

July Signpost

for the

GOOD RED ROAD

St. Tekakwitha

Opening prayer:



God of all nations and peoples. You have filled Your Creation with

Your mighty presence. Through Your handiwork You speak to our heard words that satisfy our every desire.

You called Your servant the Mohawk maiden Saint Kateri Tekakwitha to embrace the Gospel of your Son Jesus Christ to do Your will and to serve others with the gifts You gave her.

May she who held tight to the cross of Your Son through her short life marred by sickness suffering and persecution, be our intercessor during our own trials. May her embrace of the Catholic faith and her openness to sharing Jesus with others inspire us to be new evangelizers to all cultures and peoples. Amen

Summer

South

White

Sin/ rage/ anger/ lust

Fruits of the Holy Spirit/ **Patience/**
Peace/self-control/

Gifts of the Holy Spirit/ Wisdom
Knowledge



Who do we need to bring in the circle?


Who do we need to pray for:

Family members who are sick.

family members who have died.

Struggles that we are facing.


Let us bring our joys and sufferings Into this circle.



The Doctrine of Discovery The Document from Pope Francis

Joint Statement of the Dicasteries for Culture and Education and for Promoting Integral Human Development on the
“Doctrine of Discovery”, 30.03.2023

1. In fidelity to the mandate received from Christ, the Catholic Church strives to promote universal fraternity and respect for the dignity of every human being.
 2. For this reason, in the course of history the Popes have condemned acts of violence, oppression, social justice and slavery, including those committed against indigenous peoples. There have also been numerous examples of bishops, priests, women and men religious and lay faithful who gave their lives in defense of the dignity of those peoples.
 3. At the same time, respect of the facts of history demands an acknowledgment of the human weakness and failings of Christ’s disciples in every generation. Many Christians have committed evil acts against indigenous peoples for which recent Popes have asked forgiveness on numerous occasions.
 4. In our own day, a renewed dialogue with indigenous peoples, especially with those who profess the Catholic Faith, has helped the Church to understand better their values and cultures. With their help, the Church has acquired a greater awareness of their sufferings, past and present, due to the expropriation of their lands, which they consider a sacred gift from God and their ancestors, as well as the policies of forced assimilation, promoted by the governmental authorities of the time, intended to eliminate their indigenous cultures. As Pope Francis has emphasized, their sufferings constitute a powerful summons to abandon the colonizing mentality and to walk with them side by side, in mutual respect and dialogue, recognizing the rights and cultural values of all individuals and peoples. In this regard, the Church is committed to accompany indigenous peoples and to foster efforts aimed at promoting reconciliation and healing.
 5. It is in this context of listening to indigenous peoples that the Church has heard the importance of addressing the concept referred to as the “doctrine of discovery.” The legal concept of “discovery” was debated by colonial powers from the sixteenth century onward and found particular expression in the nineteenth century jurisprudence of courts in several countries, according to which the discovery of lands by settlers granted an exclusive right to extinguish, wither by purchase or conquest, the title to or possession of those lands by indigenous peoples. Certain scholars have argued that the basis of the aforementioned “doctrine” is to be found in several papal documents, such as the *Bulls Dum Diversas* (1452), *Romanus Pontifex* (1455) and *Inter Caetera* (1493).
 6. The “doctrine of discovery” is not part of the teaching of the Catholic Church. Historical research clearly demonstrates that the papal documents in question, written in a specific historical period and linked to political questions, have never been considered expressions of the Catholic faith. At the same time, the Church acknowledges that these papal bulls did not adequately reflect the equal dignity and rights of indigenous peoples. The Church is also aware that the contents of these documents were manipulated for political purposes by competing colonial powers in order to justify immoral acts against indigenous peoples that were carried out, at times, without opposition from ecclesiastical authorities. It is only just to recognize these errors, acknowledge the terrible effects of the assimilation policies and the pain experienced by indigenous peoples, and ask for pardon. Furthermore, Pope Francis has urged: “Never again can the Christian community allow itself to be infected by the idea that one culture is superior to others, or that is legitimate to employ ways of coercing others.”
 7. In no uncertain terms, the Church’s magisterium upholds the respect due to every human being. The Catholic Church therefore repudiates those concepts that fail to recognize the inherent human rights of indigenous peoples including what has become known as the legal and political “doctrine of discovery.”
 8. Numerous and repeated statements by the Church and the Popes uphold the rights of indigenous peoples. For example, in the 1537 Bull *Sublimis Deus*, Pope Paul III wrote, “We define and declare [...] that [...] the said Indians and all people who may later be discovered by Christians, are by no means to be deprived of their liberty or the possession of their property, even though they be outside the Christian faith; and that they may and should, freely and legitimately, enjoy their liberty and possession of their property; nor should they be in any way enslaved; should the contrary happen, it shall be null and have no effect.”
- 



9. More recently, the Church's solidarity with indigenous peoples has given rise to the Holy See's strong support for the principles contained in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The implementation of those principles would improve the living conditions and help protect the rights of indigenous peoples as well as facilitate their development in a way that respects their identity, language and culture.

