

SEPTEMBER 30 2024 BISHOP R. ANTHONY DANIELS

Jesus knew that when his disciples were arguing among themselves about who was the greatest, he needed to demonstrate that being the greatest did not require one to claim superiority over others. Instead, if someone wanted to proclaim themselves great, they had to diminish the worth of everyone else. This notion is fundamentally wrong.

Jesus recognized that this line of thinking was simply false and did not grant any of the disciples the right to claim greatness. What he desired was for his disciples to build a team and to recognize their mission together.

I remember Pope Benedict once saying to those who are committed to evangelization, "Remember, we propose the faith, we don't impose the faith." This concept aligns closely with Jesus' message. If we believe we have the right to impose our faith on others, we are essentially declaring that others are false. However, by proposing our faith, we engage in dialogue—we discuss what our faith entails, listen to the beliefs of others, and come to an appreciation of each other's perspectives. Ideally, this appreciation leads to a deeper faith for all involved.

As we reflect on this day of reconciliation, I can't help but think about the events that took place in our residential schools. The situation began with a belief that what we possessed was right and that what others held was wrong. Hopefully, we have learned from those experiences.

Now, as we strive to heal and reconcile, we must meet with our Native brothers and sisters—not only to propose our faith but also to listen carefully to their history, their faith, and their culture. In doing so, we can both grow in mutual respect and understanding.