

The Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions: 140 Years of Action

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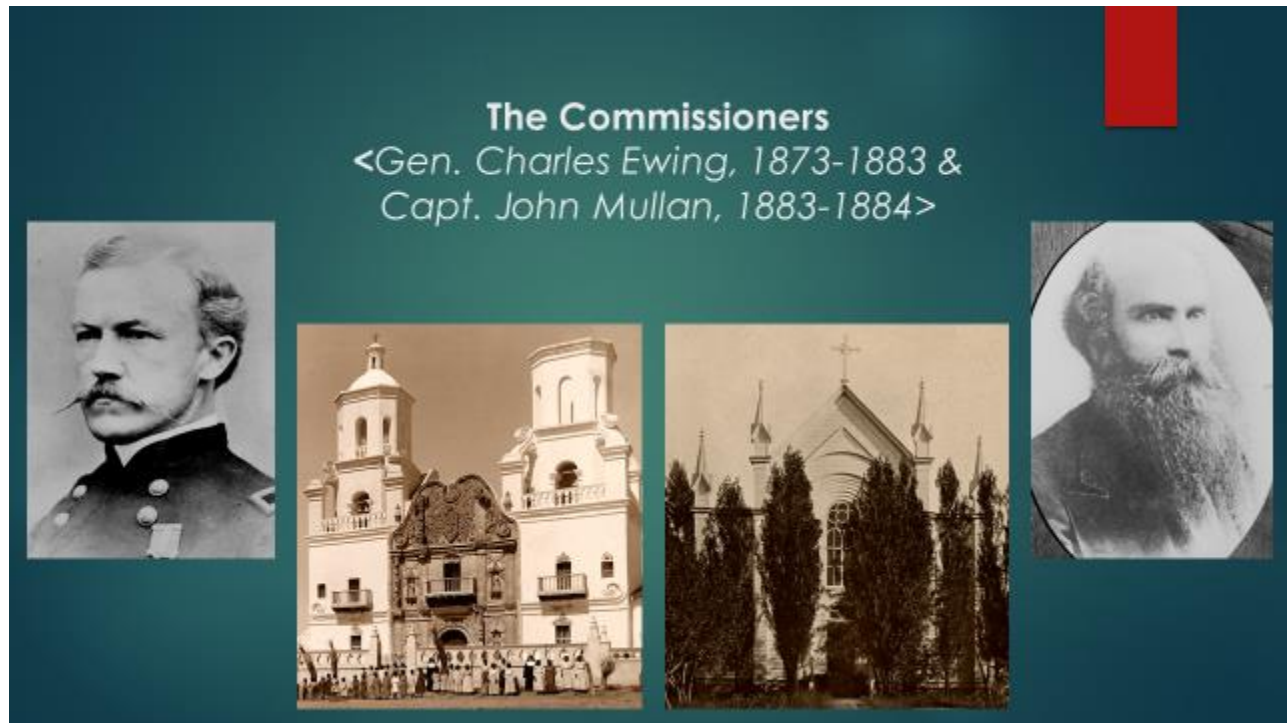


Frame 01: After the Civil War, conditions in the Western United States gave birth to the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions. Born out of necessity, and thereafter to the present, it has safeguarded the interests of Catholic Native Americans.



Frame 02: Christian evangelization began with Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries from Spain, France, and England. When missionaries were not available, Native lay catechists spread the faith whenever possible, and sometimes they taught the faith for decades and administered church communities without missionaries. Decades before Sacagawea led Lewis & Clark up the Missouri River, Catholic Mohawk and French Canadian voyageurs had traversed the Great Lakes and Mississippi River west to present-day Montana, Manitoba, and Oregon. They visited tribes and established friendships, engaged in trading, and they intermarried among them. By the time the Jesuit Father Pierre-Jean de Smet first reached St. Louis in 1839, the local bishop had already received several requests for missionaries. But until then, none were available.

Images: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records and Anne M. Scheuerman Collection, Marquette University Archives, and Public Domain.

