

The Sentinel

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News of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions • www.blackandindianmission.org

Fall/Winter 2015



76th Annual
**Tekakwitha
Conference**
attracts hundreds

Photo by Lawrence Chatagnier

www.blackandindianmission.org

The Sentinel

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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.

Mission Locations

Alabama	Montana
Alaska	Nebraska
Arizona	New Mexico
California	New York
Colorado	North Dakota
Idaho	Oklahoma
Louisiana	Oregon
Kansas	South Dakota
Michigan	Washington
Minnesota	Wisconsin
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2007-2015
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From Father Paysse



***I hold you
all in my
heart and
prayers***

September 1, 2015

Dear Partner in Mission,

You may recall that I am a priest of the Archdiocese of New Orleans who was called in 2007 to minister in Washington, DC as Executive Director of the Black and Indian Mission Office. My Archbishop, the Most Reverend Gregory Aymond has called me to pastoral service back home at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Slidell, Louisiana.

Ministry with the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, the Catholic Negro American Mission Board and the Annual Collection has blessed my life in more ways than I can enumerate. I have learned so much from our multicultural Church from our African American and Native American parishes and mission schools. Thank you. Thanks, too, to our benefactors for being a part of our family of faith. Know I hold you all in my heart and prayers and I ask for your prayerful support in return.

Together we extend a sincere welcome to Fr. Henry Sands as the new Executive Director. He will continue the great legacy of the Black and Indian Mission Office and depend on your on-going support and good will in this time of transition.

"I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but only God can make it grow."
1 Cor. 3:6

I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the generous support and collaboration of Sister Judy Gomila, MSC, Louis Aguirre, Mark Thiel and Tim Lanigan. I am most grateful to each of them! Their friendship, expertise and commitment to the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions and our Native American sisters and brothers aided greatly and enhanced The Sentinel. They always gave exceptional suggestions and insights. May the Creator continue to bless them and their families!

In the spirit of St. Katharine Drexel,

Reverend W. Carroll Paysse
Executive Director, 2007-2015
Black and Indian Mission Office

From the Executive Director

Holy Spirit:

Breathe into me

Move in me

Attract my heart

Strengthen me

Protect me

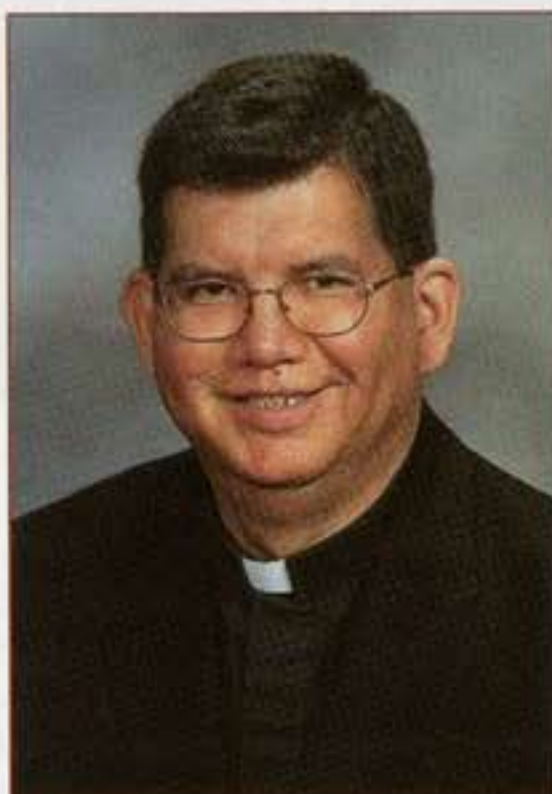


Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
Ahnee! Boozhoo! I am Fr. Maurice Henry Sands Jr. and I would like to say that it is a great blessing and honor and joy to be asked to serve as the eighth Executive Director of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions. I am a priest of the Archdiocese of Detroit. My parents are the late Maurice Henry Sands Sr. and the late Priscilla Lucille Willis Sands. I have two brothers, Kenneth Alan Sands and James Charles Sands, and I have one sister, Michele Grace Sands. I also have six nephews and three nieces and one great-nephew and three great-nieces.

I am FBI – Full- Blooded Indian. I belong to the Ojibway, Odawa and Potawatomi tribes, and we, the people of all three tribes, call ourselves Anishnaabe – which means the People. My ancestors belonged to various Anishnaabe communities in the State of Michigan. I grew up on Bkejwenong First Nation, which is a beautiful island located at the mouth of the St. Clair River and which is about thirty miles north of Detroit. Our island is unceded territory, which means that we never signed any treaties to surrender our land to neither the United States nor to Canada.

I am very grateful that the Lord has called me to be a Catholic priest and that he has now called me to assist the bishops of the Catholic Church in the United States in their work of evangelizing and providing pastoral care to Native Americans and

to African-Americans, Catholic and non-Catholic alike. I am already praying for all of you and I am very much looking forward to the opportunities that I will have to pray with you and to visit with you in the future.



I conclude by asking, first of all, that our Lord Jesus Christ will abundantly bless all of you, that he love you and guide you and protect you each day of your lives, and that he will become your all show you how to give to him all that you are and all that you have. I also commend you to the prayers and protection of our Blessed Mother Mary, of St. Kateri Tekawitha, of St. Katherine Drexel and of all of the saints. Finally, I share with you this prayer to the Holy Spirit:

Breathe into me Holy Spirit, that all my thoughts may be holy.

Move in me, Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy.

Attract my heart, Holy Spirit, that I may love only what is holy.

Strengthen me, Holy Spirit that I may defend all that is holy.

Protect me, Holy Spirit, that I always may be holy. Amen.

