

"Am I supposed to do this?"

Camp Glinondo, a Summer Camp close to Erie PA, is run by the Benedictine nuns and every year tries to promote nature through its "stations of creations" campaign. This 1996 Summer camp was perhaps the most exciting and this is why.

As campers and their parents arrived, a statue of the Blessed Kateri was being carved into the base of a tree that stands across from the main house: "Tekakwitha House".

The tree the statue is being carved from was damaged in a storm last May, and was going to be cut down. Instead of taking all of the trees down, Camp administrators asked that about 12 feet of the tree be left so a statue could be created. Six or seven weeks ago, Sr Carolyn, the Camp administrator, called Bryan Sprague, tree sculptor, to see if he would consider it and he said he didn't know if he could have it done... "We have a real devotion to the spirit of Kateri," said Sr Carolyn. "You can sense her presence here." People know that she was the first Native American to be beatified by the Roman Catholic Church and that we expect her to be canonized soon i.e. be declared a saint publicly for the whole world."

Sprague is a well known sculptor, so very busy. "I prayed Kateri that he needed her help to



get this done," Sr Carolyn said. She called Bryan and asked him if he could do it on July 14 and he said no because this day was his birthday.

"I couldn't believe it" said Sr Carolyn. "I told him that July 14 was the feast day of Kateri" and he said: "I am supposed to do this." Sprague worked for 8 straight hours to complete the statue Sunday and Sr Carolyn said she plans on putting flower beds around the statue. "It's wonderful!" She said that "Tekakwitha" has two translations. The first "she who bumped into things" was given to her because she never recovered full eyesight after suffering from small pox. The second, "She who moves things out of her way," is the one Sr Carolyn likes best.

"I suppose that shows she was someone who wants to get something done," she said. "There is an energy, a force, I feel I need to get things done and Kateri gives me the initiative to do it."

Kateri Tekakwitha "is the patroness of Peace and Ecology" and that, Sr Carolyn said, is why Camp Glinondo has such a devotion to her. ■

*From the Morning News
Mike Bennett, July 1996*

The woman in Native society



The majority, if not all the Native nations, were matriarcal. That is to say that the woman held a preponderant authority in society. In fact, amongst the Innuits, women held the most important role. Firstly wasn't she the one who gave life? The one who transmitted the culture, spirituality and the values, the one who educated. In short the one who made the nation what it is.

In the Innuit nation, every one occupied a very definite role. Man would provide the big game, would plan out itinerary and organize hunting. He would take care of the transportation of the family (from the village to the territory), of the canoe portages, of heavy loads and installation of the camps at each stop. The woman, on her side, would back up the man.

Her principal tasks consisted in raising the children, educating them in all respects. Moreover during the hunting of big game when the men would leave for a few days, it was normal that she would take care of the daily chores, like getting ready the daily meals, hunting for small game, as rabbits and partridges... fishing and picking wild fruits. It is her also who saw to the treatment of the meat and the

fish, by smoking them. It is her also who took care of the cleaning of the furs so that they could be used for the confection of garments and serve to make different accessories necessary to the hunters.

It's her also who saw to the renewal of their pine in the tent, to the hygiene of the camp, to the health of the family, to sewing, to children's education, to reading and writing for the youngsters and adolescents too. It would also happen that in the families where the elders were girls, that they would go hunting with the father.

• *From nomad to sedentary life*

With the advent of sedentary life, the woman has lost most of its occupations. Valorized as she was, she became the one to prepare meals, to do the

