



TEKAKWITHA CONFERENCE NATIONAL CENTER

Cross and Feathers

Affirming our faith as Native American Catholics
Under the Protection of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha

REFLECTION

Greetings Friends, Relations, fellow Tekakwitha Conference members and Native American Catholic Christians.

This year's 2009 Conference theme is "With Kateri we spread God's word." The theme is relevant to each and every one preparing for Lent as we pray for the Canonization of Kateri Tekakwitha and for our own needs. Lenten customs are designed to help us enter into this holy season and grow in faith. The word Lent means "springtime", a time of renewal and of rebirthing of all that is around us. As Native American Catholics we know this as the circle of life, beginning and birthing.

As a young Native American Catholic Christian, I never realized what Lent was all about. I only remember I was taken to our local parish in the middle of the week and a black cross was placed upon my forehead. I knew that Easter was around the corner and that I would be coloring eggs in celebration of Easter. I was not aware that it was really about the death and resurrection of Jesus.

When I became a young man, I soon found myself dwelling upon the cultural aspects of my life. After confirmation and high-school graduation, I headed for college. I was a Native American discovering that the color of my skin did make me something other than what I thought I was. I soon faded away from the Catholic Church, seeking a spiritual connection through my cultural heritage wherever I could find it.

Soon I found myself becoming involved with the Kateri Tekakwitha Conference and a new spiritual awareness awoke within me. Even to this day, it grows stronger. I now find myself walking the interchangeable paths of the Catholic, Native American life in this present day society which offers so many challenges and directions.

As we draw upon the season of Lent, I have taken the opportunity to read and spend time meditating on the words of our heavenly Father and the life of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha. I am including eight common Lenten practices to help us draw closer to the teachings of our heavenly Father and renew our spiritual self and faith.

ASHES. Ashes are an ancient symbol of repentance and remind us that we have come to the end of our circle of life.

GIVING SOMETHING UP. Often this is our first impression or thought of Lent. Each year we ask ourselves the big question of what to give up.

FASTING. One of the most ancient practices of Lent is a way to imitate Jesus as he fasted in the desert for 40 days. Native Americans have fasted for many years. It means to consume a smaller amount of food than we normally do and to abstain from meat on

the Fridays of Lent and Ash Wednesday.

CHANGING BEHAVIORS AND ATTITUDES. All of us have things in our lives that come between us and God, which we may or may not realize. With prayer and meditation, we can find answers which allow us to make a significant and positive difference in our spiritual walk.

PRAYER. Give more time for prayer during Lent. Try different things like spiritual reading, lives of the saints, books on prayer; retreats and days of reflection; meditating/pondering the Gospels especially the Passion; quiet listening and circle group discussions with members of your community or parish. If anything, pray for the canonization of Kateri Tekakwitha.

ALMSGIVING. Money is a source of confusion for many people, mostly because we all don't have enough of it. But if you are able, try giving a specific percentage of your Lenten income this year. As you write a check choose a charity or better yet, your own parish as the recipient.

PENANCE. Lent is the primary time for celebrating the sacrament of penance/reconciliation. Since Lent is a season for renewal, what better way to begin than to have our sins forgiven.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS. Praying and pondering the Stations of the Cross can be a way of remembering Jesus' sufferings and a way to grow in appreciation of his sacrifice and of his Passion.

I close with a prayer written by the late Rev. Stanislaus Maudlin, OSB on the behalf of Colleen Heminger-Cordell and Chet Cordell at the 2003 Tekakwitha Conference held in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Prayer (used with permission):

Great God, Grandfather, among many people, now there is division, even hatred. Through Kateri bring everything back to the peace and holiness of the Risen Christ. Let people know that we are marvelously and wondrously made. We must respect everything that You have created.

Great God, Grandfather, who gave Kateri to the Native Americans as an example of purity, teach all people to love purity, and to console your Immaculate Mother Mary through, the lily, Kateri Tekakwitha, and your Holy Cross, Amen.

Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha, hear our prayer. Blessing be upon each and everyone.



Ron Tso (Navajo)

Submitted by Ron Tso, Bellingham, WA

TEKAKWITHA CONFERENCE NATIONAL CENTER NEWS

FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends of the Tekakwitha Conference,

Let us be Transformed into the Image of Jesus during this Lenten Season.



How will we discover God in a new way this Lent? Will we commit to reflect on scripture passages that will challenge; study the Sacraments; allow time for theological or scriptural studies; participate in traditional tribal prayer rituals and ceremonies, plan that our Kateri Circles or other prayer groups will gather weekly for prayer and outreach? What about reaching out to elders, seniors, invalids at home or in hospitals/nursing homes, responding to needs in our communities during this Lent? Would Jesus do these?

Many people in our country are living in very difficult situations: emotionally, psychologically, spiritually and physically. How can we be people of compassion and support during this time of great stress, depression and hopelessness? Together, let us be messengers of HOPE to our family members, relatives, friends and neighbors. We are called to make a difference in peoples' lives just as Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha was during her short life here on earth. In our response will we have 'acted justly, loved tenderly and walked humbly with our God' (based on Micah 6) and reverently walked with our brothers and sisters in Christ on Mother Earth?

