who we are and what we practice. We know that our Catholic faith is very important to us, but our Native faith is also very dear to us. The Archbishop is very good about bringing us together. One has to earn the trust and respect of the pueblos before pursuing programs. Thank you, to the bishops and the archbishop who came to our Native people and said they are sorry for what the Church has done to us. This has enabled us to become closer to one another and has opened the doors to other pueblos.

Debbie Thomas – The Tekakwitha Conference which is held every July can provide a good way for people to learn about Native Americans. Every tribe has the opportunity to attend the conference and to learn what other tribes are doing. It would be an opportunity or place where you bishops could learn more about the Native peoples. If you attend, the Natives could also learn more about the bishops. I know that for myself, being 70 years old, I did not want our cultural traditions in our Church. But, I changed because I went to the conference. I changed because I saw how the children love to dance and how we can get past our conflicts. Fr. Sands provides support to the conference to keep it going. About 800 Native Americans attend each year, and this is the 80th year for the conference.

Deacon Andy Orosco – In 1994, Pope John Paul II signed off on a document called “Instruction: Inculturation and the Roman liturgy.” Its application follows the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy from Vatican II. The document is about 25 pages long and it outlines how different cultures should have the opportunity to engage in a dialogue about inculturation which would then be brought up to their bishops conference for discussion and approval. I don’t really see this happening in our own bishops’ conference. So I think it would be good to set up a mechanism within the US Conference of Catholic Bishops that we can use to deal with inculturation. The office of divine worship could give an official blessing to what the people want to do, and this would alleviate the concerns that some older people have because the changes would have the bishops’ blessing.

Maryanne Harstad – In our community, it helps that we build on that history of integrating ministry with culture. The Church says, “Coming into contact with different cultures, the Church must welcome all that can be reconciled with the Gospel in the traditions of a people, to bring to it the riches of Christ and to be enriched, in turn, by the many different forms of wisdom of the nations of the earth”. We have a long term plan of inculturation. We have a hymnal in our native language, which is phase one of a music effort. We have talented translators who are motivated and poetic. The beauty of the translated hymns is amazing, especially when you read them in English and sing them in Ojibwe. Phase two involves placing in every weekly bulletin a language lesson that is drawn from the translated hymns and prayers in the liturgy. In our communities, there is that message from the Church that was communicated in the past that you cannot be both Christian and Native. There is also that tension from traditional teaching that you cannot be both, and we need to remember that. We Natives do not see a dichotomy between spirit and practice. We are spiritual in our daily lives and in all that we do.

Fr. Sands – I wanted to mention that in their parish, they have created a worship book that contains Ojibwe hymns and prayers. They have also translated into Ojibwe parts of the Mass such as the Gloria, the Creed, the Our Father and various responses. Everyone here will have the opportunity to sing in Ojibwe in our Listening Session liturgies, and to experience the fruit of what some very talented people have been working on. There are a couple of Native American languages that have been officially approved for the Liturgy. The challenge faced with getting additional languages approved, is that you need people who are fluent in a Native language who can work with the various liturgy and doctrine authorities at different levels in the Church, who are responsible for translations of the liturgy. You also need a bishop or bishops who can sponsor the process.

Bishop James Wall – Navajo was one of the languages that was approved.

Bishop Robert Gruss – The document that Archbishop Chaput put together to have the Mass celebrated in Lakota, when he was the Bishop of Rapid City, has been approved by the Vatican.



LISTENING SESSION 2

LISTENING SESSION 2 –

JULIENNE MONTOUR

NATIVE AMERICANS AND FEELING WELCOME AT THE LORD'S TABLE

Welcome to all here; my name is Julienne Montour. I am a Mohawk of Kahnawake.

When I was a child, I had to sit at a little folding table that held four children called “the Little Table.” I ate the same food as the “Big Table” where ten people sat, but there was never room for me there, regardless of how lanky I grew or how the scissor legs would entrap me if a sibling left the table swiftly.

This is often the case with the welcome of a culture in the Church. The new person sits in the wrong ‘assigned’ seat, they look and sound different. We grew up in our church where fourteen heads covered two pews. There were times that mom felt her kids were treated differently. She married out of her race which made her parents uncomfortable – but dad was Catholic so that redeemed the marriage. But she was aware of the names, gestures and words that were aimed at her family.

Looking back, not everyone thought that being Catholic covered for being Indian. We were bi-racial when bi-racial wasn't cool. None of us were allowed to go to the rectory, which I now understand, but the nuns sent for the older children to scrub floors, iron, do dishes, rake, mow and such, since we were getting a break in tuition after five children. However, my parents learned that no children from other large, poor families were required to work for their tuition. My siblings worked every day except Sunday. Mom figured out why we were treated differently and pulled us all out of Catholic School and sent us to catechism instead....

“Our family just didn't FIT”

As an adult, I became an appointed Native American liaison for the Archdiocese of Detroit and became involved with Native Ministry. One day, I invited my friend DeeDee, who is Potawatomi to attend an APC meeting as my guest.

She had been instrumental in bringing her whole family back to the Church through Native Ministry. That day, a very influential person came to address the multi-ethnic vicariate members. He stated things like, “This continent was uncivilized, uncultured and undeveloped; and the Church can take all the credit for civilizing the uncultured people and developing the land.” As these words were said, I looked about the room to see if anybody was as mortified as I. They continued to listen to the speaker, nodding in support of his words or perhaps of his lofty position. I looked at DeeDee, and saw the horror on her face. The speaker left the meeting and the building so I could not catch him. The next meeting where he addressed the APC group, his words were again cutting to the first nations people. I left the meeting immediately and caught up to him. When I exclaimed that



his words were very negative towards inclusion of Native people in the Church, he apologized and stated that it was the way he was raised, and that he never thought about how this could be taken or that there would be Indians present.

I felt Native People were relinquished to the Little Table – not part of the current church.

Recently, Nathan Phillips, an Omaha veteran, attempted to bring peace to a group of Catholic boys that were in a heated argument with another group of youth. He approached with a few friends in an attempt to diffuse their anger towards each other. Nathan started singing a well-known song which is sung for mourning and healing. This diffused the arguing between the two groups of boys, but then the Catholic boys encircled Nathan's group and closed them in. Nathan continued singing the song, even with the mob turning their attention and adrenaline toward him. Nathan heard the mocking words, but stayed calm even with the fear for his small group of singers.

Afterward, Nathan made a profound statement. He didn't feel hate, but saw this experience as a teaching moment for the youth. The U.S. and Canada took notice to see if and how the Church would respond. Instead of reconciliation, the media showed well-rehearsed, calm adolescents sheepishly looking into cameras on talk shows. Trump should have renounced their actions, but the key youth were even invited to the White House as they were all wearing new MAGA hats during their confrontations. The message that the world saw was that these Catholic youth were rewarded for their disrespect.

This is not, "Making America Great Again".

These are just a few examples. Every person should comfortably fit at the Father's table where the leaves are endless, where people can grow, and be comfortable without worrying about losing their cultural ties.

A binder, "Building Intercultural Competence for Ministers" was presented to the USCCB with input from many cultures in the Church. This should be mandatory for all people who represent the Church in any capacity.

LISTENING SESSION 2 – DR. ROSE-ALMA MCDONALD PASTORAL CARE AND OUTREACH

She:kon your Most Reverend Excellencies and Father Sands.

I am very pleased to be here today to talk to you about *Pastoral Care and Outreach* at the St. Regis Mission Church located in Akwesasne: *Land Where the Partridge Drums*, on the border of Ontario, Quebec and New York. I want to say niawen:kowa to you, Father Sands, for your kind invitation to this *Listening Session*.

The St. Regis Mission serves a congregation of about 500 families. Our Mission was established in 1752 with a long history of Jesuit, and now, Diocesan Ministry. Our parish is rich with Mohawk traditions which are integrated in all we do. Weekly, the *Our Father* is sung in Mohawk at Mass and the *St. Kateri Prayer* is recited at every occasion. Funerals are richly integrated with Mohawk tradition and hymns. Nine day novenas are celebrated after funerals which are recited in Mohawk and at wakes.

Pastoral care and outreach is essential to our Akwesasronon parishioners who otherwise would not be able to come to us. Sometimes we have as many as eight deaths in one week! In a community of 12,700 people that is a lot. We average about 22 to 29 funerals annually. Pastoral care and visiting of the sick, shut-ins and the dying has been ongoing in our parish for over 45 years. Pastoral care is important because it supports our Akwesas-



ronon in a context of suffering, grief, depression, sickness, cancer, chronic disease, old age, loneliness, poverty and lack of mobility.

(Successes): We have been blessed with Sister Mary Christine Taylor, S.S.J., who has dedicated over 45 years of service to our Parish. She faithfully visits over 120 parishioners at home or at our Iakhisoh:ta *Elders Lodge* and Tsiionkwanonhso:te *Chronic Care Facility*. Communion calls and prayer services are provided weekly to our Akwesasronon sick, shut-ins and elderly. That is 480 – 500 visits a month! St. Regis Mission Pastoral care and outreach is a lifeline to our Church for our parishioners.

(Challenges): The *benefits of visitation* are *spiritual growth*, strong *relationships* with

the church and its members, *insights* into the lives of Church members, and it is *nurturing* and, most importantly, facilitates and supports *stewardship*. Pastoral care is not only visiting the sick. We experience many challenges pastorally. For example,

- No *one person* is *capable* of doing *everything*. Caring for 30 people *personally* is *possible*. Caring for 200 *is impossible*.
- Our laity volunteers *burn out* and leave us because of increased pastoral program growth, demands and frustration.
- There are limited numbers of Akwesasronon Eucharistic Ministers, Lay Ministers and volunteers to meet the increasing pastoral demands of our congregation.
- Recruitment, training and maintaining our Akwesasronon laity is a big challenge.
- There is a lack of commitment of some volunteers due to competing priorities created by poverty demands and a fast paced non-indigenous society.
- Some longhouse traditional families are hostile toward Catholics and oppose our work.
- The level of evangelization and catechism is very low.
- Everyone knows the importance of our apostolate. Our Totas and Elders are more receptive to our pastoral programs because they are strong and entrenched Catholics.
- The environment and ecology is contaminated in Akwesasne by mercury pollution. The impact is high mortality rates, cancer, poisoning of our environment and death. It is a crisis.
- Church attendance, the celebration of the Eucharist and other sacraments are impacted by pastoral care. There are fewer weddings than twenty years ago. There are more baptisms but the challenge is mixed families (Catholic and Traditional).
- There is a problem of alcoholism and substance abuse that a spiritual approach of pastoral care can address. Legalized marijuana in Ontario has created much strife in the community to the point of violence and civil disobedience in recent weeks. It is causing a huge rift in our already overburdened community.
- Gambling is another issue due to legalized gaming in Akwesasne. In the 1990's the issue caused an internal war which most Akwesasronon families are still healing from. This has huge impacts on family health and function pastorally.

(Long term solutions): Faith formation, training and recruitment of Akwesasronon volunteers, lay ministers and leaders *is urgent*. We have three (3) Formation for Ministry (FFM) Lay Minister candidates being commissioned on June 30, 2019. It takes two years per class to grow more trained lay ministers and volunteers. We had ten (10) lay ministers commissioned four years ago, but most of them are elderly and in ill health, therefore new recruits are needed to replace and substitute for them.

All of our challenges and problems are interrelated and interdependent. Non-compartmentalized solutions are required.

A **holistic approach** is required based on the life of St. Kateri Tekakwitha. Her life story is inspiring and holistically, must be part of our pastoral outreach, environmental and ecological stewardship, sharing of the holy sacraments and nurturing of the souls in our care.

Niawen:kowa to you Most Reverend Excellencies for your precious time today.

LISTENING SESSION 2 – DEACON ANDY OROSCO IMPORTANCE OF EPISCOPAL RELATIONSHIP WITH TRIBAL LEADERS AND AWARENESS OF CULTURAL TRADITIONS



Your Excellencies and dear concerned, I speak on the importance of developing and maintaining an Episcopal relationship with the tribal leaders of the reservations located within the diocese they shepherd. Also of importance is the awareness of their cultural traditions and the special circumstances they may live in. Being reservations, the mission churches are on tribal lands typically not owned by the church, and the history between the local tribes and the diocese that serves them is important.

I understand that each diocese is different because of the status of the indigenous people living within the diocese, (being federally recognized or not, living on or off reservation, not a local tribe, or being an indigenous from outside the United States). Add to this, each bishop's understanding of indigenous. Because of my ancestral and clerical connection with the area and mission, I was invited to assist in the planning of the 250th Anniversary of the founding of Mission San Diego de Alcalá, the first Mission in California being commemorated this entire year. For two years I have

worked to develop a relationship between the Mission and my people, the Kumeyaay: and what I personally experienced was bitterness and protest against the church, the Mission and the canonization of St. Junipero Serra.

In my recent meetings with Tribal Chairmen and tribal leadership (elders), their main complaints was the lack of recognition and communication between the diocese and the local tribes. It was said to me by the tribal leaders: the only time we were included in conversations or consulted, was when the church was in need.

In 2018, I had the good fortune of being invited to the “Joy of the Gospel” convocation held in Florida. While there, I experienced a session that spoke on cultural diversity in the church, giving voice to the voiceless. I was both surprised and disheartened because of the lack of representation by native peoples in this discussion, though they were present. I could not understand how this could be, due to the facts: we are the first peoples of this land, we are the ones who welcomed you, we are the first neophytes of this church, and we are the ones who built the first mission churches to establish the faith in this great country. We gave and continue to give; however, we have been forgotten, we are strangers in a stolen land. When a new bishop is installed in a diocese, we have been invited as an afterthought and are not invited first, to welcome him properly onto our lands. If a priest is assigned to one of our mission churches, we are not consulted and if the priest is not a good fit, it is difficult to voice our concerns because of our lack of relationship directly with the bishop.

Dear bishops, all we ask is to be recognized by our church, beginning with our bishops, then by our priests and the laity. To have a voice at the table, to be respected and recognized. What I recommend is to develop a protocol that calls for all bishops to convene with the tribal leaders periodically as a group, to develop a relationship that is based on familiarity and understanding. I also recommend that a ministry dedicated to local native concerns, be instituted in each diocese. The ministry can assist with the day to day ministering and maintain an account that is continually updated with changes in tribal governance. It can also assist and remind the bishop of the tribal status of each reservation, each mission church and the other indigenous peoples who have relocated themselves within the bounds of a diocese.

Remember, each federally recognized tribe is a sovereign nation unto itself and should be recognized accordingly. Also to be remembered is, when Father Junipero Serra was dispatched to Alta California, we as a people had been living in these lands for 10,000 years, with our own culture, our own societal systems, and our own spiritual awareness.

Our tribal spiritual leaders were a very integral part of our existence and our relationship with each other as a people. We developed a spiritual relationship that lasted a lifetime with our tribal spiritual leader. This was our tradition, and this is what we knew and how we lived. When Fr. Serra and his accompanying priests proclaimed the good news of Jesus Christ to the natives, some accepted this new understanding and chose to live a Christian life. The new neophytes also accepted the new priest as their new spiritual leader for life, whether the new priest or the church understood that or not. It was this understanding that threatened Fr. Junipero many times and killed Fr. Luis Jayme in 1775. Fr Jayme learned the language of my people the Kumeyaay, learned their ways, their traditions and gained their trust. With this Fr. Jayme traveled into territories that were not open but were hostile to his invitation.

Since then, my people understand only that our spiritual leader and church continues to abandon us and not fight for justice for us and that story has been told through the years many times. This was during the mission period, the secularization period, especially during and after the time California became a State, and in some ways, continues today. The bitterness is strong among Native Catholics; however, I believe it can be overcome with contrition, forgiveness, open dialogue and understanding.

