

March 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.

Direction

Spring

East

Yellow

Sin/ Apathy, Sloth

Fruits of the Holy Spirit/ Faith/

Goodness /Modesty

Gifts of the Holy Spirit/

Understanding/



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
onto this circle.



Fratelli Tutti
On Fraternity and Social Friendship
Part One

Fratelli Tutti is the latest Encyclical from Pope Francis that addresses the urgency of seeing all humanity as one family and especially acting accordingly.

The first part examines the problems of globalization and how globalization can easily lead to nationalism and challenges to social justice.

Chapter 1

Dark Clouds Cover the World.

In the first Chapter, the Encyclical focusses on what prevents social harmony, specifically how important World institutions have been transformed into the opposite of what they were developed to do, such as democracy, freedom and justice.

The Encyclical also explains that the rise of individualism continues to the rise of self-centeredness. Self-centeredness means the indifference toward the common good. This indifference includes the increase of corporations only focus on profit, culture of waste; unemployment, and poverty. The Encyclical makes a connection of these economic sins to the more prevalent social sins such as racism, modern day slavery and human trafficking and especially a “culture of walls” that stops or limits immigration. All of this sins begins with fear and loneliness.

Chapter 2

Strangers on the road





In the second Chapter the Encyclical focusses on “who is our neighbor? In order to answer the question, the Pope uses the parable of the Good Samaritan. He points out that the universal commandment of love transcends place and peoples. Further, he explains that this universal commandment of love is inclusive of everyone and does not exclude anyone. He questions the idea that compassion is limited. We are commanded by Christ to make sure that our model of compassion is the example of the Good Samaritan, especially those in need.

In order to carry out this mission the Encyclical talks about to be open to the actions taken by the Good Samaritan. It persuades us to be honest to our human nature, to avoid both being the robbers, those addicted to violence and also the Levite and Priests who have closed themselves off to the suffering of others. The Encyclical challenges us to move beyond isolating ourselves from each other and, like not only the Good Samaritan, but Christ himself to embrace the suffering of others. The decision to include those who are suffering in the influences economic, political, social and religious aspects of the world.

Pope Francis also talks about the need to be co-responsible in the process of change. We can be responsible for the suffering of others if we both work locally and globally. Using the parable of the Good Samaritan, he also urges us to go beyond who we normally think as being our neighbor.

Chapter 3

Envisaging and Engendering and Open World

In Chapter 3, the Encyclical reminds us of the need and possibility of going beyond ourselves. The two areas that have a special focus is hospitality and relationships. Hospitality is how the virtue for the love of others is acted out. When relationships are expanded, the virtue of love is also acted out.

There are types of individuals that the Pope specifically underlines as part of the need to experience our direct hospitality and be in relationship with, such as the immigrant, the refugee, the poor and the disabled.

One again, Pope Frances emphasizes the need to put forward human dignity as both an individual and a cooperate responsibility, especially concerning work, resources and priorities.



Chapter 4

A Heart Open to the Whole World

This section begins with the “complex challenges” that arise through immigration. The Encyclical talks about our response to immigration in three areas: Welcome, protect, promote and integrate.

Welcome:

To welcome the immigrant also means to accept and celebrate different cultures, that is to be aware and accepting of a diversity of people and cultures.

Protect:

Immigration policies should be directed especially in giving a safe harbor to those who have suffered politically and economically.

Promote:

The promotion of just immigration policies belong not just with governments, but with all of those associated with helping the stranger in our midst.

