

The Sentinel

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Winter 2010

Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions

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*Established in 1874 by the
Bishops of the United States*

Mission

To further the interests
of the Catholic Indian Missions
in the United States.

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Michigan	Washington
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Office of the Vice-Postulator for the Cause of

Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha
Monsignor Paul A. Lenz, PA

Do Not Neglect the Gift You Have

Dear Partner in Mission,



Christmas gifts can come in all shapes and sizes! Unwrapping the gift of 2009 has been a "good fit" and brought many blessings to the Black and Indian Mission Office. Truth be told, the best gifts were not the kind that fit nicely under an evergreen, Christmas tree. Yes, our website is awesome as it moves us into modern, world-wide communications in our ministry of evangelization. *The Sentinel* touches back on our history and gives a colorful face-lift to the long-standing, Native American newsletter. Now our hearts face east and we give ourselves over to the dawning of a new year. Welcome 2010!

Year after year, the gifts that bring the most blessings are the people! You, our co-ministers and collaborators, continue the mission God gave Jesus in the Incarnation. To all the pastoral and wise local ordinaries, directors of diocesan offices, pastors of parishes, staff in our Catholic schools and religious education programs, the faith-filled laity and our children growing in faith, you who work with grant applications, and all who make financial sacrifices that our Almighty God might be known, loved and served, thank you for the gift of yourself!

As 2010 unfolds, we will celebrate the 10th anniversary of the canonization of St. Katharine Drexel. Her faith and vision motivates and inspires us to carry the gift of Christ's love to our sisters and brothers. Herein is the continuation of our series "*Plugging into the Life and Legacy of St. Katharine*." Take a quick trip to Alaska and read "*Remembering Mission Moments*" and other journeys of Faith.

The Epistle of James (1:17) is clear that every good gift comes from our gracious God. With you, I praise and thank God for all that has been and remain open to the gift of 2010. It is my sincere pleasure to serve you through the ministry of the Black and Indian Mission Office.

In the Joy of New Year Blessings,

Reverend Wayne C. Paysse
Executive Director

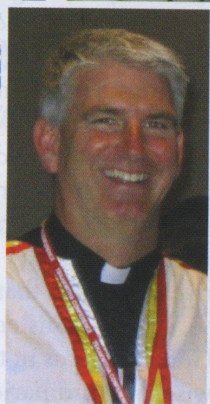
INSIDE

Collage	2
Remembering Sister Marguerite, Bishop Pelotte	3
Denver Meeting	4
Katharine Drexel	7

