INDIAN RECORD

OCTOBER 1984
381st Issue
Vol. 47 No. 4

Respect and promotion of social justice, human rights and cultural values.

Pope embraces native peoples — defends their rights

by Fred Miller, OMI

In not one, but three historic encounters with the native peoples of Canada in September, Pope John Paul II strongly affirmed their traditions, cultures and moral and spiritual values, and threw his support behind their struggles for a measure of political self-government and a land base upon which to build their society.

In doing so he gave a great boost to the sagging hopes of native people who have felt themselves in an unequal struggle for recognition of their aboriginal rights. In the political process the native people suffer from the twofold disadvantage of small numbers and a public image fed by prejudice or indifference on the part of the general public.

A time for healing and forgiveness

The Pope's words not only boosted the sense of pride in the native people, but were, in effect, a call on all Canadians to recognize their dignity and to apply to them the principles of justice and fairness that arise out of the Gospel.

Speaking at the Martyrs Shrine near Midland, Ontario, he said, *"This is truly the hour of Canadians to heal all the divisions that have developed over the centuries between the original peoples and the newcomers to the continent."*

In Ste. Anne de Beaupré, Quebec, at the shrine that has drawn many native people in pilgrimage each year since 1680, the Pope referred to the world synod of bishops on 'Justice in the World' (1971), which stated that every people should, in mutual cooperation, fashion its own economic and social development and that each people should take part in realizing the universal common good as active and responsible members of human society. He went on to say, *"You must be the architects of your own future, freely and responsibly."*

Returning to this theme in his speech prepared for Fort Simpson he said, *"Today I want to proclaim that freedom which is required for a just and equitable measure of self-determination in your own lives as native peoples."* Then, in a sentence that has all the ring of Papal authority he declared, *"In union with the whole Church I proclaim all your rights — and their corresponding duties."*

(See p. 3: Social love)

The Holy Father delivered his message to Fort Simpson at Yellowknife, NWT.

All photos in this article are by Fred Miller, OMI.

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Guest editorial

Native issues lost in election — Papal support sought

by Frederick Miller, OMI

With the federal election just days away Anglican Primate, Bishop Edward W. Scott, made public the replies to twelve questions put to the leaders of the three major political parties on aboriginal rights. Speaking for Project North, an interchurch body representing nine Canadian churches on social issues and aboriginal rights, he said, "We are alarmed that the issue has been virtually ignored in the election campaign."

Present with him at the National Press Office on August 30th were native leaders representing virtually all aboriginal peoples of Canada. Each one made a prepared statement. All expressed disappointment with the Liberal and Conservative responses. Only the New Democratic Party answered each of the questions separately and specifically. Three of the four native leaders made a point of acknowledging the support of the churches in their "continuing struggle."

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops is one of the nine church bodies listed on the statement, "On Aboriginal Rights and the Federal Election Campaign."

Questioned about political options, neither Bishop Scott nor any of the native leaders came out in support of a particular political party, but called upon each of them to abandon partisan politics and to "work together to ensure that Canada's next chapter in our relationship with Indian, Metis and Inuit peoples will be written on the basis of the principles of justice and equity."

Asked if the impending Conservative victory spelled the end of native hopes for Constitutional guarantees, all the leaders affirmed that they were not daunted but determined to carry through to success in the next two First Ministers' Conferences.

A First Ministers' Conference was convened to deal with questions of aboriginal rights in 1983. It met again last March. At these Conferences native leaders met with the Prime Minister and the ten Provincial Premiers to seek to determine rights and resolve native demands for self-government and the entrenchment of rights in the Constitution. Some progress was made. The Constitution was amended to guarantee that no changes in the Constitution affecting native peoples would be made without first consulting them. Another amendment stated that, "the aboriginal, treaty and other rights and freedoms that pertain to the aboriginal peoples of Canada apply equally to male and female persons." And while Prime Minister Trudeau expressed the federal government's support for native self-government, several provincial premiers refused to budge on this point.

Effectively the talks are stalemated, a fact which points up a basic weakness in the process. The native people have no vote at the Conference table. They get only what the governments are willing to give them, and that may fall far short of expectations. The only leverage the native peoples have is public opinion. It is here that the churches are acting as the conscience of the nation, calling for justice and equity.

Coming as it did four days before the election, the church statement was too late to influence the election campaign. Nevertheless it remains a valid call to the nation's leaders to deal fairly with aboriginal peoples.

Metis Quote Papal Bull

Harry Daniels, representing the Native Council of Canada, a Metis organization, quoted a Papal Bull of 1537 in support of aboriginal claims. In the early days of North American colonization the question of the nature of Indian peoples arose: were they truly human? Not everyone was ready to concede that they were and proceeded to treat them as animals. In his capacity of teacher of the Church, Pope Paul III in *Sublimis Deus Sic Dilexit* wrote: "Indians are truly men . . . are by no means to be deprived of their liberty or of the possession of their property . . . nor should they be in any way enslaved. . . ."

Pope to speak to native concerns

A question was asked about the Pope's visit to Canada. Did the native people expect him to come out in support of aboriginal rights and self-government?

Tony Clarke, representing the Conference of Catholic Bishops on social matters, said that though he did not know what the Pope might say, still, one of the Pope's primary concerns in coming to Canada was to meet with the aboriginal peoples. "He signaled this very early," said Clarke. He noted that there would be three occasions when the Holy Father would meet native people: namely at Ste. Anne de Beaupré in Quebec, the Martyrs Shrine, Midland, Ontario, and at Fort Simpson in the Northwest Territories. It is at Fort Simpson, said Clarke, that he expects the Holy Father to address native peoples about their special concerns.

"I would hope that some of these basic concerns that have been addressed here will at least find some strong support in what he has to say in Fort Simpson," said Clarke. □

INDIAN RECORD

Founded in 1938 — Published by the Oblate Fathers (Manitoba Province)

Editor & Manager: Rev. Gontran Laviolette, OMI

Editorial Board: Rev. Alvin Gervais, chairman, Revs. A. Lacelle, D. Kerbrat, and G. Lavallée, OMI

Published 4 times a year — January, April, July and October. Copy deadline: 6 weeks prior to date of publication.

Subscription rate $4.00 a year; two years $7.00. Bulk rates: 5 or more copies at same address $3.50 each per year.

 # 503 - 480 Aulneau, Winnipeg, Man. R2H 2V2 2nd class Mail reg. 0062 ISSN 0019-6282 **Telephone (204) 233-6430 If no answer: (204) 237-6943**

Native Grey Nuns of Ottawa, Srs. Madeleine Martineau and Cecile Sutherland and Sr. Rose Arsenault, Sr. du St. Rosaire, with Bishop Jules LeGuerrier, OMI, met the Holy Father at Beaupré, P.Q.

Social Love — from page 1

In speaking out strongly for their human rights, the Holy Father did not neglect to call the native people themselves to follow Christ in loving their neighbour. *"As disciples of Jesus Christ we know that the Gospel calls us to live as his brothers and sisters. We know that Jesus Christ makes possible reconciliation between peoples, with all its requirements of conversion, justice and social love."*

These words will not be lost on the native peoples who are deeply spiritual as well as being noted for hospitality. The Pope is challenging them to a spiritual renewal, a reawakening to their deep spiritual roots. And to a sense of responsibility in recognizing the rights of others to a place in which to live. *"God gave the earth to all mankind,"* said the Pope at Ste. Anne de Beaupré.

Referring to the waves of settlers that invaded their ancestral lands the Pope said, *"The vastness of this continent allowed you to live together in a relationship that was not always easy, but that has also had its rewards."*

He did not spell out what those rewards were, but certainly he was counting first among them the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Pope blesses native expressions of faith

At Ste. Anne de Beaupré he said, *"I have come to celebrate with you our faith in Jesus Christ."* He reminded them of Kateri Tekakwitha whom he had beatified in Rome in 1980, *"where several of you were present."* And at Huronia he recalled the Huron Indian Joseph Chiwatenwa, another example of the grace of conversion to Christ.

"God has sent the Christian message to you just as he did to others," declared the Pope. And speaking of the effect of this Good News he said, *"Your encounter with the Gospel has not only enriched you, it has enriched the Church."*

In his talk at Ste. Anne de Beaupré and again at Huronia the Pope enumerated certain moral and spiritual qualities of the native peoples which have been a source of enrichment for the Church. Among them he listed an acute sense of the presence of God, love of family, respect for elders and the aged, solidarity with their own people, sharing, hospitality, respect for nature, the importance given to silence and prayer, faith in providence, a sense of gratitude for the land, responsible stewardship of the earth, reverence for all God's works and dependence on Him.

He pointed out that the Gospel does not destroy what is good in their cultures, but rather enriches it from within.

For their part the native peoples, from their own cultures can and do contribute new expressions of faith and worship. An example of this is the sweetgrass ceremony. The Holy Father blessed such expressions saying, *"Your Amerindian and Inuit traditions permit the development of new ways of expressing the message of salvation, and they help us to better understand to what point Jesus is the Saviour and how universal his salvation is."*

At Huronia he gave this further encouragement saying, *"The Church desires to assist all people to bring forth from their own living tradition original expressions of Christian life, celebration and thought."*

To those who may be concerned that this would weaken or compromise the Gospel, the Pope added, *"There can be no question of adulterating the word of God or of emptying the Cross of its power, but rather of Christ animating the very centre of all culture."*

And to bring home in a striking way the extent to which Christ penetrates and gives life to all Christian peoples he said, *"Not only is Christianity relevant to the Indian peoples, but Christ, in the members of his Body, is himself Indian."* It was the

Father Jules Dion, OMI, pastor of Ste. Ann's, Maricourt-Wakeham, P.Q., with Eskimos Eva Tilmarsiut and Putulik Pilurtut at Ste. Anne de Beaupré, P.Q.

doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ applied, giving back to the native people a sense of their true source of dignity. It was also the closest the Pope came to wedding truth to oratory and was one of his most memorable lines.

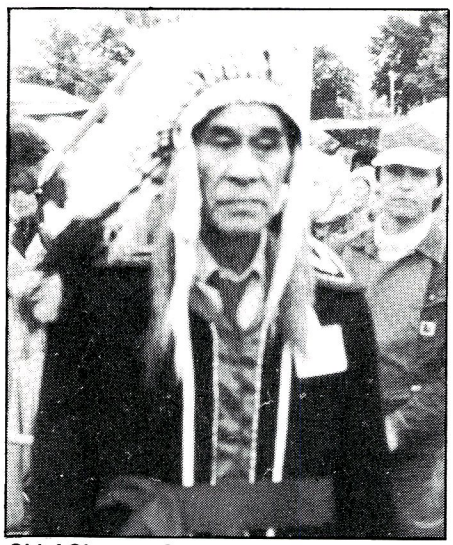
Historic ceremonies

If the Holy Father heartened the people with his teachings, he underscored his approval of native spiritual ceremonials by taking part in the sweetgrass ceremony at Huronia and by receiving the eagle feather presented to him.

Before a crowd of 70,000 and a vast television audience, the braided grass was lit and four native elders went through the ritual washing with the smoke from the burning grass. The leader then took the smoldering wick and wafted the smoke in the direction of the Pontiff.

The sweetgrass ceremony, according to Mary Lou Fox, is practiced widely by North American Indian tribes. It is a ritual of purification, communication and thanksgiving. Those taking part are asking to be cleansed of hatred, envy, intolerance and other negative thoughts and feelings. It also has positive effects: *"It is rubbed on the hands and arms so that selfless acts through love for others will follow and flourish; that the heart will be warm and accepting; and that their feet will carry them wherever they may accomplish the most good,"* explained Fox.

In presenting the Pope with the eagle feather the Indian people were recognizing in His Holiness the great courage, wisdom and humility he had shown in leadership. The eagle is that creature which, by its high flight symbolizes lofty knowledge, closeness to God, and courage in the face of adversity. The one making the presentation spoke of the Holy Father shedding his blood in the course of his duties, an obvious reference to the attempted assassination of May 13, 1981. The Holy Father seemed to be visibly moved by the honour shown him.



Chief Clarence Sack, of the Micmac Reserve, Shubenecadie, N.S., met the Pope after the Mass at Sheerwater C.F.B., N.S., near Halifax.

L. Jules Tselwel (Sioui) and his son Akian and grandson Ozalik with Mireille and Martha Walker of the Huron village, Lorette, P.Q., at Ste. Anne de Beaupré.

Fog at Fort Simpson postpones Papal visit

For several days people from all over the Territories had been gathering at Fort Simpson in expectation of the Pope's visit. Their disappointment when he could not land was in direct proportion to their longing to see him. It was great. Many were elderly and wanted to see the Holy Father before they died. It would be a fulfillment of all their life's struggles and their faith-filled prayers.

If the people were disappointed in their hopes, so was the Pope. In the office of the airport manager at Yellowknife airport, when it became clear that it would not be possible for him to get in to Fort Simpson, he read his speech before the cameras of the host broadcaster and onto a tape of one of the radio reporters. To the prepared text he added these words:

"The conditions of the weather have prevented me from landing in Fort Simpson and being physically present with you. But nothing can prevent me from being spiritually united with you. Indeed, the present circumstances have increased my desire to be in your midst, to pray with you and tell you personally of my love and affection in Christ Jesus. I know that you will understand the suffering that I feel at this time — the suffering of keen disappointment. With these sentiments I wish to read to you the message that I have prepared for my visit."

Bond of love unites missionaries — people

This talk built upon and reinforced the teachings of the other two, particularly in the area of responsible self-determination and a land base. And to show the enduring power of Papal teaching he pointed to the document 'Pastorale Officium' of his predecessor Pope Paul III of 1537 in which the dignity and freedom of the native people of North America was affirmed and in which it was asserted that they could not be enslaved or deprived of their goods or ownership.