Seeing the image of Jesus in people will be the Easter experience of a renewed life filled with hope for the future. The transforming power of Jesus in our lives will have a great impact on our deepening relationship with our God as we come to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus on Easter morning. We will truly perceive our brothers and sisters as bearers of God's gift to us – the image of Jesus.

Happy Easter to all!

Sister Kateri Mitchell

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TEKAKWITHA CONFERENCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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 Fr. Wayne Paysse – Executive Director BCIM
 Sister Kateri Mitchell – Executive Director



Next Board Meeting: July 2009, Raleigh, NC

Prayers of Thanksgiving

With gratitude for Sister Elaine Caron's four (4) full years of ministry at the Tekakwitha Conference National Center. We express our deepest appreciation for her dedication to our organization and ask God's abundant blessings on her as she returns to Massachusetts.

Welcome

We are happy to welcome Misty Williams to the staff at the Tekakwitha Conference National Center. May she be blessed in this ministry and enjoy many years with us.

Cross and Feathers
 Vol. 27 No. 3

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KATERI CIRCLE NEWS

Happy, Blessed New Year from Birmingham! May our Blessed Kateri's canonization come about during 2009.

In September, Mae Harris and I visited the Laurence County Schools Indian Education Center. We were also invited by the Superintendent of the Diocesan Catholic Schools to the Principal's monthly meeting. I had the opportunity to present the Kateri Circle goals and the activities we could offer in the school setting about Native American spirituality and culture. Each Principal received information, including copies of the Stations of the Cross 'The Tree of Life'. I also had the joy of meeting with Jackie Matte, a scholar committed to Indian rights, who helped the Mowa Choctaw in their recognition as a Tribe. She writes extensively, and some of her work is recorded in the book 'They Say the Wind is Red' which we have in our library (it is well worth reading!).

In October we focused on the preparation for November as "Native American Heritage Month". At the Diocesan offices, traditionally during November a framed poster of Blessed Kateri, has been gathering the attention of all arriving in the reception area. The Kateri Circle sponsored two brown bag lunch presentations. Gail King, director of the Alabama Trail of Tears, gave an updated overview of all studies and research on this 'hot' topic. Vickie King, a Story Teller of the NorthEast Cherokee of Alabama, shared her artistic talent and her spirituality. Several of our group participated in the parade on the NorthEast Cherokee Float. The very cold weather did not allow us to gather at our 'Medicine Wheel', so we prepared the Four Directions at our meeting place.



Deacon Paul Mullen later invited all to prayer with the drum. We prayed, reflected and shared using the reflection on the 'Medicine Wheel' which Sr. Kateri Mitchell had offered to other groups years ago. The usual abundant native meal was shared. Later several of us joined in the celebration of the Green Corn Festival in the St. Clair County Correctional Facility. We participated in the Poarch Creek Pow Wow in Atmore on Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday.

With Advent, we started planning the presence of some Native Crib in schools and churches. St. Barnabas Elementary School and Our Lady of Lourdes Pre-School and Kindergarten welcomed our Native American Crib.

May blessed Kateri walk with us as we venture into 2009 trusting the Creator and His Love for us.

Article and pictures submitted by Sr. Adelangela Paita,
91st Kateri Circle, Birmingham, AL



Interior Star Kateri Circle members in Fairbanks, Alaska, are so faithful to their monthly Kateri Mass and potluck that even 40 below zero in January is just another day to pray and to enjoy great food.



A 'miracle' recently happened in Petoskey, MI! St. Francis Solanus Indian Mission and Burial Ground was slated to be razed to the ground and the property sold. Many people hoped to save the "Little Church".

Praying to Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha was key, as her name "Tekakwitha" means "putting things in order". Our elders joined in a prayer/work campaign to preserve the church. After 3 years and after contacts with the National Historical Society, the Federal Indian Burial Grounds Preservation, much elbow grease, fund raising and especially support of the parish elders, the Indian Mission Church was saved, restored, and rededicated.

Submitted by JoAnn Carey, Petoskey, MI

A January gathering of members of the **On Eagles Wings Kateri Circle**, Grand Rapids and the **Four Seasons Kateri Circle**, Muskegon, Michigan.



Photo submitted by Pat Kooi

This bronze statue titled "Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha", was donated by sculptor Joe Kenney of Texas, to the Tekakwitha Conference National Center in memory of Fr. Alfred Baltz, OSB and all missionaries who attended the first conference in 1939.



Tekakwitha Conference



July 1, ____ to June 30, ____

Member Number

Please note:

Our membership database has been updated which caused the computer to generate a new number for each member. Your

new membership number will appear on your renewal card. We apologize for any inconvenience.

KATERI CIRCLE NEWS

Important questions are being asked about Kateri Circles

WHAT is a Kateri Circle?

A Kateri Circle is a group of Women and Men and/or Youth of all cultures within a parish/mission who want to belong to a prayer circle/group for the purpose of learning and promoting the saintly life of the Tekakwitha Conference patroness Kateri Tekakwitha, a young Mohawk/Algonquin woman of the mid-seventeenth century and to be an evangelizer to one another.