Visit us at www.blackandindianmission.org

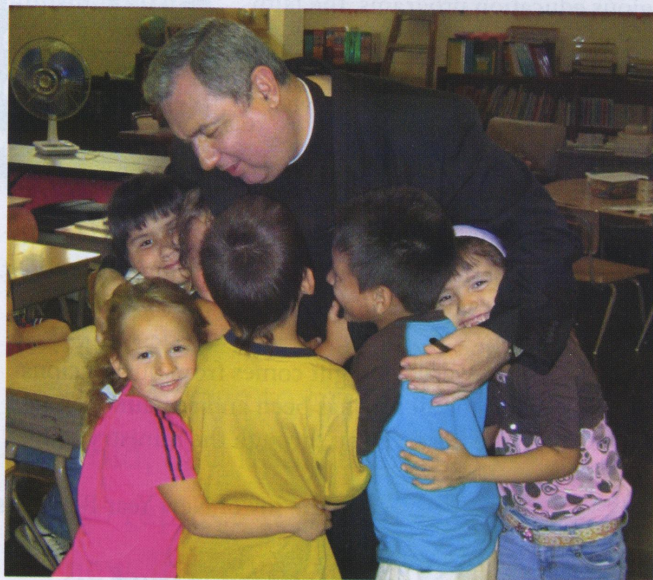
collage

A look around our missions, schools, churches and classrooms



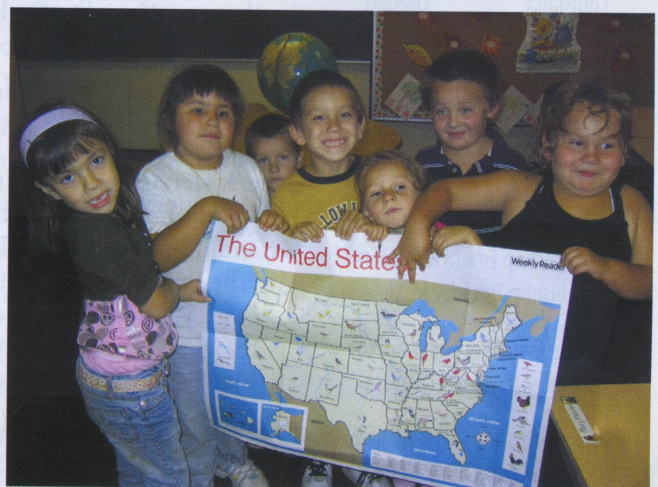
2 St. Augustine Indian Mission and School

A two-day Pow Wow celebration for the 100th anniversary of the founding of St. Augustine Indian Mission and School in Winnebago, Nebraska, was held in September. All who have been a part of the mission's history were invited to share in the celebration. At far left are Missionary Benedictine Sister Margareta Maria and Sister Bonafacia with one of the children. Above are Sister Marissa, Sister Terese and Sister Pauline with two Native American participants. Father David Korth (inset, left) is director. The Missionary Benedictine Congregation has served at St. Augustine's for nearly 60 years of the mission's 100 year history. The mission was founded by St. Katharine Drexel in 1909.



Jesus said "Let the children come unto me." The boys and girls of St. Francis Solanus gave Father Paysse a big warm welcome.

Pastoral Visits



The cheerful faces of these St. Francis Solanus school students in Stone Lake, Wisconsin, reflect the goodness of Native American people across the United States.

Celebrating the Life of Sister Marguerite Bartz, SBS

A funeral Mass, attended by an overflow congregation at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Gallup, New Mexico, Nov. 7, celebrated the life of Sister Marguerite Bartz, a champion for justice.

Sister Marguerite, 64, a Sister of the Blessed Sacrament, was found dead in her residence at St. Berard Mission Church in Navajo, New Mexico, after she didn't show up to Mass Nov. 1 in the small community of Navajo on the New Mexico-Arizona border. A teen has been charged with the murder.

According to the Diocese of Gallup, Sister Marguerite was "known to be a woman always passionate for justice and peace – and the life she lived would tell us that she would respond to this incident with a spirit of forgiveness towards whoever is responsible for these acts."

Bishop James S. Wall was the principal celebrant for the funeral. The Cathedral was packed with people standing in the aisles, in the vestibule and even outside.

Bishop Wall said, Sister Marguerite "was a woman of great faith committed to following Jesus Christ, which was expressed throughout her four decades of community life as a Sister of the Blessed Sacrament."

Prior to the funeral, the people of Navajo gathered in the church and at St. Michael Indian School for the rosary.

Sister Marguerite had served at the mission in Navajo, New Mexico since 1999. She became known to the community as a teacher, companion, spiritual advisor and advocate.

Sister Marguerite gave religious instruction to both children and adults.

At the funeral hundreds of Native peoples who had learned about the Catholic Faith from Sister Marguerite approached the Eucharistic table.

She also served communities in Sawmill, Arizona, and also at St. Michael Indian School located in St. Michael's, Arizona where she was a member of its board of directors.

Sister Marguerite worked tirelessly to raise awareness about the lack of employment on the Navajo Reservation and also the lack of decent transportation and programs to assist the people with alcohol and other addictions.

Sister Patricia Suchalski, president of the 118-year-old Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, said Sister Marguerite was a woman of deep faith, which gave her focus and energy.

Sister Patricia said she trained to be a sister with Sister Marguerite, who chose to work with oppressed African American and Native American people.



"She was a woman from the very beginning who was very zealous. Big smile and had a great, great love of God," Sister Patricia said. "Her love of God was proven in action."

