

A tribute to Kateri

What a passionating story that of Kateri Tekakwitha, a frail young Mohawk, who not having learned to read and write, lived, as if by intuition, an intense spiritual life. She resembles Theresa of the Infant Jesus in her naivety and tenderness of her love. Theresa of Avila even by the fortitude of her soul, her inclination towards mortification, her insatiable need for prayer. The interior trust, so strong towards sanctity, which animated her surely came from very special graces of the Grand Spirit, the Holy Spirit to whom she gave up all following His ways without hesitation.

As a child, small as she was, she already prayed. Nothing in the world could make her put aside her rosary which she tied to her wrist to recite it constantly. By what spiritual privilege, can grace invade so deeply this soul, to mark her at this point, if not by a very special grace of God. Kateri moved around her own people, joyfully, ready to serve and relieve the members of her uncle's longhouse where she was received. She assumed the most difficult tasks, the most thankless duties. A brave young girl as she was with a firm soul, would not let herself be disarmed by the intimidations and the vexations that her piety brought upon her. Her faith in the divine presence is so lively, that she

stands at the door of the chapel, closed in daytime, to adore her Lord that she knows present in the the tabernacle. If Kateri lived a spiritual life stamped with austerity and sacrifice, the lesson more difficult to imitate that she gives us, is the one of her constant generosity, never belied in the accomplishment of her daily duties, to which she was always faithful: heavy tasks, hunting in the forest, care of others... She answered to all call, foresaw everything without sacrificing her time for prayer in a secluded spot in the forest, where she became isolated to pray and make penance. Her spiritual journey seemed all traced out and nothing could make her deviate from it.

We must learn to know Kateri, then we cannot but love her and put our confidence in her. We can be sure that as she never refused anything to God, He will never refuse her what we ask through her, if we invoke her with faith and try to imitate her intercession are a living proof of that.

It is thus urgent for us to unite in prayer, so that our Holy Mother Church grants her the place that she deserves in the grand assembly of the saints. She is so great in her faith and availability to God.

A friend of Kateri

Kateri without frontiers

Known, loved and prayed from Kahnawake in Canada, Tonéghé in Togo, Kateri Tekakwitha appears today as a universal model of sanctity.

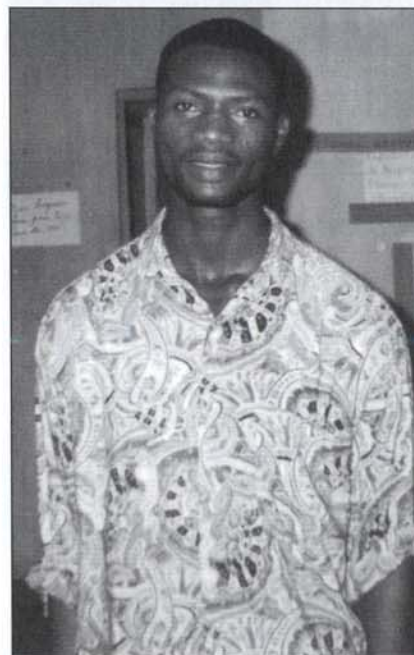
The history of the knowledge of the life of Kateri by the Togolese is intimately linked to the coming of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart to

Brothers who assumed the responsibility of the Saint John Bosco College. On their arrival, the brothers exerted themselves to assure the spiritual and human formation of the youth. But can youth be educated without an initiation to true prayer, the prayer of the heart encountered in their daily life?

What better means to attain this end than to know other youth, witnesses of the impact of a living faith in their lives! The team responsible for the group presented the personalities of Theresa of the Infant Jesus, of Dominique Savio, of the martyrs of Ouganda and of Kateri Tekakwitha.

The Lily of the Mohawks touches them by her message of evangelical simplicity, her generosity in her humble daily life, her constant recourse to the Virgin Mary and her love for Jesus in the Eucharist.

Eager to make Kateri better known, Roch, a self-made painter of



The artist painter, autodidact Roch Abotsi

Togo. Arriving in 1985 to work for the education of the youth, the Brothers established themselves in the city of Atakpamé where Bishop Philippe Fanoko Kpodzo entrusted to them the College of Saint Albert the Great.

Then in 1998, the small town of Pomégbé saw the coming of the



Mr Eugene Doyon and son Brother Claude with Albert Lazare of the Kateri center.

the town of Aklok, endeavored to paint Kateri, so that the prayer group may fix her image in their hearts.

While visiting the Kateri Center in Kahnawaké, Brother Claude Doyon seeing the warm appreciation of the painting by this Togolese artist decided to present them with the fine work.

This is how the "Fairest flower which ever bloomed along the Saint Lawrence River", came to the shores of the Domi, this little river flowing by the city of Tomégbé in Togo.



Kateri Tekakwitha, painting created by Roch Abotsi, in October 1998

Brother Claude Doyon s.c.

Novena a Prayer to Kateri Tekakwitha

*O Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha,
in your life you experienced
pain, sorrow and hardship.*

*Yet in all things you found
joy and peace in believing in
Jesus, present to us in the
Eucharist and in His love
expressed to us on the Cross.*

*O Great Lily of the Mohawks,
we ask that you take our intention
(mention your intention...)
to the foot of the Cross. Ask Jesus,
our loving Savior, to bring healing to
those who are heavy burdened.*

*Through your intercession,
may this favor be granted
if such be according to the will of God.
By your prayer, help us always to remain
faithful to Jesus and to His Holy church.*

*Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha
pray for us.*

"You have noticed that everything an Indian does is done in a circle, and that is because the Power of the World always works in circles, and everything tries to be round. In the old days, when we were a strong and happy people, all our power came to us from the sacred hoop of the nation, and so long as the hoop was unbroken, the people flourished. The flowering tree was the living center of the hoop, and the circle of the four quarters nourished it. The east gave peace and light, the south gave warmth, the west gave rain, and the north with its cold and mighty wind gave strength and endurance. This knowledge came to us from the outer world with our religion. Everything the Power of the

THE SACRED CIRCLE

World does is done in a circle. The sky is round, and I have heard that the earth is round like a ball, and so are all the stars. The wind, in its greatest power, whirls. Birds make their nests in circles, for theirs is the same religion as ours. The sun comes forth and goes down again in a circle. Even the seasons form a great circle in their changing, and always come back again to where they were. The life of a man is a circle from childhood, and so it is in everything where power moves. Our tepees were round like the nests of birds, and these were always set in a circle, the nation's hoop, a nest of many nests, where the Great Spirit meant for us to hatch our children."

(John G. Niehardt, Black Elk Speaks, 1959, pp 164-5)