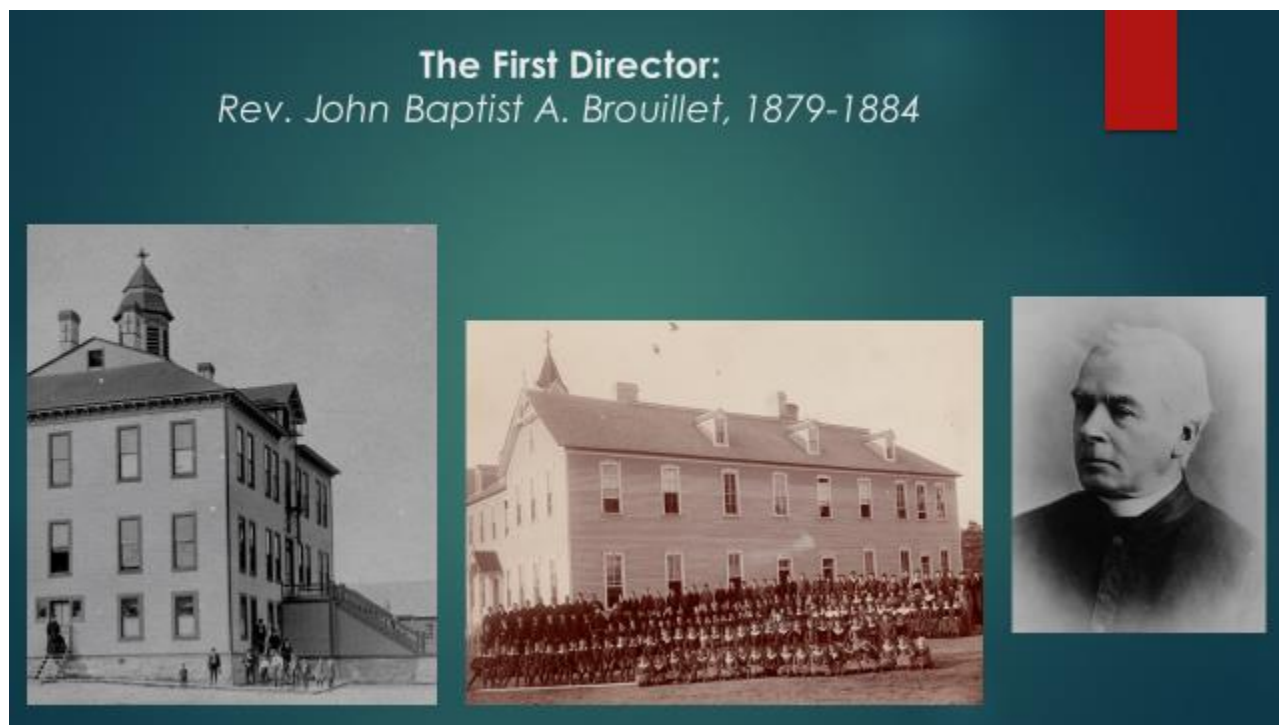


Frame 03: By 1869, active Catholic missions, parishes, and schools existed among native communities in the northeast, northwest, Great Lakes, and southwest, and elsewhere, missionaries visited Catholic Natives intermittently. Then, to combat fraud and corruption in the U.S. Indian Service, President Ulysses S. Grant assigned religious groups to Indian reservations with exclusive control, which made it illegal for Catholic priests to visit 56 of the 72 Indian reservations where many Catholics lived, which frustrated many native leaders and missionaries. Because of these and other heavy-handed regulations, Archbishop James Roosevelt Bayley of Baltimore, who represented all U.S. bishops, established an Office of the Catholic Indian Commissioner in 1874 with the authority to challenge government rules on behalf of the Church.

The Archbishop believed that this office needed someone experienced in government relationships as its commissioner or point-man with the government. So he appointed, first General Charles Ewing, and then Captain John Mullan. General Ewing was a distinguished Civil War general and son of a former Secretary of the Interior, and Captain Mullan was a famous military engineer who designed the Mullan Road – then an engineering marvel. It was the first road cut through the Rocky Mountains and it stills runs between Great Falls, Montana, and the Pacific. However, these men achieved only limited success as Catholic Commissioner, since both served essentially as volunteers with meager funds raised by other volunteers.

