



Season of Harvest

Dear Friend of Las Casas,

The Las Casas Board welcomed new board members: Gloria Glynn, OP (Sinsinawa) and Nathalie Meyer, OP (Grand Rapids) at the May meeting. We are grateful for their willingness to serve on the board as well as the wisdom and experience they bring.

The Board was able to respond to six grant requests. This year marked a record number of applications. We continue to designate scholarship funds for Dominicans who minister with Native Americans or are preparing for this ministry. If you know a Dominican considering ministry with Indigenous People please refer them to the leadership of their congregation for more information. Each Fall updated info is mailed to leadership.

Storytelling has a rich tradition among Native Peoples.

Congratulations to the Tekakawitha Conference as they celebrated 75 years of presence with Indigenous Catholics of North America at their annual conference in July. See the article in the newsletter for more information.

Storytelling has a rich tradition among Native Peoples. Enjoy the stories of grant recipients and the people they minister with throughout the country. Other stories and helpful information are also noted. Please read the newsletter and pass it on. It will also be posted on our website (www.domlife.org/lascasas).

Our Dominican sisters and brothers continue a long tradition of ministry with Native Americans. Las Casas is able to provide grants and scholarships because of the generosity of those who respond to the annual appeal. I invite you to join in this effort. If you haven't donated in the past, please consider a donation this year. A gift may be given in honor (birthday, jubilee, anniversary, etc.) or memory of someone you know. All contributions are gifts that keep on giving and support the growing need of our Dominican sisters and brothers. Thanks in advance for your generous response and prayers.



May you be aware of the blessings in your life this season of harvest.

St. Kateri, pray for us!

Diane Poplawski, OP (Racine)
President for the Las Casas Board



Scholarship Program

Three years ago the Las Casas Board decided to initiate a scholarship program and offer it to Dominicans working with Native American/ Indigenous People. By offering up to five hundred dollars per person we hoped to encourage Dominicans to select a program or conference to prepare themselves for ministry with people from these cultures or to deepen their understanding of them and sharpen their skills for ministry with them.

Since that time grants have enabled Dominicans to attend the summer session on Basic Directions in Ministry at the Sioux Spiritual Center in South Dakota or to participate in the annual Tekakwitha Conference. If you know of a Dominican who would like to prepare her/himself for ministry with Native American/ Indigenous People, encourage them to contact:

Marilyn Winter, OP
411 Mill Rd. Apt. 3C, Adrian, MI 49221
for an application form.

Sympathy

The Las Casas Board
extends sympathy to

The Family and Friends of
Gretchen Boyer
who entered eternal life on
January 21, 2014

Gretchen served as accountant to Las Casas
for many years in Oklahoma.
Our deepest sympathy especially to her husband,
Alan and her children, Gavin and Karley.

*May she rest in peace as she is
welcomed home by the Great Spirit!*

*A donation has been made
in her memory to Las Casas.*



Reflecting God's Love for All

Within the year after opening their thrift store in May, 2012, it became apparent to the Northern Cheyenne Ministerial Association that a larger, more energy-efficient store was needed. In keeping with the vision statement –“reflecting God’s love for all, in Christ Jesus, we seek to serve our people’s needs, protecting each one’s dignity,” the store continued to sell clothing and small household items at a low cost. The customer base grew, reaching beyond the boundaries of the Northern Cheyenne reservation. The thrift store board made the decision to look for available land upon which a store that could provide furniture and large appliances along with clothing and smaller items could be built. Serious efforts to raise the necessary funding began. The generous grant from Las Casas moved us closer to our goal.

“... we seek to serve
our people’s needs
protecting each others
dignity”

LeAnn Probst, OP [Peace]



Pam Kania looks at items for sale in the
Everything Beautiful Thrift Store.



Care for the Earth

St Ignatius Catholic Mission is located on the Flathead Reservation in northwest Montana. The Salish people of the Bitterroot Mountains were relocated by the US government (who



mistakenly called them Flatheads) to the north with the Kootenai tribe. We thus consist of The Confederated Salish and Kootenai peoples. Settled in the beautiful Mission Valley of the Rocky Mountains, we are 50 miles north of Missoula, 85 miles south of Kalispell and 100 miles southwest of Glacier National Park. We travel distances for medical care, sports events and shopping to name a few.

Our 9-12 Religious Education participants come directly from after school academic and sport activities to religious education/youth ministry sessions. We therefore provide supper each Wednesday before sessions begin. The youth ministers, students of 9-12, students of 6-8 and some family members who travel distances to bring youth to participate, share food and fellowship. Meals are prepared by parents, elders of the parish, parish staff and occasionally the youth.

Paper products were used each week. The parish only owned cups and silverware. The people gather after Liturgy each week for coffee and snacks. At Lenten Friday meals, summer Vacation Bible School and other parish gatherings, food had always been served on disposable paper products.

When I came, I saw a gap between beliefs and this practice. Care of the earth, respect for God's gifts

and thoughtful consumption are a part of life here. Taking time to appreciate the snow capped mountains that surround us, dig bitterroot as the snow clears and participate in honoring the rivers as the snowmelts are age old traditions. Thus the concept of reducing disposable paper use was simply a step away.