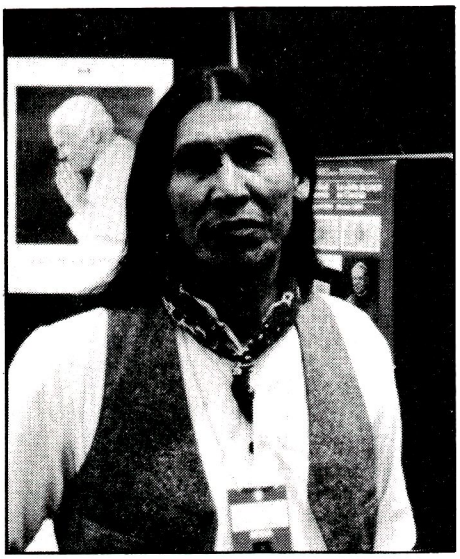
He took the time to praise the missionaries, both men and women, who had come to live among the people, devoting their whole lives to them, learning their ways and adopting their customs, language and lifestyle. He spoke of the *"endless proofs of their fraternal love."*

"I know the gratitude that you yourselves, the Indian and Inuit peoples have toward the missionaries who have lived and died among you. What they have done for you is spoken of by the whole Church; it is known by the entire world."

He reminded them that the missionaries remain among their best friends, preaching the word of God, involving themselves in education and health care. And the rebirth of culture and traditional ways, *"owes much to the pioneering and continuing efforts of missionaries . . . ."*

He paid special tribute to Bishop Paul Piché, OMI, who is celebrating his 25th anniversary as Pastor of the vast Mackenzie Diocese. *"Bishop Piché, the Church thanks you and your confrères as do your people — for the communities you have built by the word of God and the Sacraments. Through you I thank all the heroic Oblate missionaries whom the love and grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ inspired to serve the people of the north."*

He called upon the Canadian Church to be *"ever more sensitive to the needs of the missionary north."* And he called upon native youth to take on roles of leadership and responsibility in their communities. In particular he



Francois Paulette, Dene spokesman at Yellowknife, NWT.

appealed to the Catholic youth to be open to God's calling to the priesthood and religious life. He urged elders, leaders and parents to hold such vocations as honourable and to encourage those who choose them.

At the departure ceremony at Uplands Airport in Ottawa on September 20th, the Pope made specific reference to Fort Simpson and his determination to honour their hopes. He would return to visit them. This brought loud and sustained applause from all those in attendance, among whom were most of the bishops of Canada. He then turned with a smile and apologized to Madame Sauvé, the Governor General, for having invited himself back.

Next year the Pope will visit the western United States in June. It would not be too far for him to detour to Fort Simpson or some other suitable locale at that time. Whenever that day comes it will be all the more special for having been so sadly deferred. In the meantime the words he has spoken have been heard and will nourish the faith and the hopes of the native peoples for years and years to come. □

The Church and the Native People

adapted from a text by J. G. Goulet, OMI,

At the express request of Pope John Paul II, his visit to Canada was to include meetings with Native people. The Holy Father met and spoke with them at Ste-Anne de Beaupré, at Midland, and read a message to them at Yellowknife.

Native people have no wish to be assimilated into the larger Canadian culture and are struggling to preserve their cultural identity. The Holy Father therefore found himself addressing men and women who have long been demanding true political autonomy as well as a measure of control over any economic development on their lands. Many Native people also believe they have the right, indeed the duty, to live in accordance with their ancient social and religious traditions. This position poses a major challenge to governments and the Church, which only recently have stopped thinking in terms of assimilating Native people into the white majority.

The Church in Canada is no stranger to the question of Native people's living conditions and aspirations. The bishops' 1975 Labour Day Message was entitled "Northern Development: At what cost?" In this message the bishops drew the attention of all Canadians to the rights of northern Native people.

In 1975, several Christian Churches, including the Catholic Church, set up "Project North." Through its many campaigns, this agency has been able to mobilize public opinion in favour of Native people, including the Nishga in British Columbia, the Dene in the Northwest Territories, and all native groups who still hold aboriginal rights to more than one-third of Canada.

The cultural reality of Canadian Native people is complex. There are eleven linguistic groups (including Inuktitut, the language of the Inuit), each containing sub-groups where related languages or dialects are spoken. In fact, there are currently sixty identifiable linguistic and cultural subgroups.

Native people always identify themselves in relation to their ethnic group before their identity as Indians or Amerindians. They have native equivalents for the various names that white men have given them, and it is these equivalents that they prefer to use today in their dealings with the government and with other countries. Where not so long ago we spoke of Eskimos, Slavey and Iroquois, we now speak of Inuit, Dene, Haudenosaunee or Onhwehinwhe.

Native people everywhere are reasserting their cultural identity. Their spokespersons continually drive the point home: *"We were our own people when your ancestors arrived here, we still are, and wish to remain so."* Given this feeling, the need for inculturation (i.e., the presence of the Christian faith within a living culture) becomes increasingly clear. Otherwise, the Church in Canada will continue to be perceived as the vehicle of the white man's religion, a faith completely foreign to the values and symbols of Native people. Pope John Paul II, who created the Pontifical Commission on Culture, certainly understands and appreciates this evolution of the Church in Canada.

The Holy Father's visit to the Canadian Martyrs shrine in Midland, Ontario evoked vivid memories for all concerned. It was during the wars between the French and English and their native allies that these martyrs became dominant figures in the fledgling Canadian Church. The Iroquois, for their part, were destined to go down in Canadian legends as archetypal savages, fierce and bloodthirsty.

The truth is that the English and French were fighting primarily for control over the fur trade. The Iroquois and the Hurons who had been traditional enemies and who were already highly advanced politically and economically, soon found themselves at the centre of this conflict.

The Iroquois turned to the Dutch and the English for the firearms which their Christian enemies already possessed. In a way, the first victims of these wars were the 20,000 Hurons whose way of life, fields and villages lay in ruins a mere forty years after the arrival of the Christians in their country.

History has had a profound impact on the present situation of Native people. The Hurons from Loretteville, near Quebec City, are the descendants of 900 Christian refugees who left their lands in the Georgian Bay area after being defeated by the Iroquois and travelled with missionaries to settle in New France. The Iroquois who now live in Quebec, Ontario and the United States are deeply divided among themselves. Conflicts arise between those called "modern Christian" Iroquois and those called "traditional non-Christian" Iroquois. Even today, this conflict divides them on educational, economic and political issues. This division is rooted in religious values that separate those who adhere to the Christian faith and those who continue to identify with the ancestral religion.

The way in which the Church carried out its mission in the realm of education in the past has also left its mark on contemporary native life. Despite the often heroic devotion of many early missionaries, the Most Reverend Vital Grandin, OMI, Bishop of St. Albert in the Canadian West, could write that by the time Native children left the schools and boarding schools run by the missionaries, they had forgotten their mother tongue to the point where their native life style was no longer possible. He went on to say that these children had no trace left of ancestry except for their blood and that they were humiliated when they were reminded of their origin.

All too often, in wrenching the children away from their people and vital traditions, this method of education produced native persons who were strangers everywhere, rejected by white society, yet misunderstood and mistrusted by their own people.

This radical upheaval in native society has had a direct influence on the plight of most Native people today. They have the highest rate of infant mortality in the country, the highest rate of suicide (especially among people under 20), the highest rate of unemployment, the highest rate of violent death involving alcohol, etc. Native people are hoping for a radical restructuring of their society and they are looking to the Church for spiritual and moral support.

On June 22, 1980 Pope John Paul II beatified Kateri Tekakwitha, a Canadian Mohawk, who died on April 17, 1680 in Caughnawaga. Last year at the annual Tekakwitha Conference in the U.S., attended by thousands of natives from Canada and the U.S., the Apostolic Delegate to the United States asked the Native people for forgiveness for some of the unfortunate aspects of missionary activities in the past. In his homily, Archbishop Pio Laghi stated that *"many missionaries, in teaching Christianity to those who they originally considered heathen, communicated the feeling that the Native American cultural institutions were inferior. And for that, we are not only sorry, but we beg pardon."*

At Fort Simpson, representatives of various nations (Inuit, Metis, treaty and non-Treaty Indians) were hoping to treat with the Holy Father concerning need for reconciliation between the Church and Native people. It was to be undoubtedly one of the highlights of Pope John Paul's visit to Canada, as well as an important event in the development of the Church and Native people in Canada.

(We trust his message from Yellowknife will have its impact on all Canadians. ***Ed.)***

Norway House — a changing community

by Bradley C. Bird

Daniel Muskego's paddle slipped quietly but powerfully through the water of the Nelson River, propelling his canoe ever closer to the region he would trap.

With him were his wife and child, the one accustomed to this annual adventure, the other a little bit bewildered by it all.

For three days they and the other three families accompanying them had paddled from Norway House, Man., toward the traditional trapping area, the land that would sustain them in the coming winter months.

Stoically they endured the chill September breeze, knowing this was just a breath compared to January's blizzards that would bite them to the bone.

Their object was simple: to reach the trapping area and build cabins before the snow set in. Sometimes they used cabins from previous years, but this was not such a year.

Population pressure was forcing them to the fringes of the forest, farther and farther from their Norway House reserve.

Daniel puzzled over this as he paddled on and on.

"Ten years ago," he thought to himself, "our people were fewer. Now, in 1930, more and more are trapping, and farther from home we must go."

What you've just read is a re-creation of what may have happened in 1930. It is fiction in that it reads like a story; fact, in that the story actually happened to real people until about the Second World War.

Until then, the Indians of Norway House fed, clothed and housed themselves largely as they had always done: by trapping, fishing and hunting.

The devastating change from self-sufficiency to dependency didn't happen overnight. The war was not a magical dividing line. It just so happened that many of the things that caused the collapse of the traditional economy of Norway House began shortly before or after the war.

Please remember that as you read this and other articles in the series, stories that will help to explain those "things" that have wounded a people.

They are wounded but far from dead. Although 80 per cent of Norway House people are out of work and on welfare, an underlying vitality remains on the reserve.

This vitality is rooted in robust and resourceful persons such as Leonard McKay, a young business man in Norway House. McKay's father trapped and hunted and told his son of life before the war.

"Whole families used to go out trapping," he told me. "It was the only way to survive. People lived off the land."

Here we return to Daniel Muskego and his family, his friends, and his thoughts.

Daniel felt a warmth rise within him that even the cool autumn breeze couldn't chill. Partly it came from the

(See Norway House, p. 24)

First festival of the first people

by Tanya Lester

Canada's first peoples in the personages of Beatrice Culleton, Alanis Obomsawin and the Inuit Throat Singers were heralded as storytellers extraordinaire at the first Canadian Women's Music and Cultural Festival held at Winnipeg's Kildonan Park over the Labour Day weekend.

Metis author Beatrice Culleton, of Winnipeg, took the audience back to her childhood days through readings from her semi-autobiographical book *In Search of April Raintree.* Feeling the urgent need to write about the pain she was feeling after her sister's suicide in 1980, Culleton's book is the all-too-familiar story of many Metis and Indian people.

"I became aware that I was ashamed of my heritage." Culleton explained that working on the book brought her face-to-face with this terrible realization: "I had been ashamed of being a Metis person.

"This part I'm going to read was really hard for me to write because I had to be really honest with myself," Culleton told her audience before reading an excerpt from her book in which April contemplates changing the spelling of her last name to sound Irish rather than Indian. She pities her younger sister Cheryl whose darker skin will never allow her to masquerade as being white.

Culleton read another excerpt from *In Search of April Raintree,* during the weekend, that perhaps best explains how she came to this self-denial of her heritage. "This means a lot to me although it didn't happen to me in exactly the same way it happened to April," she said.

The piece describes April and Cheryl going home to find the police and a social worker waiting to take them away from their parents. Their mother is "sitting at the table openly weeping" while the children are told their parents are too sick to look after them. "My mother should have fought with her life to keep us; instead she was giving us away," Culleton's main character, April, laments, not understanding her parents' powerlessness.

The book goes on to tell the tale of April's shunting to one white foster home after another not unlike Culleton's own experience. During her childhood years, Culleton remembers telling one set of foster parents about the "white buffalo" at a previous foster home.

Drawing on that early fantasy, Culleton's next book to be published in 1985 will be called *The White Buffalo.* A children's story of special appeal to those in grade five or six, the white buffalo escapes the hunter's gun by being invisible but finds a loyal friend in the Indian named Lone Wolf.

Culleton was inspired to write about the white buffalo, she told a workshop audience, after she saw the film about rabbits called *Watership Downs* adapted from Richard Adam's book. It made her realize Native children need an animal story connected to their own heritage.

Alanis Obomsawin, an Abenaki Indian hailing from Quebec's Odanak Reserve, shares Culleton's warmth for children. Her story-telling at the festival enchanted children and adults alike as she led them through the fantasy world of the serpent who ate a whole family while they were out canoeing. Her words were met with delighted laughter when she concluded her story by saying the mother was found baking bannock at the stove when the serpent's stomach was finally opened.

But Obomsawin brought tears to her adult audience when her words, eerie chants and drum beat out the tale inspired by her own experiences on Winnipeg's skidrow. In the end, she, too, was overcome with tears after chronicling the story of the "bush lady" who is taken off her reserve and led to the city by a whiteman who deserts her after she becomes pregnant. Knowing she cannot return home with her "blonde baby," she gives it up to a white woman.

In another story, Obomsawin went back to the root of white dominance over Native peoples when she explained the Indians' reactions to Cartier's arrival 450 years ago. "Our chief feels it's up to him to go tell Cartier that he can't take his land without his permission," Obomsawin said. In the end, though, Cartier does the taking. Two "savages" are captured, stripped of their Native clothes and pride, and taken back to France.

While Culleton and Obomsawin took the audience back decades and centuries into their ancestry, it seemed the Inuit Throat Singers went back thousands of years when they told their story without even using words.

Connie Leblanc photo

Eskimo throat singers — Lucy Kownak and Emily Alerk

As is the custom, Lucy Kownak and Emily Alerk stood with faces close together while ancient guttural keenings poured from their throats. Having travelled from Baker Lake in the Northwest Territories to attend the festival, the women spoke, through an interpreter, about this traditional game passed down to them by their parents and older sisters.

They said throat singing was a game played when people gathered to spend a sociable evening together. Seldom are words mingled with the noises but the loser of the game is the one who breaks out laughing before her partner does. They said, while many Inuit communities have played at throat singing, the Baker Lake version is unique to their own community. Because the elderly women said younger people no longer want to learn throat singing, the audience was privileged to have had the opportunity to witness this authentic custom while Kownak and Alerk are still performing it.

