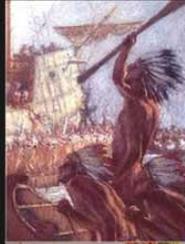


WE



ARE



HE



RE!

## A GUIDEBOOK

“If aliens visit us, the outcome would be much as when Columbus landed in America, which didn't turn out well for the Native Americans,” the astrophysicist, Stephen Hawking said in a new television series, according to British media reports.

## OUR THANKS AND PRAISE

This DVD/CD was conceptualized by Malcolm Nāea Chun, former chair of the Executive Council's Committee on Indigenous Ministry. He had asked both, The Rev. Dr. Martin Brokenleg, retired director of the Native Ministries Program of the Vancouver School of Theology, in British Columbia and the Rt. Rev. Mark MacDonald, former Bishop of Navajoland and now the National Indigenous Bishop of Canada to speak about what the repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery is and what it means. Martin's talk was taped at the first Western Wintertalk (Province VIII) and Mark's was done the following week at the national Wintertalk on the Creek Reservation in Atmore, Alabama. We are extremely grateful for their voices. Other respondents are: The Rev. Canon Ginny Doctor (Mohawk) of Alaska, Mr. Frank Oberly (Comanche/Osage) of Oklahoma, The Rev. Debbie Royals (Pascua Yaqui) of Los Angeles, Mrs. Louise Aloy (Native Hawaiian) of Hawaii, Mr. Robert (Robbie) McGhee (Creek) of Alabama, and Mrs. Becky Clark (Tlingit) of Washington State (Olympia). Ginny, Louise, Debbie and Becky were taped at General Convention in Anaheim and Frank and Robbie were taped at Wintertalk in Atmore. We are very grateful to all of their words, time and generosity for this project. The interviews were conducted by Malcolm and the taping was done by Paul Nahoia Lucas (Native Hawaiian) of Hawai'i, with editing and voice by his son Kaipoleimanu Lucas. This Guidebook was coordinated by Malcolm Nāea Chun in cooperation with ALTHCHU LLC. All images are used by permission or are in the public domain. Funding for this project was through a New Opportunities Grant of the Office of the Indigenous Missioner and the Executive Council's Committee on Indigenous Ministry of the Episcopal Church. The opinions expressed in the program are not necessarily those of the Episcopal Church or its officers and staff.

## INTRODUCTION

*The white men had many things that we wanted, but we could see that they did not have the one thing we liked best – freedom. I would rather live in a tipi and go without meat when game is scarce than give up my privileges as a free Indian, even though I could have all that whites have.[ . ..] – Lakota Holy man  
Sitting Bull*

When Resolution D035 was passed at the last General Convention in Anaheim was it another history resolution to add in the books? Some may have a sense of history that looks at the past as events that they have not control over nor benefit from; it happened back then so long ago.

The Resolution specifically calls upon the diocese and fellow Episcopalians to do something more than to look in a history book. It calls

*. . . that The Episcopal Church review its policies and programs with a view to exposing the historical reality and impact of the Doctrine of Discovery and eliminating its presence in its contemporary policies, program, and structures . . . [And]*

*. . . that each diocese within the Episcopal Church be encouraged to reflect upon its own history, in light of these actions and encourage all Episcopalians to seek a greater understanding of the Indigenous Peoples within the geo-political boundaries claimed by the United States and other nation states located within the Episcopal Church's boundaries, and to support those peoples in their ongoing efforts for their inherent sovereignty and fundamental human rights as peoples to be respected . . .*

The Resolution defines itself as being on the topic of “Reconciliation.” Again, some ask what is there to do. “I didn’t do that. I am not responsible for what the English did in the colonies. I

wasn't around during the war with the Indians," are thoughts said in silently and sometimes out loud.

Another church has become embroiled in a historical matter, except it has great concern as church members, former and present, have sued the church for millions of dollars. In wake of the historical facts and testimony of victims, one bishop, Bishop Moriarty said he was stepping down as a bishop in Ireland, because he realized that "renewal must begin with accepting responsibility for the past." Is renewal an action of reconciliation? He went on to say, "The truth is that the long struggle of survivors to be heard and respected by church authorities has revealed a culture within the Church that many would simply describe as unchristian," Moriarty said in a statement Thursday. "This has been profoundly dispiriting for all who care about the church."

There are victims and perpetrators in all abusive situations and for many indigenous peoples in our church "cultural abuse and trauma" has affected the vast majority of us, that is why we sought a renewed partnership with the church in 199 with the signing of the New Jamestown Covenant, the declaration and funding for a decade of remembrance, recognition and reconciliation, which has been given an addition ten years time, and now Resolution 035.

We have seen up to the north how our communion brothers and sisters have struggled to become reconciled over the role that their church had in the abuses over running government sponsored boarding schools for indigenous children. It almost broke up the church as well as the peoples. However, through talking, negotiating, learning, sharing and being profoundly Christian, they have now worked out a reconciliation of retribution, redemption and healing so deep it has renewed them all into a mission of healing their nation.

Printed materials have been done before to share the experience of indigenous peoples in our church, good and bad. But, new technology affords us the opportunity to communicate in a way that we are most comfortable: seeing and hearing. The companion DVD allows us to come into your life with our story.

This guidebook is here to help you, your family, your parish, your church leaders, your diocese and our church, so you can to learn about the history of Anglican missions to the indigenous peoples of the United State of American, of what the Gospel asks you to do, of activities, videos, books and other materials you can look at to learn more. With that shared knowledge then let us “worked out a reconciliation of retribution, redemption and healing so deep as to renew us as partners in our church.

## DOCUMENTS

### PREFACE

At our recent Executive Council's Committee on Indigenous Ministries' (ECCIM) meeting at White Earth Nation in Minnesota (May 14-17, 2009) we invited the Rev. Christopher Johnson, staff of the Domestic Poverty Alleviation project of our church, to give us a presentation since the project would emphasize the poverty found on many of the reservations throughout the country and in areas where the church has a unique relationship and history with its indigenous peoples.

Chris presented us with a background on the project beginning with the Presiding Bishop's summit on poverty. That summit was attended by several Native Americans, including ECCIM member Dr. Erma Vizenor, the Tribal chair of White Earth. Pervious to this presentation we had already had a discussion concerning the White Bison Foundation and its healing program, so our dialogue with Chris enlarged upon that discussion.. Many of us expressed the fact that any "war" poverty in the realization of funds, food, jobs and other material help would be greatly appreciated, but these are symptoms of a greater poverty; that of the demise of our faith, traditions, culture, language and recognition as indigenous peoples of our homelands. The analogy was made that in traditional healing we seek to treat the symptoms of illness so we can find the root causes to end the illness, and hence to alleviate poverty we need to look at it in the same way.

This led to a very serious and deep discussion about, what I believe, is the very essence of what indigenous ministry in the Episcopal Church is all about and needs required to address the situation now. Together, and with special thanks to the Rt. Revs. Mark MacDonald and Michael Smith, we were able to put our thoughts down into a statement or a "word" to the church about what we had just talked about. We also talked about what can be done by the church and by you and I so we can move from this point in time, together. Those points are listed after the statement.

All of us who signed on did so understanding the importance of what is being said and we are more than willing to engage with you in discussing it. As chair, I believe this sets forth a clear direction for Indigenous Ministries in our church to embark upon with some very real and tangible goals. Our thanks are also extended to the Rev. Brian Grieves for suggesting and arranging Chris to be with us.

Malcolm Naea Chun, Chair, ECCIM

A Word to The Episcopal Church  
Executive Council's Committee on Indigenous Ministry  
White Earth Ojibwe Nation, Minnesota  
May 16, 2009

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

We propose that the larger church join us in a spiritual movement to realize the Gospel in the life of our communities. This movement will reflect the Indigenous interdependence of theology, ecology, spirituality and morality. It will focus on the Word becoming living and real in all of our communities.

For centuries, the church's mission to the Indigenous Peoples, the Peoples of the Land and Seas, has been enmeshed in colonialism and has based its mission on its goals. Success for Indigenous Peoples was defined as reproducing or mimicking the institutions of Western culture. The negative cumulative costs of this approach are beyond human calculation. This approach must end.

We urge our churches to examine their participation in the on-going systemic tragedy of Western colonialism. Specifically, we are concerned with the unexplored dimension of the relationship of the Western church to the First Peoples of North America, the People of the Land and Seas. We note that while the churches have encouraged nations to honor the treaties made with Indigenous Peoples, they have not seriously entertained the implications of those treaties to their own institutions. Now is the time to do this.