Born in Plymouth, Wisconsin, July 31, 1945, Sister Marguerite entered the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament in 1966. She also served in Massachusetts and Louisiana.

Sister Marguerite moved into the small, double-wide trailer next to the church in St. Berard Parish. It was her last home for the final 10 years of her life.

At the end of the funeral family members went back to the cemetery

to see the grave one more time. While there, a young woman, who was the girlfriend of the young man accused of the murder, was there and went to each member of the family expressing her deepest sorrow for what he had done. According to Sister Marguerite's family they stayed together for an hour, each consoling the other.

Father Paysse and the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions expresses sympathy to Sister Marguerite's family and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament.

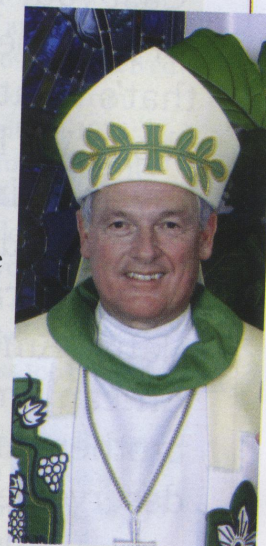
Bishop Donald E. Pelotte, SSS, Passes Away

Nation's First Native American Bishop

Bishop Donald E. Pelotte, SSS, the first Native American bishop in the United States, peacefully passed away Jan. 7, after a short illness.

Bishop Pelotte, 64, was bishop emeritus of the Diocese of Gallup.

On February 24, 1986, Bishop Pelotte – at the age of 40 – was appointed by Pope John Paul II as coadjutor bishop of Gallup and was ordained at Red Rock State Park on May 6, 1986. On April 30, 2008, Pope Benedict XVI accepted Bishop Pelotte's resignation from the pastoral governance of the Diocese of Gallup.

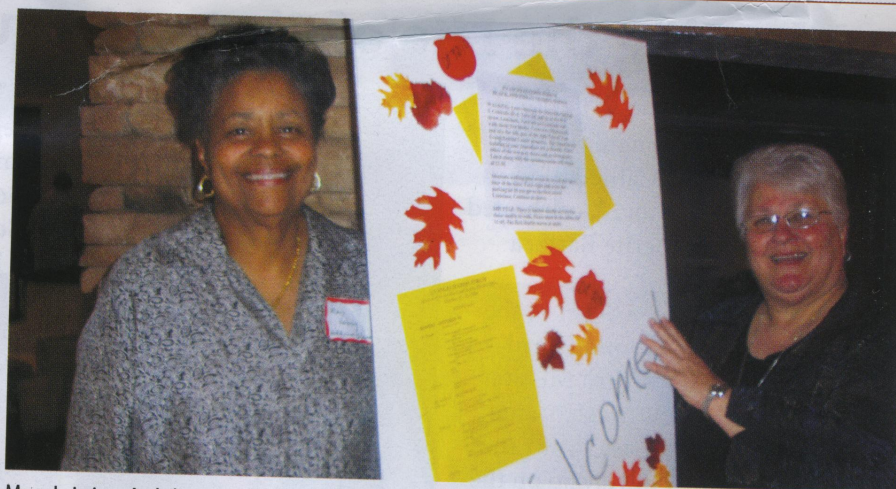


PELOTTE cont. on pg. 5

Directors Gather in Denver; Discuss New Initiatives

"Cast your net of love for Jesus because that's what it's all about. We have a new day and I invite you to cast your net for a greater catch – our Native American and African American brothers and sisters deserve better."

Father Wayne Paysse



Mary Leisring, Archdiocese of Denver, and Sister Judy Gomila, MSC, at the welcome sign for the meeting.



Sister Ursula Fotovich, CSJ, Diocese of Wichita, Lorraine Lyles, Diocese of Palm Beach, Maria Echeverria, Diocese of San Bernardino, and Dianne Brady, Diocese of Little Rock, during a planning session.

About 60 diocesan directors of the Black and Indian Missions collection and directors of Native American Ministry gathered in Denver, Oct. 19-20.