The festival organizers must be commended for inviting Beatrice Culleton, Alanis Obomsawin and the Inuit Throat Singers to tell their stories of sorrow and joy. Their inclusion contributed to the high entertainment calibre of the first Canadian Women's Music and Cultural Festival. Winnipeg festival goers now know what they have been missing and will demand that Native performers be included at future events of this nature. □

Ministry to natives progresses — Fr. Gervais

by Audrey Peterkin

WINNIPEG — Father Alvin Gervais, OMI, provincial superior of the Oblate Fathers of Manitoba, speaks with confidence and hope of the progress Canadian native people are making in confronting their own spiritual and social growth.

Father Gervais has been involved in native ministry for 13 years, five of them in a native family life counselling program in Winnipeg. He says he is encouraged by the changes he sees taking place. We are now able to speak about a number of successes, he said, not only in this province but also across Canada.

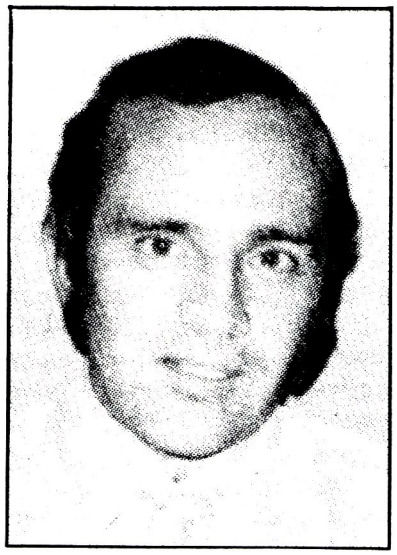
One success story is the Kateri Tekakwitha Parish in Winnipeg. When it started in 1979 there were 15 people at Sunday mass. Now there are 300 and the church is filled to capacity. The pastor, Father Dominique Kerbrat, OMI, and the two pastoral directors — Mary Davis and Leo Asham — are kept busy in church ministry. The parish also operates Kateri's Kitchen in the inner city. This provides a daily meal twice a week for about 180 people.

Father Gervais said he believes native people must be allowed to be Canadian the native way and be Catholics the native way, taking responsibility on all levels of organization. There are still many native people who don't feel that the church is their church, he said. It is seen as a foreign church. The challenge is to help them develop their creativity and organize their religion their way.

The church of the North — Canada's eight northern dioceses — is facing some major difficulties, Father Gervais said. The main one is that local leaders have not yet been integrated into leadership positions in the church. They must be helped to develop a sense of ownership of the church, he said.

The local communities have the necessary leadership, he said. If we believe the Holy Spirit is calling the native people to form Christian communities, we must believe the necessary elements, such as leadership, are there.

He said that although the question of married native clergy must be considered, he believes that many of the North's problems would still be there even if young priests were available, unless they believed in the emerging local leadership and in the people expressing their faith in their own way.



Father Alvin Gervais, OMI

The deep religious and sacred sense that is part of native heritage should be explored, he said, noting that elders, medicine men and spiritual leaders are beginning to talk with Catholic priests.

He also noted that women have emerged as spiritual leaders, through community discernment, and that even in isolated areas where there is no priest, communion services are being held with catechists leading the people in prayer.

In the Hudson Bay Diocese, he said, catechists are a family, and women are taking on an increasingly prominent role. The decisions to develop catechist families were taken as early as 1968, he explained. These "families" get special training and are the leaders of the native Christian communities. Women religious from various congregations have always been an integral part of this educational process.

The necessary leadership exists now, Father Gervais said. The Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council in southwestern Manitoba is a good example. This group of reserves with its centre in Brandon has taken over responsibility for child and family welfare on its reserves and is doing the job very competently, he said.

The March 1983 Federal-Provincial Conference on aboriginal rights is another example, he said. There, native leaders were on a par with the premiers and the prime minister. Those who watched the session were impressed with how well the native representatives held their own, he said.

Father Gervais' jurisdiction includes parts of southern Saskatchwan and northwestern Ontario as well as the entire province of Manitoba.

The Inuit are served by more than 25 Oblate Fathers and two native deacons; 12 mission stations are staffed by women religious and lay catechists. (Prairie Messenger)

Indian village 8,000 years old

WINNIPEG — Archeologists with the Manitoba government have confirmed the discovery of the oldest dated evidence of prehistoric human occupation in the province. The site, on the banks of the Winnipeg River near Lac du Bonnet, is believed to be 8,000 years old.

The site was discovered in the late 1970s by local resident Warren Sinnock. Excavations were conducted in 1980 and 1982, and findings indicate that a few families camped, cooked food, worked hides and repaired tools there before moving on.

From the location of the site, the habits of modern bison and the nature of the artifacts present, it has been deduced that the site was occupied for approximately two weeks in the fall of the year.

Indian language programs

TORONTO — Ontario's Indian students will be able to study their own languages in school for credit by September 1986, the Ministry of Education announced recently. The province has promised to provide the money to launch programs in Mohawk, Cayuga, Oneida, Cree, Ojibway and Delaware in schools where more than 15 students request language training. □

The deadline for the January 1985 issue is Tuesday, November 13.

Qu'Appelle Indian School marks 100 years

by Gontran Laviolette, OMI

LEBRET, Sask. — The Qu'Appelle Indian Residential School hundredth anniversary was marked here by a week-long celebration which included the Sask. Indian Summer Games '84, a reunion of former students and staff members and the traditional celebrations pow-wow.

The Summer Games August 5 - 9, held on the school grounds and at Fort Qu'Appelle, recalled the proud athletic history of Q.I.R.S. students Herb Strong Eagle (1956), Georges Poitras (1957) and Art Obey (1960) who were among those who were awarded the prestigious Tom Longboat medal of highest athletic achievement in Canada. Paul Acoose also brought fame to the school for his long distance running awards.

Reunion '84 brought together hundreds of ex-pupils and staff August 9 - 10 and was high-lighted by the visit of Archbishop Halpin of Regina who celebrated Mass in Lebret Sacred Heart's Church August 10. Two former principals, Bishops Paul Piche, OMI, of Mackenzie-Fort Smith, and Omer Robidoux, OMI, of Churchill-Hudson Bay, also celebrated Jubilee Masses at Lebret August 11 and 12.

The Reunion Committee was composed of Doris Bellegarde, Anita McLeod, Madeline Dumont, Bev Poitras, Rejeanne Cote, Joanne Reilly, Leila Thomson, Walter Bellegarde and Clive Linklater.

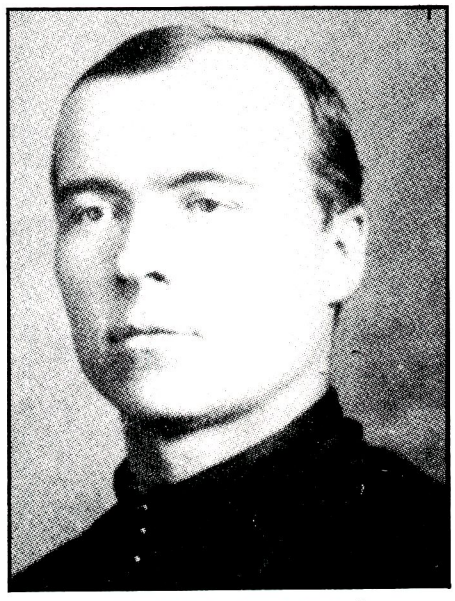
Mary-Ann Lavallee welcomed the guests at a general assembly addressed by Clive Linklater. Old-time dances and a talent show were held in the school gymnasium.

Special thanks are expressed to the residence staff, student helpers, the bingo committee, the Standing Buffalo and the Star Blanket Bands, the Touchwood-File Hills-Qu'Appelle District Chiefs Office, and the Departments of Indian Affairs, Tourism, Regional Health and many other organizations who made the events possible. Joanne Reilly was the coordinator of the Centennial events.

A History Book, being compiled, is scheduled for publication in 1985; the Committee formed for its publication includes Mary Ann Lavallee, Madeline Dumont, Doris Bellegarde, Anita McLeod, Mohan Bakshi and Kelly Pasloski.

HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL

The Qu'Appelle Indian Residential School was founded in 1884; it was one of three residential schools created by the Federal Government in order to fulfill the promises made in the Treaties with the Indians of Western Canada. Industrial schools for Indians had been successfully introduced in the United States; Bishop V. Grandin, OMI, and Father E. Lacombe, OMI, conceived a plan whereby schools would be built and financed by the government but directed by Church personnel.



Fr. Joseph Hugonnard, OMI

The correct spelling is with two "n". See Gaston Carrière's "Apôtre des prairies." (Ed.)

Father Joseph Hugonnard, OMI, was appointed principal by Prime Minister John A. MacDonald in 1884; three Grey Nuns of Montreal were the first teachers.

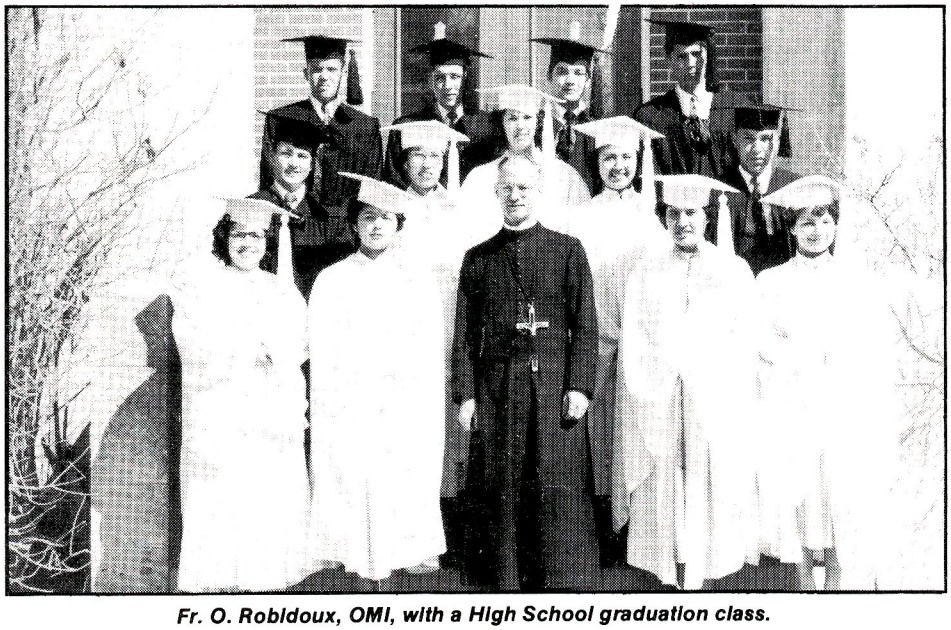
From 1884 to 1887 boys only were enrolled. In 1887 accommodations were built for girl students. By 1893, 225 pupils attended. A gymnasium was added in 1894.

At the beginning Indian parents were reluctant to entrust their children to the white people; they were prejudiced against the Christian religions and the culture of the whites. Father Hugonnard patiently persuaded them and the pupils felt more and more at home in "their" school. The program of studies was oriented towards christianity and the pupils enjoyed manual work, art, singing and music and various sporting activities.

The school made steady progress and the Indian parents gradually realized that all of what their children were getting from it was good.

The Industrial School provided a curriculum of reading, writing, arithmetic, spelling, geography, history, music, singing and drawing. The Industrial courses for boys emphasized animal husbandry and farm related subjects, with additional training in tailoring, shoemaking, printing and painting.

For the girls, homemaking skills such as spinning, weaving, baking, cooking and sewing were stressed. The students spent half of their class time on vocational training and half



Fr. O. Robidoux, OMI, with a High School graduation class.

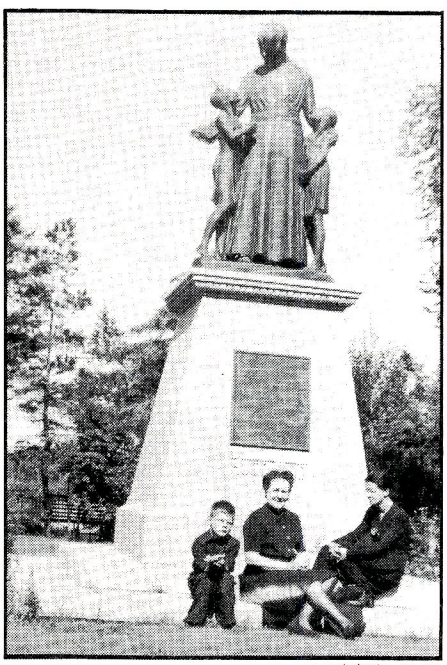
in academic, alternating on a weekly, daily or half-daily basis. They also did housekeeping and farm chores.

Destroyed by fire January 4, 1904 the school continued in temporary quarters in the village of Lebret while it was being re-built.

Father Hugonnard continued to be devoted to his pupils until 1917 when he died on February 11. He had been to the service of Indians of the Qu'Appelle Valley for thirty-eight years, of which he had spent thirty-one years as principal of the School. He had paved the way for his successors who walked in his foot-steps. A bronze statue was erected on the school grounds in 1926, to perpetuate his memory. Frs. Pierre LeCoq, P. Magnan, A. Dugas and W. Vezina served as interim principals until Fr. Joseph Leonard, OMI, was appointed in 1919.