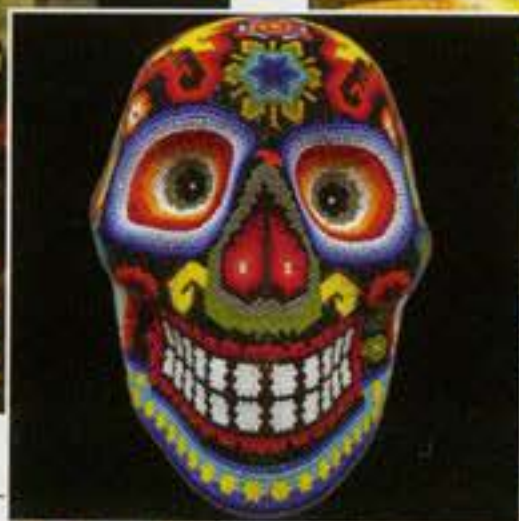
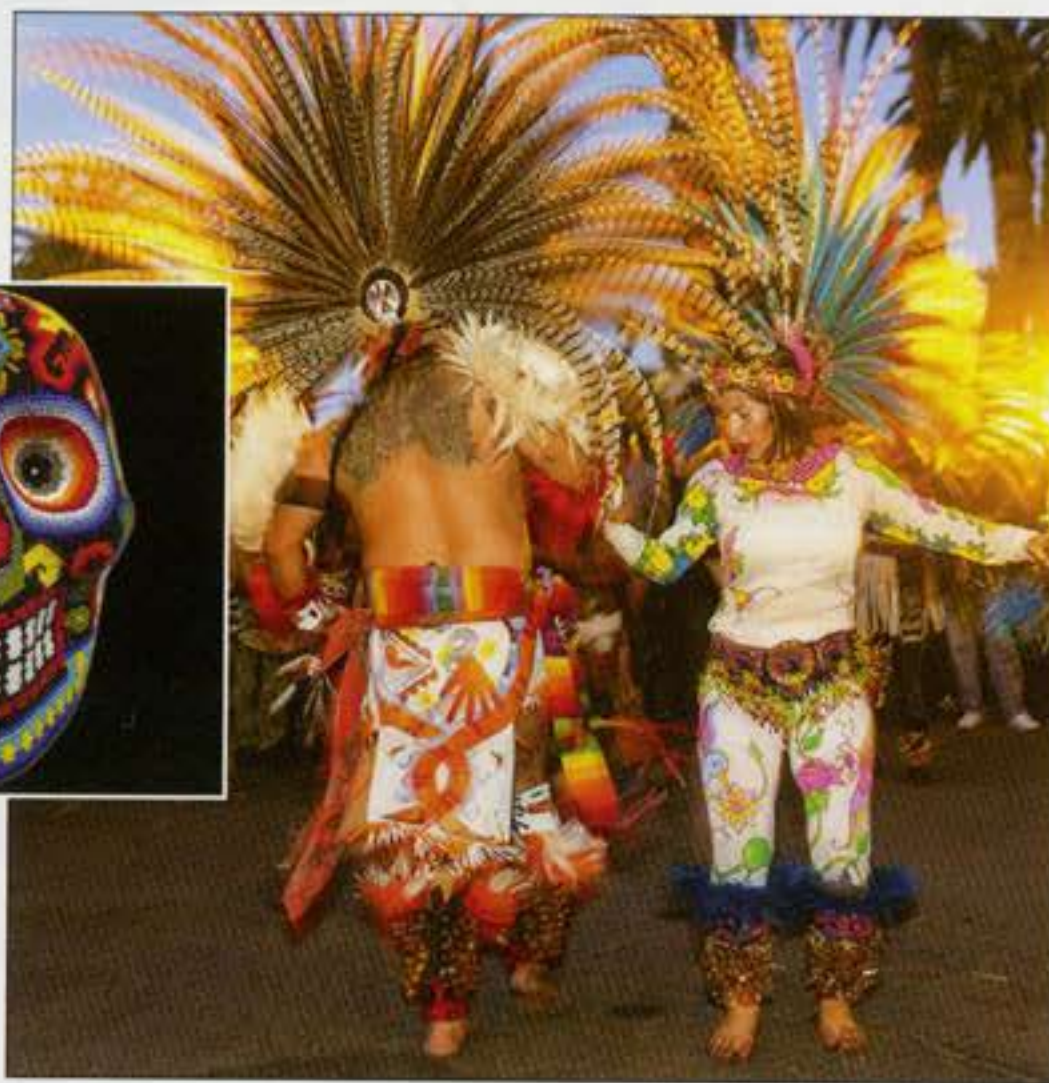
Your brother in Christ,

Fr. Henry Sands

Fr. Maurice Henry Sands Jr.



All Saints Day and All Souls Day



In the Catholic Church those who celebrate All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day do so in the fundamental belief that there is a prayerful spiritual bond between those in heaven (the "Church triumphant"), and the living (the "Church militant"). We read in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, "The bodies of the dead must be treated with respect and charity, in faith and hope of the Resurrection." (# 2300)

In many cultures the dead are not only respected but honored. This is a central belief of First Nation People who honor that sacred tradition. Indigenous people in both the U.S. and Latin America are still deeply rooted in the past even in this ever-changing world. The dead are not to be disturbed so digging up their remains for anthropological research is severely frowned upon.

From the time of the Spanish Conquistadores – more than 500 years ago – natives participated in a 3,000 year old ritual that seemed to mock death. To-

day the ritual is known as Día de Muertos or Day of the Dead and is an interesting holiday celebrated in central and southern Mexico. In most indigenous villages, beautiful altars are made in each home. They are decorated with candles, buckets of flowers, lots of fruit, peanuts, plates of turkey mole, stacks of tortillas, etc. The altar needs to have lots of food and drink for the weary spirits.

In some places the ritual is merged with Catholic theology but retains much of the original principles of the early ritual. The Spaniards of the time viewed death as the end of life; the natives saw and continue to see it as the continuation of life. Instead of fearing death, they embrace it. *"Lord, for your faithful people life is changed, not ended."* -Preface for Christian Death I (P77) Excerpt from the English translation of the *Roman Missal* © 1973, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. (ICEL).



Martyrs of La Florida Mission

"The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church."
Tertullian (Apologeticus)

The Martyrs of La Florida Cause for Canonization dates back to 1704, when Pope Clement XI established a Commission to take sworn testimony about the Apalachee Indian martyrs. The Commission testimony would expand to include Franciscan martyrs and one Spanish soldier martyr. The devotion and fame of martyrdom continued through the decades and centuries, and is well-recorded. Florida's first resident bishop, Bishop Augustin Verot, was devoted to the Florida martyrs, and bought Nombre de Dios in St. Augustine because he believed it a 1597 martyrdom site.

Archbishop John Mark Gannon and his impressive team of Catholic priest historians, on behalf of the US Bishops, submitted the Cause of the US martyrs to the Vatican in the early 1940's. Because of the war, however, the Cause was delayed.

Bishop Rene Gracida, first bishop of the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee, with the support of all the Florida bishops, took steps to open the Cause of the martyrs of the present state of Florida in 1982, and that effort is now on fire with a burning desire to bring the names of the Florida martyrs to the glory of the altar – and to build a shrine to Mary, Queen of the Martyrs! And when the Martyrs of La Florida have been canonized, the title will be changed to Mary, Queen of the Martyrs of La Florida!

In 2005, a group of Catholics began to learn a story, a great and astonishing story, from a seventy-eight

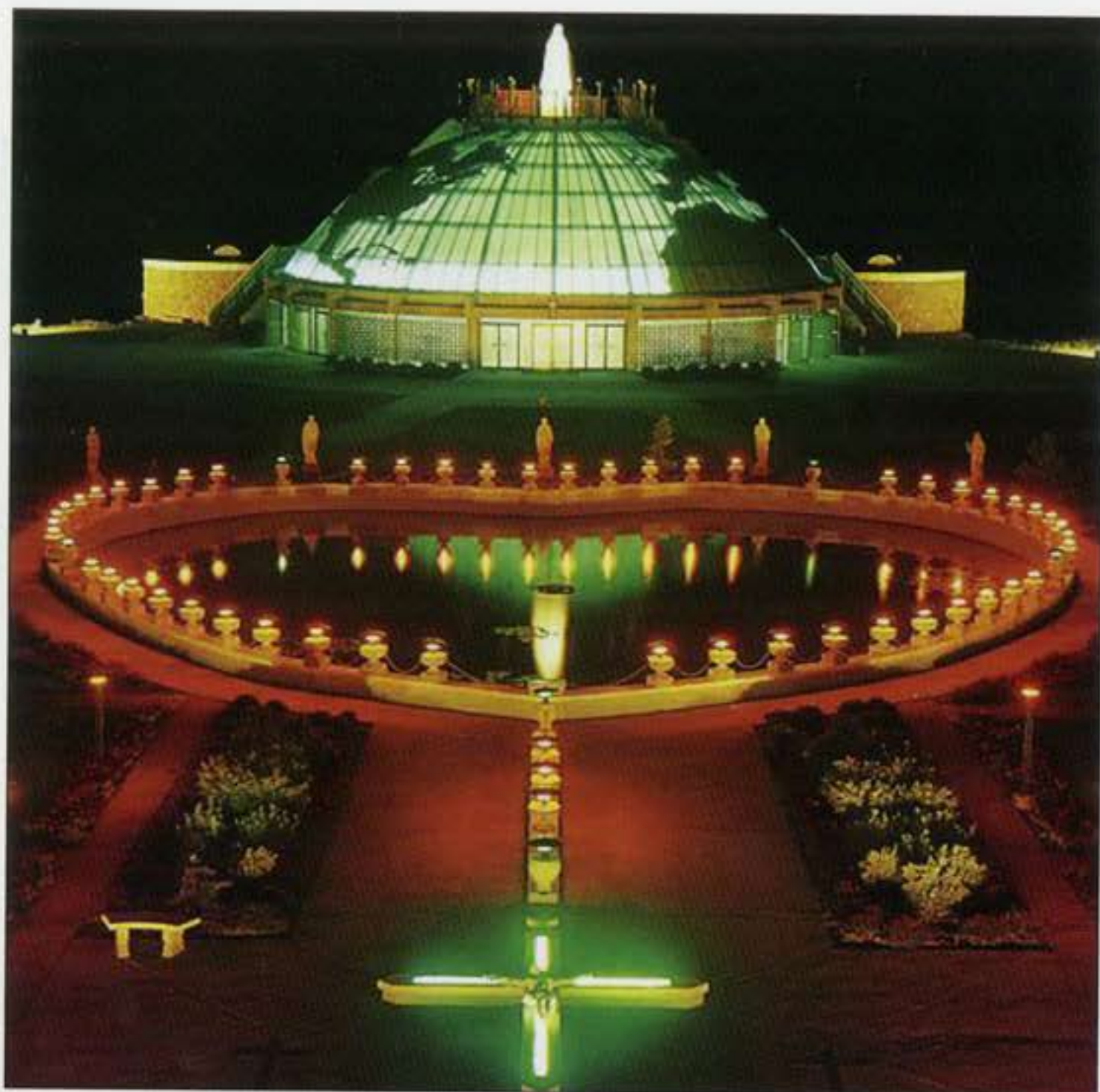
acre field, empty but for an old neglected mansion. This field is planned to host a glorious shrine to thank the many who gave their lives for the faith. With the support of the community and the formation of the Martyrs ministry, the site is named Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Martyrs. After the canonization of the martyrs, the name may be changed to Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Martyrs of La Florida.