These churches were two of the principal missions then active in Native American communities – San Xavier del Bac Mission among the Tohono O’odham people near Tucson, Arizona, and Sacred Heart Mission on the Coeur d’Alene Reservation in De Smet, Idaho.

Images: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, Marquette University Archives

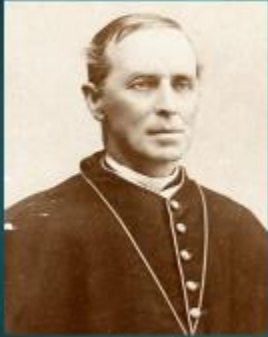


Frame 04: In 1879, Father John Baptist Brouillet joined the commissioners as the first director to manage the Office's overall operations, which were renamed the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions. Father Brouillet was a diocesan priest of the Archdiocese of Portland who was one of the first ordained for that diocese. Previously he had served the Lummi Nation and other peoples of the Puget Sound area and he had extensive first-hand knowledge of the government-related problems.

These two schools were among the first in Native American communities – St. George School in Tacoma, Washington, which served several Native communities around Puget Sound, and St. Joseph's School on the Menominee Reservation in Keshena, Wisconsin. Then in 1882, the government lifted its rules against missionaries, which allowed many new missions and schools to be established during the next few decades as missionaries became available. While this was the principal dispute with the government, others arose during the next few decades.

Images: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, Marquette University Archives

Third Plenary Council of Baltimore (1884): *BCIM Reorganization & Alaskan Missions*



Frame 05: Two years later in 1884, the U.S. Bishops, at their third plenary council in Baltimore, confirmed the Office of the Catholic Commissioner as an agency of the Church, and as their official representative with the federal government for Indian affairs. It then decreed the Office's reorganization and incorporation as the "Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions" with Benedictine Bishop Martin Marty of Dakota Territory as president of its board of directors, and it further decreed the formation of a national annual Lenten collection to be held in all churches across the United States for the benefit of Black and Indian missions. The bishops also signed the postulation to petition the Holy See to initiate the canonization causes for the Jesuit martyrs and Saint Kateri; however at this time, the Bureau was not involved with these causes.

This Lenten collection began in 1887 with the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions and the Church's new mission initiatives in Alaska as its principal beneficiaries. But for many years the collection remained small.

Images: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, Marquette University Archives

Second Director: *Rev. Joseph A. Stephan, 1885-1901*



Northern Plains reservations, which led him to baptizing over 400 native people. Since then, his ongoing concern to preserve Lakota traditions through books has inspired many native and non-native people in the ongoing development of Lakota-Christian relationships and traditions.

Images: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records and W. Ben Hunt Collection, Marquette University Archives



Frame 08: Monsignor Ketcham was a missionary and diocesan priest from Oklahoma and convert to Catholicism. He continued the tired less efforts of his predecessor, and with few conflicts with the government, he began to collaborate wherever possible. He visited native people often, such as with these catechists at a Catholic Sioux Congress in South Dakota, and he added new initiatives to fit the changing times. In 1902, he established *The Indian Sentinel magazine*, to inform the public about Catholic Native people and their missions and schools, and to raise funds to support them. It developed into an illustrated magazine, which continued to 1962 and remains an important historical resource now maintained online by Marquette University, which also provides digital copies of related photography.

While director, Monsignor Ketcham maintained his rapport with the Choctaw people in Oklahoma and Mississippi, whose hearts he had won years earlier by teaching himself to speak, read, and write their language fluently. While director, he continued to use Choctaw not only for visits, but to keep in touch by writing letters and religious and health-care publications to help them. His adopted son, Tom, shown next to him in the Bureau's Washington, D.C. office, had been an indigent Choctaw youth without parents; his friend Governor Locke, headed the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, and together they were mutual collaborators. In Mississippi, Monsignor Ketcham was a principal proponent in securing the federally recognized Mississippi Choctaw reservation within their ancestral homeland.