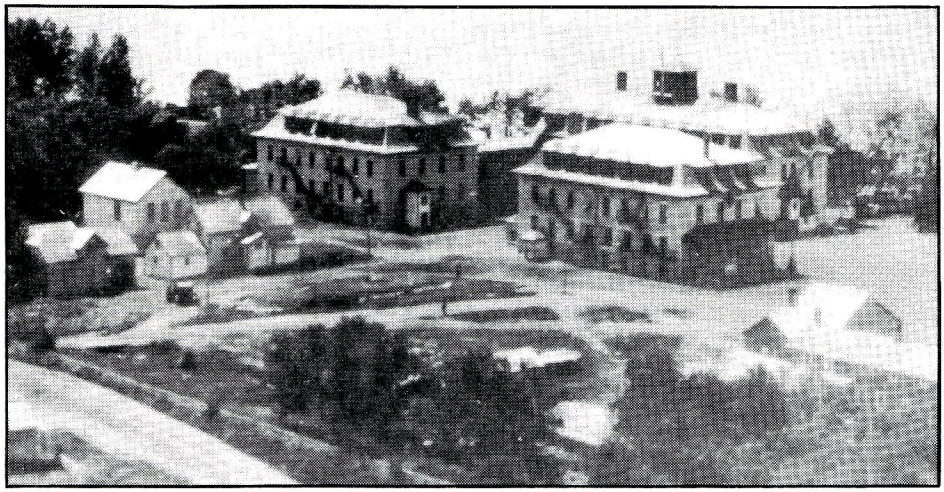
Education progressed as the Indians had found the school entirely dedicated to the welfare of the younger generations. When the first students had become parents they did not hesitate to send their children to Lebret, knowing well it was the best place to have them educated. As the children progressed in the English language the program of studies became more academic until the Saskatchewan school curriculum came into use, along with the teaching of various trades, farming and home economics.

Fr. Hugonnard recruited students mainly in the File Hills-Qu'Appelle districts in southeastern Saskatchewan. Before he died he also had recruited Catholic children from the Oak River and Oak Lake Sioux reserves in southwestern Manitoba. As the years went by students from other reserves in southern Manitoba were also registered at the school.



Laviolette photo

Monument to Fr. Hugonnard, erected in 1926.



The school, rebuilt in 1903, was burned again in 1932. It was replaced by the present building in 1935.

During Fr. Leonard's principalship in 1932, a second fire reduced the whole school to smoking ruins. The boys found hospitality at the Oblate Scholasticate and the girls, once again, in the village of Lebret. After three years a fire-proof building was erected to accommodate 300 students.

On July 1, 1936, Fr. Maurice de Bretagne, OMI, succeeded Father Leonard and served until August 1943. Fr. de Bretagne re-organized the school program, the farm operations, the manual training facilities and he encouraged the students to continue into High School. He also enlisted the missionaries to the surrounding reserves to assist in the recruiting of new students and in sharing the students' religious and moral education. He also obtained funds to permit a creation of a 24-piece military band which won many prizes in provincial festivals.

Fr. Paul Piche, OMI, was principal from August 1943 to May 1951. He opened High School classes at the school in 1948, and in 1951 a secondary school was organized and called St. Paul's High. This High School was accredited by the Saskatchewan Department of Education and, as the years progressed, 175 High School students were registered in one term. Fr. Piche also organized a Cadet Corps in 1944.

Fr. Omer Robidoux, OMI, was principal from 1951 to 1958. He taught mathematics, promoted educational standards specially at the High School level, and all forms of sports. In 1952 an 800-seat auditorium was erected.

Fr. Victor Bilodeau, OMI, was principal from 1958 to 1964. Appointed principal in 1964, Fr. Leonard Charron, OMI, was to serve until 1974. While he took his Master's degree in education (Sept. 1968 to Sept. 1969), Fr. Julien Morin, OMI, was acting-principal.

In 1965 the Indian Affairs Department turned over the education of Indians to the Saskatchewan Provincial Government and began to phase out St. Paul's High School. An all-Indian advisory council was formed to take over the administration of the school in 1969 and of the residence in 1973.

Credit and praise are due to the Grey Nuns of Montreal who served faithfully at Qu'Appelle Indian Residential School from 1844 to 1973. Among them was Sister Helen Greyeyes, S.G.M., a Cree, daughter of a former student of the school. She dedicated forty years of her religious life to the students at Lebret. Without the dedication of the Grey Nuns the school could never have achieved its present day fame.

The Indians themselves took complete control of education and of the residence, September 13, 1981. A Council comprised of thirteen members, representing twenty-four bands in the Yorkton, Touchwood, File Hills, Qu'Appelle districts became responsible for the whole institution.

Q.I.R.S. has made more progress since then. The Council hires provincially accredited teachers and follows the Department of Education, Province of Saskatchewan curriculum. The program is appraised by the Regional Director. Every effort is made to enrich the curriculum with native contents. □

Faith-family festival held at Ile-à-la-Crosse

by Thomas Novak, OMI

ILE-À-LA-CROSSE, Sask. — "After 150 years of presence in the North, is the Catholic Church leaving our communities?" "Now that there are no more priests and sisters coming to the North, do we have to give up the Catholic Church?" "Do we have to be Indians and not Catholics?"

These are some of the questions that preoccupied about two hundred men and women who attended the first *Amerindian Christian Leadership Institute* ever held in northern Saskatchewan. The meeting, billed as a *Faith-Family Festival,* was held August 3-5 at South Bay, near the historic community of Ile-à-la-Crosse, Saskatchewan.

The gathering was organized so that Catholic native and northern people in Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba could come together to discuss their personal experience of God, their concerns about a rapidly-changing Church and their own involvement in that Church.

It began Friday evening with the lighting of a ceremonial fire and the smudging (ritual purification) of the meeting area with burning sweetgrass — the way Cree and other prairie tribes begin their ceremonies.

The discussion of the first evening centered around the sense of crisis that the Churches of the North are now experiencing. The average age of active Oblate missionaries presently working among native people in the diocese of Keewatin is 61 years and, for many years, there have been almost no recruits coming from southern Canada and Europe to replace them.

Missions that once had a resident priest, and perhaps even a number of resident sisters and brothers, may now have a priest visit their villages only a few days each month. Thus the native people of the North are now being left to take over responsibility for their own parishes and missions.

Almost everywhere the people of the North have risen to the challenge. Local people have begun taking over the responsibilities that, only a few years ago, were entirely in the hands of "imported" priests, brothers and sisters: parish finances, church maintenance, participation in the Sunday liturgy, leading prayer services, baptism and marriage preparation, hospital chaplaincy and religious education.

Despite the phenomenal growth of the past ten years, there is one dream that seems ever elusive to the Catholics of the North. As the number of active priests becomes smaller, the Sunday Eucharist seems to become a rare event that happens only when a priest drops into a community for a few hours to hear a few confessions and to consecrate hosts to be used in a monthly communion service.

Thomas Novak, OMI

Discussion group at the Faith-Family Festival

Thomas Novak, OMI

Lighting a ceremonial fire to purify the meeting area with burning sweetgrass.

For more than a century Indian and Métis people have dreamed of seeing their own men ordained Priests and their own women become Sisters. "But," complained many of the festival's participants, "we were told we were not worthy. As if our mothers were not church-married, our families were not good enough." Others are overcome by the difficulties in training: long years of study and the need to learn foreign languages. Until recently very few northern people had more than a grade 6 education. "Couldn't it be made a little easier for our people to become priests?" pleaded one Ile-à-la-Crosse resident. Complained others: "There are some people that might be good priests, but they are already married."

Another source of controversy addressed was "Indian religion," currently undergoing a visible revival in many northern communities. Young people especially are learning to pray with the pipe and in the sweat-lodge; more are turning to elders and medicine people from southern communities for guidance, healing, and initiation into traditional Indian ways of praying and living.

For northern people this is a confusing, even threatening phenomenon. Amable Roy, a prayer leader from Ile-à-la-Crosse, addressed this issue speaking of his own experience. He had suffered a stroke, from which, the doctors had said, he would take a long time to recover. Through the prayer of an Indian medicine man, he experienced a remarkably rapid healing. Within weeks he returned to his trap-line. "I didn't believe it at first," he explained, "but today I use some of these traditions — by the grace of God. They help me. They give me a

lift. I will never leave the Catholic Church."

On Saturday morning a panel of local people of different ages were asked to address the following questions: "Who am I?" "Who is God for me?" "What does the Church mean to me?" Many speakers described how their vision of God had changed over the years from a God who was "up there," "on a cloud" or "someone to be afraid of," to a God who is close, a guide and a friend.

For many, the AA movement was the key to their spiritual journies. As one man said, "when I saw that guy who used to be a drunk talking about God, I thought to myself, 'Maybe so could I.' God sent him to bring God to me. All of us are God's messengers, not only the priests. Now I have a message to bring to others. I even distribute communion. It's a miracle!"

In the afternoon the meeting broke into small groups to continue sharing. Many took the opportunity to express their frustrations about some of the changes that have taken place in the Church, or to talk about the problems that they face in their local Church communities. The most common concerned marriage: the recent introduction of a compulsory period of preparation and the relatively new granting of marriage annulments. The latter was especially difficult to accept for many of the older people as, for so many years, the missionaries had preached forcefully on the indissolubility of marriage. How is it that two people who had promised God to be faithful to each other until death could now be free to marry someone else, even while their first partner was still alive?

The final day of the gathering was devoted to a discussion of lay ministry. Men and women from many parishes described their personal involvement in several ministries. These included leaders of prayer, ministers of Communion, musicians and leaders of song, parish council members and religion teachers. They described the difficulties they experienced, their reasons for not giving up despite opposition and their own feeling of unworthiness.

The festival concluded Sunday afternoon with a Eucharist and a shared meal. All activities were held under a huge tent that was set up especially for the festival.

Among the guest speakers were Stan Fontaine of Fort Alexander, Manitoba, currently on staff at Kisemanito Centre, Grouard; Carol Cotton from the Blood Reserve (Alberta), and one of the first graduates of Kisemanito Centre; and Father Adrien Darveau, OMI, who gave the homily at the Sunday Eucharist in English, Cree and Dene. The meeting was made possible by grants from the National Amerindian Christian Leadership Institute and from the Catholic Church Extension Society of Canada.

While parents and grandparents talked and prayed, the air was continually filled with shouts and laughter that could only be understood as signs of a joyous and prosperous future for the Cree and Dene churches of the North. It was the sound of their children frolicking on the adjacent beach, in the same waters over which Catholic missionaries had first come to the Canadian North 138 years before. □

Qu'Appelle Valley Amerindian Conference '84

by Sister Bernadette Feist, O.S.U.

MARIEVAL, Sask. — A regional Amerindian Conference was held at Camp O'Neill, in the Qu'Appelle Valley July 23 - 27 with 81 participants, 54 of which were natives, the others missionaries and sisters, from Wynyard, Fishing Lake, Marieval, Sakimay, Fort Qu'Appelle, Standing Bufalo, File Hills, Balcarres, Lestock, Quinton and Regina.

The core group consisted of Connie Wojunta, Eunice Bear, Lorraine Yuzicappi (Standing Buffalo), Donna Starr (Starblanket), Sister Elaine Weisgerber, O.S.U. (Fort Qu'Appelle) and Sr. Bernadette Feist (Balcarres and File Hills).

The workshops were held on Native drug and alcohol abuse; lay ministry and catechetics; community health and social service; elders; family concerns and prayer.

Resource people were Mr. Harold Cardinal and Father J. Weisgerber, pastor of Fort Qu'Appelle. Archbishop Halpin of Regina made presentations on Indian beliefs, reconciliation, the Pipe and the Cross; compatibility of Indian beliefs and christianity; Church and christianity; the Third world, hope for a people to rise; future goals and thrusts.

The daily program included workshops, discussion periods, the celebration of the Eucharist, prayer and sharing.

The 1985 Amerindian Conference will be held again in five areas of the Qu'Appelle Valley region of southern Saskatchewan. □

Sr. Bernadette Feist

Prayer and song by Wynyard and Fishing Lake delegates: Theresa Hall, Alice Campeau, Fr. Keith Helberg, Evelyn Gilles, Candace Stefan, Jerry Gilles.

Fr. Gary begins his ministry

by Frank Dolphin

Frank Dolphin photo

Fr. Garry ordained to the priesthood.

LAC STE. ANNE, Alta. — Thousands of Indian and Metis trek each year from as far away as the Northwest Territories and Montana on the annual pilgrimage to the shore of this holy lake.

This year, there were the usual prayers, celebrations and meetings with old friends. But there was something special for the 20,000 people who came. Gary LaBoucane, a Metis from Red Deer in Central Alberta, was ordained to the priesthood in a ceremony that reflected the ancient Christian and Indian religions.

Father Gary is an Oblate of Mary Immaculate and one of only two Metis priests serving in Canada.

As he stood and knelt before Archbishop Joseph MacNeil of Edmonton, Gary held an eagle feather, the Indian symbol of courage. "A woman handed me the feather during the ordination. It is usually given to people for doing something honourable."

A man burned sweetgrass. The smoke rose over Gary as he lay prostrate before the archbishop, who wore vestments made of moose hide. "It's like the incense we use in the Christian Church," Gary said. "A sign of purification."

The mingling of the Indian religious practices with the Christian ordination signalled the direction Gary wants to take in his priestly life. He sees his ministry as one of healing to the Indian people. "I want them to forget the things of the past, the many things the Catholic Church did to Indians."

One of the main hurts of the past is the system of residential schools that took young Indian children from their families and placed them under the care of priests and sisters. "The Church was trying to protect them from the white society. The priests spoke the native languages to the parents but tried to stop the children from learning their own language."

The missionaries thought the native society would disappear. They knew it was too late in life to do anything for the older generation. But if the children knew and spoke English and French, then they would have a chance to survive the loss of their culture.

Gary believes his ministry must be a bridge between the two cultures. Just as the Native peoples need the healing that someone like him can bring, whites and others learn much from Canada's original peoples.

"The Indians can teach the rest of society much about creation and how to worship in a creative way." He believes Christianity and the native religions are so close that they can become one.

