

by: Ray Beauchemin

Is Jesus White? Perhaps. Is Jesus native? Without a doubt. Deacon Ron Boyer tells why: "Our elders spoke of success, power, wealth and prestige as contradictory to Indian values. ... Is Jesus white? When we believe in him he becomes one of us. We value what Jesus valued: family, friendship, sharing, and harmony on our good earth with every one and every thing."

Boyer, of St. Francis Xavier Mission of Kahnawake, was principal organizer of "Telling Our Story," a three-day seminar (April 9-11) on native issues and spirituality. He worked with Fr. John E. Walsh, episcopal vicar of the St. Jean-Longueuil diocese of which Kahnawake is a part.

The final day of the seminar began with a sunrise service in Kateri Hall on April 12 and was followed by a mass, in the mission church, in honor of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha and celebrated by Bishop Bernard Hebert of St. Jean-Longueuil.

Elders and Chiefs

The majority of speakers throughout the three-day seminar were Mohawk, including elder Frank Akwiras of Kahnawake, who welcomed about 60 participants to the seminar's first day with a blessing, in Mohawk, calling them to "love not in word and speech but in word and truth."

Truth manifested itself in action and in numbers: more than 500 people attended the closing mass at St. Francis Xavier.

Joe Norton, Grand chief of Kahnawake, spoke on the history of natives and non-natives, relating it to his own past - the son of a Catholic mother and native traditional father. "To point out the difficulties, and the hurt and pain, is one important reality in the healing of native people, but it is not a time to continue to blame people for the past. We must start from today and build together for the future."

The conflict of the past 500 years are integral to the native story, he said. "To us, that is our truth. Our history. Our version. But our common bond [with non-natives] is spirituality."

Norton said Catholicism and traditional spirituality at Kahnawake are not mutually exclusive: "It is not a question of opting for the Longhouse or Catholicism. I could very well see you praying at the Longhouse and then going to church."

Repairing Mother Earth

Grand chief Mike Mitchell of Akwesasne, returning home from an ecumenical session on native spirituality in Edmonton, recognized his sister Bernice Lazore, one of the participants, as the only practicing Catholic in his family. "I am and will always be a traditional, a person of the Longhouse. I respect my sister and know how she believes so strongly in the Catholic Church. It is in the Longhouse that I discover the meaning of what it is to be an Indian. It is no longer the shame I felt when I was in

school and I was laughed at when I said that I was an Indian of the Longhouse."

He challenged seminar participants to work together to repair "the big hole in the sky."

"Our water is dying. The animals, the trees. Mother Earth has changed to such a degree that she cannot sustain us. Our people are spiritual. We say our Creator gave us all this. We are responsible. ...We have to take care of this."

He also called on natives and non-natives to "build understanding and reach out. We have to open our eyes and see each other."

Speakers included elders Ernie Benedict, Solomon Cook, Kevin Deer, Alma Ransom, Bernice Lazore, Rita McComber, Sarah Hasanplug, Theresa Poole, Willie Commanda and Peggy Mayo.

Local Mohawk elders; Native members of the United Church and their minister, Rev. George Predelli; Anglican priest Rev. David Oliver; and natives from Lennox Island Reserve (P.E.I.), Maniwaki, Akwesasne, Kahnasatake, and the Golden Lake Reserve outside Pembroke, Ont., were other attendants of the event.

The seminar was used to confirm the need for a native centre and ministry-program for Eastern Canada at Kahnawake, according to Boyer. The centre is expected to begin in the fall with monthly programs in ministry and native spirituality.

Source: The Catholic Times

Andrew W. Cook
Post 1479
Activities and Donations
(March-April)

January - A Color Guard consisting of Simon Cole, Nelson Sawatis, John White, Robert Thompson, Wallace Jacobs, and Andy White won second place in the Tri-Town Parade. The same individuals plus Francis Arquette and John Martin were in the Malone Winter Carnival Parade. Donations were made to the Senior citizen's Sunshine Club, the Akwesasne Library for printing our news, and the community fund raiser for the benefit of June Brosseau.