With the funds provided by Las Casas we were able to purchase 100 sets of Corelle plates, cups, bowls, and dessert plates. We began to use them immediately at Vacation Bible School and evenings during the school year. The extra work of using the dishwasher took some groups a little while to get use to. We are happy to say that we now use far fewer disposable paper products in the parish and were able to express our care of the earth by greatly reducing our paper consumption. This was the desired outcome.

Thank you Las Casas for making this possible.

Mary Stauder, OP [Grand Rapids]

The DVD *"In Her Footsteps: The Story of Kateri Tekakwitha"* is a remarkable documentary and shares the historical and contemporary story of Kateri's journey to sainthood. Numerous contemporary people are interviewed and share their insights. Kateri Mitchell, SSA (Sister of St. Anne) who serves on the Las Casas board and is the executive director of the Tekakwitha Conference is among those interviewed. Jake Finkbonner who received the miraculous healing that led to Kateri's canonization



is also on the DVD. The 2012 Tekakwitha Conference is highlighted along with excerpts from the Mass of Canonization of St. Kateri Tekakwitha, the Mass of Thanksgiving in Rome and several other features.

It tells a moving and inspirational story. It is available from the Tekakwitha Conference (tekconf@gmail.com).



Tekakwitha Conference News

Annual Conference Dates

July 22- 26, 2015

Alexandria, Louisiana

Tekakwitha Conference Workshops

Basic Directions Workshop
Sioux Spiritual Center • June 15-22, 2015

The Tekakwitha Conference National Office

2225 North Bolton Ave. • Alexandria, LA 71303

email: tekconf@gmail.com
www.tekconf.org • 1.844.483.3900



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Kateri Circle
Alaska picture is used.

Among the highlights of the 75th Tekakwitha Conference was the All Nations Grand Entry. Kateri Circles members processed in with their unique and original banners.



Las Casas board members gather:
back row left to right: Linnea Gariepy; Margaret Hillary, OP;
Mary T. Johnson, OP; Diane Poplawski, OP; Marilyn Winter, OP
front row, left to right: Tammie Miller; Mary Stauder, OP,
Ernestine Roallier Ducheneaux.

Flathead Reservation Montana at the 75th Tekakwitha Conference gathering.

Photo: Herman Ray, Tekakwitha Conference Official Photographer Used with permission.

Saint Kateri Tekakwitha

October 21, 2012

"Lily of the Mohawks"
Algonquin/Mohawk

Born: 1656, Ossernernon, NY
Died: April 17, 1680
Venerable: January 3, 1943
Beatified: June 22, 1980
Canonized: October 21, 2012

Feast Day: July 14
Patron of the environment and ecology



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Tekakwitha Conference ~ www.tekconf.org

Saint Kateri Tekakwitha
Pray for us!

www.domlife.org/lascasas



Fargo - 75 Years Later Tekakwitha Conference Celebrates 75 years!

The Tekakwitha Conference
met in Fargo, North Dakota, July 23-27.
It was the site of the First Tekakwitha Conference 75 years ago.

Las Casas board members Mary T. Johnson, OP (Sinsinawa); Diane Poplawski, OP (Racine) and Marilyn Winter, OP (Adrian) joined 730+ others to celebrate this historical event. Kateri Mitchell, SSA who also serves on the Las Casas board is the executive Director of the Tekakwitha Conference and welcomed Indigenous Peoples and all who traveled from across the United States and Canada.

Among the highlights of the conference were the All Nations Grand Entry, keynote speakers and a variety of workshops. Recognition was given to the youngest member of the conference (age 2) and the oldest (98) who were in attendance! There were 99 youth under the age of 17 present which speaks to the continued growth of the conference. Meals offered a wonderful opportunity to meet and talk with people who came from near and far.



The Las Casas Board had the opportunity to congratulate the conference as they celebrated being “the voice, presence and identity of Indigenous Catholics of North America.” It was truly a blessing to be at the conference as we remembered the past, gave thanks for the present and prayed to the Great Spirit and St. Kateri Tekakwitha for blessings on a future filled with continued faith and hope for the conference.

The Las Casas Board members were also able to talk with and meet some of the Dominican Sisters who are recipients of grants, the people they minister with, as well as some collaborators. It was truly a sacred time and experience.

If you have never attended a Tekakwitha Conference you may want to consider attending next year. See the newsletter for more info.

Photo: Presentation of plaque and gift to the Tekakwitha Conference.

Credit for presentation photo:
Herman Ray, Tekakwitha Conference Photographer.
Used with permission.