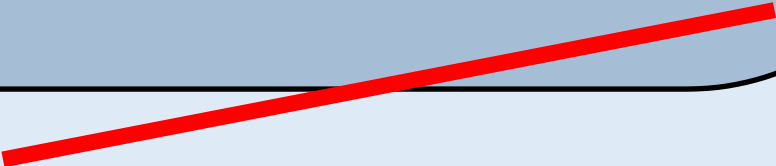
USCCB Response to the Vatican Statement

WASHINGTON - The Dicastries for Culture and Education and for Promoting Integral Human Development released today a Joint Statement on the "Doctrine of Discovery." The matter at issue involves documents (papal bulls) issued in the fifteenth century with regard to European exploration of land beyond continental Europe. Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City and secretary for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has issued a statement in response to today's Joint Statement by the dicasteries:

We are grateful to the Dicastries for Culture and Education and for Promoting Integral Human Development for their Joint Statement on the "Doctrine of Discovery." The Joint Statement is yet another step in expressing concern and pastoral solicitude for Native and Indigenous peoples who have experienced tremendous suffering because of the legacy of a colonizing mentality. We welcome the statement's renewed repudiation and condemnation of the violence and injustices committed against Native and Indigenous peoples, as well as the Church's ongoing support for their dignity and human rights. In the centuries that followed the papal bulls at issue, many popes boldly proclaimed the God-given rights owed to all peoples, but we must also confront those moments when individual Christians lacked such boldness or clarity.

As the Joint Statement points out, there were times when Christians, including ecclesiastical authorities, failed to fully oppose destructive and immoral actions of the competing colonial powers. In this regard, we too express deep sorrow and regret. In recent years here in the United States, dialogues among Catholic bishops and Tribal leaders have illuminated more aspects of this painful history, and, with humility, we wish to offer our continuing solidarity and support, as well as a further willingness to listen and learn. We will continue to support policies that protect the poor and vulnerable, and that will offer relief to Native and Indigenous families who are struggling. Through Catholic charitable, health, and educational initiatives, we will continue to offer service to all people, with particular concern for those Native and Indigenous communities where the Church has been present. We support the ongoing efforts of various Catholic communities to make archival and historical records more easily accessible.

Finally, as the Joint Statement indicates, the centuries of history at issue are complex, and the term "doctrine of discovery" has taken on various legal and political interpretations that merit further historical study and understanding. The experiences and histories of different countries and different Native and Indigenous peoples are distinct, and deserve further inquiry, although there are also opportunities for meaningful common understandings as well. As a Church, it is important for us to fully understand how our words have been used and misused to justify acts that would be abhorrent to Jesus Christ. We hope for more dialogue among Indigenous and Catholic scholars to promote greater and wider understanding of this difficult history. To that end, the USCCB and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops are exploring how they may support an academic symposium. This initiative has also received encouragement from the Pontifical Committee for Historical Sciences, the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, and the Dicastery for Education and Culture.





Cultural Appropriations

- 1) When is it correct to use aspects of Native cultures?
- 2) When is it not correct to use aspects of Native cultures?
- 3) Do I have a procedure in my parish or diocese for finding out about using aspects of Native cultures in prayers or at Mass?
- 4) If I discover Native communities have been offended by what the Church has done, how to I go about initiating reconciliation?
- 5) Do I know the rules of the tribes to use cultural aspects?
- 6) How do I stop someone from offending Natives when they try to use aspects from Native cultures?
- 7) What resources are there on this topic?
- 8) Can I clearly explain to my bishop, pastor, or liturgical coordinator the proper use of Native cultural aspects?