There will be a con-celebrated Mass on October 12, 2015 at 4:00 p.m. This will be an historic event with word from Rome that the Cause will be formally opened on that day. Bishop Gracida will be sworn in as first witness to the tribunal following the Mass. More information is available at www.MartyrsOfLa-FloridaMissions.org. In addition to this initial celebration, Bishops have been invited to send a priest to special study days, *Martyrdom and Mission History of Colonial Florida*. **This course for priests will be held to coincide with this Mass, to afford the clergy the opportunity to also concelebrate the Mass. The course is October 12-14.** In time, the priest delegates will become contact persons for pertinent updates.

The four Vice-Postulators for the Cause are Father Alberto Rodríguez López, O.P for the Dominican martyrs; Fr. Wayne Paysse for the Native martyrs; Sixto J. Garcia, PhD for Fr. Martinez SJ; and Fr. Bill Wilson for the Franciscan martyrs.

Please lift your prayers in gratitude to the holy martyrs; ask for their friendship and intercession! Holy Martyrs of La Florida, pray for us!





Basilica of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima, Diocese of Buffalo, NY





Operated by the Barnabite Fathers, since 1954, Our Lady of Fatima Shrine has become a place of natural beauty, art, communal prayer, and renewal to thousands who visit the unique buildings and grounds each year. The magnificence of the Shrine is highlighted by an awe-inspiring Dome Basilica covered with two layers of glass and Plexiglas, with a contour of the Northern Hemisphere of the globe. The impressive approach to the Basilica is down the Avenue of the Saints (over one hundred life-size marble statues represent Saints from every race and walk of life) and around the serenity of the Rosary Pool.

St. Kateri Tekakwitha is a vital part of the Avenue of the Saints. One weekend during the summer months, under the auspices of the Black and Indian Mission office and with the help of local coordinators, Leona and Rudy Gonzales, the Shrine hosted a St. Kateri Pilgrimage and Retreat. Fr. Peter Calabrese, CRSP, Director of the Shrine, offered a welcoming presence and celebrated liturgy for the pilgrims. Sr. Judith Gomila, MSC facilitated the retreat. Her presentation offered a spiritual power surge for ongoing soul enhancement --- learning from the life of St. Kateri to "*put on a new self, created in God's way in righteousness and holiness of truth.*" Ephesians 4: 23-24. On Sunday Sister was invited to pray with Holy Family Parish on the Tuscarora Reservation.



Tekakwitha Conference

76th gathering held in Alexandria, LA

St. Kateri Embraces the Wetlands was the theme of this year's gathering in Alexandria, LA. Through prayer, song, dance and varied workshops, etc. participants from 34 states were renewed in spirit as they ventured deeper into the heart of Christ and invoked their patroness, St. Kateri Tekakwitha. The BCIM gave awards to recognize evangelization efforts, leadership outreach and families of faith. Sr. Kateri Mitchell, Executive Director of the Tekakwitha Conference, presented a plaque of appreciation to Fr. Wayne Paysse, Executive Director of the Black and Indian Mission Office, for his eight years of dedicated service. The Black and Indian Mission Office, via Fr. Wayne Paysse, presented its annual awards during the Conference:

- Fr Dave Korth merited the **Msgr. Ketcham Service Award**. Fr. Dave ministers at the St. Augustine Indian Mission in the Archdiocese of Omaha.

- On behalf of Red Cloud Indian School, a Jesuit ministry, Fr. George Winston receives the **St. Katharine Drexel Evangelization Award**. Red Cloud is in the Diocese of Rapid City.

- In solidarity with Pope Francis' visit to the US and the World Meeting of Families, Rudy and Leona Gonzales were awarded the **Love is Our Mission** family plaque. They live in the Diocese of Buffalo, NY on the Tuscarora Reservation.

BIMO sponsored a photo booth for those present to have their picture taken with "Flat Francis".

Sr. Kateri Mitchell, Executive Director of the Tekakwitha Conference, presented a plaque of appreciation to Fr. Wayne Paysse, Executive Director of the Black and Indian Mission Office, for his eight years of dedicated service.

Annual awards presented by Father Paysse



Fr. Dave Korth



Fr. George Winston



Rudy and Leona Gonzales







Fr. Mike Fitzpatrick, SJ, seated at left, with members attending the Kateri Northwest Ministry Institute.

Kateri Northwest Ministry

Institute trains Native American leaders

Kateri Northwest Ministry Institute (KNMI) is a training program in leadership for Native American Catholics. Their mission is to empower Native American Catholics to serve their People and affirm their cultural and spiritual identity. KNMI encourages the People to take responsibility for the religious life of their local community.

Spokane is the hub of Kateri Northwest Ministry Institute and where the idea of bringing the educational opportunities to the Native Peoples originated. As the years passed, the Spokane group has changed and evolved. Now meeting at the St. Joseph Family Center near the Gonzaga University campus, the Kateri Program serves the Plateau Tribes from the Umatilla, the Nez Perce, the Yakama, the Spokane, the Coeur d'Alene, and the Colville Reservations, as well as the Urban Indian Community.

We extend our appreciation to the Black and Indian Mission Office for funding, and special prayers of thanksgiving for those benefactors who give so graciously. Fr. Mike Fitzpatrick, SJ's spiritual enthusiasm keeps us on track. There are so many life

blessings we receive and take home from these faith-filled weekends.