My bishops please do not abandon us again.

Thank You.



LISTENING SESSION 2 – AGNES SWEETSIR

DEALING WITH EXTENSIVE LOSS, HISTORICAL TRAUMA, INCLUDING SEXUAL ABUSE IN THE CHURCH, AND GRIEF

Dzaaneets zoo – Good afternoon

In preparation for this presentation, I did some homework. I contacted several Catholic Native American friends and facilitated a discussion at our recent annual meeting of parishes in our region. Above all, people wanted me to convey the importance of addressing the social issues that are killing our people, devastating families and keeping individuals away from God, and the Church, especially the Catholic Church.

I probably don't need to tell you that we Native Americans, and especially rural Alaska Natives, lead the statistics in this country for suicide, addictions, and domestic violence. I have many family members, tribal members and friends who were victims of abuse. Many were sexually abused in Catholic institutions by priests and other religious. Others were abused in their families and in their communities, as well. I have three brothers who committed suicide, and I believe that they were victims of sexual abuse. I am a victim of sexual abuse that took place in a Western foster home, and I can tell you horror stories about how difficult that has made my life, my parenting, my marriage, and about the challenge it brought to my faith. I empathize with those who were harmed, in what should be the most sacred and safe place, by men who were held in the highest esteem.

Disclosure has happened and things continue to get worse. The recent and numerous sexual abuse scandals in our Church have definitely opened many wounds that have angered and confused many people; myself included.

Efforts need to be put into helping promote healing. As one of the elders in our meeting stated, "The children of today may not have been abused, but they are suffering because of what happened to their grandparents and great-grandparents in the church. Victims become perpetrators if there is no healing. And we wonder why they aren't coming to Church. To many, the Church still represents a place where the lives of their parents or grandparents were destroyed."

I'm not saying that all of our trauma, loss and grief is a result of abuse in the Church. But, I do believe that in our area, a lot of it is. All of the inaction around the issue of abuse by Church personnel and leadership continues to have a profound negative impact. My people are in a constant state of grief. What is the Church really doing to promote healing and the unconditional love of Christ? Yes, we've asked for forgiveness in some cases, and in some areas of the country. Yes, we are making some efforts to ensure safe church environments. But, we must take that further.

We allowed abuse to happen and then covered it up, as has been proven. We must do what it takes to promote healing. We need to educate priests, deacons, religious and other church ministers about the effects of abuse and about how to pastor victims. At our meeting, I asked the religious if they had received training to deal with loss, grief, and trauma, such as sexual abuse. They all answered with a resounding "no." We need to be careful what



we say and how we say things when we are at the pulpit. We have to compassionately consider the wounded who are sitting in the pews.

Just last week, I received a call from one of our young volunteer ministers who admitted that she is struggling after hearing about all of the alleged cover-ups in the Church even while knowing very well about the suffering that so many abuse victims and their families are still dealing with, even to this present day. At the same time, she has heard at church about the need to deal with issues such as gun violence and abortion. Yes, they are important issues, but I think she is right when she says that our people have been violently dying at greater rates from the abuse they endured in the Church. I think I probably know at least two mothers who made the painstaking decision to abort. During my lifetime, I have known at least 100 people who have committed suicide – it's too painful to count. And that doesn't include the people I know who have died as a result of addictions.

If we are going to get people to go back in the church, we have to honestly deal with abuse in the Church and we also need to undertake efforts to promote healing. We have to consider and address the social issues that plague the American Indian people if we are going to expect them to return to the Church or to convert to Catholicism or to any other kind of Christian faith.

Anaa Basee'

**LISTENING SESSION 2 –
LUCETTA PEÑA
EVANGELIZATION EFFORTS – EFFORTS
MADE BY ST. JOACHIM'S PARISH TO
REACH OUT WILL INCREASE OUR CHURCH
ATTENDANCE**

I am from St. Joachim Church which is on the Lummi reservation located 80 miles north of Seattle. Currently we have a priest, Fr. Francis from Kenya, serving in our parish. He comes with tribal teachings and our community has been really receptive to him.

Community & Economy - Our community consists of fishermen, crabbers and hunters. Our economic base is the casino, golf courses, markets and stores. We are located on the Lummi reservation in Washington State and are one of the oldest churches in the Puget Sound, having been built in 1861. The church was built near the mouth of the Nooksack River and was later moved by the tribal men who pulled it, using logs and horses up a steep hill. The missionary priest at the time was Father E. Casimir Chirouse, O.M.I. It would be a historical error to believe that the first Catholics in the NW were the white pioneers, for factually the Indians were the first Catholics in this part of the country.

Miracle - We are the home of the final miracle that led to the canonization of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha. This is the miracle healing of Jake Finkbonner recognized by Rome.

Evangelization - We are working on evangelization because our membership has dropped dramatically and in order for us to be successful, we are working with neighboring tribes. With the Swinomish, we have a Holy Rosary boat ride which includes Mass on the boat, the praying of the rosary, blessing of the waterways, songs and rosary making.



With the Canadian band, our neighbor to the north, we work with them because they're using their traditional practices, drums and traditional regalia in their Ministry.

Media - We are also working with a new local newspaper about announcing Mass times, the offering of our Masses, Mass intentions, upcoming church events and special Masses and holy days of obligation. We use flyers, the internet, Facebook, as well as direct contact, for this evangelization effort. We are developing a survey so we can ask the members of our congregation for their input on what they would like to see the church offer them and about why they fall away.

Outreach to Sorrowful Mothers - There are lots of mothers who have lost their loved ones to drugs, alcohol and suicide. We meet one-on-one with the mothers in their homes and we also provide grief support groups. We have also reached out to local churches like Assumption Catholic Church to receive the grief training offered by the Archdiocese of Seattle.

Soup meals - We are providing soup meals for the homeless. We invite the residents of the local homeless shelter to come share a meal and join us in fellowship. We also visit the sick in hospitals, rehabilitation centers and rest homes. We are doing all that we can to get our people back.

Evangelization movies - We are reaching out to families in our Church by offering movie nights in which we show spiritual-growth, faith-based movies while sharing a meal together. We are coordinating with the local boys and girls club and youth organizations to reach out to their youth and invite them to our religious education classes. Our religious education classes are offered to both adults and children. We provide meals before every class and also provide transportation when needed. We try to work with their time constraints, keeping in mind that we are a fishing community.

Other - We make one-on-one visits to our Elder Center, the health clinic, the Tribal Center, the homeless shelter, and to crime victims in their homes. We deal with the local commissions that are led by our community members and we regularly ask them to inform us about what our needy and vulnerable community members want and need. At our parish we offer special Masses for healing of the sick and for special intentions, candlelight vigils, either at the Church or at people's homes and adoration. We also offer classes in basket making, drum making, the growing of plants and flower arranging. We also strongly encourage the youth group to hold all of their meetings at the Church.

Needs - In conclusion, we continue to work diligently to encourage our people to return to their Catholic faith. We do, however, need some assistance. We need a vehicle to transport the children to catechism classes and to our other outreach activities. We also need assistance to cover the cost of bibles, religious items (such as rosaries, prayer cards and crucifixes), food, and food transportation costs. We are also working with our archdiocese to have more religious sisters assigned to our parish because we only have one priest who serves three parishes and it is a lot of work for him. We also believe that the sisters could help us open our doors more, especially to our grieving mothers.

LISTENING SESSION 2 – FEEDBACK SESSION

Bishop Chad Zielinski – Agnes, I was deeply moved by what you had to say and we can have a larger conversation on that privately. However, to share for the sake of the larger group, what can we do as bishops because what you shared is not isolated to Alaska? What can the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops do?



Agnes Sweetsir – The bishops have said “We are sorry,” and that is it. We are aware that the Church is always short on resources, but I think having partnerships with tribes helps. There are different examples of these types of collaboration around the country and that are experiencing success in helping and bringing healing to the people. The problems that I am talking about are not just the Church’s problem, but they can partner with tribes and be a part of the solution. Catholic Community Resources used to be more active in Alaska, and I don’t know what happened. It is important to bring that back to life. We also had sexual abuse classes and gun violence classes, and there are various other things that we were doing. But there needs to be more outreach to help people heal and deal with their grief. People who have been abused are killing themselves, and it is never talked about. They are buried and the pain carries on and on, and it is the kids who suffer. There should be research of the programs that are successful both in the Catholic and non-Catholic communities and build relationships with those people and their programs and learn from them.

Fr. Sands - Related to all that, my grandparents (my mother’s parents) were both taken away from home at the age of four and grew up in boarding schools. I don’t know specifically what happened to them because they died before I was born but I do see the effects of those experiences in what I’ve heard about the lives of my mother’s generation. Both of my grandparents came from very solid Christian, stable families. They were farmers and had wonderful lives and were great contributors to their local communities. That foundation of a good, solid life was forcibly taken away. When I was younger, I asked my parents why no one did anything and I was told that until 1924 Native American persons were not considered legal persons. We had no legal rights and did not become citizens until 1924. The 13th Amendment, that was passed after the civil war to grant citizenship to everyone in the United States, applied to all except for Natives.

My grandparents had ten children and decided to raise them in Detroit. They did not want to raise their children in a Native community because they did not want the same thing to happen to their children that happened to them because they were Native. The trauma that they experienced took away a strong connection to their Native cultural ways for my mother and her siblings. They did, however, remain strongly connected to their extended family. When my grandmother died, my mother was just 15 and still had seven other younger siblings and two nieces to take care of. This was an impossible task for her to fulfill, so they were all eventually taken away and placed in non-Native foster homes. My mother was too old for the foster care system, so she went to live with a great aunt on my father’s reservation. My mother’s siblings all had problems with excessive alcohol use, and many of the subsequent generations have struggles with the same problem. The fruit of my grandparent’s residential boarding school experiences is a lot of multi-generational brokenness and sorrow. This story is very common among Native people. It is probably the biggest trauma and most serious challenge that we face as Native American people. Every Native American in the United States has been affected by this government boarding school situation, in which young children were taken away from their parents and mistreated and abused at the schools, and then having to deal with the resulting extreme pain and sorrow. Many people have turned to alcohol and drug abuse and other unhealthy behaviors to try to numb and escape from their pain.

Some time in the future, I would like to see the Subcommittee on Native American Affairs take the lead on how to address this issue because it is a big issue for the Native American community.

Dr. Rose Alma McDonald - You ask what you can do as bishops. In Canada there were about five hundred thousand First Nations children that died and were missing through the residential school system. In 2012 there was an apology from the Canadian government and the churches also apologized after that. There is

also a residential school survivor's settlement that took place for the victims of the residential school system. There is ongoing healing and reconciliation that's still happening and this would be a good model that the United States can look at. There needs to be an apology and an acknowledgement of what happened to our people for reconciliation to begin.

Billy Charles – We are asking the church to build partnerships and to use research to address some of the issues that we have to face every day. Every time we bring up these issues to policy makers and funders they want to throw money at the issue and they want to use Western culture to view the problem. Let's look at the research that the Native communities have done. Let's look at the work that indigenous communities have done for centuries. Every culture has something to contribute. God did not create cultures just to let it go away - they are still alive. We cannot rely solely on Western prevention and intervention. There is a lot of research to be done into Native culture to help empower the Native American communities to help solve some of these problems. We can use the local experts to help solve some of these issues.

Bishop Eduardo Nevares - What is the Native American leadership trying to do to help resolve some of the pain and hurt that has been imposed upon the Native American people from the priests and deacons?

Agnes Sweetsir - Throughout the country various things are happening, and I have heard of wonderful things in the Menominee country. I am only 66 years old and there are more than 100 people who I have lost in my life from suicide. These are people that I have known closely and have had a relationship with, from my grandfather to my nephews. This is not an uncommon story. Please note that this does not include those who have suffered addictions and died of health related issues because of their addictions.

We are a people in real desperation, struggling to help ourselves, and we are trying different programs. I battle with my Catholic faith as my mother chose this faith for me, and there are days I struggle with it. There are those who are at the Catholic table simply out of honor to their parents, and it's not easy. I don't think that the Native people know what to do, or are in a place to do something because of the trauma that they have experienced. Every four weeks we bury someone that we have a relationship with who died not by natural causes. My parents lived to be 92 and 100 and I rejoiced in their death because I was happy that someone actually lived to be old and die an honorable death.

The Native American community is trying its best with what they have, without much help. It's not only the Catholic Church that does not know what to do, the other churches also do not know what to do. We are Catholic in Galena but up the river they are Episcopalian, and they have the same struggles that we do. They have also tried many different Western programs, as well as native traditions which they do in private, because they don't want to be ostracized. In other areas with more resources, they may be doing



a lot more, but we are just surviving.

Dr. Rose Alma McDonald - You asked what leadership can do. In response to that, here in St. Regis Mission, because we are located right on the border of the United States and Canada, Native American leadership has really taken the churches and government to task in terms of the trauma resulting from residential boarding schools. There are strategies at the national level that have been developed cooperatively between the Native leadership and government to try to address the issues. In the US and Canada, we have higher numbers of indigenous women and girls who are missing and murdered because our young women end up on the streets due to the trauma resulting from the residential boarding schools and because of how they have been treated. There is now a national inquiry in Canada into how the trauma caused by the residential boarding school system has contributed to the situation of many indigenous women ending up missing and murdered. We don't even know the actual number, but it is probably higher than what has been reported.

The other problem we are running into is that the police and the justice system are anti-native. Therefore if there is a murdered or missing woman, it appears that no one in the justice system cares or is concerned. Racism is very alive and well. A strategy has been designed that provides advocates who can help families who have lost their women and girls work their way through the justice system.

A lot of trauma has resulted from the residential boarding school system, and the churches have an obligation to address this trauma because they were hired by the federal government to run the residential schools.

Maryanna Harstad - In Minnesota, the legislators are currently meeting and a bill that is meant to track the number of Native women who are killed is working its way through the legislative process. This is because the numbers of Native women murdered are not being separated out in the statistics as of 2019.

Deacon Andy Orosco - This is a very complex issue. Within the tribes that I am associated with, there is a lot of bitterness and it is very easy for the people to point the finger of blame at the Church and to take very little responsibility for the issues. I truly believe that the bitterness that they hold in their hearts is being passed down from person to person, and that it is killing our youth. I am a Sherriff Chaplain, and I am the one who gets called in when there are suicides, murders and overdoses. I am the one who has to tell the parents that their loved ones are gone and to listen to the raw scream of grief of the parents and siblings of the deceased person. I don't want to hear these screams anymore. This is why it is so important for all of us to recognize that we have a voice and to say that something needs to be done.

I have been talking to the tribal leadership and keep telling them that the bitterness in their hearts is what is killing our youth. We need to help remove the bitterness in the hearts of our youth by reaching out to them with hope and understanding, and not with bitterness, so that they can experience healing and help educate other young people. This will be a difficult task, but it is important.

Bishop John Folda - For my information and context, how long has it been since these schools were operating? I don't know much about the residential schools in the U.S or Canada. I have heard about them, but don't know much in the way of details and deep history.

Fr. Sands - The residential schools were established by a government policy in the 1870s in both the United States and Canada. The thinking behind the policy was that if there was some way to eliminate the Indian in the person that it would get rid of the problem of having to deal with the Indians. They thought that if they took the children away from their families and communities and culture, and put them into those boarding

schools, that they would lose their identities and cultures and become just like all other Americans. Taking young children away from their parents was a great violation of human dignity and freedom and of the rights of parents and families. The policy did not end until the 1970's. The majority of the schools were run by Christian denominations who were paid to run the schools by the U.S. and Canadian governments. Several dioceses and religious orders in the U.S. have declared bankruptcy because they were found liable for many abuse cases related to the residential boarding schools that they operated.

