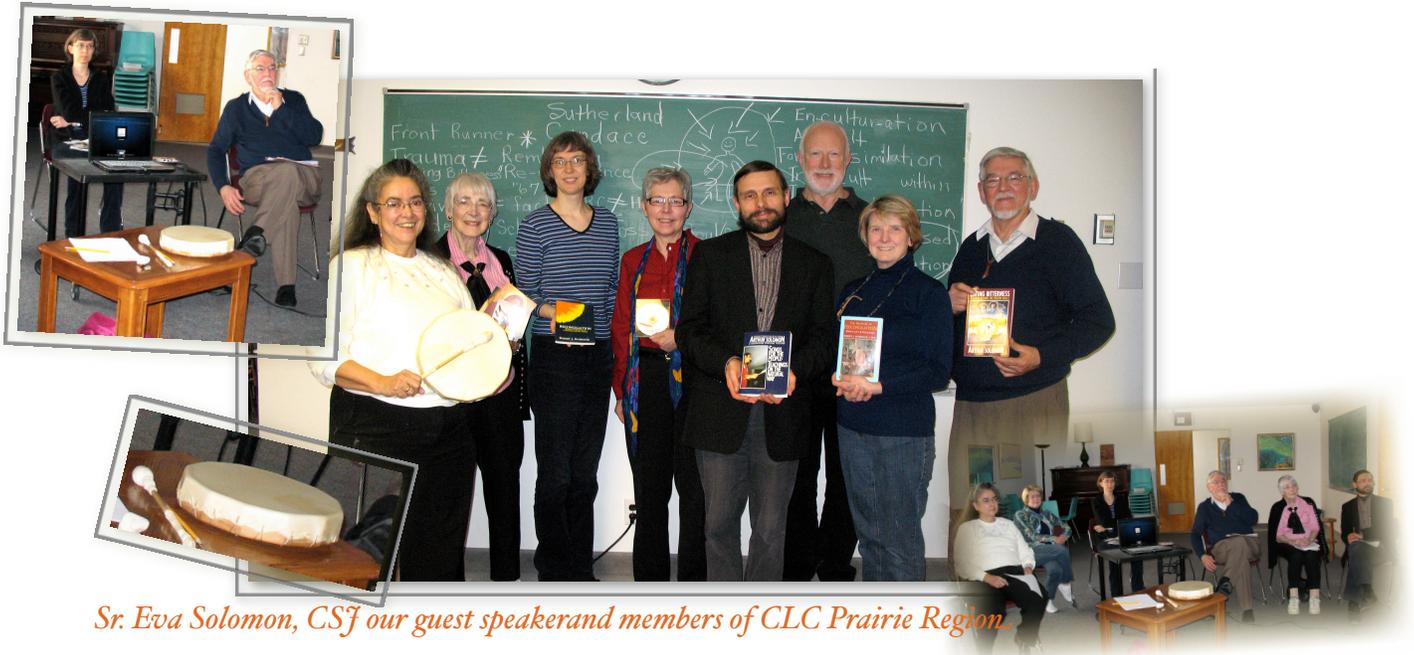


*CLC Retreat held at St Ignatius Education Centre in Winnipeg,  
on February 12, 2011 Manitoba with reflections on Apostolic Life*



*Sr. Eva Solomon, CSJ our guest speaker and members of CLC Prairie Region.*

Grace: That CLC Prairie Region might prepare to be “Ignited by God’s Holy Spirit and sent forth on Mission”.

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:17 - 20 “Paul encourages the Corinthians to understand themselves as ministers and messengers of reconciliation....”

The 3 threads that flowed throughout our day of retreat:

CLC Principle #8 (Apostolic Life)

Caritas In Veritate: On Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth (Pope Benedict XVI’s encyclical on Christian social thought and action)

Truth and Reconciliation Process included viewing of the film titled **Niigaanibatowaad: Front Runners**- is a story of survival, hope, reconciliation and a dream for a new beginning that transcends hatred and racism and guest speaker - Sr Eva Solomon, an Ojibway to speak on the topic of her reconciliation journey from the perspective of the violence inflicted on Aboriginals through colonialism, racial prejudice and systemically embedded injustice (see attachment for more information on Sr Eva’s presentation).