Kateri Circles have four components/areas to which members can strive towards.:

Spiritual : daily prayer for the canonization of Kateri Tekakwitha, pray and work toward a deeper spiritual life, pray the Kateri Chaplet which commemorates her 24 years on Mother earth.



Intellectual/Educational: study the life of Kateri Tekakwitha, become more aware of Native American issues in the rural, urban and reservation, attend classes in your Parish for teachings in theology and scripture.

Social/Hospitality: work for unity, activities to support and strengthen the Kateri Circle members, encourage the formation of other Kateri Circles both for youth and adults

Physical/Service: get involved in your local community; participate in the interests and needs of Families; outreach to the sick, elderly, and special needs of community/parish members.

HOW can we start a Kateri Circle?

Kateri Circles begin when two or three, and more, gather and want to form a group for spiritual support, and who want to form a small community of faith for prayer, learning and outreach to the community.

WHO can start a Kateri Circle?

Any person(s) willing to pray, learn more about our patroness, Kateri Tekakwitha, study the faith, and serve others.

WHO can help?

The Tekakwitha Conference National Center Staff is ready to provide additional information and assistance to help you get started. Call: 1-800-842-9635 or e-mail: tekconf@gmail.com

Members of other Kateri Circles

May Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha guide and inspire you in your efforts to make her better known throughout the Universal Church.

Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha, pray for us!

KATERI CIRCLE QUESTIONNAIRE



Please take a moment to assist us in updating your Kateri Circle information by completing this questionnaire and returning it to the Tekakwitha Conference at the address below.



Name of Circle _____

Parish/Mission/Other sponsorship, if applicable _____

City _____ State/Prov _____ Zip/Pr Code _____

Contact Information

Contact Person _____

Address _____

City _____ State/PR _____ Zip/PostalCode _____

Phone Home _____ Work _____

Cell _____ Fax _____

E-mail address _____

Mail to:

Tekakwitha Conference

PO Box 6768

Great Falls, MT 59406-6768

PRAYER INTENTIONS



Prayer for the Canonization of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha.

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 of the St. Lawrence, the pure and tender Lily, Kateri Tekakwitha, grant we beseech You, the favor we beg through her intercession; that this Young Lover of Jesus and of His Cross may soon be counted among the Saints by Holy Mother Church, and that our hearts may be enkindled with a stronger desire to imitate her innocence and faith. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Prayer Requests For Favors sought through the Intercession of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha

Cynthia Baker, MT, Sister of Patricia Baker-Denali, AK
 Father Anthony Gregori, MT
 Amy Edwards, WA, daughter of Darlene Peters
 Malvin Stockman, AL, husband of Sandy
 June Carey, Petoskey, MI
 Linda Kovar, MT, cancer
 Fr. Ray Bucko, SJ, NE, Primary Progressive MS
 Dick Poplawski, WI, stroke, father of Sr. Diane
 Desiree Barnhart, MT, testing for recurrence of cancer
 Marcus Briggs-Cloud, MA, punctured ear drums
 All who have lost jobs
 Our generous benefactors



Prayers of Thanksgiving

Pierre Solet, LA, successful surgery

May They Enjoy Eternal Rest and Peace In the Lord

Charles Simmons, FL, husband of Ella
 Geroldine Cruz, CA, mother of Sacheen Littlefeather
 Steven Saenz, TX, son of Frances and Ruben Saenz, and
 nephew of Rosa Holguin-Hernandez
 Marcus Zimmerman, IL, Menominee, Vietnam Veteran,
 poet, flute player
 Edward Thomas, QC, brother of Michael Thomas

MARK YOUR CALENDARS! FUTURE ANNUAL CONFERENCE SITES/DATES

2009: July 1-5 Raleigh, North Carolina Convention Center
2010: July 28-August 1 Albuquerque, New Mexico Convention Center
2011: July 20-24 Tucson, Arizona Convention Center

SPECIAL FEASTS /DATES TO REMEMBER

March 1 First Sunday of Lent
 17 St. Patrick Day
 19 St. Joseph
 25 Annunciation of the BVM

April 5 Palm Sunday
 9-11 Triduum
 12 Easter Sunday
 17 Feast of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha
 19 Divine Mercy Sunday



ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES FORM

We are grateful for the prayers and your financial support through your annual membership to the Tekakwitha Conference.

55 years & over: \$20.00	18-54 years: \$25.00	Seniors/Adults 18 & over (outside USA): \$25.00
Kateri Circles: \$25.00	Arch/Dioceses: \$50.00	All Organizations: \$50.00

_____ New Member _____ Renewal Date of Birth: Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

Name: _____ Home #: () _____

Mailing Address: _____ Cell #: () _____

City: _____ ST/Prov _____ Zip/Postal Code: _____ Country: _____

Email address: _____ Tribe/Nation _____ Arch/Diocese: _____

Please enclose this completed form with your Check or Money Order in U.S. Funds and mail to:

Tekakwitha Conference

PO Box 6768

Great Falls, MT 59406-6768