Deacon Andy Orosco - There are still Indian boarding schools in existence. I go every Monday to the Sherman Indian School located in Riverside, California. This is the residential boarding school that is chosen by most of the natives who live west of the Mississippi and who want to attend a boarding school. Native children from Wisconsin and Florida also attend the school. The difference is that attendance at the school is not mandatory, it is a choice. The schools are still in existence.

Deacon Roy Callison - The schools still serve Native youth. Many who attend are coming from broken homes and are looking for a safe place where they can escape drugs.

Patrick Mason - Often the education is not very good at these schools, and it is not clear why some of them are still open.

Agnes Sweetsir - We need to remember that not all the abuse happened in school. There are many priests and brothers who were sent out to missions and living isolated with no community, and who took advantage of the situation and abused men, women, girls and boys. However, my father always reminds me that the Episcopal Church took him in as an orphan and saved him. He witnessed a lot of horrific abuse, but there were also positive things that happened too. I think that there are a lot of wonderful boarding schools now.

Patrick Mason - A lot of the abuse committed by members of the Church happened in the past. Today, I am an attorney on the Navajo reservation and my sister is a counselor for at-risk youth. We see the problem caused by drugs and alcohol every day. Growing up in Gallup, I do not recall a Native American who did not experience some form of abuse from either a cousin or an uncle, and this perpetuates and leads to more abuse and drugs.

Fr. Sands - Bishop Nevares asked what the Native leadership is doing regarding the issue. This is a spiritual issue. The Native leaders themselves are wounded by the school situation and this makes it hard for them to look at the issue in a spiritual way. As Catholics, we know that the answer is Christ and that we can experience healing through knowing him and living the Christian life. However, the bishops who are the leaders of the Church, can help people to experience healing through a relationship with Christ and the Church.

Bishop James Wall - We were one of the Dioceses that filed Chapter 11 bankruptcy in 2013 - 2016. The bankruptcy process requires making a lot of monetary agreements, and one of the agreements we also entered into is called a non-monetary agreement. The things that we agreed to do that were not related to financing are the most important to me. The primary part of this agreement was to conduct healing services. This could be done in the form of Liturgy of the Word services or celebrations of the Mass. They could be held in a parish, school or mission where one of these abusers were assigned, even if no abuse was reported. We did this for about a year and half. I visited many parishes, and we publicized the process very well. We invited everyone, and especially survivors of sexual abuse, family members of those survivors, and family members of people who had committed suicide. We expressed our sincere apologies to them, but I know that one can never say I am sorry enough. Picking up on what Fr. Henry Sands said, true healing can ultimately only be

found in Christ. To be able to speak about that at length, and to allow people to grieve, was very important. It was not an easy process, but it was very necessary.

At the end of each of these healing sessions we invited the people to meet with me one-on-one. Sometimes those meetings would go on for two and a half hours. I knew that it was necessary for people to come in and be able to talk about this. You run the gambit on where the abuse took place and whether it was at the hand of a church worker, a school worker, a family member or a complete stranger. One of the things that I found was that it was most difficult for people to give voice to it, because on the reservations, it was a very taboo topic to discuss. I think that this is because there are generations and generations of it being considered taboo and because people do not feel like they have a voice to speak about those things. It was powerful to see people give voice to it, and it was very healing for them to be able to give voice to it. At the end of each session, we sent everyone home with copies of the litany of healing and encouraged them to pray it. There are several other dioceses that have done the same thing and that have found it to be very helpful. I think that everyone found it helpful.

If you're feeling marginalized, or like you're on the periphery, or that you are at the small table, or that you have no voice, there is a need for healing. Providing opportunities to our people to not feel that way is a great way to begin the healing of their justifiable resentment.



LISTENING SESSION 3

LISTENING SESSION 3 –

WILLIAM WHITE

THE ALPHA AND OMEGA

*CATHOLICS – THEY ARE BAPTIZED
CATHOLICS BUT YOU DO NOT SEE
THEM UNTIL THEIR FUNERALS*

My name is William White. Thank you for inviting me to this listening session. I am married to my wife Terri and we have 5 children. I live in Rockyford, SD on the Pine Ridge Reservations. I am the Pastoral Assistant at Christ the King Church which is one of seven churches of the Red Cloud Mission Parish. I have been employed for the church a little over a year. I am in the Deacon Formation Program in the Diocese of Rapid City, and I am the Vice Postulator for the Canonization Cause of Nicholas Black Elk. Today, I will talk about the Alpha and Omega Catholics.



The Alpha and Omega Catholics have a desire to be baptized and buried in the Catholic faith, but not much more. I got the idea for this title because of the Paschal Candle that is used at both encounters. We see a sincere effort by these people during times of sacrament preparation and sacraments, but in a lot of cases, we do not see them again until time for their next sacrament, which is usually their funeral. They identify as Catholic but do not come to Mass on a regular basis.

In a lot of cases, the grandparents are the ones pushing for baptism. We do a lot of funerals of people who identify as Catholic, and the families want rosaries prayed at the funeral service, but there is little response. On the flip side, I tell them to keep the rosaries and the prayer sheets if they want to use them. Lately, they have been keeping them. Hopefully they are using them to pray. I talked with an older man at one of these funerals and he told me, “Our lives used to revolve around the Church and its activities.” I told him to come back and let's build it back up, but I have not seen him since.

I talked to another man who told me, “I went to school Red Cloud, I got my time in.” I thought to myself, I guess God created us to put in a certain amount of time, and once we do our time – that's it! But what about his kids who were not raised with a person of faith? They did not get their time in - it is like he skipped a generation or two. I do home visits, and several people look forward to receiving Holy Communion, and this helps to expose their family members to prayers. There was this lady who used to come to Church and she called once and started by apologizing to me for not coming to Church lately. The reason for her call, however, was that she wanted to add a name to our prayer intentions. She knows what we are and what we do, but she could not attend in person.

My mother recalled growing up in the country church at Rockyford. They used to have services once a month and it was called Church Sunday. It was a true celebration with potluck dinners and picture taking. That is

what I would like to see again. My church history is not perfect, but I eventually came back. The main reason for my return, besides the Holy Spirit, was to get my daughter baptized. I know that others have the same desire. I really do not like playing the numbers game, but people ask me how many faithful we have coming to church, and I'm not sure. If you don't track it, you don't know how you are doing or if you are improving. What scares me the most is, if the elders and parents in families are not making church a priority, where will the church be after this generation? What will it take for people to make going to church a priority again? If you have one praying person it is a good thing, but it will not be feasible to keep a church open for just one person. How can we bring back the Catholics who have roots in the Church and want to receive the sacraments but who do not attend church?

LISTENING SESSION 3 – SHIRLEY ZUNI TRAINING OF PRIESTS WHO SERVE NATIVE AMERICAN CATHOLICS ON THE PUEBLOS

Good Afternoon. My name is Shirley Zuni. I am the Director of Native American Ministry for the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, under the direction of Archbishop John Wester. Your Excellencies, thank you for allowing me to speak today.

What I wanted to talk to you about today is: Training our priests that serve our Native people in the Pueblos of our Archdiocese.

This has become an issue with our Pueblos because we have priests who are assigned to our Pueblos who know nothing about who we are. The priests that come into our Pueblo communities should have training sessions with a Native Catholic person who knows the ways of the Native community, and their identity as Catholics. We need to be able to take these priests under our wing, and journey with them until they are comfortable in the new community that they are in.

We have had situations where the Pueblo Governors have banned the priest from the Pueblo because of his actions, and/or his insensitivity to our Native communities. Our Archbishop had to go before a tribal council so that they could tell him why this priest is no longer allowed on the Pueblo. Our priests need to know that we believed in our Creator long before the Catholic faith came to us. We were born into our traditional faith and were taught to nurture and respect what we have. We hold our native faith deep in our hearts, not speaking of it publicly. Then we have our Catholic faith that was given to us, which enriches what we were born with and what we have. Our Catholic faith works hand in hand with our traditions. Our leaders teach us that one is not good without the other.

As Natives, we want priests to come into our Pueblos who are going to say “Let us work together to build the community of true believers in the way you believe and in the way I am teaching you to believe.” This is why



new priests come into our Pueblos. We need them to know and accept our traditional ways.

At this time, at our Archbishop's request, I am visiting with the priests who are presently serving our Pueblos within the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. I explain to them who we are and enlighten them on what they need to know about our traditional ways. I feel that if I can help them now, we all can work together for the good of our Native people. Our Catholic faith and Native faith go hand in hand - we are not giving up one for the other.

Thank you.

God Bless all of you.

LISTENING SESSION 3 – BEN BLACK BEAR YOUTH MINISTRY

Youth ministry is very important on the Rosebud Reservation. When I came back to the reservation, I found our youth were confused – many were attempting suicide and had no direction. Jennifer and I were able to meet with many of the young adults to try and find out what we can do to help them.

We then started the St. Francis Mission Youth Group in 2013 with youth from different communities and from different backgrounds. We started with a group of four children that grew up to 20, ranging from 12 to 15 years of age. We meet monthly and have various activities with them. We incorporated prayer, bible study groups and just time for the youth to talk. We developed events that they could assist with. At Easter, we have some baptisms and we had the youth prepare Easter baskets for the kids and the children had an Easter egg hunt after Mass. The youth were very excited to be able to contribute to the community.

We created a mission and vision statement for the youth group. The vision statement reads “We envision students seeing Christ as the answer, getting an opportunity to know him better through worship, small groups and activities. Students are encouraged to love God and each other as God loves us.”

The Mission Statement reads “Our mission is to reach out to fifth to twelfth grade students, providing a place of fellowship and growth where we can connect with God, with each other and the community.”

Many of the youth took these statements to heart and we incorporate the spirit of these statements into our activities. We also incorporate our Lakota values into our teachings with our youth group. Some key Lakota values we teach include the following:

- Wocekiye - Praying, spirituality
- Wa'ohola - Respect for Creator, self, family, and community
- Waunsila - Caring and compassion for all people
- Wowicake - To be honest and truthful with self, creator and others
- Wawokiye - Generosity, caring and giving from the heart, helping without expecting anything in return
- Wahwala - Humility, remember we are all equal, not one of us is better than another
- Woksape - Wisdom, learning from elders. They give good advice because they have seen many things happen and change.

We undertake a lot of fundraising for the youth group to enable them to participate in various events. For

example we traveled to Tacoma, Washington last year to participate in the Annual Tekakwitha Conference.

**LISTENING SESSION 3 –
JENNIFER BLACK BEAR
EVANGELIZATION**

I am the Director of Religious Education Director on the reservation and was hired in 2013. We offer Religious education to over 200 children in 3 schools - two public and one tribal school. We are fortunate enough to be able to go into the schools to teach. We teach or use the Pflaum curriculum, which is the weekly Gospels, and we incorporate our Lakota culture and teachings into our curriculum. All the children know how to say the sign of the cross in Lakota as well as “The Gloria”.

Of the three parishes where we work, St. Charles is our largest. We have three Jesuit priests on our reservation and six active parishes. They are very busy and we pick up the work they can't do. Therefore we teach sacramental preparation, baptism, first Communion, confirmation, and RCIA classes. We are creative in the ways we try to bring people back to the Church. For example, we incorporate the need to come to church through our classes, knowing that the children will bring the parents or grandparents back to church attendance.

We teach them that we are Lakota Catholics. We hear a lot on the reservation about how one has to choose between being Lakota and being Catholic so we remind them that we were raised Lakota and Catholic, and it is ok to be both. We face many challenges within our communities. We have families who would like their child baptized, but don't want to attend the classes, they want to do it because their families told them to. We still face a lot of negativity from the boarding school days, but we try to work through that.

We are proud to say our last few classes of young adults who have completed their Confirmation have become involved in our parishes as lectors and ushers. One of our couples was married this past September in the Church. We have two other couples preparing for marriage. All in all, the young adults we have through the program continue to come to church and we are happy about that. One of the males confirmed last year is interested in pursuing the Diaconate program.

We started doing monthly birthday celebrations in the community along with holiday meals and rosaries. Rosaries are a big deal in the community and I always have some.

We would like to get the Lay Ministry program started on our reservation. What we really need are more priests on our reservation. In the past we had brothers/sisters that we could use. Now we could use more help.

**LISTENING SESSION 3 –
FR. HENRY SANDS
HOPE**

I would like to talk about two important lessons that I have learned as a Native American and they are about hope and forgiveness. I would like to begin by making a bold statement: I believe that, more than anything else, Native Americans need hope and for many, it is the greatest need that they have.

Having hope tends to be challenging and elusive for us Native Americans because of very many reasons. One of the reasons, as mentioned before, is the historical trauma from the government's policies which

wanted to get rid of us through policies of genocide, annihilation, termination, relocation, assimilation and Americanization. Those experiences of having to live through the policies have been very difficult for us.

What has been spoken today, which is very profound in the lives of Native Americans, is the whole experience of the government boarding schools which had an effect on those who lived through it and their descendants. Also, the profound effects of racism, prejudice and discrimination that we live through every day. Many of us live in very difficult circumstances on and off the reservation. Things that are very common for us are high unemployment, substandard housing, poor quality schools, dysfunctional families, welfare trap, death of marriages, chaotic and unstable home life, domestic violence, abuse, alcoholism and drug use.



When people do not have hope, it is hard to believe that anything can make things better - not themselves, not others; nothing can make things better. This lack of hope is the root cause of the higher rates of alcoholism, drug use and suicide experienced by Native people.

But Christ offers us the message of hope that we need and we Christians have been commissioned by Christ himself to offer this message of hope to others through the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: by our acts of charity, by being present to others and by offering them a solid Christian witness. Also, I believe helping people to experience a living and personal faith in Christ is the best way that we can help them receive the hope that only Christ can offer them. This will enable them to begin to live with hope, to believe that things can get better, and to be able to do their part in getting better and beginning to heal.

My mother was the person who taught me about Christian hope and about how to live with hope. Unfortunately, she experienced very serious trials and challenges during her entire life, many of them as a direct result of being Native American. But she always had great hope because Christ was her hope. My mother always believed that we could be better and that the world could be better for us. She offered the greatest witness of hope to me and to others because of her profound faith in Christ and because she lived a heroic life of sacrifice.

I have hope because of my faith in Jesus Christ, because my mother taught me what true hope is by teaching me the truth, by the example of her life, and most of all, because she lived a life of Christ-like sacrifice. Hope has enabled me to live the Christian life and to also strive for and achieve my personal goals and aspirations, particularly as I had to deal with the historical trauma, difficult challenges, obstacles, and untruths that have been part of my journey as a Native American. Because Christ is my hope, I want to help

others, especially my Native American brothers and sisters, to also receive his gift of hope and to experience in their lives the same powerful transformative effect that hope has had in my life.

“What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? As it is written: “For your sake we are being slain all the day; we are looked upon as sheep to be slaughtered.” No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things,* nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth,* nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”[Romans 8: 35-39]

LISTENING SESSION 3 – FEEDBACK SESSION

Bishop Liam Cary - Yes, you just gave me hope, Father Sands, and what I have heard this afternoon has made this trip worthwhile. The hope I get is from each one of you. In this chaotic world, God chooses to raise up people like you.

At the same time as I get drawn into this suffering in society, there has to be an answer. Many people throw out solutions and all that is good and necessary, because that is what we do as human beings. But it is very frustrating when what people keep saying only addresses one part of a big problem.