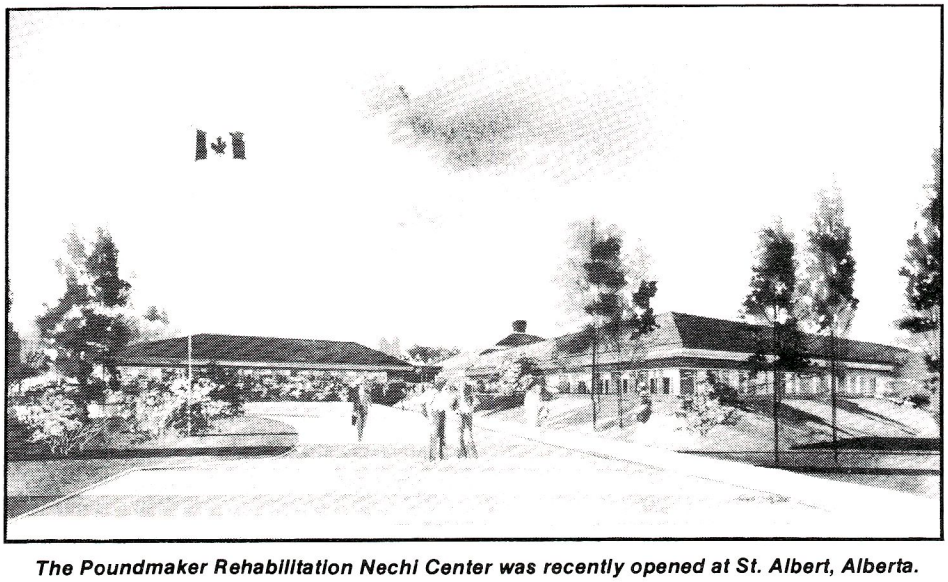
He uses St. Anne, Jesus' grandmother, as an example of how the two traditions can meet and exist so beautifully together. St. Anne was an elder. Indians have great respect for their elders as an essential element of their culture.

For Gary, his ordination to the priesthood was the end of one journey and the start of another. A priest in Kimberley, B.C. greatly influenced his life and awakened a desire to become a priest. He joined the Oblates when he was 19, but he left the congregation after three years.

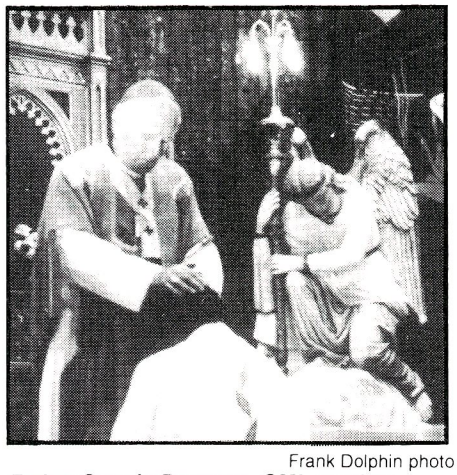
He taught for four years on reserves, then rejoined the Oblates. His studies for the priesthood took him to Newman College in Edmonton and Berkeley in California.

Gary went through a further period of doubts about his vocation. But he resolved them and took the final steps to the priesthood.

His first assignment: the parish of St. Albert, now a modern city, but not so long ago the home of those great Oblate missionaries, like Bishop Vital Grandin and Father Albert Lacombe, who planted and nourished the faith in the west. □



The Poundmaker Rehabilitation Nechi Center was recently opened at St. Albert, Alberta.



Frank Dolphin photo

Father Gary LaBoucane, OMI, receives his stole from a buckskinclad Archbishop Joseph MacNeil during his ordination July 25 at the annual Lac Ste. Anne pilgrimage. Father LaBoucane, 36, is one of the few Metis priests in Canada. He is now associate pastor at St. Albert Parish.

Bp. Paul Piche marks jubilees 50 yrs as priest, 25 as bishop

by Gontran Laviolette, OMI

FORT SMITH, N.W.T. — This year Bishop Paul Piche celebrated his 75th birthday, the 50th anniversary of his vows as an Oblate and ordination to the priesthood, and his 25th anniversary of consecration as a Bishop. This last anniversary was marked by celebrations held at Fort Smith, N.W.T. June 21st.

Born in 1909, in Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan, into a family of seven brothers and three sisters, Bishop Piche made his perpetual vows as an Oblate September 8, 1934 and was ordained to the priesthood in December of the same year.

Bishop Piche first taught liturgy, Scripture and Church history at the Lebret Oblate Seminary from 1935 to 1941; he also was bursar from 1939 until 1941. Then he was appointed Superior of the Oblate Juniorate in St. Boniface for two years. In 1943 he was appointed principal of the Qu'Appelle Indian Residential School at Lebret, Sask., where he founded St. Paul's Indian Residential High School in 1948.

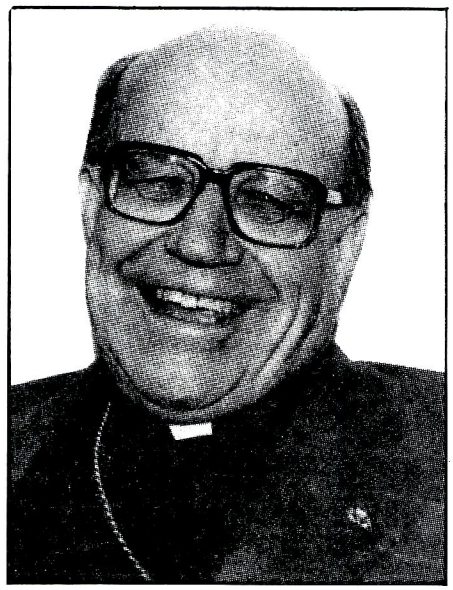
He built up the school's sports, music and drama programs to the point where teams were competing successfully with local towns. The drama class competed in Regina and the Lebret school band won provincial competitions.

After eight years as principal, Father Piche was appointed Provincial Superior of the Manitoba Oblates; five years later he became Director of the Oblate Indian and Eskimo Welfare Commission in Ottawa, where he acted as a liaison between the missions, schools and hospitals in charge of the Oblates and the Federal Government (1955-59).

On June 11, 1959, he was consecrated Vicar-Apostolic of the Mackenzie-Fort Smith diocese where he succeeded the late Bishop Trocellier, OMI. He opened Grandin College in Fort Smith to encourage Indian and Metis students to complete their high school education.

In 1967 he became Bishop of the diocese which covers two-million square km with 33,000 inhabitants, 60% native and over 50% Roman Catholic.

In the mid '50's the Federal Government began to take their responsibilities to the natives, building new schools and hospitals wherever needed. In the past twenty-five years over fifteen mission buildings were rebuilt with modern conveniences. This summer Grandin College graduated five students out of a total of thirty-two.



Lydia Misiewich

Bishop Paul Piche, OMI

Many of the former students are now in high position among the Dene Indians; one is Chief of the Fort Simpson Dene band, one is an MLA for the N.W.T. government and twelve girls are working in the Civil Service at Yellowknife.

A 180-page book, compiled by Sister Agnes Sutherland, a Grey Nun who is director of Religious Education for the diocese, was presented to the Bishop. □

Vast changes reported in northern diocese

by Lydia Misiewich

A lack of priestly vocations is one of the most important concerns of the Church's northern mission, says Bishop Paul Piche.

The 74-year-old bishop of the Mackenzie-Fort Smith Diocese said the Church is trying to remedy the situation by training lay people for the ministry. Currently, 35 Oblate priests, with an average age of 63, serve the diocese.

"In Fort Franklin young people are studying the Bible and in Snowdrift I installed seven or eight people who will be able to give Communion when the priest isn't there," he told the WCR recently.

"We have to prepare the people," he explained. "We thought we could get them to be priests right away, but I think we'll have to go through the ministries."

The people are very interested, he said, adding they will likely develop new ways to pray — mixing native culture with Church tradition.

"We'll have to start all this by giving the lay person a responsibility — a role — in the Church," he explained. "Many are afraid, and by doing this they'll come to realize they can pass through and make it."

There are even some boys going to Grandin College that look as if they may become priests, he added. "It gives me some hope."

He feels the papal visit will be a major factor in the faith lives of the natives in the North.

"The whole concept of the Church as one should appear more clearly," he said. "For them, the pope is a real representative of God — comparable to their greatest medicine men in their minds."

"We must never forget the work done by the Grey Nuns. There were over 130 of them at one time, looking after schools and hospitals.

"And the lay brothers — the Vicariate owes its development to them — they built missions, houses and churches and lived off the land," he recalled.

Because there was no transportation, the missionaries would catch 20,000 to 30,000 fish in the fall and dry them for winter food for the residential schools. They also hunted caribou or whatever else they could to feed the students and themselves through the winter months.

At one point there was even a farm seven miles from Fort Smith where 150 head of cattle grazed, he said.

"They provided all the missions with butter, salted so it would keep. We had a boat on the river and would make two trips through the summer to deliver butter and whatever else we could get from the outside.

"The cattle were also divided up: two head per institution and they would be kept until fall when they would be butchered."

Since Bishop Piche arrived in the North, food has become more easily attainable. Still, he did experience some of the hardship of the frontier, as the missions were still being heated with wood and many had no running water.

(Western Catholic Reporter)

Residential Indian schools . . . an appraisal

by Raymond Alain, OMI

The July edition of the INDIAN RECORD announced the centennial celebration of the Qu'Appelle Indian Residential School, by week-long (August 5 to 12) activities and sporting events.

It was indeed a fitting commemoration, as it also marked the 100 years of the Residential School system, as initiated by Father Lacombe, OMI, in 1883-84. Very few institutions played a larger role in the life of the native population, specially on the Prairies.

Probably it is still too early for a definitive assessment of their contribution to the promotion of Indian human and cultural values across the country but the occasion lends itself to some comments.

Much maligned and much lauded by adversaries or friends, they were, for close to a century, practically the only educational tool — save for some poorly attended day or public schools on or near reserves — available for the formal instruction of native children. As such, they would be — in a cultural atmosphere much given to scapegoatism — held responsible for most of the failures and inachievements of the period; the others being debited to federal bureaucracy.

For a more objective appraisal, one has to remind himself of what the residential school was out to accomplish: to initiate the process of learning for any one able and willing to achieve that and further goals.

We find their founding charter in Dr. Egerton Ryerson's report to Mr. Vardon of Indian Affairs in 1874. "I would suggest . . . industrial schools . . . schools of learning and religion . . . their object is identical with that of every good common school; but in addition to this, pupils are to be taught agriculture, kitchen, gardening and mechanics . . . Pupils should reside together." The same tone, almost identical words are found in the report of Mr. N.F. Davin, dated March 14, 1879. This report became the blueprint of Father Lacombe's plan for the birth or rebirth of Indian residential schools.

Education in general endeavors to develop the gifts already in the child. The etymology of the word is "educere" — to lead from, to draw from, to discover the treasure of one's nature, the capacities in the physical, intellectual, moral, religious fields.

It involves academic instruction through which the teacher indicates the known techniques of reading or writing a particular language as well as mastering numbers and figures and what they represent. Add to this orientation and initial training towards an occupation, trade, profession and you have what it takes to train and develop a person to become a worthy citizen and valued member of an ethnic or national group.

This is what the residential school system tried to give its protégés. It offered a great many advantages. Totally free of charge to parents as well as to students it offered: ". . . security, stability, love, discipline, education, knowledge spiritual and temporal, a healthy environment and abundant food, unknown or unavailable to the nomadic Indian of those years.

Certainly it also had some drawbacks, real or imagined, to hamper achievements. Material conditions, quality and dedication of the staff were equal or better than in the general public system or private non-Indian institutions.

An angry teenager summed up a few of these alleged handicaps. Generously granting diplomas in stupidity and bad faith to State and Church alike, he goes on ranting and raving about all aspects of formal education at the residential school. Be it housing, food, discipline, curriculum, teachers, principals, everything and everyone was out to downgrade and crush the poor Indian kid. We find very little in his book about the behavior of the student; his desire or lack of it to improve his lot, his motivation for learning, his steadiness at work, his perseverance at the task!

Such a wholesale condemnation opens it to question especially when the alternative is revealed, namely the Indian method of education in the past — a much bandied-about notion but never clearly spelled out. Alas, its sad incapacity to deal with problems of the past gives it poor credibility.

It seems that the main obstacle to progress and change, in the field of education, has not been the abandonment of cultural values but a certain, conscious mental "status quo," canonizing the past with the unconditional and exclusive aura of the "good old days." A culture is a living and ongoing process. To stick to the past without reference to the present is the best way to destroy future.

A good many of the political, business and industrial leaders and most of the Canadian clergy came from similar situations and methods of discipline, curriculum and teaching staff. They were not immune to homesickness — besides having to pay good money.

Measured by what we find in other native groups be it in Central or South America where pupils could not attend such institutions, Indians of Canada have achieved a degree of literacy, a standard of living, health conditions, autonomy, much envied elsewhere. For this they have to thank, at least partly, the schools that have trained most of their present leaders.

I have found very few unhappy people among the Oblates and their collaborators — very few unhappy students for that matter except in a suspect retroactive fashion, when they had other axes to grind. Most were grateful for the privilege of doing whatever they could for the promotion of Indian youth. Until further proof to the contrary the residential school system has been an effective instrument for Church and State to discharge their duty toward the original inhabitants of this land. □

Have you renewed your subscription? Now is the time to do so.

Jeanette Armstrong links past to present

by Barbara Etter

Okanagan artist and author, Jeanette Armstrong, was raised on the Penticton Indian Reserve during the 50's. She spoke her native language as well as English and practiced the traditional culture of the Okanagans who inhabit the southern part of B.C.'s desert-like interior.

"I remember attending medicine dances as a child," says Jeanette, adding that it wasn't until the 60's that these dances were held in the open.

In observing their traditional culture, which included sweats as well as ceremonial dances, the Armstrong family were a minority as most of the Penticton Indians were, until quite recently, practising Roman Catholics under the Oblate Fathers.

However, Jeanette points out that her family were also practising Christians. Evangelists have always held prayer meetings at the Armstrong family home located on approximately sixty-five acres of farm land on the Reserve.

"We were taught that religions were all the same but ours belonged to us," says Jeanette.

Consequently, it is not surprising that today, Jeanette's Indian heritage is very important to her and is reflected in both her art work and her writing.

