

# TRUTH & HEALING:

## A VIRTUAL SERIES FOR CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS ON NATIVE AMERICAN BOARDING SCHOOLS *Four sessions in October & November*

### SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

#### Session 1 | Opening Workshop: “Roots of Injustice, Seeds of Change”

**Jerilyn DeCoteau** (Turtle Mountain Chippewa) is co-director of [Toward Right Relationship with Native People](#) (TRR, a program of Friends Peace Teams), as well as an attorney, educator, and advocate for Native people’s rights. As a lawyer with the Native American Rights Fund, she has pressed for the rights of Indian tribes to govern themselves, control their resources, and insure human rights for their members. Jerilyn does consulting work on issues of tribal governance, capacity building, and the legacy of the Indian boarding schools. She was the past president of the board of directors of the [National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition](#).



**Paula Palmer** is co-director of [Toward Right Relationship with Native People](#) (TRR, a program of Friends Peace Teams), as well as a sociologist, writer, and activist for human rights, social justice, and environmental protection. As executive director of the nonprofit organization Global Response, Paula directed over 70 international campaigns to help Indigenous peoples defend their rights and prevent environmental destruction. In collaboration with Native American advisors, she created the TRR workshops *Roots of Injustice, Seeds of Change* and *Re-discovering America: Understanding Colonization*.

#### Session 2 | Webinar: Boarding Schools and Historical Trauma

**Christine Diindiisi McCleave** is an enrolled citizen of the Turtle Mountain Ojibwe Nation and the Chief Executive Officer of the [National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition](#). Diindiisi McCleave conducted her masters thesis research on the spectrum of spiritual practices between traditional Native American spirituality and Christianity, and the legacy of boarding schools on spiritual activities and Indian activism today. Diindiisi McCleave was instrumental in writing H.R. 8420, the Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policy Act, the first bill ever introduced for a commission addressing boarding school policy in the U.S. She is also a member of the Truth and Reconciliation working group for the City of Minneapolis.





**Jennifer S. Nañez**, MSW, LMSW, currently serves as a Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator with the SAMHSA Tribal Training and Technical Assistance Center under Tribal Tech LLC, and is an enrolled tribal member of the Pueblo of Acoma, New Mexico. Ms. Nañez has been in the social work and education fields for over 20 years with an emphasis in serving the American Indian population, and promoting effective community engagement and clinical work in the American Indian community. Ms. Nañez has worked in Urban Indian, Tribal, Federal, and University systems, and now provides support to Tribal communities nationally in her current role. Ms. Nañez's interests lie in suicide prevention and mental health treatment support; working within a healing from Historical Trauma framework; and supporting community readiness, resilience, and capacity building in our Tribal communities. Ms. Nañez firmly believes in "working with, not working on," and being in service to our communities. Ms. Nañez is a proud bi-racial Indigenous mom, mother to two young women, aged 20 and 12, and is a spouse, daughter, sister, auntie, niece, granddaughter and friend.

## Session 3 | Webinar: Current Efforts Toward Truth and Healing

**Maka Akan Najin Black Elk** (Oglala Lakota) is the Executive Director for Truth and Healing at Red Cloud Indian School in Pine Ridge, SD. Red Cloud is one of the very few remaining missions of the Jesuits in the Midwest serving Indigenous peoples and a former Indian boarding school. Maka is an alumnus of Red Cloud, and continued his Jesuit education at the University of San Francisco. He then earned his Master's degrees in Peace and Human Rights Education at Columbia University's Teachers College and in Educational Leadership from the University of Notre Dame. Maka returned home to Red Cloud and taught history, ran the volunteer program, and was the Director of Curriculum before taking on his current role, where he is tasked with leading the first U.S. Catholic Indian boarding school through a process of truth and reconciliation. A descendant of boarding school survivors, Maka brings a passion for interreligious dialogue to his work. He is a member of the board of directors for the [National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition](#) and also serves as chairperson of the [American Indian Catholic Schools Network](#) where he advocates for truth and healing in Catholic ministries and schools serving Indigenous peoples.



**Sr. Eva Solomon**, CSJ, is the Director of the Building Bridges Project for the Assembly of Western Catholic Bishops' Standing Committee on Indigenous Relations. A member of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie for over thirty years, Sr. Solomon is a recognized leader in the Anishinabe spiritual tradition. Her Indian name is "Megisique" (Eagle Woman). Sr. Solomon is a Sacred Pipe Carrier and Conductor of the Sweat Lodge and various other healing ceremonies. She initiated and developed The Companions of Kateri Tekakwitha and, with Villagers Productions, she created a 13-part series on the "Kateri Movement." Solomon has a strong commitment to the development of a truly Indigenous Catholic Church. She focuses on interculturalization of faith—the bringing together of the Catholic faith and Indigenous traditional ways. Her vision of Indigenous Church incorporates her dream for a religious community of First Nations Peoples.

**Fr. Donald Bolen** currently serves as the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Regina in Saskatchewan, Canada. During Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) to address the legacy of Residential Schools, Bishop Bolen served as Chair of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops' Justice and Peace Commission, and was involved in the Church's response to the TRC. On both the diocesan and national levels, Bolen has been actively involved in Indigenous relations and responding to the TRC's Calls to Action. Under Bolen's leadership, the diocese established a new consultative body, the Diocesan Council for Truth and Reconciliation (DCTR), which includes both Native and non-Native representatives. Initiatives of the DCTR have included a pastoral letter and ecumenical event about the issue of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls, and the establishment of a day of prayer for reconciliation and healing in the diocese.



## Session 4 | Webinar: How to Begin the Work of Truth and Healing



**Jaime Arsenault** is the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO), Repatriation Representative, and Archives Manager for the White Earth Band of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe. Ms. Arsenault has worked with Indigenous communities for over 25 years. She is a former National Advisory Board Member of the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries and Museums (ATALM) and Repatriation Committee Member for the University of Massachusetts—Amherst Anthropology Department. Currently, she is a Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History Repatriation Review Committee Member. She also serves on the Native American Advisory Committee at the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University and sits on both the Advisory Committee and the Collections Committee of the Peabody Institute of Archaeology as well as the Collections Care Committee with the Berkshire Museum.

**Sister Pat Kennedy, OSB**, is a member of Saint Benedict Monastery, St. Joseph, Minnesota. As the Monastery Heritage Coordinator, she oversees the work of the monastery's Art and Heritage Place-Museum, Archives, and Art Collections. She works with the Museum Manager, and Archivist, to preserve the cultural patrimony related to the history of the Sisters of the Order of Saint Benedict, St. Joseph, Minnesota. Sister Pat is a former Assistant Professor of Theology at the College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University. She currently serves as Saint Benedict Monastery's liaison for "Building Protocols for Sharing Native American Boarding School Archival Materials," a collaborative partnership with the White Earth Nation and the College of Saint Benedict. Sister Pat participates in *The Catholic Native American Boarding School Accountability and Healing Project* listening sessions and serves on the Sub-Committee Archives/Cemeteries.