What I find myself doing, as my own kind of escape hatch, is stepping out of the present and looking at the past over and over again. I think, for example, what it would have been like to live in Ireland in 900, when the Vikings came down for 50 years and just pillaged and killed, and this kept going on, year after year, and there was nothing you could do. There's no way out, there's no solution I can imagine to this. This is life - this is the way it is. Or, if I'm a Jew in the 1930s in Germany, seeing these horrible things happen - and there is nothing one can do. One solution is to get out.

In the 1800s, in the United States there were about 25,000 Catholics out of roughly 3 million people. The Pope had been taken captive by Napoleon and carted off to Paris. The French Revolution devastated the church and it seemed that the Catholic Church did not have a future.

Probably if you asked John Adams and George Washington what the state of the Catholic Church would be in 200 years, they would probably think that it would not exist. None of the greatest sociologists we have today could have predicted at the end of that one century, 1800, that it would be the greatest missionary century in the history of the Catholic Church. Nobody could have foreseen that, nor could anyone have come up with a solution to make such a thing possible.

Agnes, when you were talking, I realized I have not had anywhere near the same number of suicides – and I can't imagine what it is to go through it again and again. I'm wondering whether, when you were in the midst of the suffering that you described 20 years ago, if you were looking for a solution. I would imagine that the way you lived this day is not a solution that you foresaw. You had to kind of live by faith in the future. We are in Lent, and the cross is an absolute failure. It's the complete defeat of everything Jesus Christ did. Complete and total defeat.

What I find so important is that we have to be grounded in faith if we're going to have hope. You cannot have hope unless you are really grounded in faith. I would suggest that the solution is to be grounded in faith. This is not a solution that any of us are going to realize its worth, but we are for-

warding God's solution, which is way bigger than life.

Agnes Sweetsir - I confess that I am an active member of the Catholic Church because of the faith of my mother. If it was not for that, I know I have the same disagreement in any other institutional church. I think we worry too much about people coming to church. The most important thing is my relationship with God through Jesus Christ. All of the things happening now in the Church are because of man and not God. That's the faith I have. That's why at the age of 8 years old I didn't commit suicide because then I already knew that God is real. That knowledge has saved my marriage and helped me to adopt kids. We teach people that you are not coming to church and that is bad - maybe we need to come to them. I have a brother: we are the people of the river. Our spirituality is deeply tied to the land and the river, as that's how we survive and how we were raised. They really wanted to get married on the river but in the Catholic Church, you cannot do that. And so I thought there was something wrong with that.

Fr. Sands - I agree that we are the Church and that we need to go to the people. We are all the Church. We Native people who are Catholics, who are Christian, and who are disciples of Jesus Christ need to go to our Native brothers and sisters as the Church. We can help the bishops and others know how they can also be the Church that reaches out to these people. We need to reach out to: those who need to hear the Gospel; those who need to believe in Christ; those who need hope; and those who need to experience the transformation of their lives through faith in Christ and by living the Christian life.

Bishop Chad Zielinski - I have a military background. I was in the military for 21 years and ended up serving in three combat tours. I have been going around to our Native villages. We have 37 of them. Someone presented the idea that we should have a memorial Mass for veterans. I started doing this, and I was shocked by how many Native Alaskans have served in the military. The Church was overflowing and the priest said he hadn't seen some of those people show up to church in years.

During the intercessory prayers, we had each person name somebody in their family that had served in the military. They proudly stood up and named these people and in that way, we were honoring those individuals who contributed something to the greater good of the society. It was really powerful. It was simple and not at all complicated, but they really responded to it in a very powerful way and I was pleasantly surprised.

Shirley Zuni - Bishop – what did you do? You invited them. We need to go out and invite those who are not coming. If you keep after them, then they begin to realize that we do really want them to come back to church. As mentioned earlier today, there are those folks that have their assigned pews, and somebody comes and sits in their pews, and they get upset instead of moving over and welcoming them. We need to continue to invite them and tell them that we missed them, to check in on them and find out if everything is ok. We have to continue inviting them.

Bishop Eduardo Nevares - I think the Holy Father is reminding us that Jesus was all about encountering people one on one. If you read the Gospels, you see that Jesus really ministered to people one-on-one. That's where the healings happened and that's where the power went forth. I thank everybody for being catechists, for defending the faith, and for being witnesses for the faith. But we cannot just worry about head knowledge and giving them information and the teachings of the Church. We have to find ways such as retreats or youth activities to reach them. We have to create some ways to help them encounter the living Christ. I think that would make all the difference in the world. If

we can lead them to an encounter with the Living Christ, and show them how important this Living Christ has been in my life, then they will hopefully say, “Hey, I want some of that. How can I get some of that?” We can then tell them, “Well, come with me to Church, read the bible, and pray the rosary.” We also need to mention the Holy Spirit because it is the Holy Spirit who lives in the Church and animates us and leads us to this personal encounter with Christ.

Lucetta Pena - If anyone knew me about 15 years ago, I was a Debbie Downer and I faced a lot of things in my life. Now that I am a Catholic, I am joyous.

Deacon Andy Orosco - Last year we had our first adult baptisms in 17 years. Three years ago I took two Natives to youth day. The year after that, I took 22 and the year after that 33. This year I took 15. That is the power of invitation. Every other Thursday, we have faith formation over at the reservations, and we have 50 people who want to know more about their faith and get prepared to receive Confirmation or the other sacraments. We shall be confirming 3 adults who are over the age of 60. It is very important to be active in their lives and remember that invitation grows participation. Hopefully, what we are doing is helping prepare those who shall replace us. The hope is in us. We just need to get it out there.



Deacon Roy Callison - I think it sometimes shocks people when a Catholic invites them to Church. They comment that we Catholics don't do that. But people are very hungry for knowledge and they are just waiting for someone to say, "Come with me."

Patrick Mason - As one of the youngest people in the room, I will say that we are sometimes called the "John Paul II generation." This is because he is the first Pope we knew, and something that we learned from him is that all of us can form our future generations in their faith. The first step is to show our youth our love of Christ. If I think back to my school days, about 80 per cent of the students in our Catholic School were Native American, and I think that all but one have kept their way and still go to Mass. They have lots of kids, and they are living their faith. One of the biggest things that impacted us was devotion to the Eucharist.

If we put forward more adoration and more devotion to the Eucharist, and really show these kids that Christ is not only within you, but he is also in front of you, and you can be spending time with Christ in the Eucharist, then adoration can make a big difference. Native Americans are especially open spiritually, and while you might have a skeptical Caucasian, we as Native Americans are not afraid to think that Christ could actually be living here in the Eucharist, in front of us, not metaphorically but literally. If we can emphasize that, it could be a very powerful thing for youth. The Eucharist needs to be at the center of everything that we do.

Bishop James Wall - This is exactly what we anticipated and then some. This is a great gathering, and there are many courageous things that are being said, and I encourage you to continue to do that. This is really going to help the bishops who are present in the work that we do with USCCB. It will help us in making policy decisions and to better minister to the Native American people. Please keep doing what you're doing. We really appreciate it. Thank you.

Fr. Sands - I really see the Holy Spirit working to bring us to today. The Subcommittee on Native American Affairs has been in existence for several years, and Bishop Wall has been providing really great leadership. The bishops who are part of the Subcommittee have a great heart for the Native people. We are very open to being led by the Holy Spirit and offering up our ministry, our lives and in prayer. Another significant way that the Holy Spirit has been working is through the establishment and growth of a relationship that Bishop Wall and I have with Mr. Carl Anderson, the Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus. Mr. Anderson will speak with us tomorrow. Mr. Anderson's presence is a great source of encouragement for all of us and I am glad that the Lord has brought all of us to be together here today.

LISTENING SESSION 4

LISTENING SESSION 4 –
DEACON ROY CALLISON

HAS THE CATHOLIC CHURCH FORGOTTEN THE AMERICAN INDIANS?

Good morning. As I mentioned when I spoke on the topic of evangelization, I can only speak on this topic from the same perspective: That of an American Indian Deacon from Oklahoma. According to many of



the Indian people my wife and I have spoken with, they ask, “Has the Catholic Church forgotten the American Indian People?” I want to give you a little history of Oklahoma so that you will better understand why the people think this way.

Almost all the American Indian Tribes in Oklahoma had their own version of the Trail of Tears. Out of our 39 federally recognized Tribes, only five were native to the state. The rest were forcibly removed from their homelands and made to move to Indian Territory. Early on, there were several religious communities from Europe, such as the Benedictines and Jesuits, who came to Indian Territory. They

came in the late 1800’s to specifically work among the American Indian people. They came to offer an education to the members of the various Tribes, and to evangelize them. Their ministries were focused totally on reaching out to the various Tribes, and especially to the few that were already Catholic.

The Benedictines opened Sacred Heart Monastery in Konawa, Oklahoma. The Monastery was located on land that was donated to them by the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. They built schools for both boys and girls. The Jesuits opened schools throughout the Osage Nation. The Osage welcomed the Jesuits since they were one of the few Tribes that had been Catholic for many generations. Unfortunately, as non-Indians began to move into Indian Territory, the religious orders all began to focus their attention less and less on the various Tribes and more and more on the non-Indians.

Therefore, slowly over a period of time, we Indian people simply fell through the cracks. The religious orders seemed to have forgotten that their original mission was to the Indian People, and some orders such as the Jesuits even left Oklahoma. From conversations my wife and I have had with Indian people while doing our Pow Wow Ministry, and at the Tekakwitha Conferences, it appears that this is a far-reaching problem. It’s not just a problem in Oklahoma by any means.

Let me give you an example of just how far-reaching the problem truly is. Most Reverend Gary Gordon, of the Diocese of Victoria, British Columbia, touched on the exact same problem during his keynote address at

last year's Tekakwitha Conference in Tacoma, Washington just last year. He said that Tribes in his diocese had told him that they felt the Catholic Church had completely forgotten them. It no longer attempts to reach out to them like it did in the past. Therefore, many of the Tribes in that diocese have fallen away from their longtime Catholic faith. The same thing is happening throughout Indian country. I can't help but think that this is one of the major factors of why so many of our Indian People have left the Church and are still leaving the Church today. The Church isn't reaching out to us as it did in the past.

Therefore, I want to echo what I said in my talk on evangelization. Many of our Indian people have left the Church for different Protestant faiths and for the Native American Church. They've left because those faiths are reaching out to them.

Many of those faiths have American Indian churches, so the People are flocking to them. Some of the churches, most notably the Native American Church, incorporate American Indian cultural practices into their services. This attracts the People. It makes them feel like the churches recognize the importance of their Indian Spirituality. So many things can be done to make our American Indian brothers and sisters feel more at home in the Catholic Church. Using cedar or sage or sweet grass for the incense during Mass. Doing one of the readings in a Native language and using a hand drum instead of the bells at the elevation of the Blessed Sacrament. I know this might not seem like much, but things such as this would make a difference.

One thing that would be of great help would be if the Church began energetically seeking more American Indian vocations. We need more American Indian priests, deacons and religious. It would be a great sense of pride to our people to see themselves represented in the Church. In Oklahoma, to my knowledge, we have only three priests and three deacons who are American Indian, and that includes me. I can't emphasize enough the great need for the Holy Mother Church to make a more concerted effort in reaching out again, as it did in the past, to our American Indian brothers and sisters with the Gospel message. However, we must do this soon before more and more leave the Church.

LISTENING SESSION 4 – BILLY CHARLES SUICIDE PREVENTION AND YOUTH WELLNESS

Today I am going to talk about suicide prevention and youth wellness. Yesterday we talked about the communal place called the Qasgiq, and in this context the communal place would be the parish. However even in the parishes, churches, government services, hospitals and schools we work in silos. I think that's a risk factor in many of our communities.

In a period of about a year and half in a small community of about 800 people, there were nine young men who had committed suicide. This was an epidemic. The people began to come together at this time, only to realize that their neighbors had become strangers because everyone worked in silos. The people were not working together, and everyone went to the organization they thought they liked, and then moved on when it did not serve



their needs - just like consumers. We got rid of what we didn't like. That is a risk factor that trickles down to the young people when we start working in silos. The child would recognize one organization because his father works there, and the father does not take too kindly to another organization that he is not affiliated with. The child hears that and grows up resenting that other organization.

When we finally came together, we recognized that we all have the same concerns and are concerned for the same people in the community. People had become strangers because they never communicated with each other. A communal place is a place for communication, and that does not exist anymore. I see this in this context of the parishes working separately, and in the communities not coming together to communicate. This lack of communication is a big risk factor in our community. However, there are also other factors that come into place because there is no single teaching in our communities. The school should be part of the parish and recognize what their community teachings are. Those are risk factors of working in silos with respect to our communities.

We identified that what we needed in our community was to come together, regardless of the organization we belonged to, and have an outdoor activity for our youth on the land. We keep looking for Christ in the Church and sometimes we don't want to go to Church because of problems we may have had in the past. However, if you have an activity on the land, such as recognizing the Creator and appreciating the fruits of the land, and identify and recognize Christ on the land, then you can bring that back to the Church as there is a commonality there.

When we recognize simple activities for the children to do, like making a walking stick, it keeps them busy and there are no more distractions. They just focus on that one activity, and in turn, that opens up the child's mind and you can start to share knowledge, values and teachings about their culture and the Church. An activity like making a walking stick, alone, is able to open a child's mind to the values of our ancestors. Teaching the child to make tools such as a walking stick is practical because they can use it to survive and live off the land. That activity tells the child "This is a walking stick, I love you and I want you to come back safely."

Reservation schools go from kindergarten to twelfth grade. Many times after the children finish school, or after they drop out of school, they just disappear. We have to live off the land, and if we only teach our children the Western culture and no life skills in the community, then when they graduate from high school and cannot go any further in their education, they become very frustrated. They become unable to provide for their families and have to depend on some government subsidy.

Thank you for your time.

LISTENING SESSION 4 – MARYANNA HARSTAD EDUCATION / CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

My mother was 5 years old the day that her grandfather took her to a reservation town that was on the other side of the reservation. There were other children there and they all climbed onto a school bus. They traveled for five and a half hours and my mother had no idea where she was going, but she was going to a boarding school where she began her kindergarten through eighth grade education.



When she finished eighth grade, she began high school at a boarding school even farther away.

As we touched on yesterday, boarding schools had impacts beyond providing education. Listening to Billy Charles this morning, and hearing him say how we need to teach practical things to our children on the land because we love them, I have to say that this was broken by the boarding school education.

Surrounded by a European culture and Christian religion, generations of Native children lost their cultural identity. They were told that their culture was inferior to what they were being taught. Away from their families, Native American children lost their language because of boarding schools. Some languages were lost forever.

Tragically, the trauma experienced by children led to depression and alcoholism. As a young woman, my mother struggled with alcoholism and she faced depression for her entire life. Growing up in a regimented institution, children lost their connection to the foundation for everyday family life. This led to a multi-generational cycle of family separation. My brothers and sisters grew up in foster care and I was placed in an adoptive non-native Catholic home.

The Church's boarding schools played a role in causing these long-term conditions, and Catholic Education has a responsibility to address the problems that came about. There are ways that this can be done. Catholic educational institutions can assist in language revitalization. Indigenous people are gathering together to relearn their language, and immersion schools are being established for Pre-Kindergarten through twelfth grade. We can provide more support for Native students and Catholic universities and colleges, including through recruitment. My daughter was strongly recruited by Creighton University, St. Thomas University, and St. Catherine's University. However, we do not have this strong recruitment aspect for Native students.

In their curriculum, Catholic colleges and universities can provide an honest truthful depiction of the history of the United States, as well as courses that show appreciation for Native culture. They can provide increased education and mentoring activities to support Native students within their institutions. They can also provide an avenue for creating Native educators that will teach both at the collegiate and university level, as well as in K through 12 grade schools.