Images: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, Marquette University Archives

Saint Katharine Drexel (1882-1955)



Frame 09: Fortuitously, Saint Katharine Drexel came to the rescue. The daughter of a wealthy Philadelphia banker, she decided to use her inheritance to support Catholic schools for Black and American Indian children, and to establish a community of women religious to support them. While the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions brain-stormed and took the lead to establish other funding streams, Mother Katharine as she was known, provided the mainstay for much of the support to African American and Native American children for over half a century. Among them were St. Michael's School in the Navajo Nation in Arizona and New Mexico, where she visited with leaders to learn their sentiments, and at Holy Rosary Mission, now named Red Cloud Indian school, on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, where likewise she visited Chief Red Cloud who clearly stated he wanted a Black Robe school for his children.

Images: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, Marquette University Archives

Quick Bear v. Leup (1908):

Indian control of Treaty Funds used for Catholic schools, 1904-1970s



Frame 10: With the idea conceived by Monsignor Ketcham, President Theodore Roosevelt began an unprecedented pilot-project giving Native parents a first-ever opportunity at school choice for their children. Previously, the government often dictated to parents the terms of the education the government would provide. Now, with procedures requiring parental signatures and quarterly attendance reports, parents from tribes with treaty funds in government accounts could use them for tuition payments that would allow their children to attend a private school of their choice.

Because almost all schools in this project were Catholic schools, critics challenged it as inappropriate church-state cooperation. But in 1908, the Supreme Court ruled that the tribal funds in government accounts were tribal, and not government funds. Therefore, the tribes and its parents who were enrolled members, had the right to use them as they choose. Since then, and to the 1970s, these funds provided a major source of funding to Catholic schools serving Native children.

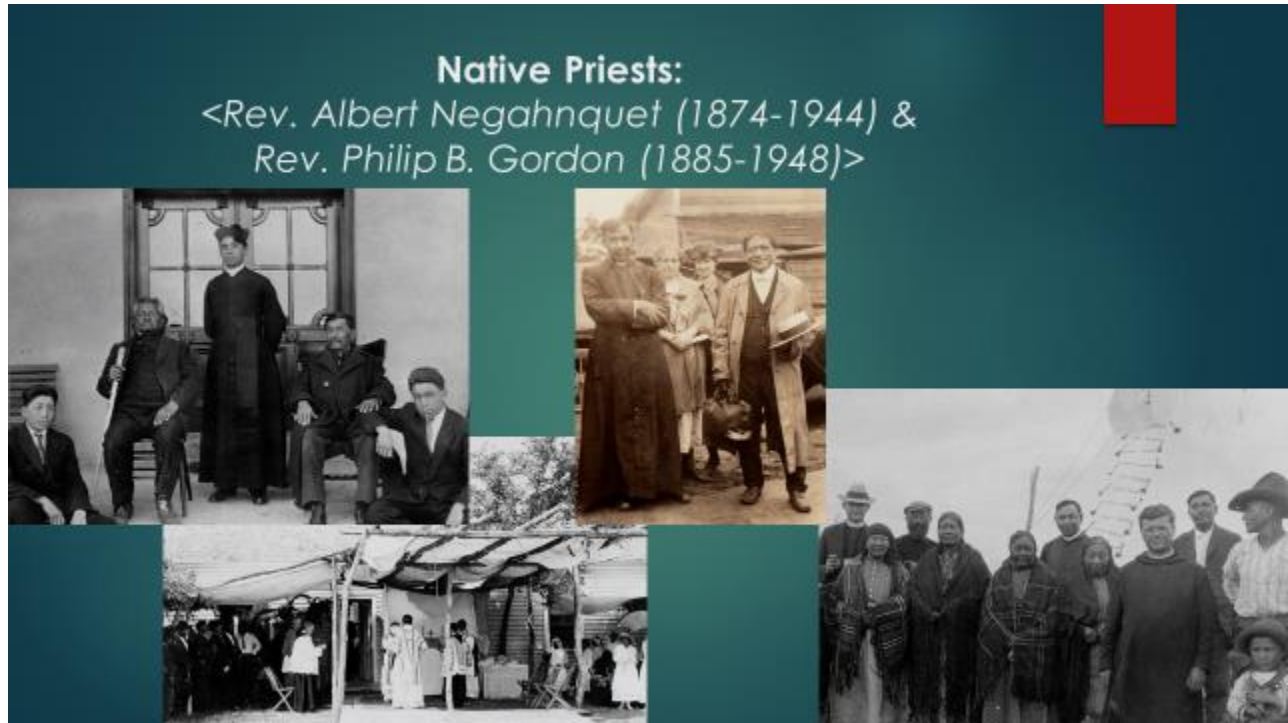
Today, duplicate sets of these school attendance reports remain as important genealogical resources within the respective Indian agency records at National Archives branches and within the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records at Marquette University. To provide an online glimpse into the records, the Marquette Archives provides an online list of surnames with associated tribal affiliations and the states where the schools were located.