Following are a few of our testimonies:

"The Kateri Ministry means a great weekend with loving friends and sharing our faith. In this, I am able to share my faith with more confidence, because of what I have learned. Also, with this knowledge I am able to better serve my church as an RCIA director." – *Dorothy McDonald, Yakama, WA*

"The Kateri Ministry has provided my husband and I with many blessings since its inception. We have learned about our faith in Scripture study and have increased our faith through group and private prayer. We have covered many subjects, including Native and Catholic spirituality, and we continue to learn. The best part of Kateri for us has been the community of believers. We have grown closer and closer as a community, and have shared our faith, joys, sorrows, hopes, and dreams. It has become an indispensable part of our spiritual lives and a fellowship of the Spirit." – *Harvey & Gail Wallace, Spokane, WA* ➡



Institute

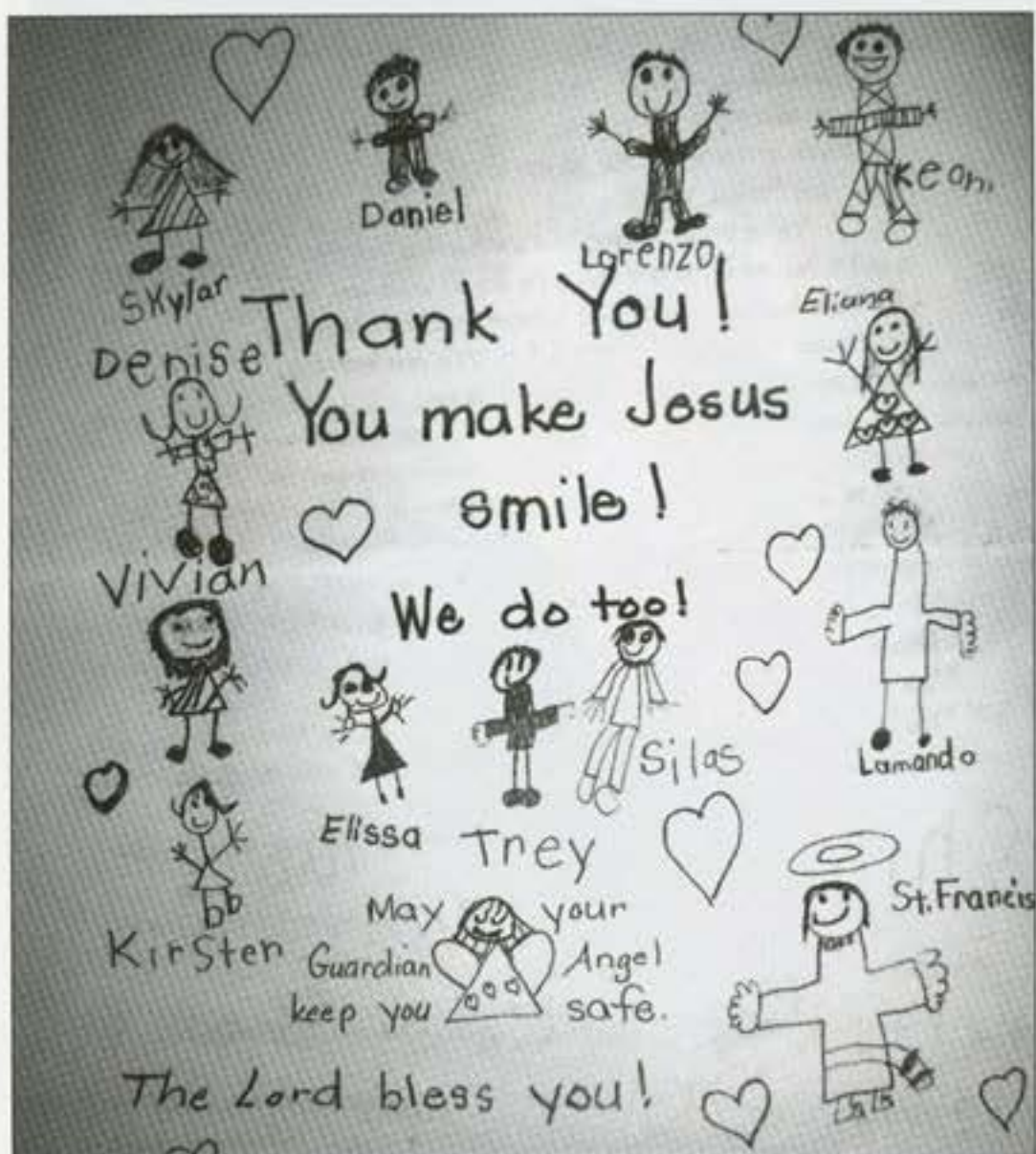
"The Holy Spirit works through all of us and we learn to be like Pope Francis. Kateri the Saint gives us all hope to be good and love one another." – *Darlene Eldred, Spokane, WA*

"My experiences with Kateri have been healing and hopeful. I am not Native, however the other participants have accepted me into their fellowship since 2009. I have seen Jesus working amongst them." – *Barnetta Bindewald, Spokane, WA*

"The Kateri Ministry has been a great help in my Christian life. Learning the Bible, how to find reference materials, find information on who, what and why of the life of Christ. The materials I've learned have been helpful in my spiritual and daily life. I look forward to the lessons and to spending time with other Christian people, learning, sharing, friendship, and good Christian activities." – *Vera Shaaf, Toppenish, WA*

"The Kateri Ministry weekends are so valuable – I look forward to them. I become stronger as I learn about myself through the Bible, reading material, discussions and sharing of stories and experiences. Yes, there is laughter and tears that heal and cleanse us. This special bond is a result of God's work through the Kateri Ministry and Father Mike. The Kateri Ministry makes it possible for us to go back to our families and communities and continue to do God's work." – *Liz Arthur Attao, Lapwai, ID*





Message from San Xavier Mission School

San Xavier School, Tucson, AZ, continues to be thankful for everyone who chooses to be part of our extended family by sending cards, letters and donations which encourage the children to work hard and use their God-given talents. We pray for all of our children, their families and benefactors like the Black and Indian Mission Office. THANK YOU.

PROCLAMATION OF APPRECIATION

Dedicated to the Sisters
of the Blessed Sacrament
across the United States in this
YEAR OF CONSECRATED LIFE
November 30, 2014 – February 2, 2016

Whereas, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament continue the work of evangelization and faith formation as given to them by St. Katharine Drexel, their Foundress; and

Whereas, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament recognize in the poor the Body of Christ; and

Whereas, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament live among the poor in the inner cities, on the reservations, in the North, South, East and West; and

Whereas, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament respect the African American and Native American cultures; and

Whereas, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament pray and work with those they serve to end poverty, racism and injustice; and

Whereas, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament extend their spirit, charism and ministry by inviting Associate relationships among Catholic lay women and men; and

Now, therefore, in this Year of Consecrated Life, the **Black and Indian Mission Office**, Washington, District of Columbia, presents this **Proclamation of Appreciation** to the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament in recognition of their faith-filled witness and dedication to African American and Native American communities since 1891.