The discussion of the intergenerational legacy of the government and church operated boarding schools is a place to initiate this discussion. This issue provides, as we see from the example of Canadian schools, an important lens through which the larger consequences and experience of colonialism may be examined. We seek the transformational insight into the past and present that will create the prophetic imagination to build a new future for all. Therefore:

- We call for full partnership in our church as promised in the New Jamestown Covenant that can be fulfilled through the Second Decade of Remembrance, Recognition and Reconciliation (2007-2017).
- We call for a study of the boarding schools and the impact upon Indigenous Peoples.

- We call upon General Convention to endorse the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the United States administration.
- We call for full support, participation and commitment for the 2010 Oklahoma Consultation exploring the implications of self-determination and developing the actions needed to be full partners in our church.
- We are encouraged by the church's willingness to focus upon domestic poverty in the lives of Indigenous Peoples and their homelands, and we note the 76<sup>th</sup> General Convention will be a crossroads in terms of funding and the role of Indigenous Peoples in our church.

Finally, as we gathered and discussed with each other these important and exciting initiatives, it became clear that we are in the midst of a new moment in our trajectory as Indigenous Peoples of Faith. In this light, we believe we are now being called to plan and convene a Sacred Council of our various peoples to fully embrace the future that God has for us.

Mr. Malcolm Naea Chun, Chair (Native Hawaiian);  
 The Rt. Rev. Michael G. Smith, Vice Chair (Potawatomi);  
 The Rev. Carol Smith, Secretary (Ojibwe);  
 The Rev. Canon Ginny Doctor (Mohawk);  
 Ms. Cornelia Eaton (Navajo);  
 The Rev. Rosella A. Jim (Navajo);  
 The Rt. Rev. Mark L. MacDonald (Pastoral Bishop of Navajoland);  
 Mrs. Linda A. Sproat (Native Hawaiian);  
 Dr. Erma J. Vizenor, Ed.D. (Ojibwe); and  
 Mr. Frank Oberly (Osage-Comanche)

Addendum: The Rev. Robert Two Bulls and The Rev. Lewis Powell added their names to this list.

## The Doctrine of Discovery and the Churches of the West: The Case of the Episcopal Church

Although it has touched every aspect of life in North America for centuries, most people are unaware of The Doctrine of Discovery. The Doctrine continues to be the central animating factor in the dispossession and oppression of Indigenous Peoples, in the Americas and around the world. All the Western institutions that now govern so many aspects of Indigenous life see the People of the Land through the distorted lens of the Doctrine of Discovery. This is especially true of the churches that are a part of the Western Cultural framework. Beyond its direct influence on Indigenous Peoples, we can see that this way of thinking is a contributing part of the Western attitude towards Creation and our environment, giving permission to treat this sacred gift as a human storehouse that can be plundered without restraint.

So, Resolution D035 (attached at the end of this article) of The Episcopal Church's 2009 General Convention is certainly monumental. In that Resolution the Church "repudiates and renounces the Doctrine of Discovery as fundamentally opposed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and our understanding of the inherent rights that individuals and peoples have received from God." The Church pledges to proclaim the Resolution among its congregations and diocese. Further, the Church promises to "review its policies and programs with a view to exposing the historical reality and impact of the Doctrine of Discovery and eliminating its presence in its contemporary policies, program, and structures."

An impressive number of Indigenous commentators have noted the significance of the Resolution. At least three major church bodies in North America (Quakers, Unitarians, and The Anglican Church of Canada) have been inspired to promote similar resolutions. Google "General Convention and the Doctrine of Discovery" or "The Episcopal Church and Indigenous Rights" and you will see some of the general excitement of a theologically broad range of commentators.

Though widely praised outside of The Episcopal Church, it has not received much notice within. It did not even reach the list of The Episcopal Church's post-convention advocacy and

social action priorities. Given the sweeping and intense mandate imagined in such an act and its general celebration outside of the Church, it leads one to question how well the Resolution is understood within it.

This relative lack of response in the Church is not entirely unexpected. The Doctrine of Discovery, a description of a systemic evil that is both well hidden and tenacious, precludes, by its nature, easy comprehension or prompt effective action. The unveiling of the Doctrine of Discovery reveals a camouflaged, pervasive, and damaging strain of thought in Western institutions and culture. The recognition of its presence helps us understand the continuing incapacity of Western societies to understand and fruitfully engage Indigenous Peoples.

*Unveiling the Doctrine of Discovery*

The Doctrine of Discovery is a phrase describing a consistent set of judgments and acts by colonizing Western societies over the past 500 years. It begins with the idea of *Terra Nullius*, an uninhabited land. If such a land is “discovered,” the persons or powers that make the discovery have the right of discovery, meaning that they may own, rule, and exploit this land as they see fit. Indigenous Peoples, in the Doctrine of Discovery, are not seen as inhabiting the land. Since they have none of the institutions of civilization, especially the Church, they are judged to be similar and with the same status as other products of the land. They now are under the jurisdiction of civilized institutions who, “for their own good,” may now order their lives as they see fit. Their “primitive” way of life is seen to have robbed them of the right to control their lands, their communities, or their destinies. This point of view is still being used against Indigenous legal claims in courts cases around the world. The pace of all of this has been increased in recent years, as Indigenous Peoples Aboriginal use and occupation of land comes into conflict with the accelerated demands of globalize economic expansion.

Church practice is also influenced by the Doctrine. To the churches of the Western cultural framework, the capacity of Indigenous Peoples for progress and success in matters of religion and faith is equal to their capacity to mimic the institutions, values, and cultural practices of the West. Proclaiming its desire to help Indigenous Peoples, the Church took a lead role in promoting and overseeing the project of civilizing them along Western lines. There was little

engagement of their cultural or religious ideas and practices; their manifestly rich spirituality and religious traditions were treated as impediments to their well-being and progress, even though they were largely monotheistic. The churches persisted in this civilizing project despite the obviously destructive and deadly results. For most of the past 500 years, the underlying assumption appears to be that it is better to be dead than to not be Western. The Church committed itself in earnest to seeing that any trace of Indigenous culture and life would be erased. Without hiding or disguising it, the Church, along with the other colonizing institutions, was committed to the disappearance of Indigenous life in any form (This proposed disappearance was, we admit, less violent than those who called for immediate extermination. The relative moral merit of the different approaches is difficult to evaluate competitively).

Today, things have changed some, but not enough. For virtually all Western institutions, Indigenous life is still to be steered towards the imitation of Western life, though now Indigenous Peoples may be permitted to mimic other minorities as a means of access to the benefits of Western life. The Doctrine of Discovery continues its influence in the myriads of ways that a colonizing culture sets the standards that control and limit the horizon of Indigenous life in our contemporary world. Though the remedies that mass Western society developed and applied have been, at best, ineffective, and, quite a bit more often, disastrous in their impact on Indigenous societies – the more “help” administered, the worse things get – it is only very rarely noticed. Because the assumptions of the Doctrine of Discovery are so well hidden in the mainstream of Western thought the deadly incompetence of Western agencies and institutions remains astonishingly invisible to its perpetrators.

### *The Doctrine and the Church*

For centuries, the Western churches have given a privileged status to the trajectory of the Word of God in their constituent traditions, cultures, and societies. Certainly respect is due to the path of Western Christian development, even the pagan philosophies which prepared the way for the Gospel in the Western Tradition. Yet, to demand that the overall path of development that the West has followed is normative, or, as some would say, even a prerequisite of serious Christianity, is wrong. It voids the trajectories of other cultures. The absurdity

expands with the continuing demand that Indigenous Christian leaders submit to contemporary Western patterns and standards of learning, including pagan elements from the past or anti-theistic sentiments from the secularized present. This priority remains even though Western institutions of learning and scholarship are no longer positively correlated with growing and vital orthodox Christianity.

Today, with very few exceptions, Indigenous Christians must place their churches within the trajectory of Western ideas, governance, and sovereignty if they wish to remain full members of churches of the Western cultural framework. This means that there is very little attempt to adapt to the unique cultural and social dimensions of Indigenous communities. The borders and boundaries of colonial occupation remain the enforced borders and boundaries of Indigenous Christians in Western churches, in governance, in theology, in faith. The trajectory of the Word of God in Indigenous life, the vibrant and surprising story of the Gospel's unlikely yet astounding progress among Indigenous Peoples is ignored, trivialized, or denied.

It appears that the Western churches are still saying, in order for the Word to become flesh and dwell among Indigenous Peoples, they must first abandon their culture. Jesus can only become living and real if you see him through Western values and institutions. Such an approach is absurd and idolatrous. That it has such strong currency among Western churches is a testimony to the systemic power of colonialism and the on-going influence of the Doctrine of Discovery.