LISTENING SESSION 4 – DR. ROSE-ALMA MCDONALD AKWESASRONON FAMILY CATECHESIS

She:kon your Most Reverend Excellencies and Father Sands.

I am very pleased to be here today to talk to you about Akwesasronon Family Catechesis at the St. Regis Mission Church located in Akwesasne: Land Where the Partridge Drums, on the border of Ontario, Quebec and New York.

I want to say niawen:kowa again to you, Father Sands, for your kind invitation to this Listening Session.

(Situation) Our Akwesasronon Christian families are in crisis in Akwesasne. Our children live in poverty. Unemployment rates are four times higher than for individuals living off the reservation. High rates of poverty put our precious Akwesasronon children at risk for inadequate housing that is overcrowded and unsafe. Many of our children can't read or write. We are seeing that, especially in our religious education



and formation programs at alarming rates.

Our families don't have money to feed their children. Food insecurity is a major problem in our community. Living in poverty increases the risk of behavior problems, depression, emotional problems, substance abuse and family dysfunction, as well as low self-esteem. Poverty creates dependency on alcohol, drugs and crime, which is also the result of trauma, domestic violence and family crisis.

Social media has major impacts as well. Our children are negatively influenced by Facebook, Twitter, the internet and cell phones; all to the detriment of our Christian families. It is difficult to get, and maintain, the attention of our young people! "The family is the community in which, from childhood, one can learn moral values, and begin to honor God..." (CCC, 2207).

Successes: The Christian family is the "church of the home" and the family provides a place in which the word of God is received and from which it is extended.

Religious upbringing is the prime source of faith as permeated in the daily life of a family, when deliberate religious activities are intertwined with the daily habits and routines of the family. We have many fine examples of such families in our community and we are very proud of them.

Challenges: The benefits of family catechesis involve the whole family in congregational life and learning; and building up the faith of the whole family. A holistic approach is required to achieve this goal. However, we face many challenges at the St. Regis Mission Church that are obstacles and frustrations for us. They are:

- The mixture of Catholic and Traditional Longhouse families. Often for baptism, godparents are proposed who do not meet church requirements because they are Longhouse and not baptized or confirmed.
- There are a growing number of Traditional Longhouse families in the community and they are hostile towards the Catholic faith. This is because of the poor catechism of families. It is easy for families to choose Longhouse beliefs over Catholic faith because our modern families are not rooted in Catholicism.
- Most young Akwesasronon parents do not see the value of God and the Church.
- We have no Mohawk priests or deacons.
- Finances are an issue and we are not financially stable enough to cater to all the programs needed.
- Because of poverty conditions in the community we have limited volunteers, many of whom are predisposed with basic survival risks because of poverty for themselves and their families.
- The volunteers that we do have are aging or elderly, retired and in poor health.
- Solutions need to be culturally based in order for them to be effective. St. Kateri Tekakwitha is a Mohawk patron Saint who is a great bridge for faith and spirituality for us. Family programs need to be designed with her as a role model.
- There is a long gap between First Communion and confirmation. We lose children because of it. They do not have a strong foundation of Catholic upbringing so they forget what catechism they have learned. Family catechesis could address this problem.
- Our Totas (grandparents) are the primary reason the younger members of our congregation reach out for the holy sacraments. As our elders age and die off, there are limited options for filling the pews in our church. Most of our congregation is elderly or middle aged. Very few young people want to come to church.

Long term solution: Non-compartmentalized solutions are required. A **holistic approach** is required based on the life of St. Kateri Tekakwitha who, as a Mohawk woman, lived the Mohawk way of life while still having a very strong connection to God and a strong desire to be a Catholic and a Christian. Her life story is inspiring and holistically, it must be part of our religious education, sacramental preparation, family formation, catechesis and training. The church has to go to the communities and to the homes and reach out to all the people – because we can't expect them to just come back to us.

Niawen:kowa to you Most Reverend Excellencies for your precious time today.

LISTENING SESSION 4 – JULIENNE MONTOUR WHY AREN'T THERE MORE CATHOLIC NATIVE PEOPLE RETURNING TO THE CHURCH?

I met my husband, Mike, at a Native American traditional funeral for a 16-year-old. Mike thought I looked familiar and told Bill, the child's Oneida grandfather, "I think she went to the church I attended." Bill's remark changed my life: "She can't be a good Catholic AND a good Indian." I have heard those sentiments from many Native people and have watched Indians avoid revealing their Christian identity for fear of cultural exclusion from their peers. I've been scolded, "How can you trust them after what they have done to us?"

History tells, "HIS STORY." There is a need to know cultural history from more than one source. Just a week ago, I was speaking with an elderly Methodist lady. She earnestly believed that Indians didn't worship the same God, but Indians had many gods, or were godless. When I shared my Catholic faith, she was amazed that Indians could be Christians.

Many people don't know about the American and Canadian cultural genocide that occurred in recent history. Of the Catholic-run Indian Boarding Schools to "Kill the Indian, but save the child." Such was the fight for souls that the denominations divided up the tribes among the various Christian faiths. The Oneida to the Anglican, Mohawks to the Catholics and so on. The "end justifying the means" resulted in one of the cruelest experiments involving children and culture in North American history; yet it cannot be found in textbooks. Fear, shame, sexual predation and mass burials. Not a comfortable topic, but as necessary to understand as the holocaust. The Church needs to acknowledge this past and mutually work toward reconciliation. Indians now share their history inter-tribally. No longer are we isolated pockets of people, we are inter-related through similar historical events.

Those here, Kateri Tekakwitha and Nicholas Black Elk are proof that **you can be a good Catholic and a good Indian**. Knowing our histories gives us an understanding of who we are. The fear and distrust my father experienced in Boarding School still has an impact on his children and grandchildren and how we were raised. To understand, opens dialogue for healing.

How the clergy perceive their people is almost as important as how the people perceive the Church.

The late Fr. Tom Sullivan was a good friend of mine from Ft. Berthold Indian Reservation, ND. When he



first arrived there to be the new pastor of the Catholic Mandan, Hidatsa and Ari-kara Catholics, he relied only on his perceptions of Native people. He told me, “I was ready to shape up these Indians.” He said that he spoke very loud right from the start to assert his authority. In his own words, he began to whip these Native people verbally with “Fire, Brimstone and Damnation.” Weeks passed and so did the people from the doors of the church. Attendance declined the more he spit, perspired and demanded respect.

One day an elder lady walked out. He demanded to know why the people were leaving. She said, “With all due respect father, we won’t come back until you get off, or fall off your high horse. He told me that he was outraged. “How dare she insult a man of the cloth and all.”

After three sleepless nights of prayer and God working on him, his heart was softened. He acknowledged his behavior for what it was, and invited the people back to the church so that he could apologize. Only then did the people forgive and reconcile with him and invite him into their lives and hearts. He became the gentle, proud-Irish, free-spirited priest that I knew and cherished. He shared this with me while a young child let himself in, holding a kitten upside down calling out, “Fadder, Fadder, can I play with your cat?”

It is essential that this history is remembered so that it is never repeated. This distrust is well founded, but cripples the heart to feel it is better not to love than to get hurt. Those here believe we can be the catalyst or we wouldn’t be here.

The Goal of Residential Schools

“We instill in them a pronounced distaste for the native life so that they will be humiliated when reminded of their origin. When they graduate from our institutions, the children have lost everything Native except their blood.”

— Bishop Vital Grandin, 1875

LISTENING SESSION 4 – DEACON ANDY OROSCO IMPORTANCE OF ACKNOWLEDGING PAST WRONGS TOWARDS INDIGENOUS PEOPLE ASSOCIATED WITH THE CALIFORNIA MISSION SYSTEM AND A BETTER EXPLANATION OF THE CANONIZATION OF ST. JUNÍPERO SERRA

Your Excellencies and dear concerned; I speak on the importance of acknowledging past wrongs towards Indigenous people specifically associated with the California Mission system and a better explanation of the canonization of St. Junipero Serra.



This past week, I was invited to participate in a symposium of scholars to be a voice for my people, the Kumeyaay, addressing Mission San Diego De Alcala before colonization, during colonization, and after colonization. It was a very informative symposium that helped me personally understand the complexities that Junipero Serra and the military force that assisted him en-

countered during, before and after the founding of mission San Diego. What also was very informative was the political reasoning for the establishment of the missions during this time. Included in the symposium was a detailed description of Padre Junipero Serra's life based on his personal journal, as it was written by his own hand without tempering the written words, together with the journals of those who dealt with Fr. Serra during this time.

At a recent meeting with Kumeyaay tribal leadership, I was asked about the Church's stance on colonization and the atrocities that occurred due to colonization. I was also asked about the canonization of Fr. Junipero Serra, about why the Church was so intent on canonizing such a man that was responsible for the genocide of our native people. They asked me this because of my ordained deacon position and personally as a Kumeyaay.

I did not answer these questions at that meeting because I was there to understand and not respond. I was there to empathize and not legitimize or incriminate. I was there to invite my people to take part in celebrating 10,000 plus years of existence on the lands of California, to celebrate all our contributions and accomplishments, and to help with the education of the general public that we are not extinct and we live among you, silently contributing to this great country.

I understand Native people throughout this great country have experienced this in the past and continue to experience this in current events that affect our lands and sacred traditions. Regarding the canonization of St. Junipero Serra, I was fortunate in being invited to attend the canonization at Catholic University in Washington D.C. What I experienced was historic, wonder and awe. I had known that Native representatives from the nine mission churches that Padre Junipero Serra had founded, had been invited by Pope Francis to attend the canonization and for a personal audience with Pope Francis. I was seated in the proximity of this group and watched them being escorted after the Mass into the Basilica.

After the canonization, I was invited to attend the ceremonies at the Franciscan Monastery where the Natives who met Pope Francis were also in attendance. I had the privilege to meet for the first time Beth



Glasco, who is also a Kumeyaay of the Barona Band of Mission Indians and who represented Mission San Diego de Alcalá. I also met her husband Ed, who is a recent convert to the faith. I told them that I had witnessed them being escorted into the Basilica and that I knew they were meeting with Pope Francis. I then asked them to describe their experience. Beth and Ed described how they were taken to a room in the Basilica to wait for the Pope. They were told not to approach him and that he would come to them. After a few minutes, the door opened and in came Pope Francis. Upon seeing them, he walked quickly to them and embraced them. Beth and Ed said it was a true sincere embrace. It was not just a hug with a tap on the back that is so often used to console, but it was a true embrace.

Then they said Pope Francis asked for forgiveness for what the Church has done to our people and for anything that he may have done to offend them or their people. He did this to all the Natives who were present at that audience. After their account of what happened, I proceeded to inform them that the embrace and the asking for forgiveness they received was not just for them but for all Native people. This is an embrace they need to share to heal our people one by one. With that being said, I stood up and asked them for my embrace of forgiveness. With that embrace, I too have the responsibility to share this experience of healing to our Native people. Since that time, I have told this story and embraced hundreds of Natives, and there are those that have refused to receive the embrace because they say it is not enough.

My Shepherds, I know these are complex issues that will require much introspection, consideration and prayer in order to assist those adversely affected by the history of these events. I believe it is imperative that we, as a Church, develop a statement of clarification and contrition that addresses these issues in a concise way that will allow a bishop, priest, deacon or the general public to understand the Church's reasoning and stance on these issues. I understand these are difficult times with so many other important issues affecting our Church. However, our Native people are in need of your response and statement, especially those faithful Natives who continue to fight the good fight for the Gospel of Jesus on their lands, contrary to most in their tribe.

Last week I had the opportunity to meet Beth and Ed and I asked them how many hugs they had passed on. They said very few because they were afraid of retribution and of being outcast. That was very sad.

Again Thank You.

LISTENING SESSION 4 – FEEDBACK SESSION

Fr. Sands - President Grant enacted the Peace Policy at a time when there was much corruption in the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and a centerpiece of the Peace Policy was to get various Christian denominations to share in the duties of the Bureau. They signed on and were assigned with the administrative oversight of various Native communities.

Deacon Roy Callison - Many Tribes were deprived of their Catholic faith when the Grant Peace Policy was enacted. This happened even though they had been Catholic for generations. When the Policy went into effect, our People were basically assigned what faith they were to have. This happened because President Grant established a Board of Directors that consisted entirely of Protestants. The Board, which was extremely anti-Catholic, enforced the Policy. The Osage, however, were one Tribe that fought to keep their Catholic faith when they found out that they were to be assigned to the Friends, or Quaker, denomination. They made a request of the Government to allow them to keep the Black Robes. Black Robes was their name for the Jesuits. The government consented and allowed them to remain Catholic.

Archbishop John Wester - Thank you for your presentations. One of the things I am very interested in is something I have seen in our Pueblos in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. We have noticed that there is antipathy between the Native American culture and the Catholic Church. The questions I have is, first – How can the Church reach out to them? And secondly – Where is the sentiment that the young people have coming from? When I celebrate Mass in the Pueblos, there is this great commingling of cultures with the dancers. I know that the elders are very concerned.

Fr. Sands -There are many different factors at play. Native Americans have a desire to live their culture and many have lost their culture. This is a great motivating force for Native people. The other thing is that young people are not being raised in the faith, whether Catholic or Protestant, and faith is no longer relevant to them because they do not see their parents living the faith or they are not living it authentically. What's happening is that living the culture and speaking the language has become another gospel for the young people. When this happens we are presenting the true Gospel to them. We need to invite them to know Christ and to live a Christian life. Additionally, they are living in a more secular world, and this is another factor affecting young people today.

Shirley Zuni - In our culture we are given our Native faith at four days old. We are taken into our Native faith and given our Indian name. We carry that faith and our elders teach us how to go on in our Native ways from that point forward.

Then we are introduced to our Catholic faith, and there was a time when you had to be no older than two weeks to be baptized. Today, we have so many Catholics that are not baptized until they are adults. In RCIA in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe we have eight year olds and 11 year olds who are baptized. The young adults are caught up in the world. They make their First Holy Communion and come back for their Confirmation, but we don't see many of them until they get married. Others, we then don't see again until their funeral.

The youth note that the Catholic Church does not invite them but the Native church does. We have to go out there to bring them back to the Church. This is why I go out to the Pueblos to teach them that the Catholic Faith and the Native faith are one.

Dr. Rose Alma McDonald - We are experiencing the same thing. My community is the only community that borders Ontario, Quebec and New York. What we find in the Religious Education Program is that we cannot get through to the youth. In the classes they have blank faces and they want to spend all the time on their phones. The children don't interact with each other, and the parents don't interact with the children. The youth put their whole life on Facebook for the whole world to know, and it is too much information. This is another challenge we face as we try to catechize and bring the Church to the community. Six churches have closed around us and people in those communities are coming to our Church. This is a good thing, but our own people are not coming to our Church. We noticed that we are teaching the children to pray, but we notice that they don't pray at home. This is a challenge as well. We are competing against society and non-Catholic values.

Bishop Chad Zielinski - Some of us bishops were invited to go to a Catholic Extension Society conference. There, a professor from the University of San Diego, Dr. Jean Twenge, did a presentation regarding the birth of the smart phone and its impact. She presented enough data to show that the impact is negative across all cultures. She has a book called *iGen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less*

Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy - and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood - and What That Means for the Rest of Us. This goes back to what Billy said about suicide prevention, that the more you interact with someone face to face, the more they will respond.

Billy Charles - One of the challenges we are having in our community is to allow people the opportunity to be out on the land. Being on the land for us is spiritual. One of the challenges we face results from the regulations for harvesting. The other is economics. In my community, we still live 75 per cent off the land to provide for our families and children. The children see that, but they will not have the same opportunities that we do and they will probably have to rely more on government subsidies. We need to strengthen their ability to be on the land anyway we can.