Witnessed by my hand

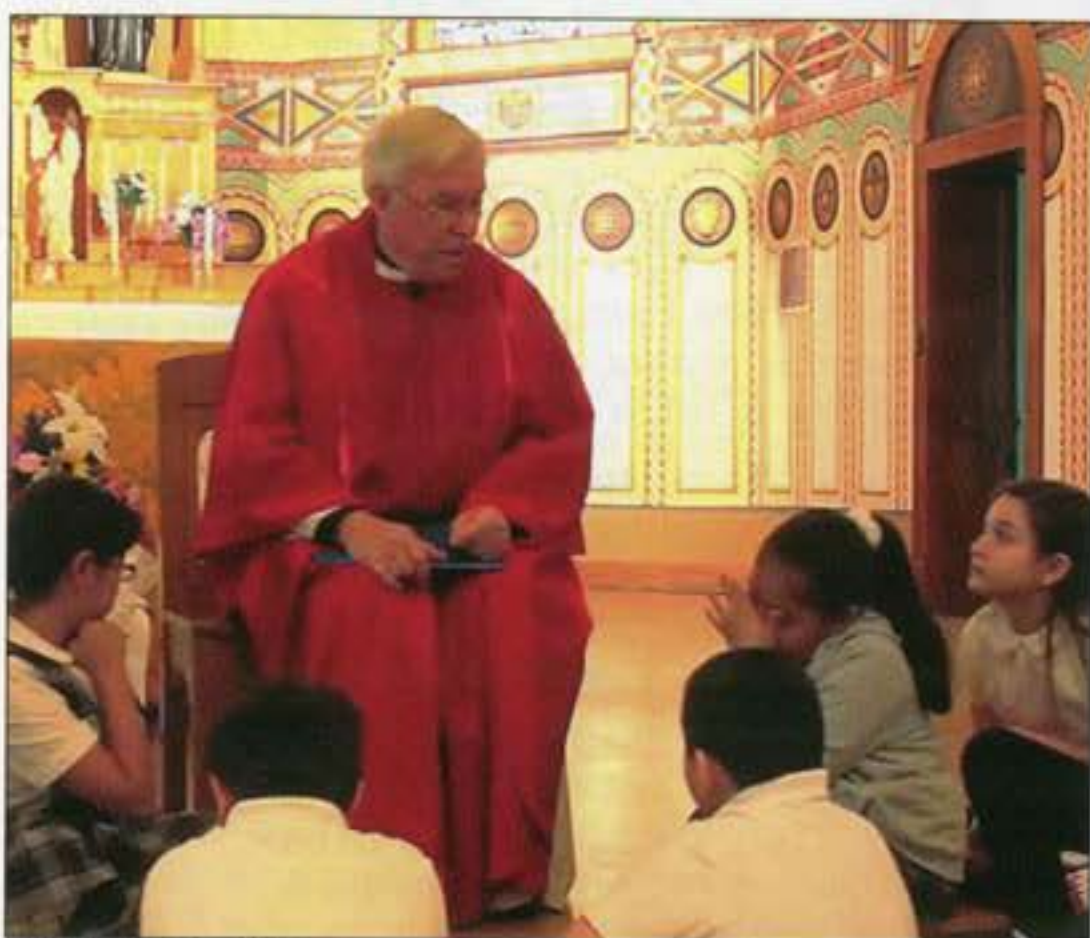
Reverend W. Carroll Paysse
Executive Director, 2007-2015
Black and Indian Mission Office



Did you know?

Liturgy of the Word with Holy Communion (LWHC) services are celebrated on Sundays when a priest is not in the village. At this time, on any given Sunday there are at least 18 of the 24 parishes in the Y-K Delta region that celebrate LWHC. In parishes where there are deacons, the deacon leads the service. In parishes that do not have deacons, lay women and men lead the services.

News briefs



Fr. John Hatcher, S.J.

- This September, St. Francis Mission School in South Dakota, is offering Kindergarten through 5th grade. Fr. John Hatcher, SJ said, "The school is expanding a bit quicker than planned but it seems wise to take kids at the Kindergarten level, so we don't have to send so much time trying to catch them up."

- Gikinawaabi means to learn through observation in Ojibwa. Respect for the elders as teachers and

mentors is emphasized in Ojibwa communities.

- The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has a job opening for a full time Assistant Director - Native American Affairs in the Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church. Google the website for complete information.

- Native Peoples have always understood the sacredness of earth because of their closeness to nature. Pope Francis is encouraging ALL Catholics to organize prayer and practical initiatives to combat the environmental crisis facing our planet.

- Many gathered August 23, 2015 at the Basilica of the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception (D.C.). Prior to the Mass Deacon Roy Calliston (Cherokee) and his wife, Susan (Choctaw) led a smudging ritual. Fr. Paysse was main celebrant and homilist. Sr Kateri Mitchell and Fr. Henry Sands were participants.

- It is strictly believed and understood by the Sioux that a child is the greatest gift from Wakan Tanka, in response to prayers, sacrifices and promises.

- Chief Seattle, Suquamish, said, "There is no death. Only a change of worlds."

- The documentary DVD, "Saint Kateri Tekakwitha: a Pilgrimage into Her Heart," is ready to be shared with your family, friends and parish community! Come on a 33-minute canonization pilgrimage into Saint Kateri's humble heart and cherish her now as their pilgrim companion. Go to www.blackandindianmission.org (STORE) to view the DVD trailer, books, posters, and medallions for potential Christmas gifts.



Big Diomedede, Russia

Big Diomedede, Russia, looms in the background, a mere 2.4 miles away from its "Little" counterpart, in the United States. The time difference between the two islands is 21 hours. You can stand on Little Diomedede and look across and into "tomorrow" on Big Diomedede. Islanders have no way on, or off the island except by helicopters, planes, and boats. the rough seas and gusty winds of the Bering Strait, where Little Diomedede is located, make boat rides unreliable and even deadly. Since the island has no runway, the only time aircraft can safely land is the winter, and then only if the sea ice freezes enough for a plow to clear a landing strip. Above Fr. Tozzi snaps a picture of the helicopter landing on the helipad on the island. Photo by Fr. Ross Tozzi



To a Young Person Dreaming of Becoming a Leader for the People

"I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? Who will be our messenger?' I answered, 'Here I am, send me.'" Is. 6:8

"If anyone wants to be first, he must make himself last of all, a servant to all." Mk. 9:35

What Do You Want to Be?

Do you have the desire in you
To become a leader and serve the People?
What does that mean to you?
Will you give yourself to petty politics, only
Out for what you can get
For yourself, your family?

Or do you wish to be
Like the great Chiefs
Who led by good example?

A great Chief was someone for the People
To see, to listen to,
To remember forever.

Reverend Patrick J. Twohy, SJ
Appeared in Leadership: Gift to the Faith
Community
2002, Tekakwitha Conference National Center