Father Wayne Paysse, executive director of the Black and Indian Mission Office, hosted the meeting held at Bonfils Hall on the campus of the Archdiocese of Denver.

Archbishop Charles Chaput participated in the meeting and was the main celebrant for the opening liturgy.

Those in attendance represented dioceses from Palm Beach to Anchorage, from Detroit to Houma-Thibodaux.

The meeting was a Forum for Evangelization to promote solidarity and collaboration among the Native American Ministry directors and diocesan personnel responsible for the

Black and Indian Mission collection.

The meeting included prayer, team building and discussion of creative new initiatives. The gathering affirmed the work of the Tekakwitha Conference and also explored "best practices" for promotion of the annual collection. The meeting also discussed ways to better assist diocesan staff in applying for grants.

Sister Judy Gomila, a Marianite of Holy Cross from New Orleans who was facilitator for the event, told the group, "If you want the biscuits to rise they have to touch one another." The two-day event allowed those active in Native American and African American ministry to work closely together.

"In the Black and Indian Mission Office our purpose is to assist bishops in the United States to promote evangeli-



During a "best practices" panel, Phil Tran, Archdiocese of Seattle, Sister Rose Messingschlager, CDP, Diocese of Duluth, Veronica Valandra, Diocese of Rapid City and Dawn Crutchfield, Diocese of Richmond, described their procedures for promoting the annual collection.



Father Wayne Paysse, executive director of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, Sister Kateri Mitchell, executive director of the Tekakwitha Conference, Denver Archbishop Charles Chaput, and Kathleen Merritt, participate in the ceremonial blessing of the new website, www.blackandindianmission.org.

zation in the Native American and African American communities. We want to build on all the good of the past and to chart new ways," said Father Paysse. "It's God's work but it's in our hands."

He said the time together was "to be inspired, to assist bishops, clergy, laity, children, Native Americans and African Americans to share in this wonderful work of evangelization."

Those who presented were: Sister Kateri Mitchell, director of the Tekakwitha Conference; Daniel Medinger, communications specialist for the Black and Indian Mission Office; Mark Thiel, archivist for the Native American collection at Marquette University; and Joe Loncki, who presented ideas for implementing the

collection in dioceses and parishes.

The new website, www.blackandindianmission.org for the Black and Indian Mission Office, the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions and the Catholic Negro American Mission Board was presented for the first time. The website includes a diocesan login feature that permits grant applications to be completed on line.

Father Paysse encouraged those in attendance "to cast your net of love for Jesus because that's what it's all about. We have a new day and I am inviting you to cast your nets for a greater catch because our Native American and African American brothers and sisters deserve better."

All left renewed and inspired.

PELOTTE from pg. 3

Since 1981, Bishop Pelotte had been a national board member of the Tekakwitha Conference – an organization for Native American Catholics – and was a member of the Catholic Theological Society of America and the American Catholic Historical Society.

Throughout Bishop Pelotte's 22 years of ministry in the Diocese of Gallup, his efforts concentrated on building the Church among Native American peoples around the country. He developed training programs for Native American deacons and lay ministers.

During his tenure as bishop, he was awarded two honorary doctorates and numerous other honors.

He was born on April 13, 1945, in Waterville, Maine, and professed religious vows in the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament on August 22, 1967. He was ordained a priest on September 2, 1972, by Bishop Edward O'Leary of the Diocese of Portland, Maine.

After receiving his high school education at Eymard Seminary in Hyde Park, New York, Bishop Pelotte attended Cleveland's John Carroll University, receiving a bachelor of arts degree in philosophy in 1969. He received a doctorate in theology from Fordham University in 1975.

While he was provincial of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, Bishop Pelotte was – at 33 years of age – the youngest major superior of a men's religious community in the United States.

The funeral Mass took place on January 14.

Father Paysse and the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions expresses sympathy to Bishop Pelotte's family and the Diocese of Gallup.

Catholic Schools: Dividends for Life

This title for Catholic Schools' Week (January 31-February 6, 2010) captures the essence of the academic and evangelization ministry prevalent in our Native American Catholic Schools. Certainly there is no better investment for the future than to invest in the education of our Native American children.