Deacon Roy Callison - We need to reach out to the people. We have to go to them since they are not going to come to us. We set up information tables at Pow Wows all over Oklahoma. We offer sessions on Domestic Violence, Safe Teen Day, Cyberbullying, etc. My wife had an idea to offer a spin-the-wheel game with questions in the faith that the person playing had to answer. We discovered that many of them could not answer basic questions on the faith, and that gave us an opportunity to catechize them and bring them back to the Church. We need to bring faith to the people.

Bishop Liam Cary - What is obvious is that the residential schools had a very negative impact. What I am interested in knowing is, what percentage of the Indian population were actually in these schools?

Fr. Sands - There are statistics on how many people were there and I can share that with you, but it varied at different times.



LISTENING SESSION 5

LISTENING SESSION 5 –

AGNES SWEETSIR

PRIESTLESS PARISHES AND CELEBRATIONS WITHOUT PRIESTS

I have been what is referred to as a ‘lay minister’ for over 40 years. I said “yes” when ordinary, non-religious people were first called to be Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist. I’ve said yes to various calls to various ministries, from teaching catechism and preparing parents for the baptism of their children to doing funerals without a priest. I currently serve as a parish administrator. The job description is to do whatever needs to be done.

I was baptized as an infant, but was not raised in the Catholic Church because there was no church available. I probably was taken to church twice a year, if that. There were also long stretches of time when we did not have a priest. Our parish in Galeana has been priestless for over twenty years. We celebrated Mass maybe every six weeks or quarterly. However, we gathered for what

is referred to as “Sunday Service without a Priest” every week, and also on Holy Days, to celebrate the Liturgy of the Word and receive Christ in the Eucharist and through one another. I believe, without a doubt, that this has been one of the best things that has happened to us.

It forced us to assume responsibility and to become “the Church,” the people of Christ who gather together in prayer. To do so, in many cases we were forced to grow spiritually and to learn more about our Faith so that we would not stray too far outside of the Catholic lines. This has always been my challenge. If our children were going to receive First Holy Communion and Confirmation, we had to first learn about the sacraments ourselves, and then teach the children about them. To gather in prayer, we had to learn how to lead. To give a reflection on the Word, we had to study and do research. We did not have a Father to depend upon or to blame. It has not been an easy journey, for sure, but it has been a very worthwhile one.

Twenty years ago, there were just a few of us answering the call. Now, we have probably 15 to 20 ministers and volunteers helping with various ministries. It is wonderful. We are a family. I often think that we emulate the early Church, before there were priests, and that we are the Catholic Church of the future.

We are “Church”.

We have grown as much in numbers as we have grown spiritually. We celebrate regularly and comfortably without a priest, and after our services, we have a beautiful fellowship time that is very much culturally appropriate. Our people always share tea and food when we gather, and now we do that in the Church as a Catholic family. One of the things that really helped us to assume this responsibility and to take ownership was that we were continually supported, held up, encouraged and blessed by our late Bishop Michael Kaniecki.



When priests did visit and celebrate Mass, they encouraged us to continue to come together in prayer. They also reminded us that we are the Church and that it is our responsibility to maintain our Faith and our Home. They told us that the Mass did not end at the end of the celebration of that particular Mass. They said that it continued in the following Sundays when we gathered to celebrate the Liturgy of the Word and to receive the Eucharist. The priests reinforced this understanding for us whenever they were with us.

We have often been encouraged to try to get some of the men to become deacons. We did give consideration to doing this because it seemed to be the Catholic thing to do. However, one of the elder men spoke up and said, “If we do that, we will lose our ministers because the deacons will just take the place of Father.” So, we decided that having deacons was not for us, even though it may be more appropriate and right for other cultures.

About three to four months ago, we were assigned a priest. Thank you Bishop Chad. He is a wonderful young man from Vietnam and he is with us maybe half of the time. We love him and we appreciate that we can now more regularly receive the sacraments. But it has been a time of adjustment for both sides. In our parish we have been responsible for our Faith and our Home for over two decades now. A priest who is assigned to a parish expects that he will be responsible for these matters. For us, it is not easy to have someone move into your home and try to make it their own. Our children do not know a Catholic Church with an assigned priest. They know how to come together in prayer, but they are not familiar with the Mass. However, I am sure this marriage is going to work because we are Catholic and because we love our Faith.

We have been praying for an increase in priests, religious and lay ministers for decades – God has answered that prayer. We now have a priest, a brother who has been with us for many years. We also have about 15 to 20 lay ministers.

What is God saying? I think that he is saying that he has answered our prayers.

I share this because I believe more and more Catholic parishes are becoming priestless. We are evidence that it does not have to be a bad thing. I think that we are a good model, and even a culturally appropriate one, and that we can be a possible resource.

**LISTENING SESSION 5 –
LUCETTA TOBY
YOUTH AND ADULT EDUCATION –
DEMONSTRATE CURRENT EFFORTS IN
REACHING OUT AND INCREASING
YOUTH/ADULT EDUCATION**

We do not have very many youth in our congregation. We ask our people to reach out and try to connect with the youth at the boys and girls club. They have a youth group called the “Canoe Journey,” and they meet once a week for various activities that include making things. We have offered our Church to them and that is where they are currently meeting.

The youth make things that they give away to visiting



Native tribes. We are also working on connecting to our youth by offering them classes on basket making, drum making, and flower growing as we prepare for Memorial Day. We want the youth to plant and to grow the flowers, and to then sell them on Memorial Day weekend.

The youth are also making placemats that have prayers on them. Many of the children who attend catechism (eight of them) learn their prayers during the classes, but they do not practice when they go home. We plan to have them take home their placements with prayers, and hope that they will put the placemats on their tables and get in the habit of praying with them with their families.

Additionally, we want to provide some 'dealing with grief' sessions because many of our young have committed suicide or have died of drug overdoses. It is a true epidemic in our community, and we need to provide a means for them to grieve and process their feelings through our Catholic faith. We do not have very many foot soldiers yet, but we are training them. We are seeking help with training from our neighboring churches that have larger communities, and we want them to teach us how to appropriately provide grief classes for our youth.

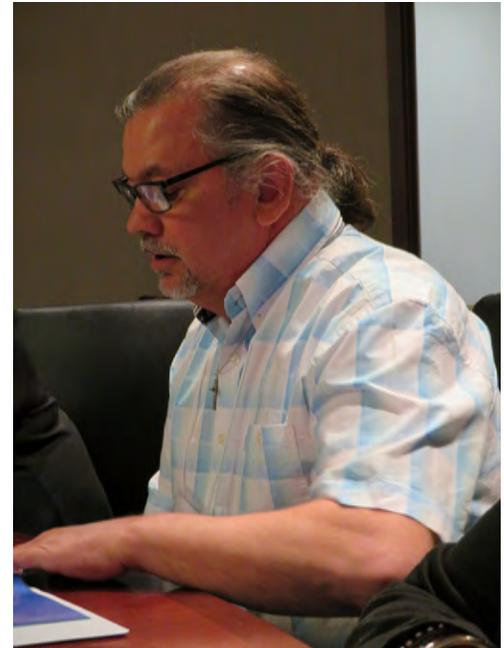
We need transportation, such as a large van, that we can use to pick up the children for catechism classes. Some of us pick up children and take them to and from the classes. But, we would be able to serve far more children if we had better transportation. We are also looking for funding to purchase religious items that can be used to teach the children, and that they can then later take home.

Finally, we are in dialogue with the Archdiocese of Seattle about how to have some religious sisters come into our community and help us provide ministry to our youth.

**LISTENING SESSION 5 –
WILLIAM WHITE
THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE – HOW DO WE
BRING THIS BACK AS AN IMPORTANT PART OF
BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP?**

Why is the vocation of marriage not promoted to their children and grandchildren by the faithful like the other sacraments? I started looking at this because my wife and I were asked to receive training on preparing couples for marriage. I did some investigation into when we last had marriage instruction at our parish, and I discovered that it was in 2011. I talked with another parish and they said they thought that the last time they had a wedding in their church was in the 1950's or in the 1960's. Fr. Klink said he officiated at two weddings in the last couple of years. Another parish said they had just started working with two couples.

One of the reasons I think that there are few or no weddings is because of the cost associated with having a church wedding. But, when I looked into this further, I found that all you actually need for a Catholic wedding is a priest or deacon and two witnesses. There is, of course, the six months of required preparation classes that can also discourage couples from proceeding with arrangements for a Catholic Church wedding.



The last couple who went to a “Heart to Heart Couples Retreat” to prepare for the sacrament commented, “That was the whitest thing we have ever done.” So that may be an issue for a very Indian couple. Additionally, others have an issue with the hierarchy of the Church being explained with a ladder symbol, and not with a circle. We have started talking about doing our own “Native Heart to Heart Couples Retreats” because our situations are uniquely ours.

Looking back to the 1950’s and 1960’s, there were a lot of marriages in the Church. This is evidenced by the many photos you see. I am not sure what happened, nor why it is not much considered an option anymore. Speaking from my own experience, I have four daughters who have tried to stay with their high school sweethearts for life without bringing God into the equation. I spoke with one of my elder aunts who told me that she married her high school sweetheart and that their marriage only lasted about 18 months. When she was then going to marry my uncle, she set up an appointment with a priest, but my uncle would not attend. They never got married in the Church until they were in their forties.

It got me thinking about why church weddings last, and maybe it is because getting married in church is a commitment to God. One can easily break a commitment made at the Justice of the Peace (JP) or with an internet minister, but people draw the line at breaking one with God. It should be a big red flag in a relationship that someone who wants to marry outside of the church may not be your true soulmate. When marriage decisions are made too quickly, it can lead to broken homes and to many financial problems such as having to pay for childcare and having to deal with other problems that result from ending relationships.

I know that church weddings are not 100 per cent the answer, but anytime you bring God into something, it will be better. Terri and I were married 32 years ago. Terri was an Episcopalian and we attended RCIA together. This was very good for our faith and for our relationship. Our marriage instruction was very good. It prompted us to think about problems that would affect our relationship in the years to come. This is something you do not get from JP weddings. The Church offered us a support system when we were having issues in our marriage. We went and talked about them with a priest, and I know that this is something my parents did, as well. We have a commitment to each other, bonded by God, and that we made in front of God. The biggest gift of RCIA is that it brought Terri and me into communion with the Church.

**LISTENING SESSION 5 –
SHIRLEY ZUNI
ASSISTANCE FROM OUR PRIESTS IN
INCREASING FAMILY SUPPORT TO THOSE
FAMILY MEMBERS (CHILDREN AND ADULTS)
WHO ARE GOING THROUGH RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION OR ADULT FORMATION CLASSES -
OUR PUEBLOS STRUGGLE WITH THIS ISSUE.**

Today, I would like to talk to you about a concern we have in our Pueblos. It has to do with offering family support for those going through faith formation classes. This applies to children going through First Holy Communion classes, youth in Confirmation classes, adults in Adult Confirmation classes, and those enrolled in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA).

When there is no family support, it is a problem because faith formation should be a family journey. Parents should be with



their children at the classes. The parents are the first teachers of their children, and they are their primary caregivers. In my faith formation classes, I send prayers home to the parents because I believe that they should be part of this journey.

This way, they can continue the class discussions with their children at home, and everyone can benefit from it. When adults are journeying to their sacraments, it is best that they have a support person in the classes with them. This is especially important if they are coming into the Church as a catechumen because they will have no one at home with whom they can discuss what they have learned in class.

How can we have our spiritual directors gently bring this to the attention of the community? It is not a matter of forcing them to attend, but showing them what a beautiful experience it can be for the family. We should gently bring them to the knowledge that they are not alone.

Families should attend Sunday Liturgy together. Parents should not just drop off the children and youth off at the door and leave. Also, there are parents who just drop off their collection envelope and do not attend Mass. Some of our catechists have gone so far as to require that the children with a parent sign in at the back of the Church before Mass. But, taking attendance this way does not work. The parents feel they are being forced to attend Mass, and it is not a joyful experience for anyone.

We need our pastors to help those teaching formation classes to very lovingly bring this issue to light - maybe in the homily. The family journey with Christ is very important for our community.

Thank you.

LISTENING SESSION 5 – FR. HENRY SANDS FORGIVENESS

I believe that Christ's teachings on forgiveness are a great help to all of us, and I also believe that they can be of particular help to Native Americans. Native Americans have a great need to learn and embrace these teachings because, in the past and in the present, we have individually and collectively been subjected to extreme injustices and wrongdoing. So, there is much that we need to forgive. Only Christ can help and enable us to truly forgive these injustices and wrongdoings that have been so very damaging, so very systematic and widespread, and so long lasting.

I believe that Native Americans can greatly benefit from Christ's teachings about forgiveness. This is because we can tend to not want to forgive wrongs that have been committed against us, and we can also tend to hold onto anger and grudges for too long. We tend to be unwilling to forgive all injustices and wrongdoings committed against us, and not just those committed against us by the U.S. Government and by Anglo members of mainstream American society.

It also occurs in our relationships with our own family members, with members of our own com-



munities, and with members of our tribes and other tribes. I have observed many situations where people hold onto grudges for so long that they do not even remember why and when the grudge match began. I have also observed many situations where someone dies and the people who have held onto anger and resentment against that person have great regrets about not having made the effort to forgive them and to reconcile with them. An unwillingness to forgive has a very negative impact on the lives of individuals, families, communities, and society as a whole. It makes us prisoners of anger, bitterness, resentment and hurt.

We who are Christian can help others to know that Christ has given us his teachings about forgiveness for our own good. Christ knows that forgiveness goes against our human nature, and he wants to change our hearts so that we are truly able to forgive one another.

For those who are struggling with being able to forgive, we can try to help them understand that prayer is one of the best ways to break down the walls of unforgiveness in our hearts. Prayer can open us up to receiving and giving the mercy, grace, patience, understanding and forgiveness that is offered to us by Christ himself.

When we help one another to learn the importance and the necessity of forgiveness, all of us are better able to experience freedom, peace and good and loving relationships with one another.

Matthew 6:14-15

If you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.

LISTENING SESSION 5 – FEEDBACK SESSION



Bishop Chad Zielinski - Picking up on Fr. Sands comment on forgiveness, when I was in Mount Angel Seminary back in 1986 we had a large number of Samoans. They also have a very tribal culture. I remember that they were in charge of doing reconciliation services, and they used a tradition that was part of their culture that I found very powerful. They said that in their villages when one person would cause an offense against another family they would use these mats that were handed down from family to family. The one who had offended would go over to the other family's hut, lay down on the floor and knock on the door. The head of the family would come out and place the mat over them, and they would lay down there for up to several hours. Once they were forgiven,

they would roll up the mat. The individuals embraced and that was the end of it. I bring that up because we talked about how the Church could integrate traditional things into the Liturgy, and the Samoan community at the Seminary provides us with this example of how this could properly be done. The need for forgiveness has been brought up, and I really think something needs to happen. It could be in the form of a letter on reconciliation from the US Conference of Catholic Bishops for reconciliation or maybe doing something in a liturgical setting.

Bishop James Wall - I am very pleased, Agnes, to hear your comments about your community working through the 'priest-less' issue for decades. The bishops issued a document entitled "Co-workers in the Vineyard of the Lord". You are making this a reality. One of the key elements of the document stresses the

importance of lay ministers and ordained ministers working together hand in hand. It is good to see what emerged when you did not have a priest for so long and your appreciation for the priest you now have. It sounds like it was not easy and there was a little friction. In regards to issuing some kind of apology, there is a need for healing and also the need for some kind of ceremony.



