

BLACK ELK'S UNIVERSAL MISSION

(Book to be published in the early part of 2008)

Black Elk is both one of the most well known and least understood Native American leaders. Until his death, he was a faithful preserver and promoter of the Lakota ways, yet the medicine man also became a Roman Catholic in 1904. From then, until his death in 1950, he remained faithful to this choice as well.

Black Elk preserved all the best elements of his cultural heritage in his testament of *The Sacred Pipe*. He also continued to bring to his people and other tribes the teachings of the historical Jesus. Truly, the elder Lakota found himself at home in both cultures and worlds, becoming a representative of a new humanity beyond races and creeds. In struggling toward a personal understanding of spiritual reality, he overcame both the Lakota warfare tradition and the limitations of dogmatic religious faith.

The controversy that has endured about Black Elk's spiritual allegiances can be put to rest through the content of Black Elk's own words and biography. His life is the enactment of his Great Vision.