St. Vincent's Continuing Care Center

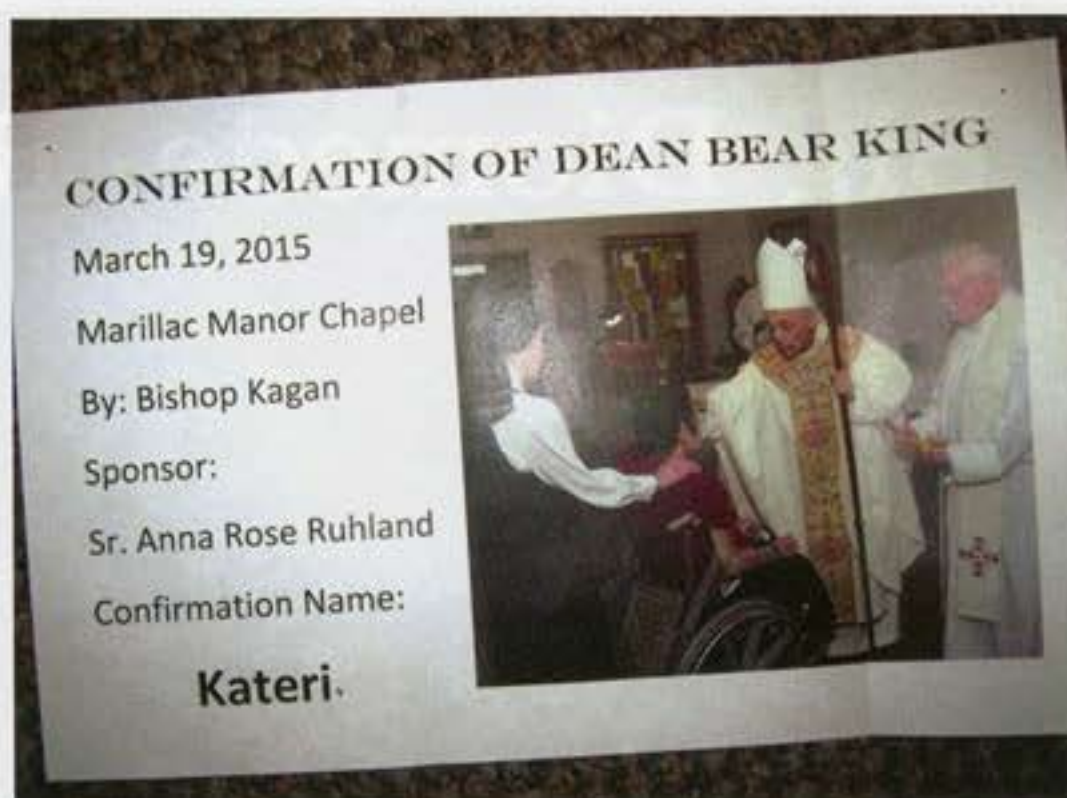
Sanford Health Marillac Manor was founded by the Benedictine Sisters of Richardton in 1977 in response to the needs for senior housing in the Bismarck, ND area. It was built on the same campus as Sanford Health St. Vincent's Continuing Care Center, which the Sisters founded as St. Vincent's Nursing Home in 1941.

Sr. Anna Rose Ruhland relates a ministry experience:

Dean, a resident of the Continuing Care Center, had shared with me he was baptized a Catholic as an infant but never practiced his faith or received any other Sacraments. I would stop by and visit and say a short prayer with him. He was open to this. After I attended the Fargo Tekakwitha Conference, I gave Dean a holy card of St. Kateri Tekakwitha and said to her, "Kateri, Dean is one of your people. Please take care of him."

Over a year ago Dean started showing up in the chapel for Mass at Marillac Manor. People would greet the visiting priest and then chat with Dean as they exited the chapel. Around Christmas, 2014, Dean expressed interest in becoming fully Catholic. I worked with Dean and also coordinated efforts with Bishop Kagan for his annual visit.

On March 19, Dean was received into the Church



receiving the Sacraments from the Bishop. For Confirmation he chose the name Kateri and I was proud to be his sponsor.

Sr. Anna concluded, Dean Bear King received one final sacrament, Anointing of the Sick from the associate pastor of St. Mary's Parish in Bismarck. Dean passed away on April 12, 2015 – Divine Mercy Sunday – at Sanford Hospital. May he rest in peace!

Msgr. William Ketcham

securing church's presence among Indians

BY TIM LANIGAN

At the 1910 Catholic Sioux Congress, he was named "Watching Eagle." It was an appropriate title for a man who kept an eye on the welfare of Indians, both spiritual and temporal, for all of his adult life.

When Monsignor William H. Ketcham, the third director of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions died in 1921, at the young age of 53, he might also have been called a peerless diplomat. Ketcham's predecessor, Monsignor Joseph A. Stephan, had been called the "Fighting Priest." Ketcham was just as tenacious as Stephan, but far more tactful. As a result, he was able to overcome a deep-seated fear and hostility among many of Washington's most powerful policy makers to the work of the Catholic Church among America's Indians.

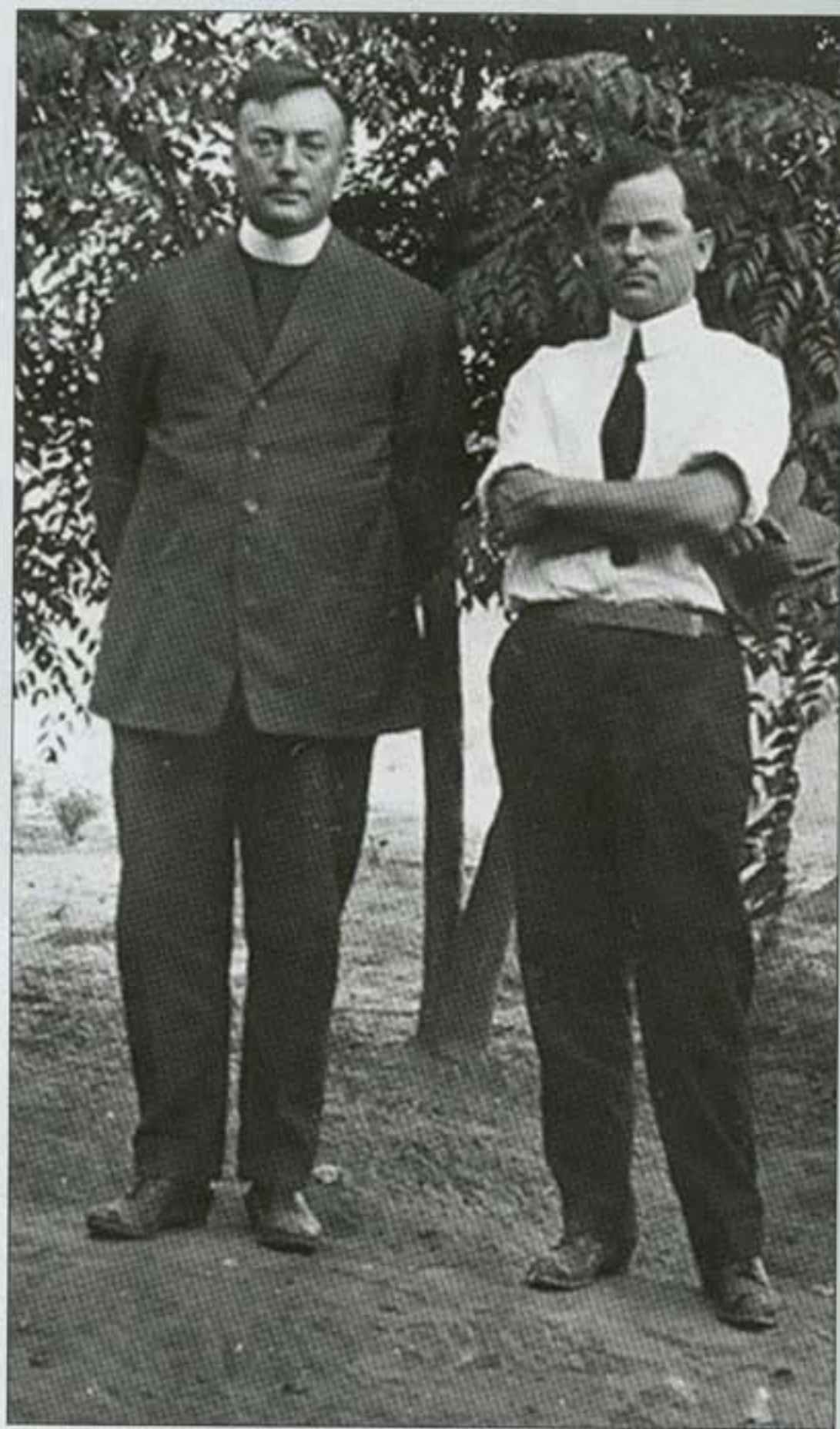
Ketcham came to his work among Catholic Indians in an unusual way. Born in Iowa in 1868, he was a descendant of the Pilgrims of the Plymouth Colony. For some reason, during his earliest years, he took an interest in the Catholic faith and converted to Catholicism when he was just 16. He must have been a persuasive believer; his family did not object to his conversion, and, in fact, later followed him into the Faith themselves.