Images: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, Marquette University Archives



Frame 11: Founded by Father Henry Ganss of Carlisle, Pennsylvania, in collaboration with New York City businessmen, the Marquette League was a non-profit fundraising organization that raised funds for Catholic Native missions, parishes, and schools that the Bureau distributed. The League held fundraising tours in major U.S. cities and it published a fundraising newsletter called *The Calumet*, which featured stories about Catholic natives and their missions and schools. Today, *The Calumet* remains as another historical resource preserved by the Marquette Archives with an online index to articles available on request or on microfilm via interlibrary loan. In 1991, the League celebrated its history at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, which included Mohawk visitors from St. Regis Mission at Akwesasne of the Mohawk Nation in New York.

Images: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, Marquette University Archives

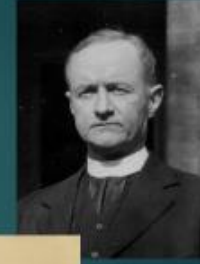


Native Priests:
<Rev. Albert Negahnquet (1874-1944) &
Rev. Philip B. Gordon (1885-1948)>

Frame 12: During the first half of the 20th century, two Native diocesan priests were active on the national level - Potawatomi Father Albert Negahnquet from Oklahoma and Ojibwe Father Philip Gordon from Wisconsin. For many years, Father Negahnquet served as a chaplain at St. Louis School, in the Osage Nation in Oklahoma, and Father Gordon served as a chaplain at the Hascall Government Indian School in Kansas, as well as Fr. Gordon served as an active member of the Society of American Indians, the first national organizations of Native Americans. Above, Fr. Negahnquet is hosting visitors at St. Louis School, whereas Fr. Gordon is escorting Dr. Carlos Montezuma of Chicago, on a speaking tour of Ojibwe communities in northern Wisconsin. Dr. Montezuma was a Yavapai native from Arizona, and a nationally prominent critic of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Below, but at different times, both Fr. Negahnquet and Fr. Gordon are visiting Catholic Sioux Congresses in North and South Dakota.

Images: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, Marquette University Archives

**Fourth Director: Monsignor William M. Hughes,
1921-1935**



Frame 13: Monsignor Ketcham "hand-picked" Father Hughes as his successor because of his exceptional enthusiasm for evangelization and respect for native heritage. Monsignor Hughes was a diocesan priest from the Los Angeles Archdiocese who served its Native communities where he spoke Spanish as a common language. But first he served as its fundraising lecturer for five years beginning in 1910, where he traveled from city to city soliciting donations by giving slide show presentations about the native missions across the United States. Then he succeeded Monsignor Ketcham following his death.

Monsignor Hughes served during an era of relative calm, with few significant controversies or conflicts. He worked closely with the government and secured whatever funding he could for Catholic schools, and he remained vigilant by visiting native communities. He also maintained the vibrancy of *The Indian Sentinel* by encouraging more photo illustrations and including short essays on reservation life by native school children. In 1934, Congress passed the Indian reorganization Act, which Monsignor Hughes supported, as he recognized this would help reverse the tribes' declining land base.

Images: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, Marquette University Archives

Fifth Director: Rev. John B. Tennelly, S.S., 1935-1976



Frame 14: Sulpician Father Tennelly succeeded Monsignor Hughes and served as director during an era of increasing change. He was the first and only director who was a religious order priest and not a diocesan priest, and he became the first to serve simultaneously as the secretary or day-to-day administrator of the Lenten collection, whose office he relocated to the Bureau's office.