### *A Preliminary Response*

A full response to D035 must unfold over time. We would do harm to predict its outcome and then act on the prediction. We can, however, outline some of the broad steps that would make a robust preliminary response, to place us on a right path:

- 1) Promote and proclaim D035 as the Resolution outlines.
- 2) Begin at every level, as soon as possible, an introduction to the damage caused by the Doctrine of Discovery.

- 3) Immediately recognize the primal and aboriginal authority of Indigenous nations, recognizing their right to exist and treating them with the respect and dignity that they deserve as the first and founding nations of North American life.
- 4) Recognize that the Indigenous Nations transcend the borders of colonial occupation. To enforce these borders on Indigenous social development and community is an endorsement of the Doctrine of Discovery (and a violation of the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.).
- 5) The Church must advocate that the United States and Canada must end their refusal to join the rest of the nations of the world and sign on to the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- 6) The living relationship that Indigenous Peoples have with the environment means that the destructive pattern of colonial economic development creates a special risk for the life and life ways of the People of the Land and Seas. To honour and protect this special relationship must be a top priority for the advocacy of Western churches.
- 7) Leadership and congregational development within Indigenous Peoples must be designed with the hidden assumptions of the Doctrine of Discovery exposed and eliminated. Theological formation must include decolonization.
- 8) The church must begin a process that will allow Indigenous church communities decide their own destiny on the basis of their full and aboriginal authority as peoples, tribes, and nations.
- 9) In Indigenous thought, Spirit animates matter. Separating the spiritual from the physical, especially in social life is deadly. The way that the West cleaves these can not be imposed on Indigenous nations, especially by the church. Only the life of the spirit is transformative in Indigenous life.
- 10) Last and most important, The Gospel alone must be the centre point and the vehicle of
- 11) Indigenous church development. The goal of the Gospel is the Word's incarnation in Indigenous communities. This is the framework for Indigenous missiology.

The scandal of Indigenous poverty in their own lands is rarely given its due weight, even by those who would seek to help them. Poverty reduction, as praiseworthy a project as it is, is not likely to create real change until the real reasons for Indigenous poverty are addressed. The dispossession of their lands, the lack of compensation or reparation, and the continuing assault

on their cultures, families, and clans is an injustice that cannot be remedied with well-meaning charity and Western sociology. If there is to be a positive relationship between Western institutions and Indigenous Peoples, it must be built on the foundation of the very real commitment that is imagined in the actions of The General Convention. Without such actions, the churches of the West will live in a prison of systemic evil that is the antithesis of the freedom and life that is promised in the Cross of Christ.

Despite the daunting nature of the struggle to dismantle the Doctrine of Discovery, it is a path that promises much. If truly applied and followed, D035 could be the beginning of a spiritual reconciliation and awakening that would reach every particle of our spiritual and theological ecology.

## RESOLUTION D035

### \* FINAL VERSION - Concurred

*Resolution:* **D035**  
*Title:* **Repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery**  
*Topic:* **Reconciliation**  
*Committee:* **09 - National and International Concerns**  
*House of Initial Action:* **Deputies**  
*Proposer:* **Dr. John Chaffee**

*Resolved*, That the 76<sup>th</sup> General Convention repudiates and renounces the Doctrine of Discovery as fundamentally opposed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and our understanding of the inherent rights that individuals and peoples have received from God, and that this declaration be proclaimed among our churches and shared with the United Nations and all the nations and peoples located within the Episcopal Church's boundaries. This doctrine, which originated with Henry VII in 1496, held that Christian sovereigns and their representative explorers could assert dominion and title over non-Christian lands with the full blessing and sanction of the Church. It continues to be invoked, in only slightly modified form, in court cases and in the many destructive policies of governments and other institutions of the modern nation-state that lead to the colonizing dispossession of the lands of indigenous peoples and the disruption of their way of life; and be it further

*Resolved*, that The Episcopal Church review its policies and programs with a view to exposing the historical reality and impact of the Doctrine of Discovery and eliminating its presence in its contemporary policies, program, and structures and, further, that this body directs the appropriate representatives of the House of Bishops and House of Deputies, to inform all relevant governmental bodies in The United States of its action and suggest similar and equivalent review of historical and contemporary policies that contribute to the continuing colonization of Indigenous Peoples and, further, to write to Queen Elizabeth II, the Supreme Governor of the Church of England, requesting that her Majesty disavow, and repudiate publicly, the claimed validity of the Christian Doctrine of Discovery; and be it further

*Resolved*, that each diocese within the Episcopal Church be encouraged to reflect upon its own history, in light of these actions and encourage all Episcopalians to seek a greater understanding of the Indigenous Peoples within the geo-political boundaries claimed by the United States and other nation states located within the Episcopal Church's boundaries, and to support those peoples in their ongoing efforts for their inherent sovereignty and fundamental human rights as peoples to be respected; and be it further

*Resolved*, that the 76<sup>th</sup> General Convention direct the Office of Government Relations to advocate for the U.S. government's endorsement of the "United Nations Declaration on the

Rights of Indigenous Peoples,” which the United States has refused to endorse (only the U.S., Canada, New Zealand, and Australia have failed to sign on).

<http://www.manataka.org/page94.html>

*Editor's Note: This article was selected as the author begins by telling of how he was involved with his children in the retelling of adult materials on Native American history and culture. This DVD and CD are primarily for adults and young adults, so how will you re-tell its story to children and youths? Or as the author suggests if you agree with the doctrine of discovery you will probably do nothing.*

*Two Kinds of Beings:  
The Doctrine of Discovery  
And Its Implications for Yesterday and Today*

*by Robert Francis*

Our son John is 14 years old and in his eighth-grade year. He's been home educated for the past five years, as have all four of our children.... or offspring. (Three of the four hardly qualify as children anymore.) Eight years ago, John was in kindergarten, Sarah was in third grade, Peter was in fourth. Luke was still enjoying *Barney and Friends* and *Sesame Street*. At the beginning of the public school year, I spoke to the children's teachers, "If you'd like me to come in and talk to the class about American Indian history, cultures or contemporary life, just let me know," I said. "I'll be glad to do it."

John's kindergarten teacher invited me to come to her class on Tuesday before Thanksgiving. As I entered the room, I looked around to see paper cutouts of red leaves, orange pumpkins and brown turkeys taped to the walls along with modestly clad Pilgrims and nearly naked Indians. Before I arrived, the children had been busy preparing their costumes for the next day's Thanksgiving parade. Half the class was making Pilgrim hats, bonnets and aprons. The other half was making paper-sack Indian vests along with construction-paper headbands and feathers. Quietly, I wondered what the celebration of Martin Luther King's Birthday might be. Would half the class be in black-face and half in Ku Klux Klan robes?

Among other things, I shared the story of Tisquantum (called "Squanto" in the history books). Kidnapped by the English and taken as a slave to Europe not once but twice, upon his second return to his homeland, Tisquantum still had enough charity or naiveté to help the starving Pilgrims get a foothold in this land. After the story, I asked if anyone had a question. A hand belonging to a little red-headed girl

with a freckled face and blue eyes was first to shoot up. "Are you a person, or are you an Indian?" was the question she asked.

This spring (April 2003) I was asked by the Colorado Baptist Convention to travel to Denver and speak to the ethnic Baptist ministers and their families from all over the state. "Ethnic" here is used to mean all who are outside the dominant Anglo-Saxon ethnicity. I went to the event dressed in full Cherokee regalia of the 1830s period, in order to illustrate the point of my talk, that being, "Whoever you are, your story is sacred, and the story of your people is sacred." Before the program got underway that evening, everyone was milling around, meeting one another and looking at the various displays from the different ethnic groups involved. I was standing there, looking at one of the displays, when I noticed a little boy, about five years old, intently looking at me. This little boy had short straight black hair, coppery brown skin and dark brown eyes. He was standing there with his father. I found out shortly that their family had moved to Colorado from Mexico. But the first words this little boy said to me were, "Are you a person or are you an Indian?"

From the mouths of children, the truth is revealed. According to the prevailing wisdom of five-year-olds, there are two kinds of beings inhabiting this country. The majority are non-Indians. The remainders are non-persons. Now, before you laugh or pass this off as childish foolishness rather than a statement of how things really are, please consider a few things.

On August 6, 2001, Ralph Boyd, Jr., U.S. Assistant Attorney for Civil Rights and Lorne Craner, Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, testified before the United Nations Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Among many other questions concerning race relations in the United States, the two high-level U.S. officials were asked, "What is the United States position with respect to its 1863 treaty with the Western Shoshone Indians?"

The treaty in question was the Ruby Valley Treaty, which, in 1863, clearly recognized the sovereignty and the territorial boundaries of the Western Shoshone Nation. But now, there seemed to be an issue of 24 million acres of that land that the U.S. wanted to buy from the Shoshones. When the Shoshones refused to sell the land and refused to accept the money, the U.S. government paid the Secretary of Interior's office \$26 million. The government claimed that paying itself a little over a dollar an acre for the land in question extinguished the Western Shoshone's title.