Bishop Robert Gruss - There is a great need for healing; healing in the hearts of all of us. We live in a world where the evil one is alive and well. One of the things that we have done in the Diocese of Rapid City is to hold a Mercy Service in the Cathedral. We send out postcards to every person within the parish boundaries of the Cathedral to invite them to the Mercy Service. We bring in fifteen confessors for the service. We pray over people and it is a very “charismatic renewal” type of event with about 500 to 600 people in attendance. It is an amazing, powerful, healing ministry. It speaks to me a lot about people’s great desire for healing. It is not just a Catholic thing. I have prayed over many people who desire to be released from anger and unforgiveness in their hearts. They want our Lord Jesus to release them so they can live a new life in him. We began this in the Year of Mercy, and we continue to do it about three or four times a year. Some of the other parishes have started to pick up on it, and it’s really a very powerful thing that does help bring about healing.



Deacon Roy Callison - I just want to mention a book about the Peace Policy. It was written by Francis Paul Prucha and is entitled, “The Churches and the Indian Schools, 1888 to 1912.” It gives a great account of the Grant Peace Policy and it also gives a great account of the turmoil in the Bureau of Indian Affairs at that time.

Bishop Nevares - Thank you to everybody who has shared about the boarding school experience and what devastating effects it had on the different tribes. One question I have is this: Was the church conscious of the effects of pulling the children away from their culture, their parents, their tribes and everything that roots them so as to educate them? Or were they trying to achieve good for the children and for the tribes with the education and these other devastating effects were just unexpected consequences? Did they purposely pull them away from the culture and their roots?

Julienne Montour - In 1875 the Church determined that the goal of the residential school was to kill the Indian and save the child. They knew what they were doing, and it was done on purpose.

Fr. Sands - Everyone, as a human being, should know that what was done was wrong; to know that it was not right to forcibly take a child of three to five years of age from their parents. I don't think that anybody can reasonably say that they would not know what kind of effect this would have. To add to that, the Church personnel were running the schools and they would have had first-hand experience with the situation. The children were forcibly separated from their parents. They were not allowed to have contact with their families, nor to speak their languages, nor to live their cultures and traditions. They weren't fed properly. The buildings were poorly constructed and they were vermin infested. Many of the people who ran the schools were very abusive. This includes priests, religious and lay people who were Catholic and non-Catholic. They beat the children, they starved them, and many of the children died. So I don't think anyone involved could honestly say to themselves, nor to anyone else, that they were trying to achieve something good. The end itself was not good, and the means employed to achieve it were also totally wrong. I invite you to think about your own family, and to think about whether you would want the same thing to happen to your brothers or sisters. That alone should enable you to see the truth and reality of the situation. As human beings, we know

right and wrong, and we are capable of knowing that this whole situation was wrong in so many ways.

Bishop John Folda - Is there suspicion and resentment in the schools that are on reservations and in missions these days? I have one school on the reservation. It is well regarded, even if it is a challenge to keep it going. I have never really received negative feedback from the people there. So, I am just wondering whether the negative experiences of the past still affect today.

Deacon Roy Callison - I think we can all agree that when you destroy the family you destroy everything, and that is what the boarding schools did. They destroyed the family unit. They separated families, separated children from the love that they needed from their parents and from their siblings, and that continues to be perpetuated in society today.



Graydon Nicholas - Thank you everyone for your comments. I just want to share a couple things. I come from another country, but we are all indigenous brothers and sisters. Pope John Paul II came to Phoenix on September 14, 1987, and here is a portion of what he said, “Already in 1537 my predecessor Pope Paul III proclaimed the dignity and the rights of the Native peoples of the Americas by insisting that they not be deprived of their freedom or the possession of their property. In Spain the

Dominican priest, Francisco de Vitoria, became a staunch advocate of the rights of Indians and formulated the basis for international law regarding the rights of peoples.”

In the spring of 1969, I had finished my first year of Law and I was part of a research project on the relationship of the Catholic Church in the Spanish context and that of indigenous people. This is when I learned about Francisco de Vitoria. He was a theologian who used the Old Testament to say that indigenous people have rights; the right to be human and to have land, even if they do not believe in the same God that we do. His influence is what changed the mind of the Pope of the day, Pope Paul III.

This is a part of the Catholic Church that has been forgotten by a lot of people, but whenever I gather with groups such as this, I remind them of that because that is what Pope John Paul II said to us when he came to the Americas. How do we then restore that unique relationship that was there at the very beginning, but has somehow been forgotten? As I talk to my own people back at home, I remind them that at the very beginning there were people and voices who stood up against the tremendous opposition to the advocacy for our rights

and for our dignity as human beings. That is why we are here. How do we do it? I think if we can revisit some of these things, with Catholic faith, as the Catholic Church, and as brothers and sisters in the same faith, we can go back and use them in some way.



I am not sure how many of you have ever heard of Joseph Chiwatenhwa. He worked with the Hurons and Jesuits and became the first lay presider of the Catholic Church in Canada. This was in the 1600s. He and his wife celebrated the first Christian marriage in Canada. He would do the spiritual exercise of St. Ignatius which involves prayer and silence for eight days. What he said at the end of the exercises are beautiful words for us as indigenous people and brothers and sisters in the Church. He said, “You love us so deeply that all I can do in return

is to offer myself to you. I choose you as my Elder in Chief. ” This is how he related to Jesus.

From the very beginning we had people who were out there bringing inculturation into the Catholic Faith. That was in the 1600's, and here we are 400 years later, and we are asking the same questions. I offer this as a historical background.

In Canada, since 1998, I have been involved with the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. We convinced the bishops of Canada to have a National Day of Prayer for indigenous people in our country. We celebrate it on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The reason we picked that day is because Saint Juan Diego and Our Lady of Guadalupe symbolize the indigenous inculturation into our faith. In the United States, you can probably pick another date. But, I would encourage you to figure out how you can have a National Day of Prayer. It will bring about reconciliation and also improve relationships.

Debbie Thomas - I was asked whether racist things still happen in schools today, and I just want to say that the discrimination is still there. There was a situation in a school where an Indian child got into a fight with another child. The Indian child was removed from the school and sent to jail with his injuries, even though he needed medical attention. When I heard about this, I called the school and informed them that, if such behavior did not stop, I would call the Bureau of Indian Affairs and have the children removed from their school. Many times when people see injustices, they do not speak up because they are afraid. But we need to speak up. One day, when my son was coming home from school on the bus, he got in a fight with a student who was pulling his hair. He was hit in the face and started bleeding. In spite of that, the bus driver made him get off the bus in the middle of the road. He had to walk the rest of the way home, which was about 10 miles. Someone in the car behind the bus recognized my son and picked him up. I went back to the school and asked the administration what would have happened if my child had fainted and landed in a ditch, and when would I have found him. They said this action was not done according to school policy, and that the driver should have brought him back to the school. This discrimination still happens today, and some of the kids never get anyone to stand up for them. Then, we wonder why they quit school or why they are on drugs. Discrimination against Native Americans still exists.

Deacon Andy Orosco - In our diocese in the Catholic schools, you cannot have long hair. This is why we specifically have an Indian Catholic school on our reservation where the children don't have to cut their hair. Having long hair is part of our culture.

Dr. Rose Alma McDonald - As noted, we are on the border of Canada and the United States. In our community we have people who are enrolled as Canadian Indians and as American Indians. So we have to deal with both governments' policies of genocide and inculturation. In 1869, the Indian Act was revised by the Federal Government of Canada to define who was Indian or not. They did this even though we ourselves should define who is Indian or not. In the 1950s, if a Native woman married a non-Indian, she lost her Indian status and was forced to leave the reservation, including leaving her children behind. There were very many Native people who were lost to mainstream society because of the Indian Act.

In Canada, Bill S3 is just being enacted in June. With this bill, the Federal Government has decided that they're going to reinstate all those women and children that lost their status because of intermarriage. This is a good thing. But, it is also problematic because the Federal Government does not plan to compensate us for the land and the education and the health services that we are going to have to provide to those people who come back to our communities.

Fr. Sands - Just in conjunction with what Dr. Rose Alma McDonald said, I wanted to let the bishops and our brother Knights, in particular, know that I don't have a birth certificate. Instead, I have a document that is called Statement of birth of an Indian.

LISTENING SESSION – WRAP UP SESSION

Bishop James Wall - This shall be our last session. We have done a lot of good work over the last 24 hours, and I would like us to keep the momentum going by defining what the next steps will be. So, let's first hear the bishops, and then from the presenters.

Bishop Chad Zielinski - I have mentioned this already, but I would like to reiterate the reference to the document, *Instruction: Inculturation and the Roman Liturgy*, that was written by Pope John Paul II in 1994. I think we need to lean forward and have a mechanism within this Subcommittee on Native American Affairs for working with the Black and Indian Mission Office on the integration of Native customs and traditions within the Roman Liturgy. Let us get together with the USCCB Office of Divine Worship and make it happen.

Bishop James Wall - That's a great idea. The Archdiocese of Los Angeles came up with their own Native American protocols. As we move forward, we can refer to their document, keeping in mind that what works in Los Angeles might not work somewhere else.

Bishop Robert Gruss - I would encourage us to consider what we have heard during these days, and set aside some time on the agenda of our next meeting in June for having a serious conversation on the issues that we discussed. We should fill in the other bishops on the subcommittee about what has taken place in these two days, and we can then define specific things that we want to do as a subcommittee to move things forward.

Bishop James Wall - Yes. I think that, for so long, much of our activity was focused on getting Saint Kateri canonized. Now, we need to move forward, relying on her intercession, with these good endeavors that we have identified. I really like the idea of a National Day of Prayer for Indigenous Peoples. I was thinking of doing this on December 9th because it is the feast day of an indigenous person, Saint Juan Diego. A proposed date will be determined by the Subcommittee on Native American Affairs. It will then go to the Committee for Cultural Diversity, which Archbishop Wester and I both sit on. Once they have approved it, it will need to be approved by the entire USCCB.



Archbishop John Wester - I was very moved by Fr. Sand's presentation or forgiveness. That is very important, and I would like to pursue that especially because we had the Year of Mercy not too long ago. Secondly, I am very interested in determining how we can reach out to our youth in the Pueblos, and more generally to youth around the country. In your presentations, a lot of what you spoke about is specific to the situation you are experiencing as Native American people, but we are also all dealing with a lot of the same issues throughout society. I liked what was said about getting the attention of the youth, about how they communicate, and about how we can connect in a better way. We talked about how families are all communicating through their phones nowadays, and how no one is looking at each other in the eye anymore. But, we need to do more than talk about it. We need to really do something that is going to

be effective. It really concerns me that there seems to be a movement within the youth that is anti church and anti establishment, and those are two things that I think we should focus on.

Bishop John Folda - It has occurred to me that there are many questions I will have for my Native communities when I go back to my diocese. I have had great encounters with them, but if I could ask a few questions it might open some doors.

Bishop Steven Raica - There is something that I have been thinking about. I don't think we have really approached it here, but it's about dealing with the Native Americans who have passed away and the situation in some cemeteries. I have seen that some cemeteries in my diocese are very beautiful and that some are in disarray. Taking care of those who have passed away is a corporal work of mercy, and locating the bodies is important, too. One of the Native Americans that I met a few years ago goes to the cemetery to clean the tombstones, and it's a very beautiful gesture that he does unbeknownst to anybody else. As part of the process of healing and reconciliation, I think this is another aspect that we need to take into account.



Bishop James Wall - So that's what we have heard from the bishops, and we can now hear from the presenters about where we go from here. What are the next steps, the next positive steps, that we can take to keep the momentum moving forward.

Deacon Andy Orosco - Before I was at this meeting, I was at the 4th meeting of the USCCB National Dialogue on Catholic Pastoral Ministries with Youth and Young Adults. We are working on organizing sessions in which we will dialog with youth, nationwide, and we will record those conversations. This can provide a good opportunity to dialogue with the youth and to ask them questions about the Church. We want to have real conversations with real meaning, just like the conversations we have had in this Listening Session. We have been here to listen, with the expectation that responses will come later. We Native American Catholics need the support of the bishops of the Subcommittee. That is something we truly do need.

Julienne Montour - The USCCB document on Building Intercultural Competencies for Ministers took a lot of cultures into account. We need to resurrect it, examine it and have a dialogue to better educate people who are coming into the priesthood and religious life. It is not uncommon to find people who do not know what our situation is. I feel very honored that the bishops opened their ears to actively listen to us. We were able to say what came from our hearts, and some of the things that we had to say caused a little bit of uncomfortable feelings within ourselves. But, we wanted to bring that out, and to be honest and open, so that you are apprised of what the situations are in our Native communities.

Bill White - With regards to further training, we have the Sioux Spiritual Center in South Dakota and they have a week long retreat called Basic Directions. Its purpose is to explain our Lakota culture to ministers and deacons who will be going to work on a reservation. You can find their website by googling 'Sioux Spiritual Center.'

Deacon Roy Callison - If retreats like those could be started in other places in the country, tailored more to a particular area, that would be great. If we could encourage the participation of bishops in different areas of the country, that would also be great.

Fr. Sands - What they did at the Sioux Spiritual Center can be adapted for other parts of the country. Juli-
enne mentioned the Building Intercultural Competencies for Ministers workshop that was developed by the
USCCB Secretary of Cultural Diversity. This is where Fr. Carson works. The Cultural Diversity Secretariat will
provide staff to conduct a workshop, but you can also conduct your own training. The workshop addresses
the current situation with racism in the U.S., the diversity of cultures in the Church, and how to build up a
multicultural parish. It is a very useful tool, and I encourage the bishops to take a closer look and consider
its applicability for their diocese.

Jennifer Black Bear - At the Sioux Spiritual Center, we offer a session on Native American people. It is the
teachings of how we integrate our Lakota culture with the Catholic faith. We have several sessions where we
bring in speakers, and we have Mass as well. People from all over the United States have participated in the
program.

Dr. Rose Alma McDonald - This has been an amazing experience and I want to know if there is a possibility
that this is going to happen again in the not-too-distant future, possibly within a year or at least two years,
to keep the momentum going. I also think it would be good to provide a meeting report that includes the
presentations and a summary of what we learned here.

The document could be shared with our partners across the country. I would also like to see it shared at the
US Conference of Catholic Bishops because there are a whole lot more bishops who could benefit from the
knowledge that was shared here. Also, I think one of your Excellencies mentioned making a presentation at
next June's meeting of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. This presentation could highlight what was
learned here and also the importance of the Native American community to the Catholic Church.

I keep mentioning that we are from Canada and that we are the only reservation in North America that
borders Ontario, Quebec and New York. We think like dual citizens. In Canada, the universities decided to
integrate Aboriginal (Indigenous) studies into their curriculums. There is a requirement that every university
has to offer a course on Aboriginal awareness as part of their graduation requirements. I have done some
work with the indigenous Physicians Association of Canada. We found that physicians who deal with Native
populations are very insensitive, in many ways, and especially when it comes to dealing with trauma from
residential boarding schools. There is now, therefore, a requirement in Canada for physicians to have training
in Aboriginal awareness.

I wonder why we can't have a similar requirement in the seminaries? I heard somebody say, yesterday or
today, that change in the Church takes a long time. I think that more education about indigenous peoples
should be developed in the seminaries in the Catholic Church.

Bishop James Wall - I was in the Seminary from 1993 to 1998, and we had a cultural diversity course that
did not include any discussion of ministry to Native Americans. I had to really push to find someone to talk
to us about Native American Ministry. So this is a great idea.

Dr. Rose Alma McDonald - The residential boarding school legacy happened both in the United States and
Canada. That is another reason why education about ministry to Native peoples should be a requirement
in the seminaries. It will help seminarians to better understand the trauma that indigenous peoples have
suffered.