Las Casas Grant Gives New Life to our RCIA through New Textbooks

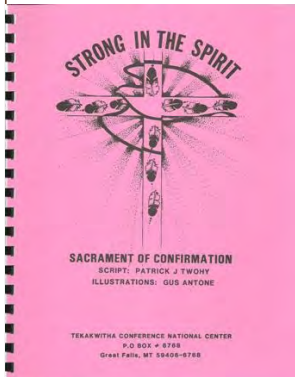
The Sacrament resources from the Tekakwitha Conference have been written with consultation and guidance from members of the Plateau Tribes in our region. When Sister Kateri Mitchell recommended these resources to me a couple of years ago, she commented that the artwork on each page was a meditation in itself and that the symbols would speak to Native readers and the drawings could lead them into a deeper appreciation and understanding of the sacraments. It is with great pride that we are able to read quotes and ideas expressed by persons we know who are living on our own Flathead Reservation and neighboring reservations. The print concepts on each page of these resources are illustrated with beautiful drawings by a Native artist.

This was especially demonstrated when one of our young RCIA adults opened the book on the Sacrament of Baptism for the first time. His eyes began to glow as he turned page by page and examined the drawings on each page. About half way through the book, he looked up and said, "I love the pictures." Then as he continued paging, his next observation was a joyful question, "Are there pictures on every page?" I began to rejoice with him as I recalled Sister Kateri's comment when she recommended these books as resources for youth who had requested catechesis from their own culture. I told him about Sister Kateri's advice to me and admitted that even though the drawings were very beautiful, I did not understand all of the symbols and what they meant. He began to teach me by pointing out the eagle, the feathers, the water and other symbols that had spoken to him.



His explanation helped me better understand why our high school youth show such reverence for these books and why they are usually looking at the picture while I am concentrating on the printed words on the page. The sacrament sets were originally purchased through a grant from Las Casas and have served our high school youth well. Our supply has diminished because so many people have asked for their own copy of a particular sacrament book as they were preparing themselves and their children for one or other Sacrament. The grant has made it possible to purchase more sets of these beautiful resources and replenish our supply so that every class participant has a copy to explore as we study a specific sacrament. Thank you Las Casas and all Las Casas donors.

Margaret Hillary, OP [Grand Rapids]

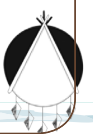


Sacramental Resource Books
Are available from the Tekakwitha Conference Center
tekconf.org or call: 844.483.3900

Authored by: Patrick Twohy, SJ
Native Artish: Gus Antone
God's Family Circle: Sacrament of Baptism
Strong in Spirit: Sacrament of Confirmation

Artwork:
Native Artist: Gus Antone. Used with permission
of the Tekakwitha Conference.

Note: Permission is granted by the Tekakwitha
Conference to the purchaser of the Sacrament
resource books to use artwork images.





Las Casas is grateful
for the generosity of our
Financial and In-Kind Donors

July 1, 2013 through June 2014
We regret any errors or omissions.
Please report discrepancies to
lascasasop@gmail.com

- Dominican Sisters of Adrian
- Dominican Sisters of Amityville
- Dominican Sisters of Caldwell
- Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids
- Dominican Sisters of Hope
- Dominican Sisters of Houston
- Dominican Sisters of Peace
- Dominican Sisters of Racine
- Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa
- Dominican Sisters of Sparkill
in Memory of Laura Fucito, OP (Sparkill)
- Dominican Sisters of Springfield
- Dominican Sisters of Tacoma

- Grace Augustine, OP (Blauvelt)
- Marilyn Francoeur, OP (Adrian) *in Memory of
Eugenia Bourassa Francoeur (Potawatomie)*
- Mary Therese Johnson, OP (Sinsinawa) *in Honor
of Jubilarian Marie Michelle Hackett, OP
(Springfield)*
- John Morris, OP (Western Province)
in Honor of Dominican Friars, Western Province
- Judith Jepsen-Popel
in Honor of Charlotte Rebbe, OP (Springfield)
- Diane Poplawski, OP (Racine) *in Honor of
Dominican Sisters of Racine 2014 Jubilarians*
- LaVerne Poplawski *in Memory of Dick Poplawski*
- Joyce Roach, OP (Tacoma)
- Sisters of St. Anne
- Mary Vaughn, OP (Racine)
- Marilyn Winter, OP (Adrian) *in Honor of
Dominican Sisters of Adrian 2014 Jubilarians*

Las Casas Board in Memory of:
~ Gretchen Boyer

Contributions to support
Las Casas and Dominicans
who serve in Native American Ministry

- \$100 \$200 \$300 \$500
- Other \$ _____ Anonymous

My contribution is made [please print]

- In Honor of _____
- In Memory of _____

Name _____

Address _____

City State, Zip _____

E-mail _____

Thank you!

Check payable to: Las Casas
Contributions are tax-deductible
to the extent allowed by law.

Mail donations to:

Las Casas
c/o Diane Poplawski, OP
5635 Erie St.
Racine, WI 53402-1900



Las Casas Newsletter
c/o 10730 W. Cermak Rd., 1W
Westchester, IL 60154-5234

Las Casas Board

L-R:

Diane Poplawski, OP [Racine]
Mary Therese Johnson, OP [Sinsinawa]
Gloria Glynn, OP [Sinsinawa]
Nathalie Meyer, OP [Grand Rapids]
Kateri Mitchell, SSA [Sister of St. Anne]
Barbara Bogenschutz, OP [Springfield]
Marilyn Winter, OP [Adrian]



visit us at: www.domlife.org/lascasas

