



TEKAKWITHA CONFERENCE NATIONAL CENTER

Cross and Feathers

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

FEATURE ARTICLE



It was the end of July, 2006. I found myself addressing many of you as part of the closing ceremonies of the Kateri Tekakwitha Conference held at my school, John F. Kennedy Catholic High School. It was the end of two years of planning with groups from the Archdiocese of Seattle, the Lummi, Tulalip, Yakama and of course our own, Sister Kateri Mitchell.

This labor of love, of course, is to annually gather in prayer for the canonization of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha.

I remember distinctly the words I spoke to each of you present, "For five days, we have gathered in prayer and celebrated the faith we all have in common. . . and now Goodwin Gymnasium, this sacred space, will forever be marked with the grace that has come from our worship together."

I was just finishing my second year as principal of Kennedy Catholic and now, I'm starting my second five years. I can't begin another new day without sharing with each of you the grace that has descended upon this great school; that undeserved favor coming to us from our Creator God.

In that period of time, our enrollment has increased by over 150 students, our retention of students is 97% and despite the economy, we are adding students daily.



We have invested 1.2 million dollars in renovating our campus upgrading our cafeteria, library and media center, computer labs (3), video editing and of course a new meeting place for students and community to gather.

Teaching and learning have improved addressing both the talented students and those students with specific learning needs. We now have a program for struggling students called the Mother Teresa Program.



Our Catholic identity has become a beacon for the Archdiocese. We have more student led Masses, Adoration of the Eucharist, Lancer Life to build faith, fellowship and fun, the Ministry of Youth, bringing youth pastors and ministers to our campus representing all faith traditions to evangelize the good news. And we have parents gathering in our chapel for prayer to cover all present at Kennedy.

Finally, the Puyallup and Muckleshoot tribes have agreed to sponsor Native students to be able to attend Kennedy Catholic. Their financial gifts and advisory presence are the foundation of the Tekakwitha Program, which now sponsors almost 20 students and families.

I marvel at God's infinite patience and love that continues to shower upon us. That has come from your presence on our campus; leaving us with a mantle of grace that has clothed me with a garment of your love.

I pray daily for the canonization of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha and for spiritual and physical health to you all.

Michael Prato
Principal
Kennedy Catholic High
School

Artwork by Students
at Kennedy Catholic



TEKAKWITHA CONFERENCE NATIONAL CENTER NEWS

FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends of Blessed Kateri,

Fix your eyes on the Star! Jesus, the Light has come in glory into this world! Emmanuel 'God with us' walks the sacred circle with us each day. Let us ask the Sun of Justice to show us new ways to be people of justice and hope in this New Year. May we promote and keep focused on respect for life and uphold the dignity for all persons, and all of the Creator's work in the beauty of creation.



In this New Year, we reawaken within our own hearts better care and respect for our brothers, sisters, and the earth, our Mother. In his Papal Message for World Peace Day, Pope Benedict XVI, chose the theme: "If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation". The Pope writes ... "creation is the beginning and the foundation of all God's works", "...that covenant between human beings and the environment, ... should mirror the creative love of God, from whom we come and towards whom we are journeying." Together, let us try to live this everyday.

During this New Year, may we continue to anticipate the news that our patroness, Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha will soon have a new title recognized by our Holy Mother the Church. We also look forward to our 71st Annual Conference in Albuquerque, NM this summer. The theme invites us 'With Kateri We Walk in Beauty in the Land of Enchantment'.

In gratitude and appreciation to all of you who year round support this organization through your prayers and monetary contributions by way of individual membership renewals, Kateri Circles, Arch/dioceses and organization membership renewals. Thanks to all of you who have encouraged new members to join the Tekakwitha Conference family. We, the staff give thanks to you our customers who purchase religious items available through this office. We say 'thank you' to all who are faithfully contributing to our restricted fund, 'Friends of Kateri Tekakwitha'. Your generosity reflects the goodness of our loving God, the giver of all gifts.

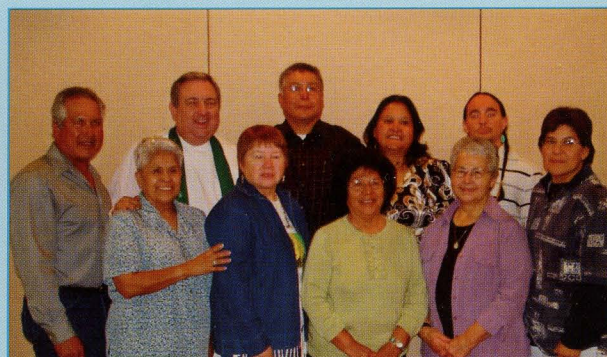
As we journey together this year, will we as members of many nations walk in the Light remembering the 'Star' and that a great Light has shone to guide us through both the light and the darkness of each challenge we meet?