Father Tennelly, too, was passionate about Catholic schools. Not only did he visit them often, but he was very successful in lobbying for government funds to support them, that is, until after World War II. Then, funds dwindled and several schools closed. When lobbying, he did so quietly and he did not publicize his successes, lest he alert his critics and become a victim of success like Father Stephan. He saw supporting reservation Catholic schools as his top priority, and with meager returns from the Lenten collection as well and the demise of *The Indian Sentinel* in 1962, he supported emerging needs and new possibilities only when initiated by the bishops, such as Native deacons in Alaska and South Dakota and urban Indian centers in Gallup, New Mexico, and Rapid City, South Dakota.

On the eve of his retirement, although the number of Catholic native schools had declined to 37, there were, nonetheless, more Native Americans and more of them were Catholic, served by more churches. There were 157,000 Catholic Native Americans and about 400 mission parishes.

Images: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records and Holy Rosary Mission-Red Cloud Indian School, Marquette University Archives

Sixth Director: Monsignor Paul A. Lenz, 1976-2007



Frame 15: Monsignor Lenz succeeded Father Tennyly as the Bureau director and Lenten collection secretary. Like all Bureau directors before Father Tennyly, he was a diocesan priest, and his was the Altoona-Johnstown Diocese in Pennsylvania, which actively supported evangelization in Latin America. Since 1970, Monsignor Lenz served the indigenous Guaraní (gwǎrə'n) people as pastor of a mission in Paraguay, where he spoke not only Spanish, but also their native language. In 1976, at the request of Cardinal John Krol, the chairman of the Bureau's board of directors, Monsignor Lenz became its new director. Soon he began to publicize the Bureau through a new newsletter, mailings, and visits with native people and their bishops. Always a "people person", he loved to visit parishes and schools across the United States and to receive visitors as well at the Bureau's office in Washington, D.C.

Images: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, Marquette University Archives

Jesuit Father Francis Paul Prucha:
*From The Churches and the Indian Schools, 1888-1912
to the Marquette Archives*



Frame 16: Meanwhile, Jesuit Father Francis Paul Prucha, a history professor at Marquette University, was researching a future book, *The Churches and the Indian Schools, 1888-1912*, which is about the many conflicts and controversies between the Catholic Church and the Protestant-dominated United States over missions and schools for native people. In so doing, Father Prucha contacted the Bureau and discovered a vast and hidden treasure trove of historical records without essential care and access for the many researchers who could benefit from them. With permission from Marquette and financial support from a now defunct Milwaukee foundation, he negotiated with the Bureau's board whereby Marquette became its archival repository and acquired the back records and the Bureau regained the upper half of its building for new purposes and continued access to the records through copies provided on request. Pleased with Marquette's services, Monsignor Lenz later encouraged the Tekakwitha Conference to likewise archive its records at Marquette with a similar agreement.

Images: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, Marquette University Archives

Tekakwitha Conference: Revitalization, 1977-1979



Frame 17: In 1977, Monsignor Lenz, and several Native clergy, religious, and laity, attended the Tekakwitha Conference, then an annual gathering of missionaries from the Northern Plains. That year 46 people attended. Several Native attendees spoke on the benefits of expanding the membership and revitalizing its purpose, and Monsignor Lenz pledged funding from the Lenten collection to facilitate this change. Then the attendees voted. The majority *voted out* the current operating board, which resigned, and they *voted in* an interim task force to plan a comprehensive reorganization and the next year's meeting.

The Task Force comprised Capuchin Father Gil Hemauer and Franciscan Sister Genevieve Cuny and Francis Hairy Chin, two Lakota people from South Dakota. Over the next two years, Monsignor Lenz provided support as they formulated the Conference's new structure and expanded its annual meeting format.

Images: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, Marquette University Archives

Tekakwitha Conference: Revitalization, 1979-



Frame 18: At the 1979 Conference in Yankton, South Dakota, Monsignor Lenz and the three bishops in attendance listened to the concerns of the “Circle of 66” native attendees. At that “watershed” moment, the Circle articulated the Church’s insensitivity towards them and native culture, which thereafter changed the tenor of the Conference.