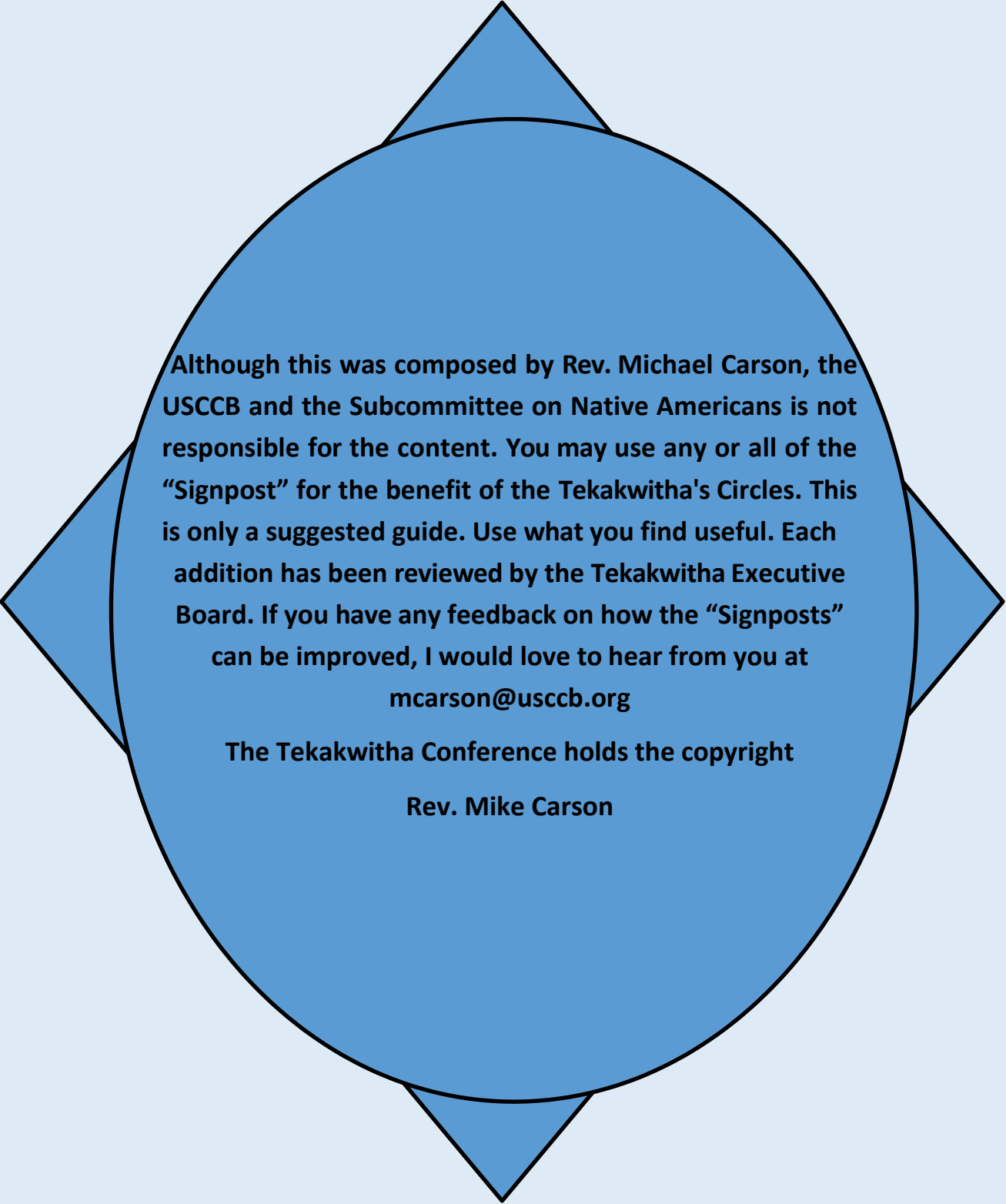
Closing prayer from the Black and Indian Mission Office:

God of all nations and peoples. You have filled your creation with Your mighty presence. Through Your handiwork You speak to our hearts words that satisfy our every desire.

You called Your servant, the Mohawk maiden Saint Kateri Tekakwitha to embrace the Gospel of your Son Jesus Christ, to do Your will and to serve others with the gifts You gave her.

May she who held tight to the cross of Your Son throughout her short life marked by sickness, suffering, and persecution, be our intercessor during our own trials. May her embrace of the Catholic faith and her openness to sharing Jesus with others inspire us to be new evangelizers to all cultures and peoples. May she who sought our Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament lead up to similar reverences for the Eucharist so that, like Saint Kateri, our last words may be, "Jesus, I love You."

Amen.



Although this was composed by Rev. Michael Carson, the USCCB and the Subcommittee on Native Americans is not responsible for the content. You may use any or all of the “Signpost” for the benefit of the Tekakwitha's Circles. This is only a suggested guide. Use what you find useful. Each addition has been reviewed by the Tekakwitha Executive Board. If you have any feedback on how the “Signposts” can be improved, I would love to hear from you at mcarson@usccb.org

The Tekakwitha Conference holds the copyright

Rev. Mike Carson