



Sculpsit Kirsten Waldbillig.

BLESSED KATERI TEKAKWITHA

KAHNAWAKE'S FIRST DEACON

The Story in Pictures, Paul Harnel, S.J.

5. Today, this parable of cultivating the Lord's vineyard presents a *real challenge to Aboriginal nations and communities*. As native peoples you are faced with a supreme test: that of promoting the religious, cultural and social values that will uphold your human dignity and ensure your future well-being. Your sense of sharing, your understanding of human community rooted in the family, the highly valued relationships between your elders and your young people, your spiritual view of creation which calls for responsible care and protection of the environment—all of these traditional aspects of your way of life need to be preserved and cherished.

This concern with your own native life in no way excludes your *openness to the wider community*. It is a time for reconciliation, for new relationships of mutual respect and collaboration in reaching a truly just solution to unresolved issues.

6. Above all, I pray that my visit may be a time of comfort and encouragement for *the Catholic communities* among you. The pioneering efforts of the missionaries—to whom once again the Church expresses her profound and lasting gratitude—have given rise among you to living communities of faith and Christian life. The challenge is for you to become more active in the life of the Church. I understand that Bishop Croteau and the other Bishops of the North are seeking ways of *revitalizing the local Churches* so that you may become ever more effective witnesses of God's kingdom of love, justice, peace, forgiveness and human solidarity.

My dear Indian, Inuit and Metis friends, I appeal to all of you, especially the young people, to accept roles of responsibility and to contribute your talents to *building up the Church among your peoples*. I ask all the elders, leaders and parents to encourage and support vocations to the priesthood and religious life. In this way the Church will become ever more at home in your own cultures, evangelizing and strengthening your traditional values and customs.

7. I have come today, dear brothers and sisters, to *proclaim to you Jesus Christ and to proclaim that he is your friend and your Savior*. In his name, with the love of the Good Shepherd, I repeat the words of the second reading: "Conduct yourselves in a way worthy of the Gospel of Christ" (Phil 1:27). By doing this, Christ will be exalted in all your actions (cf. v. 20), and his peace will reign in your hearts.

We are about to renew our *baptismal promises*. This is a solemn moment. By rejecting sin and evil, and by renewing