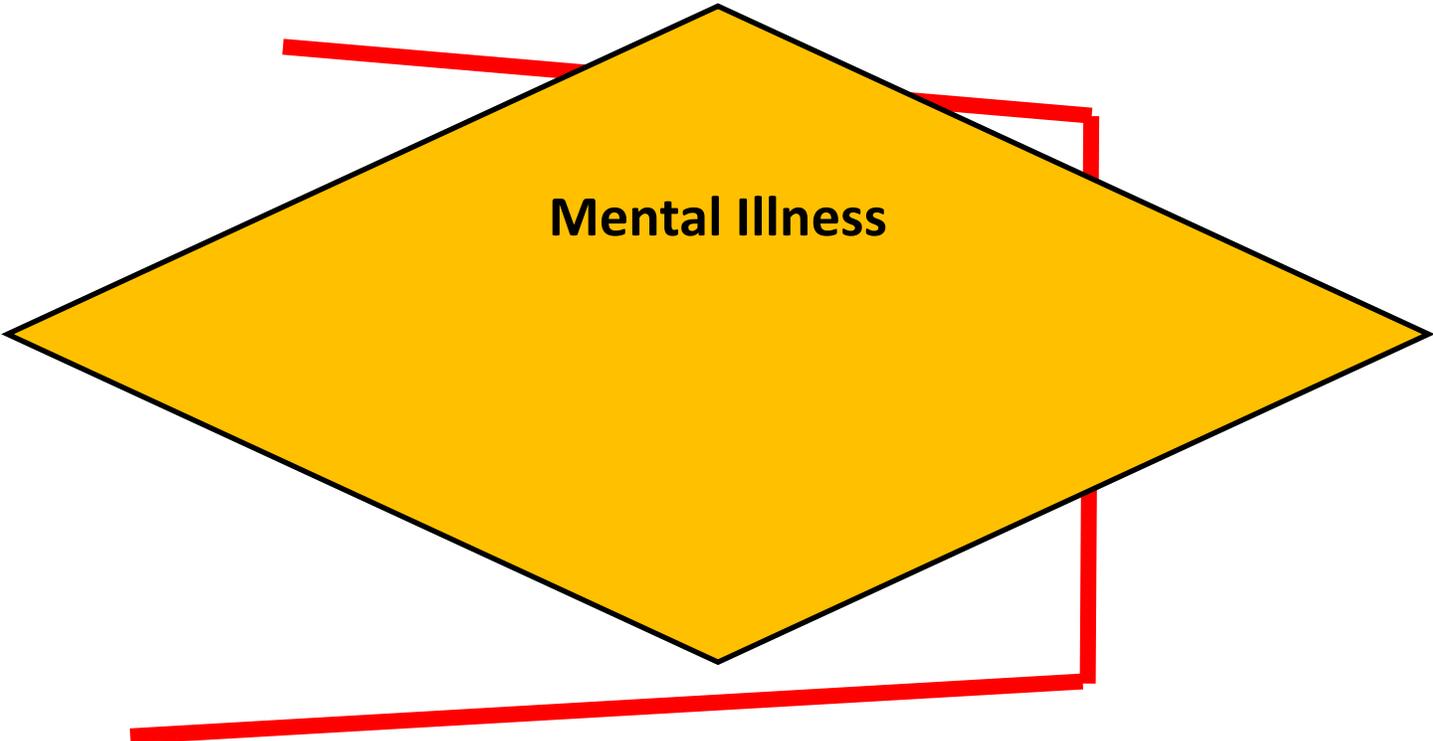
Integrate:

Integration is the ability to adopt policies and procedures that reflect the dignity of the human person and also promote policies that help include the stranger into the “complete fabric of society.” This also means to adopt the mindset of the immigrant being a gift and not a burden.



Questions for Native Communities:

- 1) How do you advocate our common responsibly to promote social harmony?**
 - 2) In what ways can Tribal Leaders advance and illimitation of social sins such as racism economic deprivation, and human trafficking?**
 - 3) In what ways can we use the Gospel Story of the Good Samaritan to promote social reasonability?**
 - 4) In what ways can I respond to the Encyclical's call to go “beyond myself” and build up relationships with my family, Church, and tribe?**
 - 5) In my Christian duty to welcome the stranger, in what ways can I promote the call of the Encyclical for just immigration policies?**
- 



Mental Illness

Native American Communities have some of the highest rates of mental illness compared to White, Black, Asian, and Hispanic adult populations. Native Americans have a high rate of using mental health services, prescription medication, and outpatient treatment compared to their counterparts. The data also suggest that Native communities suffer from high rates of posttraumatic stress disorder and alcohol dependence. 2021-*Mental Health Services Administration* .

There are many reasons that are the cause of this statistic, but one of most important concerns that is the foundation of many mental health problems is historical trauma. Like a snowball rolling down hill, historical trauma is not reduced through time, but effect one generation to the next. Individual Natives might be free from injuries suffered by intuitions, but never-the-less, they are affected by their parents or grandparents that were injured and devastated by racism, greed and other social evils.