In Blessed Kateri,

Sister Kateri Mitchell

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TEKAKWITHA CONFERENCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



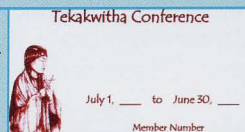
Ronald Tso (11), President
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Ex-Officio Members:

**Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, OFM Cap,
Episcopal Moderator**
Fr. Wayne Paysse – Executive Director BCIM
Sister Kateri Mitchell – Executive Director
**The Spring Board Meeting is scheduled for
March 4-5, 2010, Bensalem, PA**

Invitation to Join the Team of Evangelizers

**The Tekakwitha
Conference Staff**
and Board of Directors invite all of our Kateri Circle Mem-



bers and individual Members to extend an invitation to both relatives and friends to **join**

the Kateri Tekakwitha Family by becoming a member and holding your own **Personal**

Membership Card and Number. There are numerous spiritual benefits.

How to obtain a Membership Form:

Visit the website: tekconf.org - click on Membership;
Call the office 1-800-842-9645; E-mail: tekconf@gmail.com.

Cross and Feathers
Vol. 28 No. 2

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KATERI CIRCLE NEWS

Updates from Akwesasne Kateri Prayer Circle



Mohawk Festival - Our first annual Mohawk Festival was held on Saturday, October 10th, from 9 AM until 4 PM. A good time was had by all and we look forward to an even bigger event next year. Thanks are extended to all the Native Americans who worked so hard to make this event a success. Special

thanks are extended to Tom Porter, our neighbor and friend from Kanatohareke who joined us for the opening prayers and blessing. The Shrine is fortunate to have two annual Native events, our Metis Pow-Wow for the 4th of July and now a Mohawk Festival in the Fall. Hope you can all come and enjoy both of these and celebrate the richness of authentic Native culture, food, spirituality and fun. Don't miss them next year. Fr. Kevin Kenny



Our goal for the Festival was to present cultural awareness. Speakers and presenters talked about our history, our culture and our spirituality. We had a fashion show and crafts people showing and selling authentic crafts and art work. Our feast included our traditional food which is corn soup, frybread, strawberry drink, corn bread

and steak. Everyone had a good time socializing and listening to our presenters. We had traditional singers and got everyone up to do some dances. A Mohawk basket maker demonstrated how baskets are made with sweetgrass, splints and various sizes of molds. A finale of a Healing Service conducted by Deacon Ron Boyer took place in the evening. This was Fr. Kevin's last event before he passed and we will miss him so much. He was good to the Native Americans. We learned from each other and he always welcomed us to the Shrine. We called the Shrine our second home. Members of the Shrine Board of Directors, Bernice Lazore, Theresa Steele, Sarah Hassenplug and Deacon Ron Boyer are also members of the Akwesasne Kateri Prayer Circle and the Fonda Kateri Prayer Circle. We come together at the Fonda Kateri National Shrine three weekends a year in May, July and October. We participate in the weekend masses, inculcate with our Mohawk singing, do the purification by prayers to the four directions and smudging and conduct a Healing Service on a Saturday evening. We have been doing this for many years now to show our devotion to Blessed Kateri.



Submitted by
Bernice Lazore
President-Akwesasne Kateri Prayer Circle

The Indigenous Religious and Clergy at the 70th Annual Tekakwitha Conference

The Indigenous Clergy and Religious met during the 2009 Tekakwitha Conference. The Annual Retreat prior to the Tekakwitha Conference was not scheduled this year.

The alternative was to have a few sessions together in



Native Religious



Raleigh, NC during the annual gathering. This provided the opportunity for our Native clergy and religious to pray, share both personal and ministry stories, and reconnect after a year of service as 'proclaimers' of the Word.



Native Clergy



Mayan Leadership Conference October 2009 Omaha, Nebraska

The National Mayan Indian Leadership Conference convened in Omaha, Nebraska this Fall 2009 with Native leaders from California, Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Nebraska, Oregon and Washington. Ms. Cecil Motus of the USCCB (United States Conference of Bishops from Washington, DC along with invited guests from the Native Studies Department of Creighton: Fr. Ray Bucko, SJ and Dr. Rudi Mitchell (Omaha Tribe), and Sr. Kateri Mitchell of the Tekakwitha Conference were present for the weekend.

Many members of the Mayan Community were born in the United States. The Mayan Indian Leaders made a resolution to the USCCB that they be identified as Native Americans within the conference structures. Before this they were identified as part of the Refugees and Immigrants Group. Although the group is from what is now called Guatemala and they are far from the original homeland they confirmed that they are the original inhabitants of the land and this is their primary identification. The group also expressed



interest in the Tekakwitha Conference as an leaders, their love for the Church and pride in being Mayan Indians.

The next National Mayan Leadership event is scheduled for July 16-18, 2010 at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska.