How did Boyd and Craner answer the U.N. committee's question concerning the U.S. treaty with the Western Shoshones? They referred to the 1823 United States Supreme Court decision of Johnson v.

McIntosh. Boyd and Craner said the Johnson decision held that, “as a result of European discovery, the Native Americans had a right to occupancy and possession.” But “tribal rights to complete sovereignty were necessarily diminished by the principle that discovery gave exclusive title to those who made it.”

Well, whatever this Johnson decision was, it must be pretty important, if the United States Government can rely on it as legal grounds for arbitrarily taking possession of another 24 million acres of Indian land pretty much anytime they want. What is this thing? And what's behind it?

In 1823, writing for the Court who had unanimously sided with Johnson, Chief Justice John Marshall observed that European nations had assumed "ultimate dominion" over the lands of America during the Age of Discovery, and that upon “discovery” the Indians lost “their rights to complete sovereignty, as independent nations,” and retained only a right of “occupancy” in their lands. Marshall went on to write that the United States, upon winning independence, became successor nation to the right of “discovery” acquiring the power of “dominion” from Great Britain. “As early as 1496,” Marshall continued, “her (England's) monarch granted a commission to the Cabots, to discover countries then unknown to Christian people, and to take possession of them in the name of the king of England.”

Supreme Court Justice Joseph Story wrote, “As infidels, heathens, and savages, they (the Indians) were not allowed to possess the prerogatives belonging to absolute, sovereign and independent nations.”

Christian versus heathen.

That sort of language did not begin in 1823. In 1452, Pope Nicholas V became aware that Portugal had begun a slave trade along the west coast of Africa. Pope Nicholas really liked this. To make it look as though he had come up with the idea himself, Pope Nicholas V issued to King Alfonso V of Portugal, the bull *Romanus Pontifex*.

*... [W]e bestow suitable favors and special graces on those Catholic kings and princes, ... athletes and intrepid champions of the Christian faith ... to invade, search out, capture, vanquish, and subdue all Saracens and pagans whatsoever, and other enemies of Christ whosoever placed, and ... to reduce their persons to perpetual slavery, and to apply and appropriate ... possessions, and goods, and to convert them to ... their use and profit...*

This was a basic declaration of war against all non-Christians throughout the earth, specifically sanctioning and promoting the conquest, colonization, and exploitation of non-Christian nations and their territories. In today's rhetoric, this papal bull would be called a mandate for terrorism. Non-

Christians were considered enemies of the Catholic faith. As such, they were considered less than human, in effect, non-persons.

When Columbus sailed toward this hemisphere in 1492, it was with the understanding that he was to “take possession” of any lands he “discovered” so long as they were “not under the dominion of any Christian rulers.” As soon as he set foot on the beach of Guanahani Island, Columbus performed a ceremony to “take possession” of the land for the king and queen of Spain, in accordance with the bull Romanus Potifex.

The Taino people discovered Christopher Columbus on their shores in the Caribbean Islands in October of 1492. At that time, the Taino were a nation of more than 15 million human beings. The largest population was on the island of Bohi’o (around eight million). Bohi’o is known today as Espanola. The countries of Haiti and the Dominican Republic are on this island. On Christmas Eve, 1492, Columbus wrecked the Santa Maria near the shore of Bohi’o. The people helped Columbus get all the goods of the ship to dry land before it sank. Afterward, of the people and the country, Columbus had this to say....

*.... They are an affectionate people, free from avarice and agreeable to everything. I certify to Your Highnesses that in all the world I do not believe there is a better people or a better country. They love their neighbors as themselves, and they have the softest and gentlest voices and are always smiling.... – Columbus’ Log.*

When Columbus returned to Europe, Pope Alexander VI issued a new papal document, at the request of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, granting Spain the right to conquer the lands Columbus had already “discovered” as well as any that might be “discovered” in the future. This document was the bull Inter Caetera of May 3, 1493. (Read Papal Bull of 1493)

In his absence, the Spanish seamen left behind took advantage of the Taino hospitality on Bohi’o by attempting to take control of the island. After seeing the true intent of the invaders, the Taino fought back, but were overcome when Columbus came the second time with 17 ships, loaded with canon, war dogs, armed soldiers and horses. Bohi’o was turned into a giant concentration camp where two objectives were met: the mining of gold through forced labor and the extermination of the people. By the time Columbus was relieved of his duties as governor of the Island in 1500, only 100 thousand Taino were left alive there. This is a population reduction of 7.9 million people within a period of less than eight years! After he left the Caribbean, Columbus’ policies remained in effect. Within 50 years the entire area was depopulated. By then slaves were being brought from Africa as well as from the main lands of North and South America.

Of course, Ferdinand and Isabella decreed that a statement be read to any “discovered” people before the advent of hostilities. The “Requirement” was read in Latin or Spanish, witnessed by a notary. That the people could neither speak nor understand Latin or Spanish was of little note.

*On the part of the king, Don Fernando, and of Doña Juana, his daughter, queen of Castile and Leon, subduers of the barbarous nations, we their servants notify and make known to you, as best we can, that the Lord our God, living and eternal, created the heaven and the earth, and one man and one woman, of whom you and we, and all the men of the world, were and are descendants, and all those who come after us. ...*

*Of all these nations God our Lord gave charge to one man, called St. Peter, that he should be lord and superior of all the men in the world, that all should obey him, and that he should be the head of the whole human race, wherever men should live, and under whatever law, sect, or belief they should be; and he gave him the world for his kingdom and jurisdiction.*

*...One of these pontiffs, who succeeded that St. Peter as lord of the world in the dignity and seat which I have before mentioned, made donation of these isles and Terra-firma to the aforesaid king and queen and to their successors, our lords, with all that there are in these territories,....*

*... Wherefore, as best we can, we ask and require you that you consider what we have said to you, and that you take the time that shall be necessary to understand and deliberate upon it, and that you acknowledge the Church as the ruler and superior of the whole world, ....*

*...But if you do not do this, and maliciously make delay in it, I certify to you that, with the help of God, we shall powerfully enter into your country, and shall make war against you in all ways and manners that we can, and shall subject you to the yoke and obedience of the Church and of their highnesses; we shall take you, and your wives, and your children, and shall make slaves of them, and as such shall sell and dispose of them as their highnesses may command; and we shall take away your goods, and shall do you all the mischief and damage that we can, as to vassals who do not obey, and refuse to receive their lord, and resist and contradict him: and we protest that the deaths and losses which shall accrue from this are your fault, and not that of their highnesses, or ours, nor of these cavaliers who come with us. ....*

Some of the hostilities which, according to the “Requirement” the people brought upon themselves, were described in some detail by the Spanish Priest Las Casas.

*“And the Christians, with their horses and swords and pikes began to carry out massacres and strange cruelties against them. They attacked the towns and spared neither the children nor the aged nor pregnant women nor women in childbed, not only stabbing them and dismembering them but cutting them to pieces as if dealing with sheep in the slaughter house. They laid bets as to who, with one stroke of the sword, could split a man in two or could cut off his head or spill out his entrails with a single stroke of the pike. They took infants from their mothers’ breasts, snatching them by the legs and pitching them headfirst against the crags or snatched them by the arms and threw them into the rivers, roaring with laughter and saying as the babies fell into the water, ‘Boil there, you offspring of the devil!’ ... They made some low wide gallows on which the hanged victim’s feet almost touched the ground, stringing up their victims in lots of thirteen, in memory of Our Redeemer and His twelve Apostles, then set burning wood at their feet and thus burned them alive. To others they attached straw or wrapped their whole bodies in straw and set them afire. With still others, all those they wanted to capture alive, they cut off their hands and hung them round the victim’s neck, saying, ‘Go now, carry the message’ meaning, Take the news to the Indians who have fled to the mountains. They usually dealt with the chieftains and nobles in the following way: they made a grid of rods which they placed on forked sticks, then lashed the victims to the grid and lighted a smoldering fire underneath, so that little by little, as those captives screamed in despair and torment, their souls would leave them.”*

All these behaviors were understood by the Conquistadores to be justified by the papal bulls, which, in turn, were understood to be based on the Bible, such Old Testament passages as these from the Psalms:

*"Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. You will rule them with an iron scepter; you will dash them to pieces like pottery." – Psalm 2:8-9 N.I.V.*

*May the praise of God be in their mouths and a double-edged sword in their hands, to inflict vengeance on the peoples, to bind their kings with fetters, their nobles with shackled of iron, to carry out the sentence written against them. This is the glory of all his saints. Praise the Lord. – Psalm 149:6-9 N.I.V.*

Add to this the Old Testament Book of Joshua which tells the story of the “chosen” people of Israel entering the “promised land” of Canaan, destroying whole cities of people: men, women, children, even livestock.