After graduating with a B.A. degree from St. Charles' College in Louisiana in 1888, Ketcham enrolled at Mount St. Mary's Seminary of the West, in Norwood, Ohio. But he soon became ill and was forced to spend a year recuperating at his parent's new home in Oklahoma City, a town that had only been recently settled during the Oklahoma Land Rush of 1889. When he recovered, he decided to remain closer to home and enrolled at Sacred Heart Monastery, a Benedictine institution located in Indian Territory.

Building a Mission to Oklahoma's Indians

The people he found in the Indian Territory, both American Indians and Catholic missionaries, set the course for the rest of his life. Ordained in 1892, the first newly ordained priest in the Vicariate of the Indian Territory, he was assigned to Muskogee, located in northeastern Oklahoma. Since 1830, when President Andrew Jackson had expelled the Five Civilized Tribes of the southeastern United States, the Muskogee area had served as the home of the Creek Nation. But Father Ketcham's ministry encompassed members of ten other tribes and a small number of white settlers, as well.

It was a huge area to cover, one that demanded a lot of travel. The condition of the roads, the few



Msgr. Ketcham with Choctaw Indian leader

that existed, made travel difficult; the more daunting obstacle facing young Father Ketcham was the fact that few of the residents, both Indian and white, were Catholic. The hostility to Father Ketcham's work among some of the Indians made his work all the harder. When, for example, Ketcham chose a plot of ground on which to build one church, his opponents placed barbed wire around the site. But he persisted and gradually built churches, schools, and a growing community of Catholics throughout northeastern Oklahoma. ➡



Msgr. Ketcham with a student

Msgr. Ketcham

In 1897, Father Ketcham was transferred south to Antlers, Oklahoma, in an area held by the Choctaw nation. When he began his work there, he had only \$25. But that was a minor problem. The far greater challenge was that full-blooded Choctaws spoke little English. He resolved this problem by studying the Choctaw language, eventually conducting services in this native tongue.

The opposition and challenges he experienced in Oklahoma helped steel his resolve and perseverance, character traits he would need when called to his greatest challenge, serving as director of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions in Washington, D.C.

Ketcham Receives a New Call

He received this call early on in his work when he met Monsignor Stephan at the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Much of the exposition was a celebration of modern technologies, but a portion of the fair was reserved for representations of American Indian life. Learning how late 19th

Century Americans were representing Indian history may have drawn Stephan and Ketcham to the fair, but Stephan had another motive. He had heard of Ketcham's work in Oklahoma and wanted an assistant at the Bureau with experience in working among the Indians. But it was not to be. It may be that Ketcham wanted to continue his hands-on work with the Indians he had come to serve, but the clincher was that his bishop said he needed Ketcham right there in Oklahoma and denied Stephan's request for the reassignment to Washington.

It wasn't until 1900, when Stephan's health began to worsen, that Archbishop Patrick John Ryan of Philadelphia, a member of the Bureau's board, leaned on Ketcham's bishop to release him for service in Washington. That did the trick. With Stephan recuperating in Europe, Fr. Ketcham on his arrival in Washington found the Bureau faced with a number of challenges, the largest of which was adequate funding for the work of the missions.

The Need for More Funding

Since the federal government had decided to end funding of so-called "contract" mission ➡

schools, government-supported religious schools that served the Indians, Ketcham determined that he needed to raise \$140,000 a year to replace the government funds. An annual Lenten collection helped a bit, as did fund-raising by missionaries from the field, who traveled from parish to parish discussing the need for revenue to maintain the missions. In 1901, Father Ketcham created an organization he called The Society for the Preservation of the Faith among Indian Children. Membership in the Society was priced at 25 cents and included a subscription to *The Indian Sentinel*, a publication he developed to keep people abreast of Catholic mission affairs. But the revenues from all of these efforts didn't add up to what Father Ketcham needed to fund the work of the missions.

For the bulk of his revenues, he turned to Mother Katharine Drexel. She was an heiress to the Drexel banking fortune, the foundress of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, and was canonized in 2000. Fortunately for those Father Ketcham served, Mother Katharine dedicated herself, her order, and much of her fortune to the welfare of Indians and Blacks in America's west and southwest. By contributing \$100,000 a year she saved a number of Catholic schools and the Bureau itself from closing.

A Victory for Indian Family Rights

Monsignor Stephan, having spent a year recuperating in Europe, returned to Washington to resume his duties as the Bureau's director. But he died suddenly in September, 1901, leaving Father Ketcham in charge as the new director.

One of the first orders of business for Ketcham was overturning the Browning Ruling, which pitted government schools versus mission schools in the competition for students. In 1896, Daniel Browning, then Commissioner of Indian Affairs, sent a letter to one of his Indian agents saying: "It is your duty first to build up and maintain the Government Day Schools....and the Indian parents have no right to designate which school their children shall attend." The Catholic missions reasoned that the ruling meant "open season" for government schools to poach students from the mission schools and that it could signal the end of Catholic mission schools entirely. But the ruling also opened up debate on an age-old question: "Who controls a child's education? The parents or the state?"

Monsignor Stephan had appealed the ruling, to no avail, and it was left for Father Ketcham to take it up with Browning's successor, William A. Jones. Jones claimed that Indian parents and children are "wards of the Government." Ketcham, on the other hand, considered this government assertion of power to be a "denial of the inherent, natural right of the Indian parents." According to Father Francis Paul Prucha, S.J., author of *The Churches and the Indian Schools, 1888-1912*, and a source of much of our knowledge about many of the controversies the Bureau faced,

Ketcham decided to bring his appeal directly to President William McKinley. The strategy must have worked, for Jones was ordered to rescind the policy in late 1901.

Holding the Government to Its Word

A second issue facing Father Ketcham, very much tied, albeit indirectly, to the funding of the mission schools, was the gradual cessation of federal rations of food and clothing allowances for schools operated by "religious, philanthropic, or other approved societies." The decision to end the rations was based on the belief by Commissioner Jones and others that Indians needed to play a greater role in supporting themselves and that weaning them from federal subsidies, such as rations, would be a step in the right direction.

But the rations weren't simply a case of federal generosity. Many were the result of treaty obligations to tribes in return for the cession of tribal lands to the government, lands that once no doubt provided the tribes with the food and clothing they needed. For tribes served by Catholic missions, this funding became a significant source of income. In the 1890s Father Stephan had estimated that the value of these rations for children served by Catholic mission schools was \$25,000 a year, a large sum of money back then.

The decision to cut the rations set off a reaction by not only Catholic mission organizations but by Protestant ones as well. Both groups began to lobby the administration and Congress. Father Ketcham had a valuable ally in Charles J. Bonaparte, a devoted Catholic, a successful lawyer in Baltimore, a prominent reformer on the national scene, and more recently an appointed member of the federal Board of Indian Commissioners. It didn't hurt that he was also a good friend of the sitting president, Theodore Roosevelt, who later appointed him Attorney General. Bonaparte suggested to Ketcham that the most effective argument against the cut-off of rations was not a review of the legislative history, but the message the cut off sent to Indian parents, which was roughly: "If you're determined to send your children to a Catholic mission school, we'll make you suffer for it."

That and other arguments appealed to Roosevelt, who was considered a sympathetic and knowledgeable friend of the American Indian. He ordered a reconsideration of the cut off. Bonaparte also suggested working with members of Congress, and in the end, it was through a provision in the 1904 Indian Appropriations Act that the rations to children were restored.