Schools located across the country, mold and shape the total child, often in remote areas. A sampling: Alaska, Arizona, California, Minnesota, Mississippi,

Montana, Nebraska and New Mexico.

We are most appreciative of our Administrators, Teachers and Staff who provide students and their families not only high expectations but also daily experiences of faith. Often the circumstances under which they work are not ideal and the salary compensations are small.

Quality Catholic education continues in the spirit of St. Katharine Drexel. We thank the parents for their sacrifices and cooperation with our schools. As we celebrate Catholic Schools' Week, we are especially proud of our Native American girls and boys.

With sincere gratitude, we applaud our Native American Catholic Schools as they inculcate faith, knowledge, morals and discipline – dividends for life.

We invite you, our readers, to collaborate in this wonderful ministry of Catholic Indian schools. Please visit our website: www.blackandindianmission.org to make a donation or write us at 2021 H Street NW, Washington, DC 20006. Please make checks payable to Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



DIVIDENDS FOR LIFE



Remembering Mission Moments

A Winter Sick Call, May 1944

This excerpt was first published in The Indian Sentinel and written by Rev. Martin J. Lonneux, S.J.

An Eskimo, who came to St. Michael from Chaneliak to get a lot of goods for the trader there, brought me two letters. Both were about a sick man at Kotlik who was quite ill. His case has been on my mind for some time. Although a native of Kotlik, Tom (not his real name) had been driven out of the village some years ago because of his bad conduct. The man who brought me the letters could not take me back with him. His sled was heavily loaded and he himself would probably have to trudge back on foot most of the way. After confessions I shared my quandary with John Aluska, a parishioner. He agreed to take his family home after Mass and to take me the next morning on the sick call to Tom.

John borrowed a few more dogs and we had a team of 13. It turned out to be a clear day but bitterly cold. We struck across the tundra arriving at Tom's shack at 7:00 p.m. I brought him Holy Viaticum and gave him the



Part of the Kotlik Congregation, St. Margaret's Mission, Alaska

Last Sacraments. I remained with him a couple of hours to prepare him for death. It was almost midnight by the time I got to the catechist's house. John was waiting for me and we agreed to leave at 4:00 a.m. so he could get back to go seal hunting to get food for his family. Following Mass we had breakfast and were back on the trail. I did not stop to speak to anyone, but waved as we passed them. They all knew that I would be back for a long stay after Easter.

Plugging into the Power of Katharine Drexel

An Apache burden basket hangs in a place of reverence next to the tomb of St. Katharine Drexel! Both are in the beautiful crypt of St. Elizabeth Chapel at the Motherhouse of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, Bensalem, PA.

Many who visit the burial site place their intentions there. Other prayer requests arrive via U.S. Mail or by e-mail. A sister transfers these to the basket. That wide-rimmed Apache Basket symbolizes the openness with which God hears our prayers.

It is also a reminder of the legacy of St. Katharine who dedicated her life to working with African American and Native American populations. Our Catholic Church considers her the Patron Saint for Racial Justice.

Born in 1858, into a wealthy Philadelphia family, Katharine was permeated with a love of God that expressed itself in her love of neighbor. The spiritual and material well-being of Black and Native Americans

became her passion and she donated money seeking to make a difference.

In an audience with Pope Leo XIII in 1887, Katharine petitioned him to send missionaries to help in her cause in Wyoming. The pope replied, "Why don't you become a missionary?"



After making a novitiate with the Sisters of Mercy, Mother Katharine founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament in 1891 in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The rest, as they say, is history.

Mother Katharine died in 1955 and was canonized in October, 2000. This year we celebrate the 10th anniversary of her call to Sainthood. Her feast day, March 3, is fast approaching.

You and I can learn from this zealous woman of faith what she learned from her deep relationship with Christ in the Eucharist. Just as Jesus reached out to troubled hearts, Katharine touched the lives of those in need. Katharine sought to heal a society sick with ignorance and

prejudice just as Jesus healed those with physical ills.