Captain John Smith was an admirer of Columbus and the Conquistadores, as were the Puritans of Massachusetts and the Founding Fathers of the United States. Just as the Spanish before them, these English immigrants to North America imagined themselves as the “chosen” people of Israel and the Indian inhabitants of the land as the Canaanites, doomed to destruction or subjection. In this country, a

pre-contact population of from 12 to 20 million indigenous human beings was reduced to 200 thousand by 1920. The present American Indian population of the United States is around four million, most of which are of mixed ancestry.

According to recent U.S. Government statistics, 110 of every 1,000 American Indians in the U.S. were victims of violent crime within a given period of five years (1993-1998). This compares to 43 per 1,000 for blacks and 38 per 1,000 for whites. It is also noted that while most violent crimes committed against blacks were committed *by* blacks, and most violent crimes committed against whites were committed *by* whites, most violent crimes committed against Indians were committed by *non-Indians*. Another government study found that one-in-ten hate crimes in the U.S. are committed against American Indians. American Indians comprise less than 2% of the U.S. population! In the United States, Children are taught in school that while it is wrong to kill human beings, a person may kill thousands, millions, even entire nations of Indians and be celebrated, even worshipped as a hero. When attempts are made at teaching about American Indians, it's often done by teaching children to play Indian, promoting stereotypical thinking or mocking the complex cultures of Indian peoples. In church, children often learn a hateful theology that says God left Indian people in spiritual darkness for thousands of years, until Europeans arrived and brought God to this land.

As a follower of Jesus, this theology of racism that gives legitimacy to conquest and genocide is most offensive to me. I understand Jesus to be Eternal Creator-Son, not bound by time or distance or oceans or anything. According to John 1:9, Jesus is "The true light that gives light to every [person]...." The good news Jesus came to bring, the news of Creator's awesome love is not foreign to any people. Jesus himself said his followers are not identified simply by words professed, i.e. "Lord, Lord," but by love shown to neighbors and even to enemies (Matthew 7:21; John 13:35; Matthew 5:44-45). Columbus himself testified to Creator's presence with the people of the Caribbean, saying they were "In-Dio" (With God). Those who say Columbus or even the missionaries brought God to America are making Columbus and the missionaries out to be greater than God. This theology justifies the theft, the rape, the murder, anything and everything, for all is done in the name of Christ.

Even our Indian people believe these lies. American Indians are five-times more likely to commit suicide than are people of any other ethnicity in this country. Most of these are our young people, our teenagers, who are taught in school and even in church, that our ancestors were worthless savages, standing in the way of progress, and so had to be wiped out. If it was all in the past, maybe we could forget it. But it's not all in the past.

The U.S. Supreme Court's decision for Johnson in 1823 has been used by the United States to justify the breaking of hundreds of treaties the U.S. entered into with Indian nations; despite the fact that the United States Constitution says all such treaties are "the supreme Law of the Land." This ruling has been used to justify the stealing of the homelands of Indian peoples living east of the Mississippi through the Indian Removal Act of 1835. It was used to justify the General Allotment Act of 1887, robbing Indian people of an additional 90 million acres of their lands. It was used to steal the Black Hills from the Sioux in violation of the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie. It was used to justify the U.S. Government paying itself for 24 million acres of Western Shoshone land, extinguishing the title granted in the 1863 Ruby Valley Treaty. These are just a few examples.

In the case of *Standing Bear vs. Crook* (April 1879), Judge Elmer S. Dundy ruled that an Indian is a person. As a result of this case, the United States government did allow Chief Standing Bear and a small group of Poncas to remain on a fragment of their ancestral homeland in Nebraska, rather than being forcibly sent back to Indian Territory. However, within a short time, General William T. Sherman arbitrarily decreed that Judge Dundy's ruling "does not apply to any other than that specific case."

In 1973, a federal judge told the Blackfeet Tribe, "The blunt fact... is that an Indian tribe is sovereign to the extent that the United States permits it to be sovereign - neither more nor less."

All this is based on the decision of 1823, which in turn is based solely on the Doctrine of Christian European Discovery. This doctrine, in turn, is based on the papal bulls of the 1400s, which are themselves based on an ethnocentric and racist reading of the Christian scriptures.... a theology of conquest, a holdover of the Dark Ages, which, indeed, has brought an age of darkness to us.

James Madison wrote, "Religion is not in the purview of human government. Religion is essentially distinct from civil government, and exempt from its cognizance; a connection between them is injurious to both."

Thomas Jefferson said that when the state uses church doctrine as a coercive tool, the result is "hypocrisy and meanness." This is the understatement of the past millennium!

You may have thought there was a healthy separation of church and state in this country. However, the U.S. Indian policies of today are based on the assumption that since our American Indian ancestors did not possess the Christian Bible and had no connection with any European church at the time of first European contact; our ancestors were simply brute animals occupying the land. Furthermore, because of

our ancestral connections and regardless of any present religious connections, Indians of today are ourselves, non-persons, with no true sovereign rights within our own ancestral homelands.

In 1993, 500 years after its issuance, the Indigenous Law Institute petitioned Pope John Paul II to renounce the Inter Caetera bull. Seven years later, in March 2000, the Pope openly begged God to forgive the sins of the "sons and daughters" of the Church. His stated goal was to purify the memory of the Church by expressing sorrow for misdeeds committed by Christians over the past 2,000 years. The Pope failed to mention particular historical cases and made only an extremely obscure reference to American Indians. In response to the petition to renounce the Inter Caetera bull, there has been nothing but stony silence.

In conclusion, I will say again: There are two kinds of beings inhabiting this country: non-Indians and non-persons.

If you agree with this conclusion, do nothing.

If you disagree with this conclusion. If you actually believe that American Indians are, in fact, persons and that American Indian tribes and nations are, in fact, peoples, then I challenge you to do something to prove your belief. Educate yourself on these issues. A good place to start is with the Indigenous Law Institute website. Discuss these issues in your home, in your church and within any other groups to which you belong. Write your congressman. Ask him why in the world current U.S. Indian policy is based on archaic church doctrine. While you're at it, ask your congressman why our tax dollars (including the tax dollars of non-persons like me) are used to fund a national holiday that celebrates a mass murderer. Finally, talk to a Roman Catholic clergyman in your hometown. Ask him why the church has not renounced these papal bulls that continue their damage to this very day. Discuss this also with non-Catholic clergy.

Most Christian denominations in the United States have roots in the Roman Catholic Church of the 15th Century, and non-Catholic church leaders and governments have taken the Doctrine of Christian European Discovery as their own in these past centuries. If churches and denominations openly renounce (even ceremonially burn) the bull Romanus Pontifex and the bull Inter Caetera, the evil of the Doctrine of Discovery will be revealed. This could start a stir that could ultimately lead to a complete change in U.S. Indian policy and in government policy toward indigenous peoples throughout the earth.

*“You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment’ But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, ‘Raca’ (You worthless thing!) is answerable to the Sanhedrin (Council or Court). But anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ (You who have no relationship with Creator!) will be in danger of the fire of hell.*

*“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.*

*“Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still with him on the way, or he may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. I tell you the truth, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny” - Mathew 5:21-26 N.I.V.*

## ONLINE RESOURCES

### PAPAL BULLS

1452 (June 18) *Dum diversas* Nicholas V Authorizes Afonso V of Portugal to reduce any Muslims, pagans and other unbelievers to perpetual slavery.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dum\\_diversas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dum_diversas)

1456 (March 13) *Inter Caetera* Calixtus III Confirmed the Bull *Romanus Pontifex* and gave the Portuguese Order of Christ the spiritualities of all lands acquired and to be acquired.

1493 (May 4) *Inter caetera* ("Among the other") Alexander VI Divides the New World between Spain and Portugal.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inter\\_caetera](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inter_caetera)

1493 (June 25) *Piis Fidelium* Alexander VI Grants Spain vicarial power to appoint missionaries to the Indies.

