



## A Circular for the McCroskey Township

May 16th, 2026 (Armed Forces Day)

Issue #25

### Father DeSmet

Even though our little village of DeSmet, Idaho was never settled or served by the famed Pierre-Jean De Smet (1801-1873), it is still a part of his legacy. DeSmet is a point on a long trail marking his journeys. Numerous place names can be found on the High Plains and in the Northern Rockies such as DeSmet, Montana, for example. But *our* DeSmet began with his Sacred Heart mission to the Coeur d' Alenes in Cataldo, Idaho. It was moved here when the Reservation boundaries were redrawn and forced the relocation of the Tribe.

A dedicated Jesuit priest, he is said to have traveled a staggering 180,000 miles: including eight trips to Europe to raise funds for his numerous missions. He made many trips up and down the Missouri River and its tributaries and then at one point - to get to the tribes in the Pacific Northwest - he made the ("I'll never do that again!") trip around the Horn of South America.

He was a valued neutral presence at the numerous treaty negotiations between the various Indian tribes and the U.S. government and earned the affectionate nickname, *the De Grote Zwartrok* ("The Great Black Skirt").

But fundamentally, he was a representative of Christ and His Church and even though he treated the Indians with respect and compassion, as a prolific writer, he revealed that he was ever pressed by the task of making these pagans into Christians.

Long before the Indian Wars with the United States, Father DeSmet saw first hand the negative consequences of an animistic hunter-gatherer tradition and argued repeatedly for the need to transition the Indians to an agrarian way of life.

He believed that the only way for these tribes to overcome the constant conditions of deprivation, starvation, and brutal internecine conflict was to elevate them through the bounty which comes from peaceful agriculture. He saw this as the imperative outcome of his Christian witness.

Whatever we might want to feel about the role of religion and agriculture in its replacement of the wilderness and the diminishing of the tribes which lived there, it is important to remember that these two unique features of European culture have become the necessary pillars upon which our modern society rests: the teachings of Jesus Christ and the spiritual discipline of tilling the soil.

"Turning back the clock" to more primitive technology and customs is a foolhardy aspiration. While we must always preserve a portion of the land in its original and pristine condition as a way of staying connected with Nature and its Creator, we must never forget the virtues and rewards from hard work. We must remember that our current and future prosperity is dependent upon the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the success of our farmers and ranchers.

Through Father DeSmet's teachings along with the work of philanthropists like Virgil McCroskey, the greater Palouse region has benefited from a carefully crafted balance between wilderness, agriculture, logging, mining and industry. Let us dedicate ourselves to preserving that balance and not be drawn into the fanaticism of any particular group.

We don't need agribusiness but we don't need radical environmentalism, either. We need to preserve the beauty that was the Coeur d' Alene tribal culture, but yet on the other hand, we don't need the fanaticism of irrational hatred for the "White man's ways."

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## Water Adjudication: “A Fire Bell in the Night”? Part 1

They kept us in the dark about the details of the Water Adjudication Agreement. And with good reason: It turns out to be bad for everybody except for an elite group of corporate investors.

If you are a Tribal member, the door is now slammed shut for you to own your own property “free and clear.” It is held with a “restricted title” that reverts back to the Tribe upon your death. “Water rights”? It’s all a facade for a different agenda.

If you are a “state citizen” not much changes at first. Your rights are protected.

However, that is a facade too.

The Tribe now claims the aquifer under your feet. Until now, as a state resource, it belonged to everybody. Now, it belongs just to the Tribe and a new layer of bureaucracy has been added to prevent any further depletion of the Tribe’s water rights.

New comers will have to apply to the newly created Tribal Water Supply Bank for permission to drill a well. I predict that this new bureaucracy will be hostile to new homesteaders on the Reservation. Once word of this gets out, property values will plummet. Gone will be a sustainable tax base for Benewah County.

Who benefits from this? Is it a part of the mania for AI Data Centers that require a lot of water? Is that what these fat cat politicians are after? More next month.

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### ***The McCroskey Agrarian***

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## Celebrating America’s Sesquicentennial

Don’t forget, this year is America’s sesquicentennial. 250 years ago, the Declaration of Independence was signed. It’s time to revisit America’s heritage and identify the principles that made us unique to the world of nations.

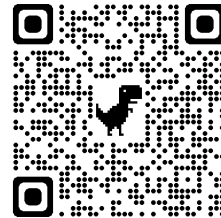
May 16th is called “Armed Forces Day.” Unlike “Armistice Day” which celebrates the end of World War I, it honors active duty servicemen. With World Wars I & II behind us and maybe World War III on its way, the “War to End all Wars” seems to be a distant and forgotten promise.

We must continue to encourage those tasked with protecting our country, which includes an honorable representation from the CDA Tribe.

### We Must Not Let Them Divide Us

The wealthy elite hide their agenda by creating meaningless controversies to distract and weaken the people from protecting their interests. The Water Adjudication issue is one of their tricks.

A full report with a copy of the Agreement and the court decision upon which it relies can be found at our website. Scan this QR Code to go there:



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