Lastly, I did mention Bill S3, and I was talking about how the Indian Act decided the Canadian government

would define who Indians were. Long-term impacts have resulted from that. In June, we will have the implementation of Bill S3 which will enable people to apply for reinstatement of their Indian status. Akwesasne was established in 1752. If someone was enrolled or registered in the 1940s through the 1990s, the only place they can find proof that they are Native is in the Church's records. We are therefore going to get inundated with people who want to try to prove their Native heritage. How will we assist with the documentation of the persons who lost their entitlements? How will we help them to be buried, to live on the reservations, to receive health care and education, and to help with so many other issues?

Additionally, many of the older records are in French. Then they went from French to Mohawk for about 45 years. Then they went to English in the 1970s. What do other tribes do with their records? They are part of the legacy of our Indian heritage. I have thought of digitizing them because the pages are rather delicate. I am surprised the ink is still there, since they date back to 1752.

How do we digitize these documents or come up with some other system that will allow them to be used in the future?

Fr. Sands - Every parish in the United States is in the same situation. Some have digitized their records, and others have not. We have spent a good amount of time speaking about inculturation, residential boarding schools, reconciliation and forgiveness. I would like us to continue to speak about those things.

Dr. Rose Alma McDonald - Yesterday the question came up on how we can begin to heal. In Canada, we have the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and that can be a model for churches and organizations to look at. The Commission looked at how the government can facilitate healing. They developed programs to offer counseling, and there have also been court cases that have resulted in financial settlements. This is one example of facilitating healing of the trauma resulting from the residential boarding schools.

Billy Charles - In the long run, a lot of research on trauma and healing has been done, and we now have data to advance the work in the rest of the Native American communities. We can tailor it to the needs of our community. The service agencies are starting to recognize this at the federal level. I am looking at ways of asking the Subcommittee on Native American Affairs to help advance the identification and documentation of policy changes and research that have been done in various Native American communities. We could also look into identifying best practices and making recommendations based on that.

In the short term, we need to become more human, to start raising our children from the time they are conceived, and to start talking to them so that by the time they're four years old, they are ready for the Quaziq. When they are ready to go to the Quaziq, they are ready to listen. I am looking to the bishops to see how we can advance this type of work.

Julienne Montour - I think all you bishops have been inundated with so many different ideas from many different cultures. It's probably going to be slow on the uptake. If you go to a doctor because you have a broken leg, it should be to a specialist who knows how to fix it. I would not go to a veterinarian. I would go to an orthopedic surgeon. The same applies with these huge amounts of information that you have received in these two days. There may be gaps, and you may have questions in the days to come. I would say, do that research.

If you are the practitioners, the specialist on the Catholic faith, then educate yourselves on the things that fell through the grate here. Things that you didn't understand or things you need more information about. Some of you were honest enough to say that you had never heard of some of these things before, and being honest



and open allows you to learn. When you leave, don't leave those gaps open. I say this because you are the practitioners of the faith, and we ultimately depend on you. In order to be the best Catholics that we can be, we have to make sure that we are going to the practitioners of our faith who are the specialists and who can educate us. Take the time you need to get up to speed with what this is. You will then be able to make the best decisions for us and for our next generations.

Maryanna Harstad - Our parish, right now, does not have a priest. Previously, we had a priest who we shared with another parish. Prior to that, we had a retired priest who came out of retirement. However, we had a crisis when a recently ordained priest was assigned to our parish. We were initially joyful to have a full time priest assigned to us. The discussion about training in the seminary on diverse cultures is very relevant to this situation. If the Church could have offered some guidance on inculturation, that would have been very helpful. The priest looked at our practices and said that they didn't fit with the Church's practices. He then wrote a letter to the archbishop about our parish and he didn't tell us. After that, we didn't have Mass for a few Sundays, and then the priest left.

We were able to go through the long list of things he brought up, point out his misunderstandings, and then show how our practices were Catholic practices. Fuller knowledge of the Church's teachings on inculturation in the Roman Rite would have helped us in this situation.

Deacon Roy Callison - I would like to follow up on what Julienne just said. I am sure that there are going to be tons of questions that are going to come to your minds that were not answered here. I would like to suggest that we can be your resource. If you have questions, feel free to contact us and ask your questions.

Debbie Thomas - A lot of the information we have discussed here is offered and experienced at our annual Tekakwitha Conference. We have one night that is just for reconciliation. Each day of the conference, the Mass is celebrated by the bishops. And, the youth are invited to serve at all of the Masses.

The conference is in its 80th year, and it has come a long way. It is run by Native people, and if we want to learn more about Native Americans, this is another place where you can learn more. The conference is constantly promoting our youth.

Many people who attend the conference struggle to pay for the cost of attending the conference – registration, transportation, meals and accommodation. Many groups fundraise throughout the year to raise the funds needed to attend the conference. The conference can be a good place for learning more about all of the things we have been discussing; topics ranging from culture to poverty to youth.

Bishop James Wall - Thank you for all that good information, and for helping us to wrap this session up. One of our guests is Mr. Carl Anderson, and we would like to have him address the group.



**MR. CARL ANDERSON –
SUPREME KNIGHT, KNIGHTS OF
COLUMBUS**

Thank you for the opportunity to be with you and to listen. That was the greatest gift I received, and I appreciate all the gifts that everyone brought. Fr. Sands did not tell me they were going to exchange gifts so if it's okay, Monsignor Eduardo Chavez and I several years ago wrote a book on Our Lady of Guadalupe and I would like to send that to you. Maybe some of you have seen it before.

Monsignor Chavez and I wanted to write this book as an Anglo, although I hesitate to use that term since three of my grandparents were Italian. We wrote it to express and spread the devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe outside of Mexico and outside of the Hispanic community. Monsignor Chavez was the postulator for the cause of canonization of Juan Diego. This meant that he had become an expert on pre-Columbian religion and indigenous life in Mexico. So while we looked at the book as primarily for a Hispanic and an Anglo audience, the more I have reflected on it since its publication, I see that there is a lot in there that should resonate strongly with Native American cultures and Native American people.

The original shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe was outside of Madrid and was Queen Isabella's favorite pilgrimage site. Any educated member of the Spanish hierarchy, like Bishop Zumárraga, would know Our Lady of Guadalupe because hers was a very popular pilgrimage site among the royalty of Spain. The Spanish in Mexico resented that. They wanted her to be called Our Lady of Tepeyac because of the indigenous aspect of it. I think as we look at inculturation as a means to open a window between Native Americans and non-Native Americans, it will be very important to reconsider Our Lady of Guadalupe.

I had prepared a lot to speak about before I came and listened. Now that I've listened, I have less to speak about. What I do have are some observations. This is new to me, so if I make some mistakes, I hope you will correct me.

Preparing for this meeting I kept reflecting on two quotations; one by Saint John Paul II, and the second one by Pope Francis. The one by John Paul II was made in Simpson, Canada, and he said, "Not only is Christianity relevant to the Indian peoples, but Christ in the members of his Body is himself Indian." Pope Francis said, "Each culture that receives the Gospel enriches the Church by showing a new aspect of Christ's face." If we think that the Popes are serious, and that they are saying something important to us, then to what degree have we reflected on this as American Catholics? Looking at it from my own perspective, the identity of Catholics in America, today, is a tremendously important question. I don't know how we answer that question if we ignore the heritage and history of tribes that have been Catholic for three and four hundred years. How do we do that? It is not simply a question of multiculturalism.

My grandparents and great grandparents came to this country, coming to New York and passing by the Statue of Liberty, because America was always a land of opportunity. However, for the Catholic community, America was the land of closed opportunity. How to come to grips with that in an honest way as a Catholic community, to me, is a really important question.

I have three trips this month, and this one is in the middle. I began by going to Iraq and spending time in Erbil. In 2014, we began helping the Iraqi Christians, the Chaldean Christians, to escape from genocide by Isis. I met

with a number of the survivors of genocide, there outside of Erbil, and we have made a commitment to try to help them. There are two things that I think really struck my heart back in 2014, and which I think motivated a lot of our efforts by the Knights of Columbus. One was hearing this from these Christians, “Our neighbors kill us because they say we have no right to be in this land which we have been in for 2,000 years. As bad as that is, what is worse is the fact that our neighbors tell us you should not be here, you should be in the West. Then the West ignores us and has forgotten us.” The other thing was seeing the price list in the Isis slave market for Christian women. The most expensive Christian women were two thousand Denarii and they were girls under 16 years of age. I don't know whether this community is going to survive. There are about a hundred and fifty thousand of these Christians in the Kurdistan region. They may survive, and they may not. But, we will try to help them over the next couple of years to see if they can make it. We can't see much further into the future than that, but at least on our watch, we will try to help and see that they have a right to continue to exist.

At the end of the month, I am going to Korea. This is my fourth trip to Korea since we started the Knights of Columbus in Korea. During my first trip, I went to the Shrine of St. Andrew Kim. In the 19th century, half of the Catholics in Korea were martyred. Today, his Shrine is on the banks of the Han River in which thousands of Catholics, day after day, were beheaded and had their bodies thrown into the river. The Shrine that is my favorite place, is the Mothers' Shrine where women and children were martyred after their husbands and fathers were killed. You have three and four generations of martyrs. Today Korea is the fastest-growing Catholic community in the world.



So it's a real question of hope.

In the Philippines, we have four hundred thousand Knights of Columbus members. In 1948, we had two councils. In terms of going back to Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Spanish missionaries assumed that once Montezuma was defeated and the surviving members of his family converted, the indigenous people would convert after the European model because that's what happened in Europe. But it did not happen. In fact, the indigenous began in to commit suicide in large numbers.

The impact was a destruction, of not just their civilization and their religion, but their entire worldview and self-respect. A culture without hope. That is what our Lady of Guadalupe brought - hope and conversion.

The other reason we wrote the book was because we don't think that Our Lady of Guadalupe's message is only a message of personal devotion. As important as that is, it has the ability to transform culture, to transform civilization precisely for reconciliation, and to build something new out of a situation which is desperately in trouble.

The day before I went to Iraq I had the opportunity for a private audience with Pope Francis for about a half hour. I usually get to do this once a year with the Pope. We talked about the Knights of Columbus and what we're doing and I talked about this meeting and what we could possibly be doing in terms of helping the situation. I think your comment about meeting the Pope in Washington at the Mass for Junipero Serra very much speaks to what his heart is for the issues that matter to you.

If it is any encouragement, I think it is very clear that the Pope said he was praying for you and your mission and

doing this work. That is another opportunity as we look forward to the Synod on the Amazon. I have been to four Synods and they tend to generate a lot of controversy. However, that gives us an opportunity to talk about the fact that indigenous people are important, particularly in this country, for our coming to terms with the history that has affected the indigenous. This should be a time in which the Church turns more attention to it.

My takeaway from this is that there is a great spiritual and religious heritage here, and somehow this must be a contribution to the church as we go forward. How do we do that? If these communities reveal the face of Christ, then we need to see what that face is, and we need to see what these communities are. You come from areas in which you have a relatively large presence of indigenous people. There are people that are not Native Americans who get to see you, but for millions of Americans, there's no opportunity for this and they do not know what your face looks like. Maybe, in some way, the Knights of Columbus can help open some doors and open some windows. Maybe at our local councils, we can encourage more interaction. Maybe there are a few things the Supreme Council can do to help in terms of this process of reconciliation and inculturation, which I think is very important.

This is a unique history that needs to have a unique response. If we work together, we can change some things. The Knights of Columbus has two million members, and with family members, that's probably six to seven million. If we can do something that will shift things in a positive way, we will do it.

Additionally, I think that Nicholas Black Elk is very important. The cause for Fr. McGivney has been underway for about three decades now, so we've had a little experience dealing with causes, and I think that is important. If you look at his life, from Little Bighorn and at Wounded Knee, he spans a spectrum that comes out on the good side, a side that offers hope and a future beyond those tragedies.

Stanley Rother is also another very important cause because it is very clear that he went back and he knew that he was going to be killed for the indigenous people. He flunked out of Seminary the first time because he had no facility for languages and he couldn't pass the Latin exams. Yet, he translated the Bible into an indigenous language. That, in itself, is somewhat of a miracle. A parish that is over 300 years old, and that had not had one vocation in 300 years, has now had a dozen vocations since his death.

I think, with St. Kateri, Nicholas Black Elk, Stanley Rother, and Our Lady, that there is the opportunity to talk about spirituality and heritage in a way that would appeal to many Americans. If we are talking about what might be a project in the future, if there's another Listening Session, maybe a part of that session ought to be what contributes to being an American Catholic for all American Catholics.

**FR. MICHAEL CARSON –
USCCB**



I am a staff member at the USCCB Subcommittee on Native American Affairs. What we discussed in the last two days will be brought in front of the Subcommittee. It will be their job to establish some objectives and to then identify activities that will help them achieve those objectives. Some of you participate in the conversations that I have with Native American Catholic leaders. They are held four times a year at the change of seasons. It provides a good way to offer ideas and express concerns that can be shared with the bishops of the Subcommittee. The next one is coming up on June 20th. I will send an email to everyone here, and you can then send me an email to let me know that you would like to participate.



CONCLUSION

Bishop James Wall - Thank you, Fr. Henry Sands, for the generosity of the Black and Indian Mission Office. This would not have been possible without you and without the Black and Indian Mission Office. We had wonderful hosts, here, in the Diocese of Phoenix. Thank you, Bishop Olmsted and Bishop Nevares, for your hospitality.

St. Paul the sixth, wrote a document on evangelization. He came up with the concept of the new evangelization. It speaks not only about cultures or societies that have not yet been evangelized, but also about cultures and societies that have been evangelized and that have grown cold to the Good News. Remember that Our Lord sent us out to all the nations. The new evangelization tells us to use new methods and expressions to preach the Good News to the world. It is important for all of us to be able to do that.

Saint John Paul II gave us a beautiful document called *Ecclesia in America*, a Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation. He said this is the blueprint for the Church in America and he builds it upon four pillars: an encounter with the living Christ, which has the opportunity to produce a conversion, which has the opportunity to produce communion, and this in turn produces solidarity. That is the blueprint for how we are going to evangelize our culture and our world that are becoming more secular and more closed off to the Good News.

He concludes the document with beautiful prayers. We shall now conclude our time together with this prayer from Saint John Paul II.

In the name of the Father and Son and the Holy Spirit.

We thank you, Lord Jesus, because the Gospel of the Father's Love, with which he came to save the world, has been proclaimed far and wide in America as a gift of the Holy Spirit that fills us with gladness.

We thank you for the gift of your life, which you have given us by loving us to the end: Your life makes us children of God, brothers and sisters to each other. Increase, Oh Lord, our faith and our love for you present in all the Tabernacles of the continent.

Grant us to be faithful witnesses to your resurrection with a younger generation of Americans, so that in knowing you, they may follow you and find in you their peace and joy. Only then will they know that they are brothers and sisters of all God's children scattered throughout the world

You who, in becoming man, chose to belong to a human family, teach families the virtues which filled with life the family home of Nazareth. May families always be united as You and the Father are One. May they be living witnesses to love, justice and solidarity. Make them schools of respect, forgiveness and mutual help so that the world may believe. Help them to be the source of vocations to the priesthood, of the consecrated life, and all the other forms of Christian commitment.

Protect your church and the successor of Peter, to whom you, Good Shepherd, have entrusted the task of feeding your flock. Grant that the church in America may flourish and grow richer in the fruits of holiness. Teach us to love your mother, Mary, as you loved her. Give us strength to proclaim your word with courage in the work of the new evangelization so that the world may know new hope.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of America - Pray for us.