1537 (May 29) *Sublimus Dei* Paul III Forbids the enslavement of the indigenous peoples of the Americas.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sublimus\\_Dei](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sublimus_Dei)

### THE DOCTRINE OF DISCOVERY

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discovery\\_doctrine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discovery_doctrine)

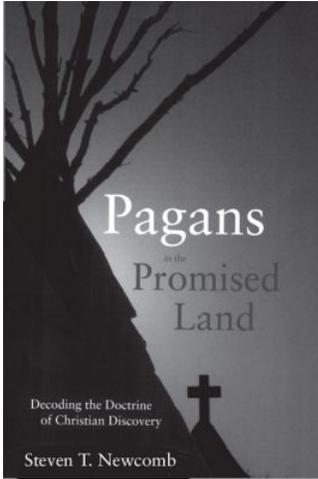
Unitarian Congregation Repudiates The Doctrine of Discovery, Third Church to Join Repudiation Movement, by Gale Courtney Toensing, Story published: Feb 14, 2010

<http://www.indiancountrytoday.com/home/content/84226102.html>

Episcopal Church repudiates Doctrine of Discovery, Urges US adoption of Un Declaration, By Gale Courtney Toensing, Story published: Jul 26, 2009

<http://www.indiancountrytoday.com/national/southwest/51572857.html>

## BOOKS AND OTHER DVDS



A review by Linford D. Fisher in an online article “The Doctrine of Christian Discovery”

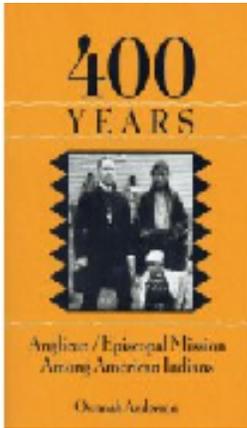
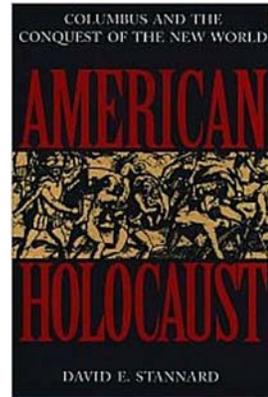
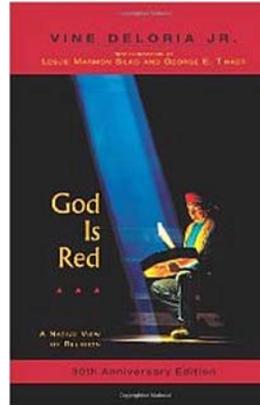
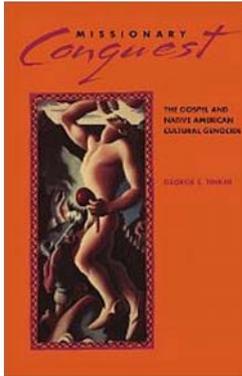
<http://usreligion.blogspot.com/2009/11/doctrine-of-christian-discovery.html>

Most of the sessions I attended were—unsurprisingly—focused on issues related to North America’s indigenous populations, past and present. Two presentations stuck out to me. The first was by Steve Newcomb of the Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation, titled “The Myth of Christian Discovery in Federal Indian Law,” which I took to

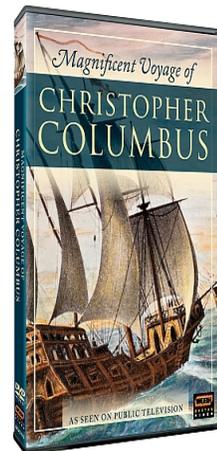
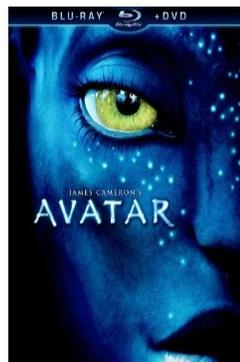
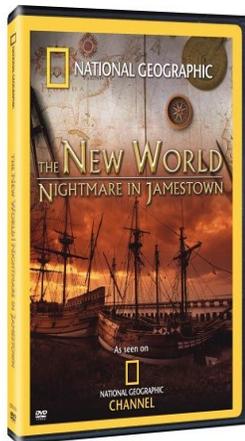
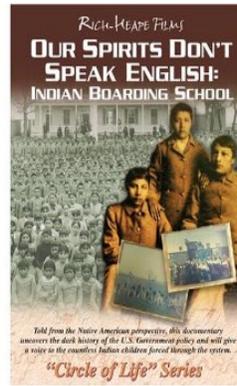
be a summary of his 2008 book, *Pagans in the Promised Land: Decoding the Doctrine of Christian Discovery* (Fulcrum).

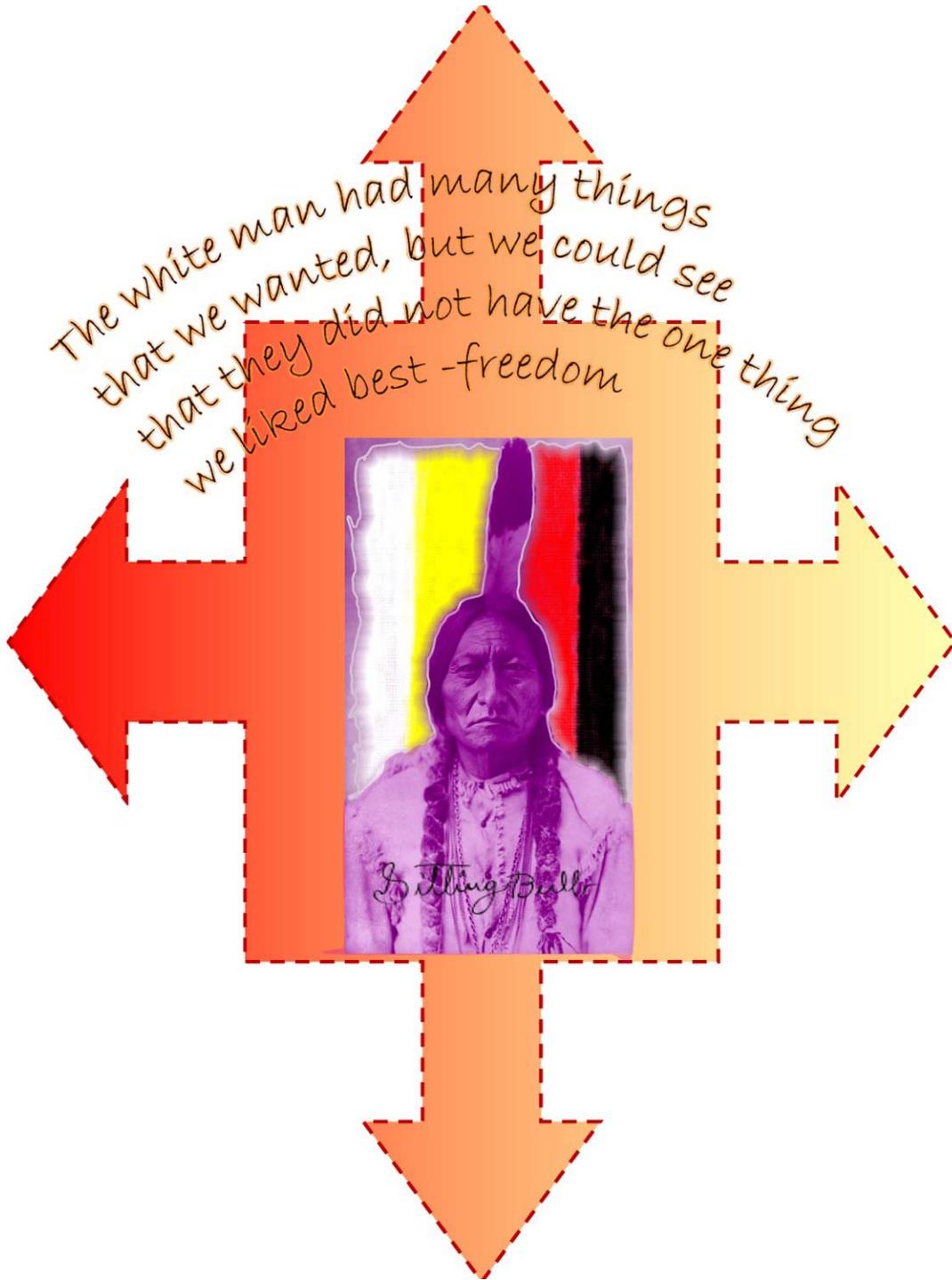
Newcomb laid out how the “Doctrine of Discovery”—essentially the European notion that first “discovery” of new lands meant they held exclusive and transferable rights to and dominion over the land, resources, and people that inhabited those lands—has a longer, specifically Christian history that is rooted in Old Testament notions of divinely-sanctioned conquest and a pervasive belief in the “chosen-ness” of a particular nation. More importantly, these ill-founded European beliefs, Newcomb argued, formed the ideological and intellectual rational for what is undoubtedly the watershed nineteenth century legal case regarding Native American land in the U.S.: *Johnson v. McIntosh* (1823), which proclaimed that the U.S. had acquired a free title to its lands through widely recognized standards of European colonization, thereby establishing the legal basis for U.S. occupation of lands and limiting the sale and purchase of additional Indians lands to the U.S. government, not to individuals. (Although, as Stuart Banner points out in *How the Indians Lost Their Land*, this process of centralizing land sales had been in motion since early colonial times.)