Jesus sent his disciples to bring Good News to the poor; Katharine dedicated her sisters to the ministry of education and evangelization. One of her popular mantras states, "Peacefully do at each moment what at that moment ought to be done." Katharine Drexel understood attentiveness to the Sacrament of Christ present in the here and now.

By the prayers and example of St. Katharine Drexel, may we seek to promote equality and stand up against ageism, sexism, racism or xenophobia. Like St. Katharine let us draw strength from participation in Mass and reception of the Eucharist. We are one in the Church, the Body of Christ.

Schedule a Pilgrimage to St. Katharine Drexel Shrine, 1663 Bristol Pike, Bensalem, PA 19020 Phone 215-639-7878 and mail your prayer requests to be remembered before the Blessed Sacrament. Also, visit the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament at www.katharinedrexel.org.



From the office of the postulator

Monsignor Paul A. Lenz, P.A.



While we await news from the Vatican, wonderful letters arrive weekly regarding Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha. As the Vice-Postulator for the Cause of Kateri, I wish to quote parts from the latest letter:

"I am writing you today concerning the canonization of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha. I am in the process of becoming a Catholic and it was the story of Kateri Tekakwitha that aided in my decision to join the Catholic Church.

"... I am of Caucasian descent and working with Native Americans was

no easy task. I actually traveled to the reservation; ate with many members of the tribe; and got to dance in Inter-tribal dances...

"... A couple months ago I came across the story of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha. I understand now that many Native Americans have taken to the Christian faith. I cannot tell you what a blessing it would be to canonize the Blessed Kateri. The canonization of Kateri Tekakwitha would, in my opinion, heal a lot of wounds...

"I stayed on the lands of the Kiowa Nation. Many of them accepted the

Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha and a lot of them are very devout because the Church has recognized her as Blessed. I implore you to please consider Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha as she was the reason I converted ... "God has given the Church many gifts but I believe the ultimate gift of all was Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha ... I am blind and if it were not for the support of my priest I would not be writing this letter today."

For one to have such Faith in Kateri is, for me, the Vice-Postulator, a true miracle itself.

Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions

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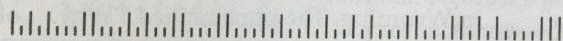
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Pray Daily for the Canonization of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha

Be It Resolved

How are you with New Year Resolutions? You know, a resolution is a commitment that an individual makes to a project or the reforming of a habit, perhaps a life-style change! Do you totally avoid them? Make long lists with good intentions, and then ignore all your resolutions? You have the knowledge but are overwhelmed by emotion or desire. Or do you set out determined to accomplish at least one particular resolve: to be more patient, give up smoking, read the Bible regularly, lose weight, devote more time to prayer, save some money, etc. and then take positive steps to do so?

Consider this! We frequently teach and are taught through the words and actions of others. Mastering the art of bead work, changing a tire, becoming a good hunter, cooking a meal, we often learn as an "apprentice" to a grandmother, a parent, or friend. Unfortunately, we also can learn negative things like rudeness, apathy or deceitfulness.

Our Catholic Church uses the words proclamation (words) and witness (actions) in referring to our Baptismal responsibility, as a believer in Christ, to pass on His light and His joy. Simple daily resolves not only demonstrate our Christ-likeness but also draw us closer to Jesus and those we form community with in His name.

It has been said that it takes 14 days to break an old, bad habit and to replace it with a new, life-giving one. Here are a few very practical resolutions that express our Christian values through one form of proclamation or witness:

Look for good and offer sincere compliments to people

Say "I'm sorry" to someone you have hurt, and really mean it

Speak words of gratitude, "thank you," for acts of kindness

Pray for someone who gets on your nerves

Volunteer to do a good deed for an elder

Try again to accomplish something you've not been successful at before

Say something positive or walk away when gossip starts

In an effort to have our creeds and deeds match up in 2010, let's become more aware of what we say we believe and how we speak or act as Catholics. Resolve to BE the Good News . . . Jesus is with us, tell the world.

It has been said that it takes 14 days to break an old, bad habit and to replace it with a new, life-giving one.

Here are a few practical resolutions.