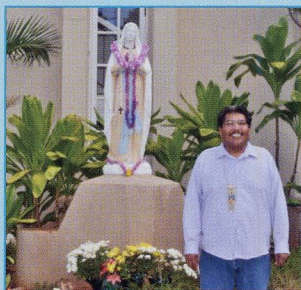
KATERI CIRCLE NEWS



Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha Goes to Hawaii

In September I celebrated my 45th birthday in the Hawaiian Islands thanks to mom God Bless her! But on Sunday the 27th which was my birthday we went to church at Maria Lanakila Catholic Parish in Maui. I handed Blessed Kateri Prayer cards and all were taken. I was amazed that people were interested in who Blessed

Kateri is, as they are Natives too. And the last island was Oahu there we attended the St Augustine Catholic Church in Honolulu and passed out "Highlights of the Life of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha" brochures and people were asking about her again. I felt great knowing that the Hawaiian Natives have a interest in "Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha." What a wonderful feeling I have in spreading word of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha!

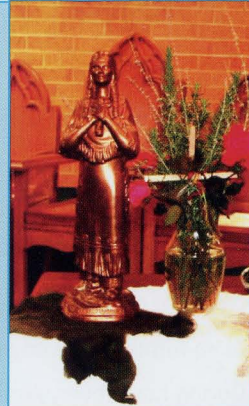


Submitted by Herman Ray
Salt River Pima
Phoenix, AZ

News from the Raleigh Area Kateri Circle

Niawehe sgenu!

We were involved in the Thanksgiving Day Mass at St. Mary, Mother of the Church, Garner, NC. Mass began at 9:30, and we were given permission to smudge the church prior to that. We offered a four directions prayer with the smudging of the church.



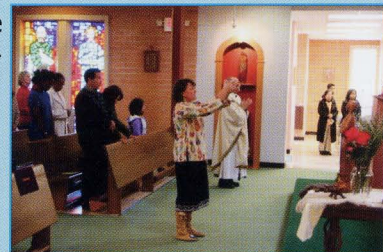
Following the Eucharist, we sang Amazing Grace as a meditational offering. It was sung in four languages: English, Lumbee, Mohawk, and Cherokee.

We had a second collection for a statuary fund. Our hope is, in the near future, to place a lifesize statue of Bl. Kateri in the garden at St. Mary's.

We passed out prayer cards and information on the Life of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha.

Following the Mass, we joined our prayer and talking circle.

Submitted by
Chris Keffer



MISSION CONGRESS 2010

God's Mission, Many Faces
A Portrait of U.S. Catholics in Mission



SAVE THE DATE:
OCTOBER 28-31, 2010
Albuquerque, New Mexico

**For more information on
Mission Congress 2010
in Albuquerque, NM.,
October 28-31, 2010
please contact the
Catholic Mission Forum
At
1-202-832-3112**

UPDATE YOUR KATERI CIRCLE CONTACT INFORMATION FOR 2009-2010

PLEASE take a moment to assist us. Update your Kateri Circle CONTACT INFORMATION by completing the form 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/Chair _____

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 or EMAIL to: tekconf@gmail.com

Kateri Circle News

Official Opening of the Native Nations Embassy for the National Congress of the American Indians in Washington, DC. November 3, 2009

EMBASSY OF
TRIBAL NATIONS

Alma Ransom, Mohawk Nation from Akwesasne, NY. was selected by all the Indian Chiefs from across the United states to give a four directions blessing with tobacco, corn meal, sage, pine and sweet grass at a sunrise service. Alma Ransom, Bear Clan offered the opening prayer by giving thanks to the Creator for many things in both her Mohawk language and in English. She pointed to the smoke "piercing the sky" and invited the group to join her in giving thanks by facing each of the four directions, the east, the north, the west and the south.



Alma formerly served as Vice President of NCAI and then Treasurer on the Executive Board.

During her prayer, Alma praised the NCAI staff and said one of the benefits of having a tribal embassy is to "notify the all nations of any events that are taking place or planned in DC."

"This is an important day," Jefferson Keel of the Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma told the gathering after the prayer ceremonies had been completed and the songs had been sung. "This is a special day. This is a new day for Indian Country."

As president of the National Congress of American Indians, Keel has an office in the new embassy building in northwest Washington that houses his organization. So it's no surprise that Keel is predicting a new era for the country's more than 4 million American Indians and Alaskan Natives.

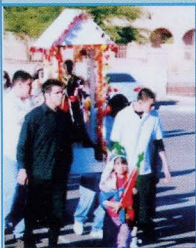
Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha Parish in Tucson, AZ Celebrates 25th Anniversary

Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha Parish, established in Tucson in 1984, celebrated its 25th Anniversary on November 21, 2009. Traditional dancing and prayers, a colorful procession and a Mass led by Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas were followed by a feast.

Various Native American tribes from the missions of Christo Rey, El Senor de Los Milagros, San Ignacio, San martin De Porres, San Juan Bautista, Santa Rosa de Lima and San Juan Diego Center were present for the event.

Father Dan McLaughlin, S.T., retired pastor who served the parish for more than 20 years, led the prayer to the four directions and offered the smoke blessing. He was presented with a stole and a cross in appreciation.

Amount the attendees were new pastor Farther Ermeregildo Saldana-Taneaco, Father John Edmunds, General Custodian of the Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity, and Father Wayne Paysse, Executive Director of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions in Washington, DC.



We invite you to become a member and join the Tekakwitha Conference Family.

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