"Divine Inspiration or Sheer Desperation"

But rations weren't a substantial enough source of the funds needed to finance the mission schools. Ketcham didn't want to continue to rely so heavily on Mother Katharine's generosity, and government appropriations had come to an end. The idea ➡

Msgr. Ketcham

he hit upon, according to a short biography of Ketcham by Kevin Abing, might have been attributable to either "divine inspiration or sheer desperation." The solution, as Ketcham saw it, was to make use of tribally controlled revenues obtained from treaty obligations or from sales of tribal lands or timber. These funds, he argued, belonged not to the government but to the Indians themselves, and they should have the right to determine how they were spent.

When the Bureau of Indian Affairs rejected this solution, Father Ketcham appealed directly to President Roosevelt, who approved this use of funds. This gave Ketcham the upper hand, but he faced the continuing opposition of Protestant reform groups who believed that the use of these funds by Catholic schools would be a violation of the separation of church and state. These groups wanted Indian children to be educated by government-run schools, institutions which they had good reason to believe would stress Protestant values as opposed to Catholic values.

Protestant groups brought their case to sympathetic legislators in Congress. In testimony before a senate committee, Ketcham stated his case succinctly: "Shall an Indian parent have the right to use his own money in the education of his own children in the school of his choice?" That argument seemed to win a majority of legislators, and repeated Protestant efforts in Congress to have the arrangement overturned brought repeated failure.

Having lost their case in both the executive and legislative branches, Ketcham's opponents turned to the judiciary. In 1906, the Indian Rights Association, the Bureau's main opposition group, brought a suit against Francis Leupp, the government's Commissioner of Indian Affairs. The case, *Quick Bear v. Leupp*, made its way through the judicial system to the Supreme Court, which unanimously ruled in 1908 that, according to Abing, "tribal funds were, in fact private and not public revenues and that the tribes could expend their funds as they wished." The result guaranteed \$100,000 every year for the mission schools to support their work, a sum that was equivalent to what Mother Katharine was donating and was more than 70 percent of what Ketcham figured he needed to keep the schools in operation.

Ensuring a Catholic Presence in Government-Run Schools

The funding issue resolved for the moment, Father Ketcham was forced to contend with efforts to deny Catholic Indian children in government-run schools the right to receive Catholic religious instruction, to assist at Mass and to receive the Sacraments. It was agreed on all sides that a formation in the Christian religion was an important part of education for citizenship. In fact, the federal government required Indian students to attend a "suitable service" on

Sundays. But which service? In the 1890s, when the various Protestant denominations had a commanding influence over American cultural life, it was generally understood that the services would be Protestant in some form. That, of course, was not acceptable to Catholics, and in 1893, Monsignor Stephan vigorously opposed the existing practice.

But it was not until the turn of the century that a resolution of the issue developed, and it came from a most unlikely source, the Carlisle Indian School. The school was founded in 1879 by Captain Richard Henry Pratt, a Civil War veteran and an officer who had later worked closely with Indians in the southern plains. The school he founded in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, was predicated on his belief that young Indians must become part of the broader American culture. The best way to do that, he thought, would be to take them away from their traditional Indian culture to a place where he could introduce the children to industrial work habits and Protestant character formation. Carlisle became the first federally funded off-reservation Indian boarding school, and as such, it became a model for similar educational experiments.

Pratt was well-known for being vehemently anti-Catholic. As the pastor of the local Catholic church, Father Henry Ganss, put it: "a more rabid bigot could not be found." When Ganss asked Pratt for permission to minister to the Catholic students at Carlisle, Pratt refused. And yet, as Father Prucha relates, somehow at the beginning of the new century the frosty relations began to thaw. The result was what became known as the "Carlisle Plan," which spelled out steps the school would take to show greater accommodation to the spiritual needs of the Catholic students.

It was not all that Catholics could have hoped for, but it was a start. And more importantly, it became the model for a new, more even-handed policy regarding church-state relations in the Indian schools. It also reflected a warming of the relations between the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, a warming no doubt fostered by Father Ketcham's tactful approach.

Can Sisters Wear Their Habits in a Government-Run School?

One final issue remained to be resolved, the issue of just how Catholic could government-run schools for Indians be. The issue arose after the government assumed control of some mission schools. Rather than fire the staff and bring in new teachers, the government agreed to retain the existing staff. This led to a new church-state problem: Should the government allow the teachers to wear their distinctive religious garb and display religious symbols in the classroom? The Protestant reform groups saw their opportunity to reverse some of their recent losses and they seized it. The groups persuaded then-Commissioner of Indian Affairs Robert Valentine to forbid religious dress and symbols in the classroom. ➡

Ketcham immediately prevailed on President William Taft to revoke Valentine's directive and hold public hearings. In the meantime, Father Ketcham did his best to rally Catholic public opinion against the directive. He also undercut the force of the Protestant campaign by ordering the Catholic teachers in the ten schools in question to remove all the religious symbols from their classrooms. His efforts helped result in a compromise in which existing religious teachers were "grandfathered in," allowing them to wear their distinctive garb, although no new religious teachers would be allowed to teach in the converted schools. Neither side was perfectly happy with the outcome, but with this and the other issues resolved, the future of the mission schools and the BCIM looked far brighter than they had been.

Prospects looked brighter for several reasons. The Protestant dominance of American political and cultural life was beginning to diminish. By 1900, Catholics had become 14 percent of the American population. That was a sizable voting bloc and was recognized as such by Theodore Roosevelt and his successor, William Howard Taft. While Roosevelt held many of the era's biases, especially a fear of greater immigration and a wistfulness for the old Anglo-Saxon order of things, he could see that he would need some Catholic votes to win the 1904 presidential election. As a result, he made a special effort to campaign against anti-Catholicism, a tactic which was well received from Catholic immigrants. Archbishop John Ireland of St. Paul, Minnesota, once told him that he had far more Catholic support than he might believe.

It was President Taft who appointed Ketcham to the Board of Indian Commissioners in 1912. It was one more sign that Catholics had been able to take a place among the seats of power, but it was also a sign of respect for Father Ketcham and his many contributions to American Indian life. Like Monsignor Stephan before him, Ketcham was faced with many hostile forces, both in the government and among members of what was called in another era, the American Establishment. Stephan arrived in a particularly hostile era, and he gave as good as he got. Ketcham chose the diplomatic approach, and it was a combination of a changing public mood and his own tactful, respectful nature that made him such a successful representative for America's Catholic Indians.

In 1919, when Father Ketcham was 50 years old, Pope Benedict named him a domestic prelate as a way of showing the Church's respect for his achievements. Monsignor Ketcham was in New Mexico and Arizona at the time, visiting reservations in the area. The first time he wore the monsignorial was at the Sioux Catholic Congress, held on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota in July.

Two years later, while visiting with the Choctaw Indians in Mississippi, he suffered a heart attack



at the breakfast table and died suddenly. He was only 53 years old, but he had accomplished much in his short life. Many prominent officials from the executive and legislative branches, as well as high-ranking Church officials, came to his funeral on November 22, 1921. The January 1922 issue of the *Catholic Historical Review* captured the key to his success in Washington, especially among officials of the Interior Department. "There was that charm to his person," the *Review* wrote, "which made them feel that here was a man whose every effort in behalf of the Indians was inspired and prompted by the purest charity. As a consequence, seldom, if ever, were his requests denied."

At his death, he had bequeathed to his successor and good friend, Father William Hughes, an organization that had survived years of assaults upon its existence, that had kept faith with the Indians it served, and that had taken its place among the public and private institutions that were searching for the best ways to serve America's original peoples.

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