February - Donations were made for flowers for a deceased community member, sports T-shirts, and the entry fee for a girls' hockey tournament.

March - Sponsored a race car at the Frogtown International Speedway for Memorial Day opening, donated flowers for a deceased community member, hired a band for a benefit dance, and sponsored a boys' hockey tournament.

The American Legion was closed on March 24th and 25th. A new floor was installed upstairs by our Legionnaires Francis Arquette and Nelson Sawatis and their helpers. Thanks for a job well done.

Much work has already been done in anticipation of the many events to take place on the Memorial Day Weekend (May 23, 24, & 25). Make sure to get your advance concert tickets and raffle tickets.

On May 30th there is to be a special liturgy in memory of all deceased veterans. We urgently need names of persons you know who died in action (which war they died in and place they died), who died in time of peace (which war they served in and place where they were stationed). Please help us in this project. The more input that we receive, the more rich will be the experience.

Submitted by Joanne Reyome; dictated by Daniel Jock.

Hydro Quebec Grant to Akwesasne

After several years of negotiations, last winter the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne signed an agreement with Hydro Quebec regarding the disputed 18 months period of arrears and services to Akwesasne. As part of the agreement, Hydro agreed to donate the money to the community organizations for a two year period.

In this the first year, the Mohawk Council requested the St. Regis Elders Club to administer the grant based on proposals received.

The St. Regis Elders Club is pleased to announce the initial allocation of funds to the following recipients under the

- Hydro Quebec Grant to Akwesasne:
- Mohawk Council Ambulance Unit: \$3,000.00
- C.K.O.N. Radio: \$3,000.00
- Akwesasne Minor Lacrosse: \$1,000.00
- St. Regis Recreation: \$3,000.00
- St. Regis Village School Committee: \$500.00
- St. Regis Village Hot Lunch Program: \$500.00
- Kateri Circle, Bicentennial Activities: \$1,000.00
- Akwesasne Focus Group on Disability: \$1,000.00
- St. Regis Elders Club: \$1,100.00

Reebok and American Indian Firm
Join Forces to Produce
One-of-A-Kind Beaded Collection

Grant from Reebok Foundation to fuel Economic Development Among American Indian Families.

In what may be one of the most culturally significant initiatives launched by an American company, Reebok International Ltd. made history in the athletic shoe and apparel industry when their President and Chief Executive Officer, John Duerden, signed the company's first American Indian business contract with Melody Lightfeather, President of American Indian Designer Collection, (AIDC). The company will design and produce the Reebok-Lightfeather Collection, an exclusive line of beaded footwear and apparel.

The Reebok-Lightfeather Collection will be hand-beaded and sewn by over 100 American Indian families living on and off reservations in the south western United States and will reflect a number of traditional American Indian designs. Each product will be an original, taking anywhere from two to eight weeks to complete.

The beaded Reebok was first conceived by Lightfeather, an award-winning artist, as a wearable art form which blends both comfort and culture. When photographs of Lightfeather in her footwear appeared in national and international press, she attracted Reebok's attention as well as a following which includes such celebrities as Linda Grey, Goldie Hawn, Wayne Newton and First Lady Barbara Bush. Recognizing the opportunity to bring a unique product to market and jobs to a community where the unemployment rate can, according to the U.S. Department of Labor, often reach as high as 70 percent,

Reebok and Lightfeather agreed to join forces.

"The Reebok-Lightfeather association is more than a minority business venture," said John Duerden, during the signing. "It is a socioeconomic project that has the potential to educate and employ hundred of Native American families." Through its Foundation, Reebok has also donated \$10,000 to the Native American Arts Foundation, Inc. The grant will establish an educational program for American Indian entrepreneurs to market their craft; develop cooperative ventures and cottage industries as well as encourage economic development and self-sufficiency among American Indians on reservations.

