

Join Us For WALKING THE RED ROAD

Celebrating Native American Heritage

Saturday, October 24, 2026 | 9 am - 3 pm

DIOCESAN PASTORAL CENTER | 611 WEST NORTH STREET, GAYLORD

A Free Conference for Native Americans and Non-Natives

Join us for a meaningful celebration of Native American heritage and faith, featuring thought-provoking speakers, hands-on cultural traditions and inspiring stories that reveal the enduring values of faith, hope and community.

9 am | Mass, St. Mary Cathedral in Gaylord

Celebrant Bishop Jeffrey Walsh, Diocese of Gaylord.

9:45–10:15 am | Registration/Hospitality

Walk over to the Pastoral Center. Enjoy a light breakfast and fellowship.

10:15–11:30 am | The Road to Sainthood for Nicholas Black Elk: Holy Man of the Oglala (Sioux)

Fr. Michael F. Steltenkamp, S.J., a leading Black Elk scholar, shares the extraordinary story of Nicholas Black Elk, the renowned Oglala Lakota holy man, Catholic catechist and missionary whose witness of faith has inspired a growing movement for his canonization.

11:30 am–12:30 pm | Lunch

12:30–1:30 pm | Sacred Traditions: Native American Wreath Making

Learn the Native American tradition of crafting handmade wreaths to honor loved ones and pray for

the faithful departed. Odawa family flower maker Diana Naganashe will guide the first 15 registrants in creating their own wreath (other attendees will assist with flower making and observe wreath assembly); Bishop Walsh will bless all wreaths in preparation for All Souls' Day.

1:30–1:45 pm | Break

1:45–2:45 pm | The Dove and the Muskrat

Drawing from both his Native heritage and his Catholic faith, Dcn. Curtis Chambers brings together American Indian spiritual teachings and the Catholic faith through the stories of the dove in Noah's flood and the muskrat in the Native flood story. Discover the shared themes of faith, hope and God's presence found in both traditions.

2:45–3 pm | College Scholarship Presentations

3 pm | Closing Prayer

Bishop Jeffrey Walsh, Diocese of Gaylord, provides closing prayer for unity and love.

This FREE conference is organized by the Diocesan Native American Ministry.

Free-will offerings to cover the cost of lunch will be accepted.

Registration required. Seating limited.



Register by Wednesday, Oct. 14.

Call Dcn. Curtis Chambers at 231-290-0193 or visit:

DioceseofGaylord.org/WalkingtheRedRoad2026