Historical Trauma is not an excuse by a diagnostic tool to be used in helping individuals and tribes to regain their social and cultural connections to reduces mental illness. It is also not the only reason for the high rates of Mental Illness in the Native Communities. Other reasons include isolation, poverty and cultural duality.

What is needed is an increase research and treatment for mental illnesses by all of the health agencies that are involved in the lives of Natives. We as a Church also need to counter historical trauma by conducting listening seasons to promote healing and reconciliation.

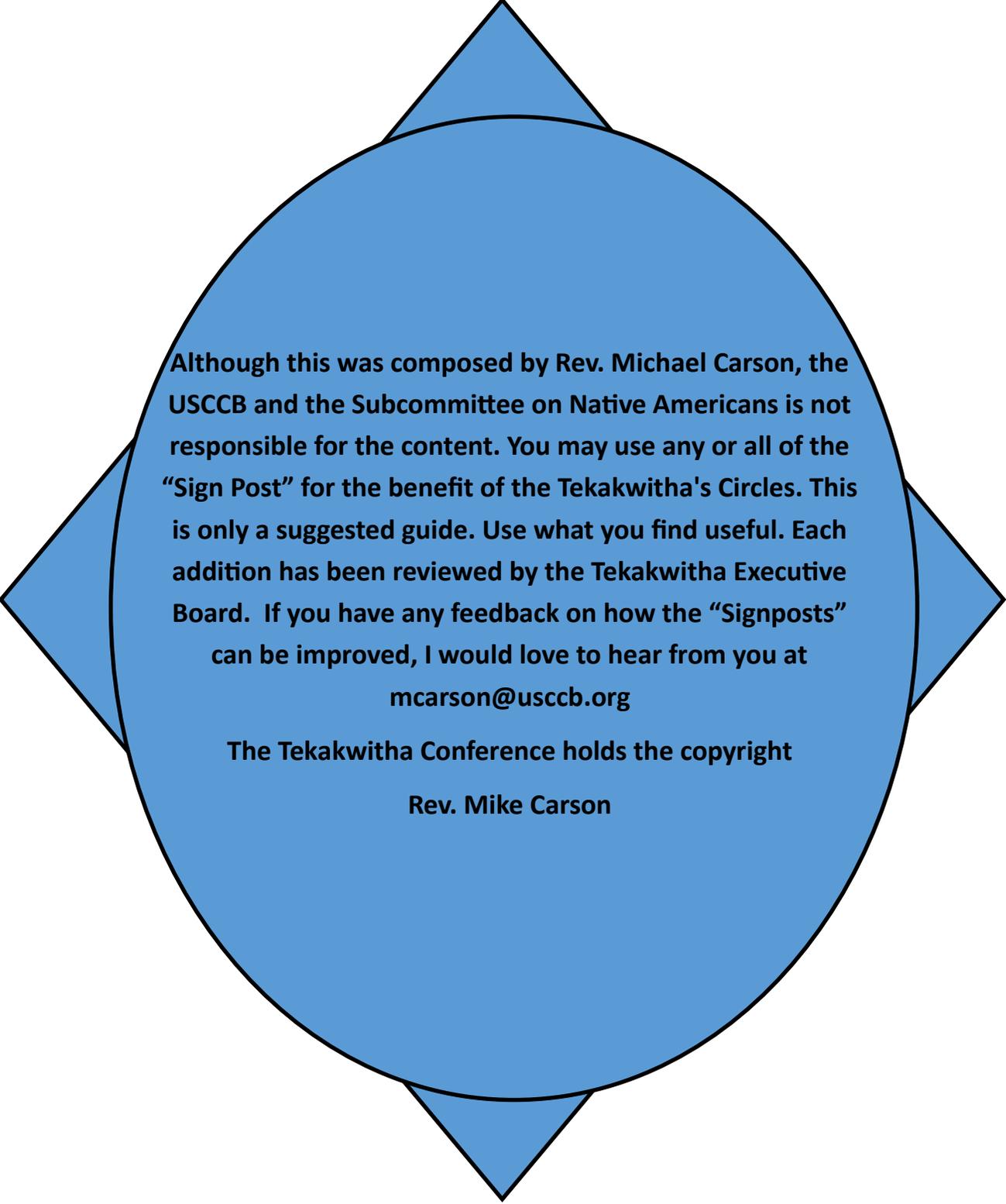


Closing prayer from the Black and Indian Mission Office:

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 “Sign Post” 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