OTHER BOOKS



DVD





## *THIS LAND BELONGS TO US*

We are all familiar with the Exodus story of Moses and Israelites leaving the land of pharaoh and Egypt. It is one of the first Biblical stories I remember coloring in at Sunday school and the image is kept alive by the re-runs every Easter of Charlton Heston as Moses and Yul Brynner as Pharaoh in the *Ten Commandments*. You can hear Heston demanding of the bald-headed Bruner, “Let my people go!” In the Bible, the script reads that Moses and the Israelites left Egypt: ‘GOD, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you with this message, “Release my people so that they can worship me in the wilderness. So far you haven’t listened.” (Exodus 7, p. 116)

The same plea was made here in Native America but by another holy man, the Lakota chief, Tatanka Yotanka or Sitting Bull. He spelled it out in an interview with a journalist James Creel in 1882. He said:

*This land belongs to us, for the Great Spirit gave it to us when he put us here. We were free to come and go, and to live in our own way. But white men, who belong to another land, have come upon us, and are forcing us to live according to their ideas. That is an injustice, we have never dreamed of making white men live as we live.*

*. . . I have seen nothing that as white man has, houses or railways or clothing or food, that is as good as the right to move in the open country, and live in our own fashion. . . . There! Your soldiers made a mark like that in our country [a square], and said that we must live there. They fed us well, and sent their doctors to heal our sick. They said that we should live without having to work. But they told us that we must go only so far in this direction, and only so far in that direction. . . . The white men had many things that we wanted, but we could see that they did not have the one thing we liked best – freedom. I would rather live in a tipi and go without meat when game is scarce than give up my privileges as a free Indian, even though I could have all that white have. . . . I have spoken. (Native Universe, p. 192)*

*Reflections to consider:*

*Why did the Israelites want to leave Pharaoh's land? What was it that God wanted Moses and Israelites to do in the wilderness?*

*Pharaoh is considered by God to be stubborn for not letting the Israelites leave but Moses never compromises either. What would have happen if either party gave in a little?*

*God is not the name given to Moses – we are told it is something like I AM or I AM WHAT I AM – how different is that from “Great Spirit”?*

*What is the Lakota way of life?*

*Who is Sitting Bull and why is he so stubborn?*

*What was his journey in the wilderness?*

*Why doesn't he just accept what he is given?*

*Why would he choose poverty to having someone else's wealth?*

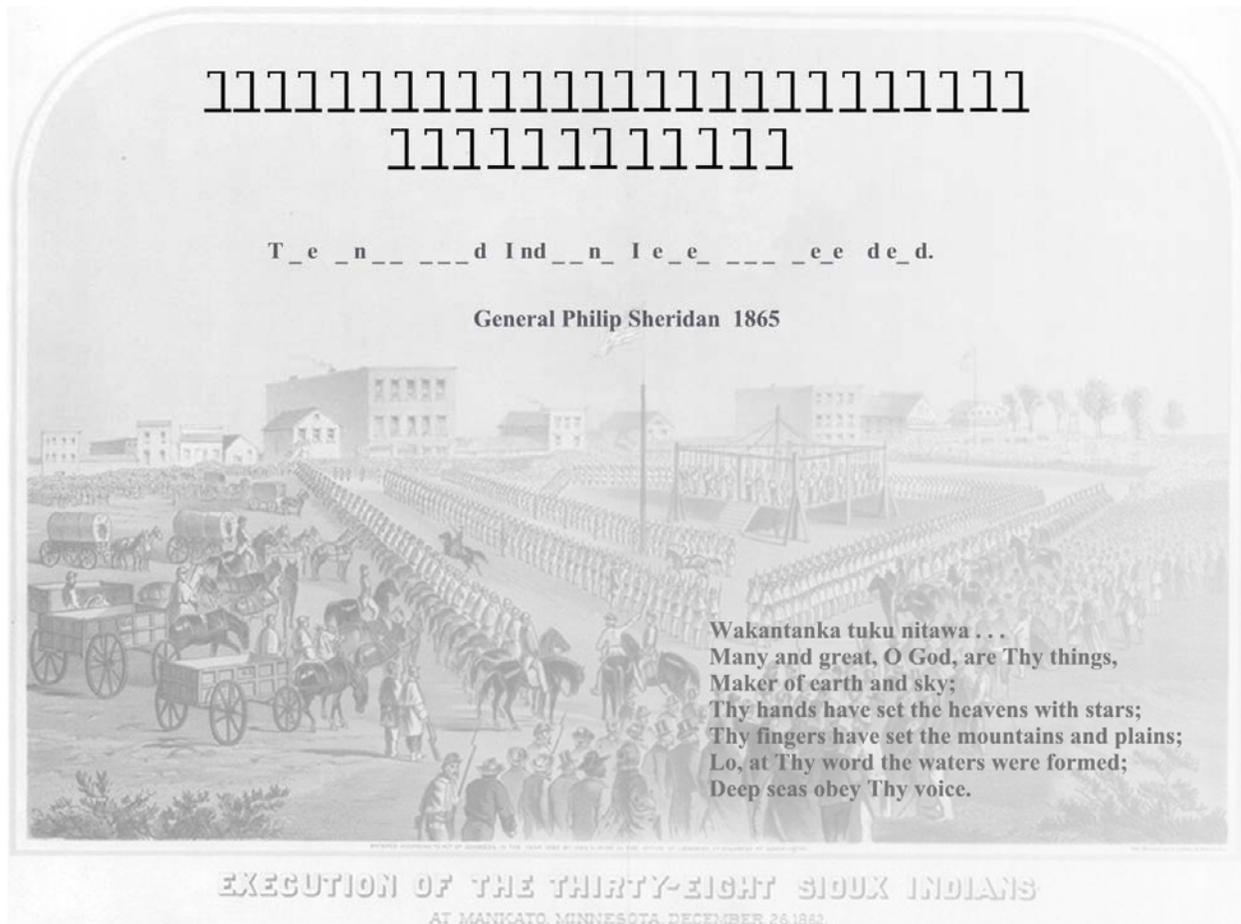
Sitting Bull states that his people were here first. That is what is meant by being “indigenous” and that the white men came from someplace else but were “forcing us to live according to their ideas.” He is describing what is known as the “doctrine of discovery.”

*What has been the effect good and or bad?*

*How have you benefited from the “doctrine of discovery” or have you not?*

*It has been one hundred and twenty-eight (128) years since this interview – has things changed for Native Americans – in the church?*

*The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language, Eugene H. Peterson, Navpress, 2002, Colorado Springs, CO; Native Universe, Voices of Indian America, Ed. By Gerald McMaster and Clifford E. Trafzer, National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, National Geographic, 2004, Washington, D.C. Contributed by Malcolm Naea Chun (Native Hawaiian)*



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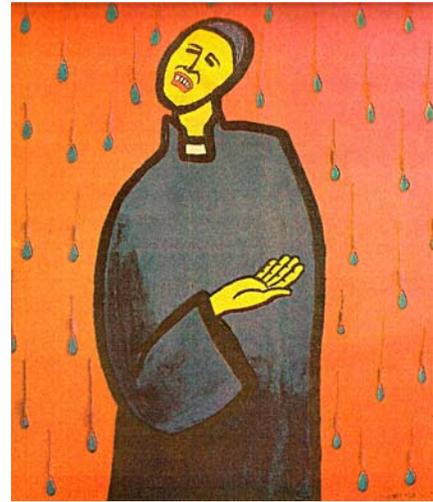
## MANY AND GREAT, O GOD, ARE THY THINGS

The largest mass execution in American history was committed at 10 a.m. on December 26, 1862, in Mankato, Minnesota. 38 Native Americans of the Dakota people were hung on orders of the President of the United States of America having been tried by a military commission. Up to 40 cases a day were heard by the five man commission with some lasting only five minutes and the prisoners were without any defense counsel.

Authority for the final order of execution was passed to President Lincoln. He was being pressured by American people retribution for what was then called the Sioux Uprising against

the American settlers in the new state of Minnesota. They wanted the immediate execution of the 303 still on the condemned list. Interceding on behalf of the Dakota was Episcopalian Bishop Henry Whipple, known to the Indians as "Straight Tongue" for his honesty and fair dealings with the Dakota. Presbyterian missionaries to the Dakota also supported a fair trial.