Added Lightfeather: "This partnership is history in the making. There has never been a major corporation in the United States to lend its hand both educationally and in business for the economic development of Indian people on and off the reservation."

Also present at the contract signing was John R. Winston, National Assistant Director Office of External Affairs, U.S. Department of Commerce. He said: "Native American businesses have been seriously overlooked. Reebok has taken the first step towards creating a positive attitude and a new consciousness of thinking for Native American products in the corporate world." The Reebok Lightfeather Collection will make its debut in June in the company's retail store in Santa Monica, CA. Reebok stores in Boston and New York City will also carry the line.

Healing Our Selves: The Next Step
"Circle of Elders: Conflict Resolution"
Seminar #1
June 5, 1992
Concordia University
Loyola Campus

Purpose: To explore the process of conflict resolution with our Elders
Time: 9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Place: Administration Building, Room 131 (AD 131)
7141 Sherbrooke St. West
Montreal, Quebec
Elders: Art Solomon (Ojibway)
William Commanda (Algonquin)
Ernie Benedict (Mohawk)
John Carotte (Mohawk)
Dhyani Ywahoo (Cherokee)
Animator:
Charlie Hill

Circle of Elders: Resolving Conflict

Waseskun House is continuing the process of helping our communities break the cycle of violence.

This seminar, the first in a series of six, follows our conference held in June of 1991, "Communities In Crisis: Healing Ourselves." It seeks to explore, through the personal experiences of the Elders, the process of conflict resolution.

Conflict resolution is a process whereby the individual and the community try to resolve the tension between themselves in order to restore harmony within the community. It is a process that explores and builds upon traditional values and allows individuals to assume a role in a more traditional manner.

A circle of Elders, with their own personal experience and

knowledge of this type of conflict, will explore ways of helping communities with the participants.

While there are no instant solutions or fast and easy answers to all questions, as a caregiver or individual, you will hear and understand some of the many words of wisdom that will assist you and guide you in your personal life and your role as a caregiver.

As this is a very intimate process, we ask you to arrive before the doors close to allow for maximum of silence and tranquility while the Elders speak.

For more information on registration, etc., contact Deena Sky at (514) 932-1424; 932-4634; 932-1895.

Parent Advocacy Training

The Salmon River Central School District and the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe will jointly sponsor Parent Advocacy Training for parents of children with disabilities on May 28 and May 29. Each three hour workshop will be conducted by Catherine McHugh, associate with the New York State Commission on Quality Care for the Disabled. One session will be held on the evening of May 28th at the Community Building of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe from 6 - 9 pm. The workshop will be repeated on May 29th at the Salmon River Central School Board of Education Room from 9am - 12 noon. Individuals wishing to attend either workshop are requested to call Betsy Dyke at 358-2933 or Annemarie FitzRandolph at 358-9516 to register for the session.

Keep Your Eyes on Channel 31

On Monday night, May 18, from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., there will be a live telethon on Channel 31 to benefit the St. Lawrence County students trip to Russia.

The telethon will be emceed by Danny Burgess and Sandy Cook. It will be held at Cheel Arena. We encourage people to come to the arena to be on live T.V.

In addition to the telethon, there will be 20 craft booths going on at the arena that night and there is entertainment for the three hours from talented students from all over St. Lawrence County, including Mike White of Watertown and Karl Anthony, International Music Director.

Again, tune into Channel 31 at 7 p.m. on May 18, or come down to Cheel Arena on that evening.

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Iakhihsotha
News
Month of June

As June is National Nursing Home Month, Iakhihsotha will be host to various events throughout the community which will be open for all to participate in. A Health Fair has been discussed, as well as a Community Gathering and a Pig Roast as a "Grand Finale" to the events of Nursing Home Month. A tentative date for the Pig Roast Finale has been set for Sunday, June 28th.

For further information, or to donate or volunteer your services or suggestions in any way, please phone 575-2507.

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