Later that year, the Tekakwitha Conference incorporated with a board of directors and it became an official Catholic organization with an Episcopal Moderator. Thereafter, Monsignor Lenz and his successor continued as an “ex-officio” board member.

Images: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, Marquette University Archives

U.S. Bishops' Plan: Efficiency vs. Autonomy For Black & Native Funding, 1978-1981



Frame 19: But as Monsignor Lenz began to reinvigorate the Bureau and the Lenten collection, he was soon confronted by an unprecedented challenge. With assistance from an outside fundraising consultant in a three-piece suit, the U.S. Bishops' Ad-Hoc Committee on National Collections developed a plan to consolidate all annual national collections. It called for combining the Lenten collection and all others into one super collection that would distribute funds according to new priorities. Arguing that this would greatly reduce funding for Black and Native evangelization, Monsignor Lenz vigorously opposed this plan, and he invited native supporters to so testify at its meetings, which were held over the next three years. In the end, the plan was defeated and the Lenten collection survived without changes.

Under a new name – the Black & Indian Mission Collection – Monsignor Lenz continued to publicize and promote it among bishops and diocesan fundraising personnel. Consequently, by 1985, it had grown from transferring a little over \$1 million per year when he began, to \$5 million now collected from over 90% of all dioceses and distributed to about two thirds of them plus 14 other Catholics agencies. And the growth continued; 20 years later it reached the \$9 million level. Then and now, about two-thirds of its funds go to Black concerns and one-third goes to Native ones.

Images: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, Marquette University Archives



Frame 20: Monsignor Lenz collaborated with bishops and supported the development of new training initiatives for native deacons and laity. Under Bishop Harold Dimmerling, the Rapid City Diocese in South Dakota began its program in 1973 with Jesuit leadership and lessons learned from the Fairbanks Diocese in Alaska, which began its program three years earlier. In 1978, Rapid City established the Sioux Spiritual Center with Bureau support, and since the 1980s, the Center has collaborated with the Tekakwitha Conference to provide native ministry training to people from across North America. From 1993 to 2003 under the auspices of the U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops' Committee on Native American Catholics, the Rapid City Diocese instituted an Inculturation Task Force, which through consultation with its native communities conducted extensive discussions on the use of Lakota culture in a Catholic context that resulted in an inculturation handbook.

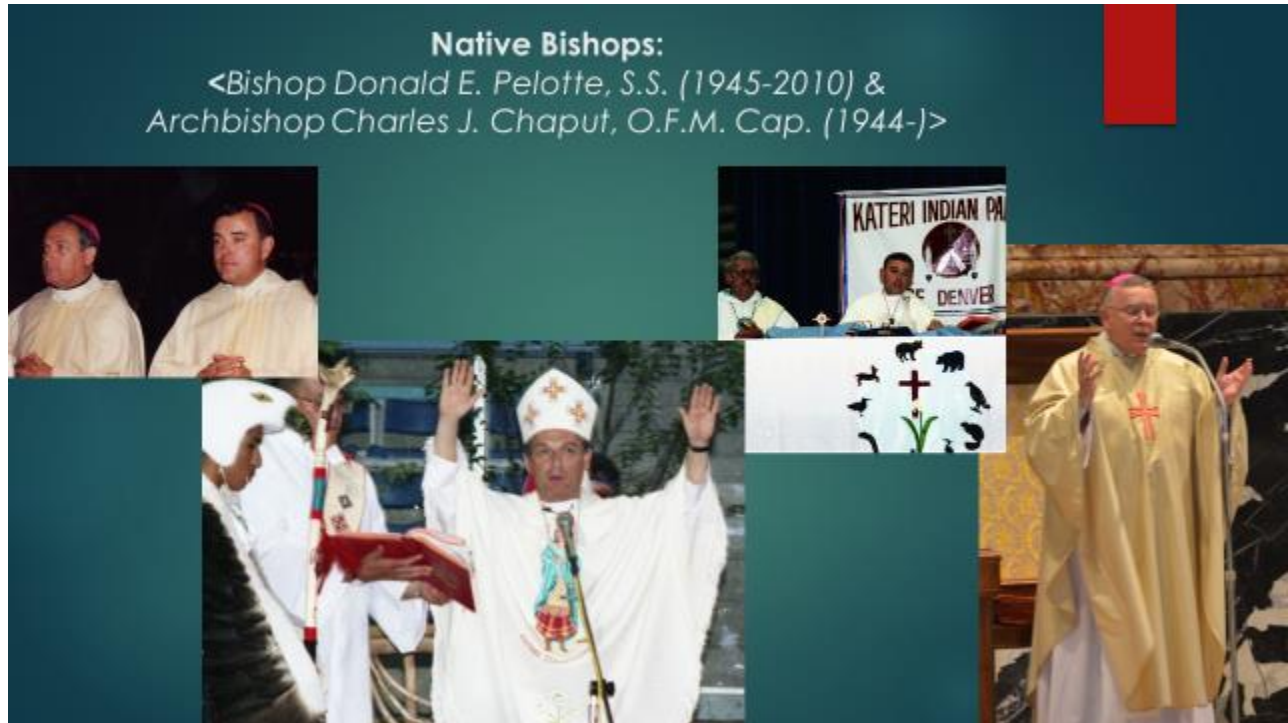
Images: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, Marquette University Archives