Whipple was a champion for the cause of Native American groups in the state against what he saw as an abusive and corrupt Federal policy towards Indians, even at risk of endangering the establishing of his new diocese. Whipple traveled to Washington to meet with Lincoln and discuss the causes of the Dakota Conflict. By Lincoln's own account, the visit impressed him deeply and he pledged to reform Indian affairs. President Lincoln pardoned 265 at the urging of Bishop Whipple. But his intervention was not popular at the time.



"38 Tears of Bishop Whipple" © by the Rev. Robert Two Bulls. A post modern icon of Bishop Whipple. Used by Permission of Artist.

On August 17, 1862, four young Dakota men were on a hunting trip in Acton Township in Minnesota, where they stole food and killed five white settlers. Soon after a war council was convened the attacks on the settlements in an effort to drive them out continued on.

With military intervention the violence ended and 303 Dakota were taken prisoners. To prevent mob actions after the military trials, Lincoln asked two clerks to go through the commission's trial records and identify those prisoners convicted of raping women or children. They found only two. He then asked them search a second time and identify those convicted of participating in the massacres of settlers. This time they came up with the thirty-nine.

It was said that "The doomed ones wished it to be known among their friends, and particularly their wives and children, how cheerful and happy they all had died, exhibiting no fear of this dread event. To the skeptical it appeared not as an evidence of Christian faith, but as a

steadfast adherence to their heathen superstitions.” But during the night several were baptized, and received the communion of the Church.

The Indians sang as they left their prison and continued singing until the end. It is said that they were singing a death song which we know now as the Dakota hymn known in English as “Many and great, O God.” At the third drumbeats, the rope was cut that held the platform and the prisoners fell to their deaths. A loud cheer went up from the thousands of spectators gathered. Some doctors, including one named Mayo, arrived to collect cadavers for their medical research and the rest were buried in an amass grave.

Many and great, O God, are Thy things,  
Maker of earth and sky;  
Thy hands have set the heavens with stars;  
Thy fingers spread the mountains and plains.  
Lo, at Thy Word the waters were formed;  
Deep seas obey Thy voice.

Grant unto us communion with Thee,  
Thou star abiding One;  
Come unto us and dwell with us;  
With Thee are found the gifts of life,  
Bless us with life that has no end,  
Eternal life with Thee.

Among many of the recorded stories of this event there are two lesser known ones that stand out for us to consider today:

After spending a freezing, disease-ridden winter at Fort Snelling, the remaining Dakota were banished to an inhospitable reservation in South Dakota. All, that is, except one man named Chaska. In an example personifying the trial defects, Chaska—who had saved the lives of captive white women—was errantly hanged instead of one Chaskaydon, convicted of shooting and mutilating a pregnant woman.

The marshal of the prison had gone to release Chaska: “[B]ut when I asked for him, the answer was ‘You hung him yesterday.’ I could not bring back the redskin. [Daniel W. Homstad and originally published in the December 2001 issue of *American History Magazine*.]



President Lincoln



Bishop Whipple

The other gives a perspective of the dilemma that Lincoln was caught up between what is morally right and what is politically expected. Some say that his actions were not unlike his Proclamation of Emancipation which was hailed as a landmark against slavery, but only to freed slaves already in Union territory and not in the Confederacy:

Ultimately Lincoln’s handling of the Dakota Conflict trial is another example, like the Emancipation Proclamation, of Lincoln’s ability to understand what he can and cannot do in a trying situation where there

is no perfect solution. Perhaps Lincoln's position is best summed up in a conversation he had with Minnesota Senator and former Governor Alexander Ramsey, who pushed hard for Lincoln to deal with the Dakota harshly. When Ramsey told Lincoln that his leniency towards the Dakota would cost the Republican votes in 1864 election, Lincoln is reported to have said to Ramsey, "I could not afford to hang men for votes." [Niles Anderegg, November 12, 2009 . . . 11:19 am in the President Lincoln's Cottage Blog.]

### *Reflections to Consider:*

*Contrast Bishop Whipple and President Lincoln in their responses to the conflict and their decision-making towards the Dakota; what can we learn from each of them as to what they did?*

*Do you know the hymn "Many and great, O God"? It is hymn 385 in the 1982 Episcopal Hymnal.*

*A midi file of the tune can be found online:*

<http://www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/m/a/mangreat.htm>

*What does the lesser known story of Chaska speak about justice and prejudice?*

Some scholars today believe that Lincoln reacted and decided based upon being a lawyer as well as politician. He had those who wanted Indians dead and church people like Bishop Whipple to please, so he took the middle ground.

*Was that a good decision? Study both sides of issue.*

*What do the Gospels speak to us about justice and prejudice? If you were Lincoln what would have you done and why?*

*Read more about Bishop Whipple online at:*

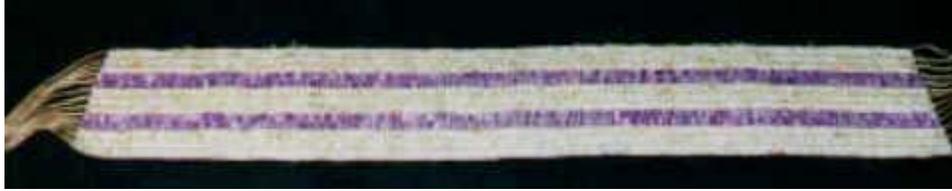
<http://anglicanhistory.org/usa/whipple/sanborn.html> and

<http://anglicanhistory.org/usa/whipple/flandrau.html> .

Read more in the interview with the Rev. Robert Two Bulls “Minnesota Priest’s Pop Art Challenges Stereotypes” by Pat McCaughan in “diocesan digest” of *Episcopal New Monthly* 2/1010, page 5.

Contributed by Malcolm Nāea Chun (Native Hawaiian)

## *THE TWO ROW WAMPUM BELT*



The Two Row is a visual record of the very first treaty the Six Nations made with 17th Century Dutch traders. The Wampum Belt memorializes that early agreement, that the Haudenosaunee would retain complete economic, political and cultural independence, or sovereignty in its dealings with the other nation.

Since then, the Two Row has remained an important element of Six Nations treaties. Each nation desiring to make a pact with the Haudenosaunee is first read the *Gustwenta* which is a description of the concepts behind the symbols on the Two Row Wampum Belt.

It is two rows of purple wampum, this wampum being quahog (clam) shell – this is the purple part of the shell. This is on a field of white. The purple lines represent the Haudenosaunee travelling in their canoe. Parallel to them, but not touching, is the path of the boat of the Europeans that came here.

In our canoe is our way of life, our language, our law and our customs and traditions. And in the boat, likewise are the European language, customs, traditions and law. We have said, please don't get out of your boat and try to steer our canoe. And we won't get out of our canoe and try to steer your boat. We're going to accept each other as sovereign – we're going to travel down this road of life together side by side.

*G. Peter Jemison*

Faithkeeper

Cattaraugus Reservation

Seneca Nation

From online: <http://www.pbs.org/warrior/content/modules/tworow.pdf>

And from online: <http://www.akwesasne.ca/tworowwampum.html>

The first newcomers and all those afterward were introduced to the Kaswentha or Two Row Wampum Belt which embodied the principals of Peace, Friendship and Mutual Respect. These principles formed the basis of the numerous treaties and agreements between Haudenosaunee and non-Haudenosaunee nations.

The Kaswentha or Two row Wampum Belt is a visual instrument that was made with two parallel rows of Purple Wampum on a bed of white beads

- The background of white Beads was meant to symbolize the purity of the agreement and some say that is represents the "River of Life".
- The two separate rows of Purple beads were made to symbolize and encompass the two separate peoples who was incorporated in the agreement. Some say it also represents the spirits of Haudenosaunee and non-Haudenosaunee people, past, present and future.
- Between the two rows of Purple beads, are three rows of white beads. These were made to stand for the Friendship, Peace and Respect between the two nations. As much as the three rows keep the two nations separate, it also binds them together.

Some say that the two rows of purple beads represent two separate vessels traveling parallel to each other down the `River of Life'. The Haudenosaunee are in their canoes. This symbolizes their culture, laws, traditions, customs and life-ways. The non Haudenosaunee are said is be in their ship, which symbolizes everything that they carry in their culture, laws, traditions, customs and lifeways.

It is said that each nation shall stay in their own vessels, and travel the River of Life side by side. It is further said that, neither nation will try to steer the vessel of the other, or interfere or impede the travel of the other.



The *Kaswentha* or *Two Row Wampum* is a treaty of respect for the dignity and integrity of the other nation, and stresses the importance of non-interference of one nation in the business of the other. The early principles established in the Kaswentha formed the basis of all Haudenosaunee treaties with other nations including the Dutch, the French, the British and the the Americans.

Contributed by the Rev. Canon Ginny Doctor (Mohawk)