**From our first round of sharing:** After viewing the film, we saw how we have had a long history where at times Christianity was forced on people and created “victims” due to an inadequate and distorted vision of the Christian Gospel. We felt the injustice and pain on the young Aboriginal runner in the residential school. The nurse who had the courage and compassion to care for an abused victim inspired us. It caused us to ask: “Do I know any poor people”? Can I accept the challenge to help on a personal level?”

The connections of the 3 strands became clear as love must be rooted in truth in order to change anything. There was hope as the Front runner expressed desire to go on and seek forgiveness in his journey towards reconciliation.

We had the image of a braid - 3 strands: **Christ's mission**, our **CLC General Principe #8** and **Love in Truth and Reconciliation**.

From our second round: we imagined ourselves as frontrunners for Christ. We felt hope and courage which is rooted in love and truth. Image of the burning torch.

**Sr Eva Solomon:** Based her presentation on the oppression of the Aboriginal peoples by the Europeans whose main belief was that they were superior. From that came the abuse of power over the Aboriginals which in turn led them to feel that they were not "good enough". They were forced to "assimilate". "Inculturation, which is a term used to describe the process whereby the gospel and life of Jesus is inserted into a culture; e.g., an aboriginal person is given Christianity in Euro - Western cultural trappings as if that is the only form of Christianity that is acceptable for the aboriginal person" (from Sr Eva's handout). This is a form of violence in that there is a loss of soul/spirit and personhood. The culprit is called imposed colonization. This still goes on today as in the Minister of Indian Affairs.

Sr. Eva described a process in reconciliation: awareness that there has been an injustice, anger and a crying out that a lie has been given, and then to go on in creating a **new truth**; ie that we are good enough. The oppressed and oppressor both need to open the door to the act of forgiveness. She challenged us to ask ourselves where we have experienced oppression and what did we do about it. When we recognize that we are capable of this ourselves, we see our own humanity and need of reconciliation.

After hearing Sr Eva, we did personal prayer for an hour. The last portion of our day consisted of the 3rd Round with 2 questions:

### **1) Where and to what is this leading me personally?**

#### **Responses:**

- Get to know Aboriginal persons at a personal level and learning more about their culture in dialogue
- Look for ways to mutually share with the Aboriginals
- Search and understand the "new truth"
- Look for opportunities for reconciliation
- Education - Affirming the truth and look for ways to reconcile - cry out when we hear the lies
- Deepen the process of de - colonizing ; by recognizing that we all have dignity before God.

## 2) Where is this leading us as a Region?

Respond to invitation to attend **The Hidden Legacy Conference at the Convention Centre** from February 22 - 24, 2011 [http://www.manitobachiefs.com/pdf/HiddenLegacy\\_Agenda\\_web.pdf](http://www.manitobachiefs.com/pdf/HiddenLegacy_Agenda_web.pdf)

- As we go towards our Regional Assembly, that we prepare ourselves to be transformed in our attitudes
- Be attentive to ways in which we can actively respond to the needs that exist
- Learn about Aboriginal spirituality - by osmosis
- Share the gift of CLC with aboriginal community in dialogue
- Respond to the challenge that Sr. Eva presented us with: support of Candice Sutherland
- Life up and support Sr. Eva's work
- Desire to experience aboriginal culture

### Challenge presented by Sr. Eva

**Candace Sutherland is an example of a frontrunner today. First female, first Aboriginal, first youth, first mentally challenged to run for raising awareness of poverty**

[www.candacesutherland.com](http://www.candacesutherland.com)

Candace Sutherland has overcome some insurmountable odds in her young lifetime. At the tender age of 17, Candace has experienced a childhood rife with poverty, dependence of food banks and a brief stay in foster care. Born into a family with a developmentally delayed mother and schizophrenic father, Candace never celebrated Christmas like other children her age did. At 8 years of age, Candace's life changed drastically when a government agency diagnosed her mother with her disorder and placed Candace in custody.

Support her cause by donating, by emailing letters of support and get every friend to read her story.

We ended the day with the celebration of the Eucharist (for those who could stay) at St. Ignatius Church.

Then a few of the participants shared supper together at Falafel's