Assistant Bureau Director: Jesuit Father Ted Zuern,
1981-2001



Frame 21: Father Zuern, who served as pastor of St. Isaac Jogues Church, in Rapid City, South Dakota, became engaged nationally and worked collaboratively with several like-minded agencies that advocated Indian religious and political rights. Although these issues went beyond the historic concerns of Catholic missions and schools, Monsignor Lenz, nonetheless, recognized Father Zuern's advocacy as renewing and continuing the Bureau's legacy of advocacy for native rights. Beginning in 1980, Father Zuern wrote a social justice essay in every issue of the Bureau's newsletter under the heading, "Bread and Freedom", which he continued for 25 years and later compiled as a book by that title. Then for two decades, he served as assistant Bureau director, which enabled him to more effectively serve as an advocate on native human rights issues.

Images: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, Marquette University Archives



Frame 22: Monsignor Lenz collaborated with the Holy See and identified Native priests as potential candidates for the Episcopacy, which resulted in the 1986 ordination of the late Bishop Donald Pelotte, a Blessed Sacrament father of the Abnaki people in Maine, and the 1988 ordination of now Archbishop Charles Chaput, a Capuchin of the Potawatomi people in Kansas.

In 1990, the Native American Catholic population in the United States included 25 priests, 80 sisters, 60 permanent deacons, 10 brothers, and two bishops. However, 31 of the deacons resided in the Fairbanks Diocese where they comprised nearly half of all diocesan clergy throughout this extremely large and rural diocese.

Images: Anne M. Scheuerman Collection and Herman D. Ray, Jr., Collection, Marquette University Archives



Frame 23: In 2007, Father Paysse succeeded Monsignor Lenz, who became the new Vice-Postulator for Saint Kateri's canonization cause in the United States. While retaining the established relationships with Catholic native parishes and schools and the Tekakwitha Conference, he began to explore new innovative ways to effectively expand the effectiveness of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions and its allied agencies, now collectively known as the Black & Indian Mission office. Soon he established a website for the Bureau and the Black & Indian Mission office; he initiated electronic newsletters while retaining the print ones; he established a Catholic native leadership award and an art contest among Catholic Black and Native schools in Monsignor Lenz' honor; and he has explored new meaningful ways to engage and partner with donors.

Images: Anne M. Scheuerman Collection and Herman D. Ray, Jr., Collection, Marquette University Archives



Frame 24: The memorable events surrounding Saint Kateri's canonization and thanksgiving were arranged with Vatican and Italian officials in collaboration with the Bureau, the Tekakwitha Conference, as well as the offices of the Canadian and U.S. vice-postulators.

Images: Anne M. Scheuerman Collection and Herman D. Ray, Jr., Collection, Marquette University Archives

the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records. To find it, type into your browser, "Marquette Archives Bureau history". Thank you for your interest.