

to the United States and personal representative of Pope John Paul II, brought the greetings of the Holy Father and reminded the delegates of the unique human experience with which God the Creator had gifted the Indians. Later in the evening a candlelight procession was climaxed by a holy hour in the great abbey church conducted by His Eminence, John Cardinal Krol, Archbishop of Philadelphia.

Next morning, Father Henri Béchard, S.J., of Montreal, vice postulator for the canonization of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha, opened the first working day with a talk on the spirituality of Blessed Kateri. The Most Reverend Thomas Joseph Murphy, Bishop of Great Falls, MT, explained to an attentive audience they had come together to glorify the Almighty and to heal the brokenness caused by many painful memories in the peace which the Church gives.

The delegates then broke up into groups in order to participate more actively in the eight workshops of the conference. One particularly popular workshop for the St. Regis delegates, the one on Native Catholic Catechesis, was directed by Sister Kateri Mitchell, S.S.A., former principal of the Akwesasne-Mohawk School on Cornwall Island.

Mohawks from St. Regis expressed themselves as deeply moved by two unusual Catholic liturgies, the first of which was a memorial service on Thursday afternoon conducted by Father Sevilla, in which candles were placed in the ground to symbolize the graves of relatives and friends of the delegates who had died during the past year and corn meal sprinkled on the candles. The second liturgy was a sunrise mass next morning conducted by Fr. Hascall. A majority of the St. Regis group was on hand a half hour before sunrise for this latter service at which cedar boughs were burned. The main part of the liturgy began with the canticle of Daniel in the place of the usual Gloria. The memorial acclamation after the consecration of the bread and wine was a poignant chant of a Chippewa elder uttered in his ancient tongue.

On Friday morning the general session opened with a dramatization of the life of Blessed Kateri, written and directed by Sarah Monroe Hassenplug, a native of St. Regis, and enacted by fifteen delegates from the Mohawk congregation of St. Lucy's Church in Syracuse. In a moving display of Mohawk solidarity the players from St. Lucy's invited both St. Regis and Kahnawake representatives to portray additional roles in the drama. The presentation was so well received by the Indian delegates that they requested their Mohawk brethren to give a repeat performance. With the help of Father Gilbert Hemauer, O.F.M. Cap., President of the Tekakwitha Conference from Great Falls, Montana, arrangements were made to schedule this encore at the start of the general session that evening.

Both Thursday and Friday evenings were devoted to prayer services. The first of these on Thursday, was a communal penance



Statue of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha on the Campus of St. John's University  
Collegeville, Minnesota