

CELEBRATING the LIFE of BLESSED KATERI TECKAWITHA

“LILY of the MOHAWKS”

1656 – 1680

Beatified: June 30, 1980

Feast: July 14

Kateri was born of a Christian Algonquin Indian mother and the chief of the Mohawk clan near what is today, Auriesville, New York. At age four, Kateri lost her parents and a brother to a smallpox that left her disfigured and half blind. She was adopted and raised by an uncle who succeeded her father as chief. He hated the Blackrobes (Jesuit missionaries) but could do nothing to them because of a peace treaty with the French. She refused to marry a Mohawk brave and when she was 19, found the courage to convert to Christianity. She was baptized on Easter Sunday and took the name Kateri (Catherine). She was treated as a slave and because she would not work on Sunday, she was denied food for the day. She was always in danger because her conversion and holy life created grave opposition. On the advice of a priest, Kateri secretly left her village and began a 200 mile walking journey to a Christian Indian village near Montreal. For three years she grew in holiness under the direction of a priest and an older Iroquois woman, giving herself to God in long hours of prayer, in charity, and in strenuous penance. At 23, Kateri took a vow of virginity, an unprecedented act for an Indian woman whose future depended upon being married. She found a place in the woods to pray and would practice extremely severe fasting as penance for the conversion of her nation. She humbly accepted an ordinary life and died on the day before Holy Thursday. Witnesses said that her face became like that of a healthy child while the lines of suffering and the pockmarks disappeared.



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Let us pause and remember that the God of Kateri Teckawitha is our God Who pitched His tent among us and is always abiding with us.
Holy is God, holy and mighty, holy and living forever.

The hand of the Lord has given her strength
and she will be praised forever.

Ephesians 1: 3-10

Praised be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
Who bestowed on us in Christ every spiritual blessing in the heavens.
God chose us in Him before the world began,
to be holy and blameless in His sight.
He predestined us to be His adopted daughters and sons
through Jesus Christ,
such was his will and pleasure, that all might praise the glorious favor
He has bestowed on us in His beloved.
In him and through His blood we have been redeemed,
and our sins forgiven,
so immeasurably generous is God's favor to us.
God has given us the wisdom to understand fully the mystery,
the plan He was pleased to decree in Christ.
A plan to be carried out in the fullness of time,
to bring all things into one in Him in the heavens and on the earth.

Come, bride of Christ and receive the crown
which the Lord has prepared for you for ever.
Alleluia!

Matthew 5: 13-16

Jesus said to His disciples:
"You are the salt of the earth. But what if salt goes flat?
How can you restore its flavor?
Then it is good for nothing
but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.
You are the light of the world.
A city set on a hilltop cannot be hidden.
People do not light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket.
They set it on a stand where it gives light to all in the house.
In the same way, your light must shine before others
so that they may see goodness in your acts
and give praise to your heavenly Father.



Reflection:

We like to think that our purposed holiness is thwarted by our situation. If only we could have more solitude, less opposition, better health. Kateri repeats the example of the saints; holiness thrives on the cross, anywhere. Yet she did have what Christians, all people, need: the support of a community. Kateri had a good mother, helpful priests and Christian friends. These were present in what we call primitive conditions and blossomed in the age-old Christian tradition of prayer, fasting and almsgiving in union with God. She practiced self-discipline, suffering, and charity for all her brothers and sisters.

Quote:

Kateri said, "I am not my own; I have given myself to Jesus. He must be my only love. The state of helpless poverty that might befall me if I do not marry, does not frighten me. All I need is a little food and a few pieces of clothing. With the work of my hands I shall always earn what is necessary and what is left over I will give to my relatives and the poor. If I should become sick and unable to work, then I shall be like the Lord on the cross. He will have mercy on me and help me, I am sure."

Litany:

Lord have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Kateri, lily of purity, pray for us.

Kateri, bright light for all Native Americans, pray for us.

Kateri, courage of the afflicted, pray for us.

Kateri, lover of the cross of Jesus, pray for us.

Kateri, full of patience in suffering, pray for us.

Kateri, keeper of your virginity in persecutions, pray for us.

Kateri, lover of penance, pray for us.

Kateri, who traveled many miles to learn the faith, pray for us.

Kateri, steadfast in all prayer, pray for us.

Kateri, humble servant to the sick, pray for us.

Kateri, who loved to pray the rosary for all people, pray for us.

Kateri, example to your people in all virtues, pray for us.

Prayer for Kateri's Canonization

O God, who among the many marvels of Your grace
in the New World, did cause to blossom on the banks
of the Mohawk and St. Lawrence Rivers,
the pure and tender lily, Kateri Teckawitha.
Grant, we beseech You, the favor we beg through her intercession
that this young Lover of Jesus and His cross,
may soon be counted among the saints by the Church.
and that our hearts may be enkindled
with a stronger desire to imitate her innocence and faith.
We ask this in the name of Jesus.
Amen.

Psalm 131

In You, O Lord, I have found my peace.
O Lord, my hearts is not proud,
nor are my eyes haughty;
I busy not myself with great things,
now with things too sublime for me.
Nay rather, I have stilled and quieted my soul
like a weaned child.
Like a weaned child on its mother's lap,
so is my soul within me.
Hope in the Lord both now and forever.
Glory to You, Father, Son and Spirit.
As it was, is now, and shall ever be.
Amen.

Let us Pray:

O God, You called the virgin, Kateri Teckawitha,
to shine among the Indian people as an example of innocence of life.
Through her intercession may all peoples of ever tribe, tongue, and nation,
having been gathered into Your Church,
proclaim Your greatness in one song of praise.

Saint John Baptist de La Salle
and all you holy Brothers who have gone before us,
give us a great love for Jesus.

Live Jesus in our hearts. Forever!

"Jesus Konoronkwa." "Jesus, I love You."
— Last words of Kateri Teckawitha