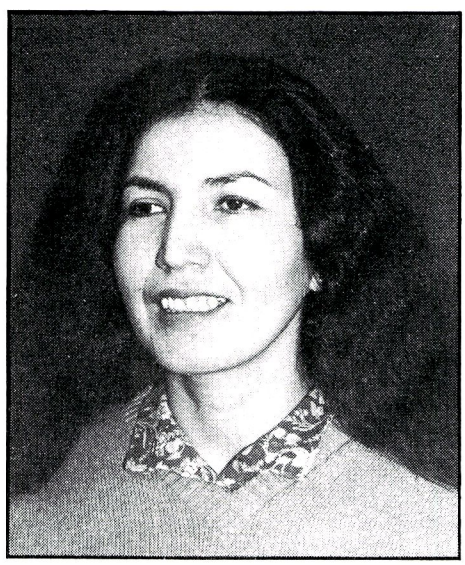
Jeanette's first two books, *Enwhisteetkwa* (published in 1982) and *Neekna and Chemai"* (published in 1983), serve as a vehicle not only to teach Okanagan Indian history — which to date has largely been undocumented — but many important aspects of the Okanagans' traditional culture and life style as well.

Neekna and Chemai is part of the Kou Skelowh ("We are the People") series based on Okanagan legends, culture and life style in the pre-contact period (before the arrival of the white man). *Enwhisteetkwa* is the story of an Okanagan girl growing up in the 1860's, a period which marked the first permanent white settlement in the Okanagan Valley and the beginning of irreversible changes in the Okanagans' traditional way of life.

Jeanette's third book, *Slash,* a contemporary social history, is slated for publication later this year as is a book of poems. *Slash* is the story of a boy growing up on an Indian Reserve during the 1960's and 1970's, a period of intense political and social upheaval for all native Indians throughout Canada and the United States.

Although not autobiographical, the boy Slash is living through a period of Indian history with which Jeanette is very familiar and she, like Slash, went through a series of political and social changes during this time.

For a brief period in 1975, when Indians throughout B.C. were rejecting government funding, Jeanette participated in sit-ins and road blocks. Although she describes herself as a militant during that period, today this attractive and articulate woman is a self-professed activist who, "resists domination by a non-Indian government," but does so through writing and speaking about it as much as possible.



Stan Etter

Jeanette Armstrong

In addition to her writing, Jeanette is also a printmaker, painter and sculptor. All three art forms reflect her heritage. Her paintings, which are only produced on commission, are expressionistic, exploring contemporary Indian themes such as powwows. Her relief prints, which are primarily concerned with design, colour and format, also reflect Indian art forms.

As a sculptor Jeanette is still experimenting and has no finished products as yet. In describing what she is attempting to achieve Jeanette says her concept is close to that of the Inuit and totem carvers in trying "to materialize the spiritual as contained within the material." It is, says Jeanette, a concept which requires understanding of the artist's material which in her case is invariably metal.

Her ability as a sculptor received recognition when, on graduating with distinction from the University of Victoria in 1978 with a major in sculpture, Jeanette shared with three others the Vancouver Foundation Award.

More recently, as a special tribute to her printmaking technique, Jeanette was one of two Okanagan artists commissioned to make Keeper Awards which were presented to the winning competitors of the province-wide B.C. Festival of the Arts held in Penticton recently. The winning print is a stylized human form with red, yellow and earthy orange colours predominating. A proof of the print is now part of the Penticton Art Gallery's permanent collection.

Jeanette is also the recipient of two scholarship awards: the Mungo Martin Memorial Award and the Helen Pitt Award. As well, in 1977 she received a $2,000 cultural award from the Department of Indian Affairs. The first two awards were given while Jeanette was studying fine art at Okanagan College in Kelowna; the third while a student at the University of Victoria.

Jeanette has always been encouraged in her art by her parents and, as a teenager she attended three sessions of the Okanagan Summer School of the Arts in Penticton, studying creative writing under John Robert Colombo, Paul St. Pierre and Eric Nicol, and art under well-known artists such as B.C.'s Tony Onley.

After completing grade 12 Jeanette left the Penticton Reserve, married and lived in Vernon for several years raising her two children, Tracy and Lyle, and selling her paintings at local craft fairs before continuing her education.

In 1978 Jeanette returned to the Penticton Reserve and since 1979, through her work as a writer and researcher for the Okanagan Indian Curriculum Project, she has been actively involved in shaping the educational future of her people.

The Okanagan Indian Curriculum Project was developed in response to a growing concern that Indian children were being short-changed in the public school system. By developing a social history of the Okanagans, to be

incorporated in the standard social studies curriculum from kindergarten to grade 11, the project co-ordinators hoped to offset the alienation which Indian children experience in the system resulting in a disproportionate high drop-out rate. To date, the kindergarten to grade 7 curriculum is in place in elementary schools throughout the Valley with the secondary curriculum to be piloted this Fall.

However, although Jeanette sees education as, "the highest form of politics and the only tool that makes for permanent change," she does not see the curriculum project as the answer.

"It has achieved some of its original purpose — to reinforce the positive aspects of Indian culture," says Jeanette, however, she maintains that, "specific kinds of curriculum have to be developed for our people's use."

When she looks at the public education system she sees, "an obvious curriculum in place to teach specific skills such as math and science." But she also sees a hidden curriculum, "destructive to Indians," which teaches children not to think but to listen and do as they are told; to be on time and not to question.

"Indian people don't fit into this mold," says Jeanette, pointing out that the life style on the Reserve is different and education in the public school is confusing to Indian children and ultimately they drop out.

An alternate education facility is needed says Jeanette and the Okanagan Learning Institute, a logical projection of the curriculum project which officially concluded June 1983, has been set up to provide such a facility.

Jeanette is involved as a researcher at the Learning Institute, gathering data in order to identify areas of need. The underlying purpose of the Institute is to build into existing educational programs preventative mechanisms in areas in which Indian children have difficulties.

According to Jeanette, people who know her as an artist and author are surprised to learn she is the same person who is so involved in the curriculum project and the Learning Institute. However, Jeanette does not see a conflict of interests as, through her work with these educational projects, she has been able to utilize her creative talents, in particular her writing skills.

Jeanette's only regret is that during the past three years her art, in particular her sculpture, has been neglected. "However," says Jeanette, "I'll get back to it as there's a lot of unfinished business here." □

Forgotten prairie chiefs

Hdayamani — Turtle Mountain's man of peace

(third in a series of eight articles)

by Dr. Peter Lorenz Neufeld

Because they had fought on the British side in earlier conflicts, an 1873 Canadian order-in-council granted citizenship to the (American) Sioux refugees of the 'Sioux Wars.' Hdayamani (Rattling-he-walks; Rattler) was probably the most peaceful of all chiefs involved. Though he lived on Canada's side of the Turtle Mountains from early 1860s until his death half a century later, no evidence exists to link him with any of Inkpaduta's terrifying guerilla strikes against the Americans during the 15 years or so they shared these mountains as home. Probably he did participate in the earlier Minnesota uprising.

On file is a 26 January 1874 letter by G.A. Hill (likely the well-known Anglican rector of the same name) to Cpt. H.M. Cameron of the Boundary Commission in Ottawa on Hdayamani's behalf. In part, it read:
"I enclose two letters Aahdamane has importuned me to write for some time. He is a very good Indian and firmly attached to the British. He seems to be afraid of being left out by his absence from the settlement during the disposal of reserves . . .
'I Aahdamane, a Dakotah of the Wockatow Band, desire to have the grant of land from the Queen which is to be given to each of us in the Turtle Mountain . . .
'I saw the Ojibway here and gave him four horses and five sacred pipes. The chief warrior of the Ojibway gave the Turtle Mountain to me and my people. I want some land from the Queen for myself and my three sons . . .
'My God hears what I say . . .
'What I say now is we are comfortable and our hearts are good.'"

Cameron explained to his minister that Hill had been sent into the Turtles to cultivate Sioux friendship to avoid problems surveying the Canada-U.S.A. border. Fortunately, Inkpaduta's force had left recently to join Sitting Bull's army. The survey progressed without incident and was completed well before Inkpaduta with 25 volatile families returned victorious from the 25 June '76 Little Bighorn battle to camp awhile along the east shore of Lake Flossie near Hdayamani's band (about 10 miles west-northwest of the present International Peace Garden) before migrating northwestward.

Hdayamani continued to press for a reserve on behalf of the more peaceful faction. Some 34 family heads comprise an 1877 list requesting the reserve. Untranslated, faded, hard to read and with approximate spellings it looked like: Boaas, Aputinszie, Makoakitcho, Awitchoan, Sioux Jack, Yitkadoata, Wakanichagai, Togangin, Wakantanike, Sapaudatake, Disiakea, Meapepiska, Bookpa, Masaechage, Booedoo, Thamaizaorhaste, Chachampikata, Oiizeizi, Douroostourrakan, Appahow, Paponenge, Apaidorta, Caskea, Okinengua, Waepialailiamin, Chachaniowashtage, Outapapapa, Maipeaduka, Makato, Catikoganange, Oaschachastie, Wananechidati, Ousaenpigan, Wakanorechiorta. Some of these families, with slightly different spelling, ended up on Oak Lake reserve.

With the list was a letter from Manitoba Lt. Gov. Morris to Ottawa revealing Hdayamani with four followers met with him on White Horse Plains. Excerpts read:
"come to tell their condition . . . very poor and found it very hard to get food. They wanted a piece of land be given them and implements to cultivate the soil and seed to sow, and scythes and sickles and some cattle . . . provisions for immediate wants of their families."

Morris told them they weren't British Indians but he'd try to help them, gave them enough food and ammunition for the return trip, exacted their pledge to keep out of American troubles. "They left a favourable impression on me." A telegram from Ottawa awaited Morris in Fort Garry rejecting both Turtle Mountain and Oak Lake as reserve sites, a decision with which he took strong issue. That October another Turtle Mountain dele-

Verna Neufeld Sawabe
Chief Hdayamani

gation visited him and the next month Oak Lake was declared the reserve site for all Turtle Mountain Sioux.

Chief Hdayamani with about 12 other families refused to leave the Turtles. Ottawa allowed them to continue "squatting" and by 1885 correspondence referred to the little community as "Reserve #60." Next year, commissioner Edgar Dewdney instructed federal land surveyor A.W. Ponton "to subdivide Section 31, Township 1, Range 22, West of the Principal Meridian they occupied into 80 acre lots, which would in a manner, confirm them in possession." This single section of land did thus finally become the legal property of Hdayamani and immediate followers after almost a quarter century of living peacefully in the Turtles since arriving there from Minnesota with the fiery Inkpaduta clan.

It's amazing that Ottawa dealt even this compassionately with Hdayamani's people during the 1880s. The chief's son-in-law Big Nose had played a major role in the Minnesota revolt and was believed to be bringing his 150-lodge band to hold the Turtles by force if necessary. Almost certainly it was this very band which in 1885 smuggled a gatling (machine-gun) into Canada inside a closely-guarded coffin purported to hold their dead chief slated for burial in the Turtles but actually headed for Louis Riel's force in Saskatchewan, a plot that almost succeeded and might greatly have changed Canadian history.

Several problems the Oak Lake band encountered with the settlers were mistakenly attributed to Hdayamani's people. Despite claims of some historians to the contrary, there's considerable evidence that Riel's chief lieutenant Gabriel Dumont did try to initiate a rebellion in 1887 through clandestine operations on the American side of the Turtles (an Inkpaduta plan in reverse) and received considerable backing, the Saulteaux-Cree chief Yellow Calf foiling that plot.

By 1891 Ottawa was trying to close down the little reserve and move its residents to Moose Mountain near Cannington Manor in Saskatchewan. The celebrated 'Turton case' of Cannington Manor soon after when the John Turtons' young daughter was believed kidnapped by a Moose Mountain woman marrying a Turtle Mountain (American) Reserve man delayed transfer plans. (She was a great aunt of my daughter-in-law Audrey Turton Neufeld who grew up in Emerson, Manitoba.) A few stragglers, like Two Dogs and Good Elk, did manage to get re-settled in those years.

In '92, the interdenominational Christian Endeavour Society founded a mission school on the reserve with pastor A.F. Mackenzie teaching the 10 students. An important part of the curriculum was planting and caring for a large vegetable garden. The request to Ottawa to provide biscuits to the often-hungry pupils was eventually granted.

By '95, the school faced bankruptcy and a public appeal for funds failed. The 11 June Boissevain Globe issue reported "all children with exception of those under charge of the old chief have been sent to the industrial school in Regina." An earlier issue listed Paguriepamow as current chief.

By '98, officials had renewed pressure to close that "rendezvous for Indians of low character from the United States" and move them to Oak Lake "where they will be less subject to evil influences and easier to look after." Oak Lake Sioux minister John Thunder concurred and the Iyojanjan, widow Casto and Kibanahota families moved. Thunder called the Hdayamani, Bogaga and Tetunkanopa families "disgraceful Indians."

A 1906 census listed the reserve as: Hdayamani with 4 members, Bogaga 2, Sunkanapi 5, Wahkandito 2, Hinhansunna 2, George Nayioza 4, widows Matohitika and Heuakahowaste, Tetunkanopa 4, Sam Eagle 7, Tunkanastina 6, John Matoita 4 and Haikpawakita 3. Two years later the fifth, sixth, seventh, tenth and twelfth families transferred to Oak Lake, the fourth had moved to U.S.A., the eleventh and thirteenth couldn't be found, Tetunkanopa was in Montana hiding his son wanted for horse stealing.

Well over 65, Hdayamani was tiring of fighting to hold on to a tiny strip assigned to him by Ottawa of the vast Turtles given him 47 years earlier by the Saulteaux. His wife had just died — poisoned by Mrs. Bogaga, he charged. In March '09, the Indian commissioner visited him and Bogaga, urging surrender, Tetunkanopa being still away. In August, Bogaga, Tetunkanopa and Charlie Tetunkanopa signed the release, Hdayamani and his 22-year-old grandson Chaske (Charlie Eagle) refused.

In December the land was put up for public auction but settlers refused to bid out of respect for the chief's family. The auctioneer's recommendation that Hdayamani's most reasonable claim of $2,000 for his share in the Turtles be quickly paid irked Ottawa who felt $500 to the chief and $300 for the grandson was more than enough.

Now followed years of settling claims, including ones of families who moved in 1898 and 1908. A long 1911 letter from Hdayamani's daughter Anna's husband, Luke Bigtrack of Fort Totten, N.D., mentions the chief visiting there and attending a Catholic congress. By 1913, he was dead.

