

# LISTEN TO THE DRUM

Justice and Peace City representatives met at St. John Bosco meeting room May 9, 2009. The purpose of the meeting was to begin developing and to understand a tolerance for the Aboriginal community in this city.

## **Plan: I**

Rather than have Aboriginals speak about their culture and their ways, we had a brief introduction by someone with strong connections with that community.

It was fortunate that the Parish Life Director for the parish, Sister Estelle Lavigne had spent many years on various reserves. Here are some of her significant comments:

- They had never been allowed to be self-sufficient.
- Living on the reserve was a form of enslavement.
- Treaty rights and amount of land was restrictive.
- Their own spirituality - Manitou.
- We owe them a lot.
- "We'll come when we are ready."

## **Plan II**

A series of five provocative statements, each with five follow up questions has been prepared. One of the five statements was given to small groups of two or three with time to discuss and then make a summary report to the larger group. Each group then reported to the gathering with the opportunity for all to make additional comments.

### **Encounter One**

#### **'I'M AFRAID TO GO ON TWENTIETH STREET'**

1. Where or when have you heard this?
2. Give reasons for people to think this way.
3. List any experiences you know of in other cities.
4. What specific recommendations would you make to change Twentieth Street?
5. What is your personal response to this statement?



### **Encounter Two**

#### **MOST ABORIGINALS I KNOW OR HEAR ABOUT, DON'T SEEM ABLE TO DO A DAY'S WORK LIKE MANY OF US.**



1. Discuss where or when this statement is likely to occur.
2. Give examples of where the native person seems to be failing in work patterns.
3. What solutions can be offered by employers, government agencies and others?
4. What solutions would you personally offer?
5. How do you respond to the opening statement?

Go to Issues: Listen to the Drum for the workshop report

### Encounter 3

**‘WHY SHOULD I SAY I’M SORRY FOR WHAT SOMEONE OR SOME ORGANIZATION OR SOME GOVERNMENT SAID AND DID YEARS AGO?’**



1. People saying sorry? When, where and why do they do that?
2. What do people expect when they say they are sorry?
3. Is there any part of the way we live such as in sports, business, family life that makes it easier or more difficult to be sorry or be forgiving?
4. Is saying “I’m sorry” the same as apologizing or as seeking forgiveness?
5. What positive response or action can you offer for the statement?

### Encounter 4



**‘I DON’T UNDERSTAND ALL THIS ABOUT SWEET GRASS, SWEAT LODGE AND NATURE STUFF AS WELL AS ROUND DANCES AND DRUM SONGS. WHAT HAS THAT GOT TO DO WITH LIVING IN THE CITY IN THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY?’**

1. Have you ever witnessed any of the above?
2. What is your response to those who object to some of these ceremonies being part of a church service?
3. Give examples of activities which we accept from other cultures.
4. Suggest ways of bringing these events and practices of the aboriginal society to captive audiences.
5. What is your personal response to the comment?

### Encounter 5

**“SOMETHING’S WRONG WITH THE WAY THEY LIVE. JUST LOOK AT HOW THE PRISONS HAVE SO MANY ABORIGINALS IN THEM. LOOK HOW MANY GIRLS AND WOMEN END UP ON THE STREET, AND THEN DISAPPEAR OR ARE MURDERED. I WOULDN’T WANT ANY OF THESE KINDS OF PEOPLE LIVING NEAR ME.**



1. How often is this heard or read in the media such as open line shows?
2. Give reasons why there should be more or less law enforcement.
3. What positive experiences do you know of in regard to affordable housing and school programs which have been or would be a help?
4. If you easily identified a person on the street behaving in an unusual or a criminal way, what action would you take?
5. What personal reaction would you have to the above statement?

These exercises are intended for personal evaluation or can be used in any small group, informal or informal.

What the people at the meeting identified will appear shortly on the diocesan website. Scroll down under ministries to Justice and Peace; then to Issues.

- I encourage you to take two actions:
1. Converse with others in your circle of acquaintances.
  2. Contact this office by phone or e mail.