



A Pastoral Letter by Nick Black Elk in *Šinasapa Wocekine Taeyanpaha*
Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, Series 14-1 Collected Publications

A pastoral letter by Nick Black Elk at Manderson, Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, South Dakota, undated; published in *Šinasapa Wocekine Taeyanpaha*, St. Michael's Mission, Fort Totten, Fort Totten Indian Reservation, North Dakota Vol. 12, no. 12 (July 15, 1908): Verso of supplement without pagination. Translated from Lakota to English under Michael F. Steltenkamp, S.J. Source: Marquette University, Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records (Series 14-1 General Publications, *Šinasapa Wocekine Taeyanpaha*, Box 25 Folder 19, Microfilm reel 19)

I will be going on a journey to Wyoming, the land of the Arapahoes. We are bringing Good News [about Jesus Christ] to these people—I and Joe Red Willow. They have selected us to go to the Araphahoes. We are invited by the majority of the people, and we had a really big meeting with the Arapahoes and what they want to know about is the St. Joseph and St. Mary's Societies. So we did the best we can. We told the Arapaho people that we, too, are very poor, and that there is no difference between them and us because we are both Indians. And they asked me to say a few words to the members there, so I told them about the St. Joseph and the St. Mary's organization. First how to conduct a meeting. And then I told them about the order of the meeting: that you've got to have a president, a vice-president, a secretary, treasurer, a critic, and a doorkeeper. And then they were so enthused that they are going to start their own St. Joseph and St. Mary Society there. And then they asked me how they should pray, so this is what I said to them. When you say the Our Father, remember that there is one Father and one Son. This is what you've got to believe. And after my talk, they were so interested so they want us to go back to the land of the Arapahoes again, in the near future.

What they want to know is how to pray. So I asked Fr. Westropp to send our prayer-books so they can translate in their own language [Arapaho]. Then they will have a prayer-book. While I was talking, I was talking in my own native [Lakota Sioux] language and Mr. Red Willow was translating my talk [into English for retranslation into Arapaho] because I do not talk English well. I know a few words and that is it.

The next thing that I will be talking about is how to elect officers. And we told them that you select a person who is worthy-- that has knowledge of being a leader, and that's the person that you select. And the vice president is the same way, in case the president is not there, then the vice will be there to take over. And the next position is the secretary. The secretary is to keep the minutes. And I told them that whatever they say are the main points that's what the secretary should write down and make it a good minutes. And a treasurer is responsible for all of the money that's been collected so as to keep an account and report this at each meeting. A critic is a person that if a person gets out of line, he should correct them and still accept it. And a doorkeeper is to shake his hand, then he will close the door and charge a fee for opening the door again. This is the organization of the St. Joseph and St. Mary society. They had a big election of officers while we were there. Andrew Jackson, president; Alfonso Goes In Lodge, vice president; Mr. Big Head is treasurer; Black Coal is secretary; Alfonso Moss, catechist.

The next Catholic Congress is in Rosebud. These officials are planning to come there, and to get more ideas while the meeting is going on. And there's many people who are suffering. The superior [of St. Francis Mission] told me to help these people and I went to every lodge, to help them. Fr. Westropp came by and talked to me about going back to the Arapaho. And he said he had received a new donation to build a church and a meeting house and I was really glad that they are beginning to take hold of their own and I hope in the near future that they start organizing and do the things that we are doing over here. So Fr. Westropp has told me that we are going to install some more catechists in our area, the Pine Ridge Reservation. The place where they are going to install these new catechists is at St. Paul's in Porcupine District. So now I will close my talk and wish you the best, and I will shake my hand from the bottom of my heart and I will remain as your friend,

Nick Black Elk

Fyanpaha.

Wotani, wašte on oicimani wanji waklaotanin kta wacin. Hekta Feb. 20 kin he enan Wyoming makoce ekta Malipiyato oyanke el wotani wašte onkaiyi. Joe Caršaša kici na oyate kin ob omniciye tanka onkagapi. Wakantanka okolakiciye tawa ope wicunš pi tka takuni eyapi šni. wocekiye wicohan takuni nececa siolyapi š i. heon etannan oyate kin wicohan kin otalci icakijapi. Tokel onkokinipi wocekiye wicohan onspe-wiconkiyapi na wanna oyate kin okiseya wicalapi na St. Josephn okolakiciye wanji tanka lici onkagapi, na omniciye wanji wašte wicakicagapi, na wicaša na winyan ko ota miniawicak:štanpi.

Lena omniciye itancanpi.

Andrew Jackson itancan.

Aloysius Goes in the Lodge okibe.

Big Head mazaska awanyaka.

Black Coal wowapi kaga. Alpnons

Moss catecnist.

Ho mitakuyepi, oyate kin lena teliya kakijapi tka wanna Wakantanka okolakiciye opapi, heon wocekiye on wiconyeksuyipi kta. Tokata Rosebud Agency omniciye tanka yuhapi kte cin nipi kte. Ho he necetu.

Maka akan wicaša ni onqonpi kin nahan taku onkikakijapi kin hena onkiciyapi onšipi, na tiwane wanjila onkicagapi na wowicala wanjila onyuhapi; neon etannan ito mitakuyepi tuwe key:š icakijapi kin ekta wicon-towanpi kte, cewiconkiciyapi kte. Icin Wanikiya onkitawapi maka akan ni na wicaša onšikapi oyašin owicakiya. He iyecel wicaša wakan wanji onyuhapi wanna waniyetu nonpa he Father Westropp ece wicaša o:ška onqonpi kin ataya etonwe selececa. na wicohan ota lici okini onyanpi. Nakuu Malipiyato oyanke heciya omniciye wanji kaga, nakon tipi wanji wašte kaga. Oyanke onkitawapi el nakun omniciye tipi 6 waštešte yuicaga. Na anpetu kin nenanyan tukteni owanjila yanka okini šni selececa niyowin škalakese oyate kin Wakantanka tokiconze yuha onkiyapi kta lila cin. Hecel wanna wicaša wanjikji Wakantanka towaonšila kin enan awicai selececa. Wawokiya wicaša ota wicayuna; Easter heenan wawokiye omniciye wanji kagapi, na he St. Paul omiciye eciyapi, na Wakantanka okolakiciye nakicijinpi kta hecapi na wikenompa kin mazaska top eknakapi kte. Hena nayalhonpi kta wacin.

Oyašin cantewašteya nape ciyuzapi.

NICK BLACK ELK.