Deloraine Collegiate history teacher Bob Caldwell's research of the reserve found that residents and neighboring Whites got along very well, often helping each other out, lending horses, etc. The chief lived out his last days alone, eating skunks and other such animals in an effort to subsist, until he was found dead in his cabin — likely while taking a steam bath of hot stones.

By 27 February '13, claims for the chief's estate had been filed by 39-year-old daughter Anna Bigtrack of Ft. Totten, grandsons Chaske and Alex Mazawasicuna of Oak Lake. On 15 May '14, Minnesota-born 64-year-old Edwin Phelps (Catkaihduze) of Lake Traverse reserve near Peever, S.D. claimed to be a son, his mother being Winyan. For the past 35 years he had been a Congregational missionary on Standing Rock and Cheyenne River reserves. Anna remembered her half-brother slightly, both

claiming their father "threw him away" as a baby. Anna's mother Tunka had borne seven children but by then she was the sole survivor. Edwin's stepfather was Joseph Dawankun. Affidavits indicate the chief's earlier name was Wigiya, meaning yellow, because he then lived in a big yellow tent.

Eventually the little reserve was auctioned off and sale proceeds distributed to the claimants. Wrote Reserves and Trusts superintendent W.C. Bethune in 1958, "When the last distribution was made in 1917, it was definitely the intention of the Department to make that payment the last to the individuals concerned. All were informed that was the case when they received their cheques."

There's no doubt in my mind that the Turtle Mountain chief to whom historian R.D. Symons refers when quoting aged Cree medicine man Morning Child greatly helping Ottawa's controversial treaty negotiations on the central Prairies was none other than Hdayamani himself. "I am going to speak. Let us hear what Morning Child says in the matter of the bounty and the medicine of marks," he urged the assembled chiefs. The rest is history. Yet, he himself received very shabby treatment from our federal officials.

If Turtle Mountain Indian Reserve #60 was legally released and all claims duly settled as Ottawa claims, then why can't I shake the nagging suspicion that Chief Hdayamani's consent was vital to affecting that release and because it was never given it follows also that Ottawa settled only a small part of his claim? Nor does the signature of this peaceful Sioux chieftain appear on any treaty, Canadian or American, relinquishing any part of those Turtle Mountains purchased from the Saulteaux. □

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Re: Native Council of Metis

In the July '84 INDIAN RECORD Fr. Fred Miller states that the Native Council of Canada represents a large proportion of the Metis people. This does not accurately describe the current situation. In 1983 the vast majority of Canada's Metis left the NCC because of that organization's domination by Eastern Canadian Non-Status Indians. The Metis Association of Alberta, the Association of Metis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan, the Manitoba Metis Federation, the Louis Riel Metis Association of British Columbia and the Robinson-Superior Metis Association of Ontario formed the Metis National Council (MNC) which has represented the Metis at the First Ministers' Conference of 1983 and 1984.

Statistics Canada figures taken from the last census show that in excess of 85% of Canada's Metis live in the "Metis Homeland" and are represented at the national level by the MNC.

John Weinstein,
Policy analyst
Metis National Council

To Bern Will Brown,
Colville Lake, NWT

Re your letter to the INDIAN RECORD May 1984:

It is only fitting I should defend both the INDIAN RECORD and Simon Paul Dene for contributing to the development of the Indian people. I am grateful to the INDIAN RECORD for being open minded.

Not everyone who went to residential school ended up a confirmed Christian. Many Indian people have turned their backs on Christianity because it tried to force them into molds they were not prepared to accept. When I listened to Simon I could feel his bitterness. I felt sorry for him. Simon is gifted and is growing as a person, in spite of his mistakes. He grew up when it was not good to be an Indian.

As an interviewer, and as a Christian, it is not my job to judge. If you feel that Simon is a casualty, pray for him, for he is not the only one lost in the battle of identities and of cultural and social values. Simon is to be commended for opening himself up to the scrutiny of all who care to judge him as an artist and as a person.

Connie Wright
Thunder Bay, Ont.

Dene leaders oppose nuclear war

The Dene Nation has announced to the world that it opposes the nuclear arms build-up by any and all nations throughout the world.

In a resolution at the meeting in Fort Franklin the leaders stated that the mining of uranium poses deadly health and environmental problems and contributes to the nuclear arms build-up and that there are already enough nuclear arms to destroy the world several times over.

"The Dene refuse to contribute to the destruction of the world," the resolution stated. The Dene also opposed any uranium development in Denendeh or anywhere else in Canada.

The Dene leadership also noted in a resolution that there is some possibility that nuclear power plants could be used for generating electricity in the north and that these plants have numerous life threatening, environmental and health problems. The resolution adamantly opposed any building of any form of nuclear power plants in the North or in Canada, and asked that the Government of the NWT support the Dene in this matter.

The Dene are willing to consider various other means of alternative energy that would ensure the protection of Dene land and its people.

(Dene Nation Newsletter)

Local historians profile chiefs

"Trails to Little Corners," a local history of Maka and districts in Southern Alberta contains profile articles on two Blackfoot leaders who took part in the signing of Treaty No. 7 in 1877. They were Chief Old Sun of the north Blackfoot and Chief Crowfoot who represented the south Blackfoot.

The story of Old Sun was written by Ann Scheer with help from the two Blackfoot editors of the book, George Fox and Mervin Wolfleg. The Blackfoot feel that Old Sun's place in history has been grossly ignored, though he was much admired by his own people and had a strong influence on them.

The profile of Crowfoot was taken from an article written by Teddy Yellow Fly in the Calgary Herald in 1927. Yellow Fly, born in 1889, was a much respected, educated and well-travelled member of the Blackfoot tribe. He died in 1950.

"Trails of Little Corners" refers to both Chiefs as Canadian statesmen and has attempted to give them their rightful place in Canadian history.

B.F.

The yellow dahlia

by Connie Wright

Even with the windows open, the room slept as calmly as its three inhabitants. Its faded wallpaper, reminiscent of discarded cracker jack boxes enclosed the three beds: its dying red roses held fast to a charm which the years had depleted. Sun peeped through the dusty Venetian blinds to form odd thin stripes along the cream-colored, rose-covered wall and, where the blinds ended, it poured great blocks of sunlight onto the white bedding.

Mabel slept on her side with Jay at her right and Beeta at the south end. A wearied tenderness emanated from Mabel as she lay sleeping; patches of rouge warmed the earth brown of her face and her black hair stood ruffled by dreams. She drew long breaths and sighed deeply the powerful sleeping songs to dead ancestors and a nearly forgotten past.

Jay, her youngest, had twisted his bedsheet around himself so that only his bare brown bottom greeted the rising sun. Beeta was protected by the room's shadows and calmly left her dream world where blue hummingbirds flew across cool green waters.

In a few quick blinks her small brown face opened to greet the day. As she rolled in the bed, eyes, nose and ears were rubbed in the waking up process. Deep contentment filled her childish soul as she spied her mother, the sleeping giant, and perceived her advantage in being the first awake. Quickly she kicked down the white sheet; her pink nightdress rising to reveal spindly brown legs and bony knees. She hopped to the floor and scurried around to the vacant space beside her mother.

"Hi mom! Are you awake yet?" began the eager enquirer, crawling into bed beside her mother. "Do you know what day it is? Huh, well do you?" Beeta couldn't wait for her mother's reply whether sleepy or otherwise. "It's Saturday. We don't have to go to school today."

"Hmn hmn," answered Mabel, opening drowsy eyes to look her young daughter square in the face. She smiled a big toothy smile, then rolled to her back.

"Is Jay up yet?"

"You know him. He's always last up."

"No I'm not mom, Beeta doesn't know anything." Jay sat up his eyes showing annoyance; his short curly hair standing on end; and his brow so seriously wrinkled that he looked all at once like a pudgy little man.

This seriousness greatly endeared him to Mabel who accepted her son's sudden tempers as she did her husband's moodiness. Back home on the reserve, Aylmer had been a kind, gentle man. And he was so proud of little Jay. He would talk on and on about how he and Jay would be out setting the traplines in a few years. He had great plans for Jay and was teaching him all about the animals — how to look for tracks in the leaves and in the snow, and when to lie quiet and wait for the kill. Sometimes on winter's evenings they would all sit around the potbellied stove listening to the stories of that old fool Wis-a-ke-jak, talking and laughing.

Then Mabel remembered how Aylmer had beaten her last week. He had come home drunk, looking like a battle scarred raccoon and smelling worse than a dead skunk. Beeta and Jay were in bed, but she had waited up for him, worrying more than anything else. She wasn't trying to be incriminating, but Aylmer didn't see it that way. He didn't wait to listen. It was the first time she could recall him being like that with her.

Since they had come to the city Aylmer seemed to be always getting mad at her and the kids, and complaining about the boss at the factory. But he'd never done anything like this. She guessed he'd gone back to the reserve by now. The more she thought about it the more she realized Aylmer was right: the city was no place for an Indian. Here people were strangers who scurried past as if they had some special place to go and had to be there in a hurry.

Yet fascination with the city held her tight; she loved getting on buses with Beeta and Jay. On one ticket they could cross the city and gaze at tall buildings, gold mirrored buildings, grey brick buildings, buildings of every colour and description. She could wonder at the billboards with their impecably dressed ladies; she could poke fun at the little patches of land called parks. Sometimes she'd take the kids downtown where they would stand for hours peering into Eaton's or Simpson's store windows and experience the noon hour crowds rush by them.

Sometimes she felt like a fish moving upstream and downstream at the same time. The whole parade of people excited her, walking amongst beautifully dressed women, clean-shaven men in business suits, even the gnome-like cripples, who sat begging in corners, attracted her. As she lay in bed with the sun pouring down on her, she wondered where she belonged.

"Come over here Jaybird," Mabel implored, "we'll find room for the both of you. Okay Beeta move over. Here Jacob climb in here." As Jay nestled in beside his mother, Mabel puffed up the pillows and raised her face out of the sun. She put her arms around her two children and pulled them in close so she could describe the day's plans.

"How would you like to go with me to the Jewish market?"

"Mom do you think we can go to the place where they have real chickens running around?" Jay asked.

"Ya, I'd like to see the rabbits but it . . . it always makes me so sad to see them all cooped up," Beeta interjected.

"We can spend all morning looking if you want to but there's a washing to be done first, so lets get breakfast."

On that remark a mad scramble began, leaving Mabel to struggle for slippers and retrieve a crumpled housecoat from the floor. As she bent over a long pigtail flopped to her forehead and out of long custom she flipped it back, smoothing out truant wisps of hair. She glanced at the bed. How empty it looked these mornings. Sleeping alone had quickened her remorse in leaving the comfortable reserve life.

She wished wholeheartedly that Aylmer would come back and share it with her. The longing for Aylmer always started as a low tremor deep in her belly, it rose circling around her and through her. It was like the North wind, this pang of despair . . . cold, icy, and bitter. She shuddered for a moment, put on her housecoat and went to the kitchen.

Beeta was leaning over the toaster. As she reached across the table her elbow nudged the milk jug, it fell over, spilling milk all over the frayed oil cloth. Mabel caught her daughter's startled gaze. The table was already so crowded with perfunctory items . . . the ketchup bottle, salt and pepper shaker, sugar bowl, vinegar bottle and dishes, that Beeta's spill only added to the confusion already there but, as she caught her mother's glare, Beeta turned a guilty eye on what she had done.

"Guess I spilt the milk, eh? Sorry. Guess I wasn't watching what I was doing," apologized Beeta. She forgot about the toast, forcing Jay to the rescue. He lowered the toaster's sides so the billowy puffs of black smoke could escape and the toast be spared more burning.

"Landsakes, child! It's a wonder we ever get through a day with you around here," said Mabel. "Lets clean that mess up." Wisely Jay smiled as he watched Beeta sulk over to the sink, pick up the wet rag and slink back to the table.

The morning passed quickly as they searched out bargains at the Jewish market. Beeta got to see the little rabbits in their wooden cages and Jay rambled on about how he'd be out trapping furs, one of these days, with his pa.

When they got home Mabel told them to run off and play. She would call them when lunch was ready. Immediately Beeta and Jay headed for the garden that belonged to the tea factory. To them it was an enchanted forest with maple trees, flowering shrubs, and garden flowers galore. The only trouble was that it had a huge barbed wire fence all around it and only one entrance, near old Mr. Hobbyshop's shed. From there, he watched the garden and tended the flowers. But Saturday was his day off so no one was there or so the children thought.

They opened the door and stood in awe of the zinnias, lilies, snapdragons and, most particularly, dahlias. The big luscious dahlias intrigued Beeta the most as she had only known bachelor buttons and wild daisies that grew on the roadside into their reserve. In the summer she would pick them for her mother, then get a jug full of water to store them in. Beeta always liked to surprise their mother with flowers. The only place she could find flowers was here in the tea factory's garden. She got down on all fours to sniff at the dahlias. She loved the sweet rich smell of them and their bright yellow colouring.

"I wish we could take one home for momma," said Beeta.

"What do you think old Mr. Hobbyshop would say?" Jay asked. "You know how mad he gets whenever we come by the fence to look in."

"What do we care about old Mr. Hobbyshop, he's not here today and besides he'd never miss just one flower." Beeta retorted.

"Okay," said Jay, "You pick one and we'll take it home."

Beeta reached over, drew one of the dahlias in close to her and snapped off the stem.

"Here we are, let's go," said Beeta.

The two made for the door and began running down the lane towards the street. Before they got there, old Mr. Hobbyshop stepped out of his shed, noticed the gate was open and saw the two youngsters running with what looked like one of his prize-winning dahlias. He went over to his dahlias and carefully inspected all the flowers. He found the broken stem, swore at the children: "Those little bastards, I'll teach them a lesson."

Mr. Hobbyshop guessed they belonged to the tenement houses on the corner of the street. As he walked through the back yard he saw that one of the doors was open and he could hear the excited chatter of children behind a screen door. That's probably the house, he thought. As he walked to the door he wiped his pant-leg to rub off some imaginary dust and stretched out his neck as if preparing for something unpleasant.

He went up the stairs, knocked on the screen door and in a rather murky kitchen he saw the figures of three people: the mother, standing at the stove making lunch while her two children sat around a table, covered with dishes.

In the middle of all the rubble was his solitary yellow dahlia. When he knocked, a hush fell over the room. Mabel stopped stirring her pot, looked up to see who the intruder was and took the pot off the burner. "I wonder who that can be?" she said. But Beeta and Jay began to cower as they knew Mr. Hobbyshop had followed them from the factory garden.

Mabel opened the door and at the sight of Mr. Hobbyshop's luminous smile, began to smooth out the creases in her dress. It wasn't so much his smile that disturbed her but the shine of his blue overalls. She had never seen such a well dressed labourer in all her life. When Aylmer went to work, he wore his oldest clothes, tattered and torn, but this man was wearing overalls that looked as though the price tag were still on them. His blue shirt was so well starched that she imagined his wife had ironed it for him that very morning.

"Good afternoon," said Mr. Hobbyshop, "I wonder if you know where your two kids have been this morning? They look like the two I saw running from my garden stealing a couple of flowers."

Mabel felt like lying to him and telling him that she didn't have two kids but Hobbyshop had already seen them at the table and most likely he had seen the dahlia in the glass milk jug. Instead she put back a wisp of hair from her cheek, and looked thoughtfully into Mr. Hobbyshop's penetrating smile.

"Yes I'm sorry, Beeta and Jay brought me home a flower and such a beautiful one it is too. There isn't much I can do now that the flower's been picked."

"Not much you can do!" exclaimed Mr. Hobbyshop. "I'll have you know these are prize dahlias. I enter them in the CNE every summer. Your kids could be held up in juvenile court if I were to press charges," he finished.

"Well there's no sense in making a big thing out of nothing," Mabel began again. She was afraid that this clean shaven man might do what he threatened. She could never tell with white people . . . she never knew whether they spoke the truth or whether they only talked big to impress other people.

"We can pay for the flower," she insisted still keeping her ground. "What will you charge for it?"

"Those flowers are priceless," said Mr. Hobbyshop. "You can't replace them ever."

"No, I don't know what you're talking about,"

"Well you better keep your kids out of the park down at the factory," he replied, "or the next time I'll call the police on them."

With that Mr. Hobbyshop closed the door and left. Mabel backed up slowly, turning away from the door as if she were still considering the threat he had made to her. She scowled at Beeta and Jay.

"You two should be ashamed of yourselves. Look at the trouble you nearly got yourselves into."

She was scolding them as she had promised, but her thoughts turned more to the yellow dahlia which stood in the glass milk jug.

There it was — large, luminous, full blown, representing more to her than just a simple flower. It was as Mr. Hobbyshop had insisted — priceless, ephemeral, and beyond their means. Yes it had affected her.

It was different from the bachelor buttons and daisies Beeta and Jay had collected back home. It had come from a world which placed a monetary value on everything it possessed. It cost money and it shouldn't have been theirs, but there it stood forlorn, wanting to be back with the other dahlias enjoying their short life out in the garden.

And it was beautiful beyond measure. Mabel touched the flower with her hand and smelled the sweet perfume emanating from it. She valued this gift her children had chosen to give to her no matter what the cost. It brought her back into the world they shared with the people downtown. It brought them back into this pageantry of people moving somewhere . . . some place . . . ! □

Culture understanding — key to native ministry

by Msgr. Roy Carey

Our native people, Inuit and Indian, are an unknown people. Nearly five hundred years after Columbus discovered America the aboriginal peoples are not really understood, nor fully appreciated.

There are four races: black, white, yellow and red. Each race is composed of many nations; that means many nationalities, traditions, (including religious) cultures, languages. The white man is quick to recognize these differences in his own race. He would not confuse an Italian with a Swede, a Ukrainian with an Englishman. He recognizes many nations in the white race.

Strangely, the white man does not recognize these realities in the red race.

There are many nations in this race. These nations differ as the white nations differ from each other. We speak of the Indian as if one Indian were like every other. We treat them as if they were not distinguished as nations, even as persons.

Before we start to relate to our native people, we must try to understand them, respect their differences from us, the differences that exist among themselves.

There are a number of obvious consequences from the diversity of nationalities, traditions, cultures and languages in the red race. First, many translations are required because of the many languages for teaching, liturgical, and scriptural texts. Second, if liturgy allows the worshipper to express himself as formed by his own experience of tradition, culture, language, then there can not be one imposed liturgy for Indians. There must be a diversity of native liturgies, each expressing national traits.

The American Indian is a nomadic people. They were continually on the move, influenced by seasons and wild game migrations. Survival meant mobility. There were no large permanent settlements. Rather, the society was tribal, familial, close knit, supportive. The Indians' experience, therefore, allegiance was tribal.

Just as the white nations of Europe, the black nations of Africa, the yellow nations of the Orient, fought among themselves, so the red nations fought among themselves.

Scars, animosities, rivalries, consequences of wars fought long ago still influence nations today. We hear "they are historical enemies."

There needs to be a healing, a reconciliation among the Indian nations. They must find it themselves.

Because the white man failed to respect the Indian as an equal, a child of the same Father, he did not always treat the Indian with compassion or justice.

The white man's failure left something wanting, something missing in the native's experience of white government, white Church. There needs to be healing, reconciliation between the native and government, the native and the Church.

Besides, these are changing times. The changes since the last war have been so rapid that they have overtaken us. The confusion and instability of our world is evidence of our inability to cope. Man is always running late. These changes have also affected and overwhelmed our native people who were less able to cope than the sophisticated 20th century white man who stepped upon the moon. Should we be surprised that our native people are trying to find themselves?

Let us pray that they find their prophets among themselves — not be fooled by any pseudo-outsider, however garbed. If we read the Scriptures which relate God's encounter with man, we find that all God's prophets come from within the group they were meant to influence. God respects every nation so much that He does not send outsiders. When He came to the human race, He came as a man; an insider.

The treatment of aboriginal people by the Canadian government and the American government hardly bears comparison. We must keep these geographical and historical realities clear and not try to treat one as if it were the other.

Even the aboriginals' experience of the Catholic Church has been different.

The very first white man who came to Canada brought missionaries who immediately reached out to the native peoples, recognizing them as God's children, called by the Father, redeemed by Christ.

We are a pilgrim people. We have sometimes lost our way. In practice, in relationships, we have denied the Christ we say we follow. He is the Way, the Truth and the Life. All Christians, whatever their origin, must see the truth and the way in Him. If we do, He will give us the Life to live it, as brothers of one Father. □

New Indian Band At Conne River

OTTAWA — The people of Micmac ancestry at Conne River, Newfoundland as Indians will constitute a new band and will continue to occupy the one square mile area upon which they now reside.

The Conne River community will continue to be funded according to the five-year Canada/Newfoundland Agreement for Conne River: $1 million annually.

Book review

Distilling native myths for children

by Connie Wright

"Why the Man in the Moon is Happy and Other Creation Stories", retold by Ronald Melzack and illustrated by Laszlo Gal. $5.95.

"Little Badger and the Fire Spirit", by Maria Campbell and illustrated by David Maclagan. $7.95.

"Peter Pitseolak's Escape From Death" edited by Dorothy Eber, drawings and story by Peter Pitseolak. $5.95.

Three children's books published by McClelland and Stewart express a unique poetic vision of the native mythology and culture. The first, adapted by Ronald Melzack, a distinguished professor at McGill University is called: *Why the Man in the Moon is Happy and Other Stories.* It takes as its subject eight legends and makes them intelligible to the urban child. Melzack has researched his topic well to find a time when wholeness and harmony reigned in the mythological world of the Eskimo people. His book satisfies the reader.

Pitseolak's book, on the other hand; *Peter Pitseolak's Escape from Death,* brings into sharp focus the effects modern life has had on the Eskimo mind. Melzack has retained the original flavour and beauty of the Eskimo imagination. One senses the poetic harmony of their physical universe united in love and brotherhood. His style of writing is simple, fluid, and readable.

Basically, the stories begin with the creation of all living things when the transformer, Raven, made people from the darkness and clay. During this time he unwittingly creates a wicked giant and introduces the possibility of both good and evil.

The stories move through an explanation of natural phenomena: how the winds were discovered, how the sun and moon came to be, where white reindeer originated, how the whiteman came to be and so on. Significantly, the last story explains the existence of the whiteman in the framework of Eskimo mythology. The story heralds the arrival of sail ships and the beginning of change.

Graphically speaking, *Little Badger and the Fire Spirit,* the second book is the most stunning of the three children's books. The story is beautifully enhanced with vibrant colour drawings which would most certainly fire the imaginations of young readers. David Maclagan, the illustrator, has imitated the style of Cree artists to give the book a uniquely Indian flavour.

Although this book is a free adaptation of an Indian legend, it has been presented with great care and consideration. There are many stories concerning the origins of fire in Indian mythology, and many took place when only animals roamed the woods, led by a spiritual leader like wolf, coyote, or other significant figure. In many of the fire myths there were obstacles and conflicts to overcome. However, unlike western myths, no punishment was meted out by the Sky world.

In this story, Maria Campbell eliminates most of the conflict Blind Badger must face in finding fire. Instead she draws upon the spirit of love and faith to solve the hero's dilemna. It is a very heart rending story of how Badger's faith in Coyote and his capacity to love others results in such a beautiful denouement, a mixed blessing of physical warmth for his people and renewed eyesight for himself. It may seem idealistic to imagine a world without much external conflict but the story is saved from sentimentality through an exposure of the fear behind all violence.

Ms. Campbell postulates a world where love and understanding can conquer all and restore peace to the earth. This is an excellent story for children of all nationalities since it promotes the spirit of brotherhood and love to solve world problems.

The third book, already mentioned is *Peter Pitseolak's Escape From Death.* It is a curious work since it contains a strange mixture of social conventions, both Eskimo and non-native. It stands apart from the other two books for two reasons: it is not an adaptation of a story designed for a specific young audience; it is written by a man whose native tongue is not English. Unlike the authors of the other two books, Pitseolak does not write specifically for children. His straightforward and direct style wants to communicate the harrowing adventure of being lost at sea.

In reading this book to children one should keep in mind that the Eskimo is going through severe cultural changes and the mixture of social conventions emerging in this short story have great value in themselves.

For example, when Pitseolak and Ashevak have been blown far out to sea they both pray, but to whom? Pitseolak receives his answer in a dream flooded with strange creatures that somewhat resemble the traditional vision quest. Curiously, he is to be saved by an English-speaking bird. One wonders whether this detail was added to interest a southern audience or whether this is the result of a very mixed cultural imagination.

The illustrations in the book were made by Pitseolak himself. Some are simple, representational drawings and others are highly stylized forms of birds and animals. In the drawings one notices dramatic changes in perspective. Even within the same picture objects may be presented as either uni-dimensional or as objects set in three dimensional space. The fact there is so much flux and change reveals the ambivalence of the artist's state of mind.

The drawings corroborate what one has already discovered about the story; the Eskimo is in a process of acculturation. This makes the book fascinating reading and perhaps on another level it is more difficult to enjoy. □

Read in our next issue:

Mr. Dowden — My school teacher	by Connie Wright
A smoke and a talk (The Dawson Trail)	by Marjorie MacDonald
Christine Tsorihia and Her Family	by John Streckley
Elmer Ghostkeeper — Metis Leader	by Frank Dolphin
Film review: "Running Brave"	by Connie Wright
Isabel Millette of Cape Coker	by Sylvia Opl
Book Review — Keepers of the Game	by Connie Wright

The deadline for the January, 1985 issue is Monday, November 19, 1984.

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ADDRESSEE

Stanley Fontaine ordained priest

GROUARD, Alta. — Stanley Albert Fontaine was ordained to the priesthood October 7, by Archbishop Henri Legare, OMI, of Grouard-MacLennan.

Rev. Fontaine celebrated a high mass at the Fort Alexander Reserve (Man.), October 14. A banquet and a reception were held in his honor. On October 21, he celebrated mass at Winnipeg's Kateri Centre. This was followed by a reception. Rev. Fontaine says he takes pride in being the first native priest in Manitoba. Rev. Fontaine is a cousin of the late Rev. Deacon, Paul Bruyere, of Thunder Bay Diocese.

The new priest, born in 1947, attended school at Fort Alexander: he studied for two years at the Fort Alexander Minor Seminary and attended high school at the Otterburn Minor Seminary. He obtained a Master's Degree in theology in Rome's College of the Propagation of the Faith.

After two years of teaching, he completed his studies at Grouard's Kisemanito Centre.

Father Fontaine's first job as a priest will be to help build a native church. Instead of heading a parish, he will be based at the Kisemanito Centre, a seminary in Grouard for native people. For at least the next year, he will travel the West encouraging natives in the church.

He does see a source of hope in Pope John Paul who strongly reaffirmed native religious identity during his Canadian tour last month. "For years," Father Fontaine says, "natives felt unrecognized by the Vatican. John Paul has erased a great deal of that. There's been no pope in history who's embraced the native people as Pope John Paul has."

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Norway House — from page 6

paddling, but mostly it stemmed from the feeling of being at peace with himself.

He had felt this even as a child. It always came as he left the settlement to live in the wilderness, to survive on a simple diet with simple tools and simple needs.

He hadn't much use for the Hudson's Bay Co. Those people created false needs, he thought, as pictures of ornaments and fancy clothes crossed his mind.

No, he didn't need them. All he needed were his family, friends, skills and self-respect, the same things that had sustained his people for as far back as he knew.

Still, as he paddled and scanned the shore, he knew that change was imminent; an impending change that would prove more traumatic than reservation life, which had come in 1875.

In 1983 we see the results of that change; idle people traumatized by the loss of their way of life.

(Prairie Messenger)

CREE LEADER DIES

He said he would outlive Pierre Trudeau's term as Prime Minister — and he did, by a little more than a week. Chief Robert Smallboy, 86, died Sunday July 8 in the Rocky Mountain foothills camp that had been his home for the last 16 years.

Elected chief of the Ermineskin Cree Band in 1959, Chief Smallboy gained national attention in 1968 when he led 125 people into the mountains to live a traditional lifestyle.

During his lifetime, Chief Smallboy was awarded the Order of Canada for his achievements, and had audiences with both the Queen and the Pope.

The Cree are mourning the loss of a great spiritual leader. □