

## Native people honour memory of Blessed Kateri



For Sarah Valdo, no distance is too great to go to be close to Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha. The 89-year-old Acoma, N.M., resident travelled thousands of miles to be present at the 63<sup>rd</sup> annual Tekakwitha Conference at Michigan State University.

The conference seeks to promote the voice, presence and identity of native Catholics. According to Valdo, the July 31-Aug. 4 conference allowed aboriginal Catholics to affirm their faith under Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha's protection. More than 1,000 people attended.

"I feel close to Kateri. There are so many miracles that she has been responsible for", she said in an interview. "This conference is a way for me to say thank you and pray to her one-on-one. She is here at this conference—I can feel her." Her son Mike is a past president of the Tekakwitha Conference. "It is wonderful to see so many members of the native American Catholic community sharing in evangelization", he said. "We are here to spread the good word of the Blessed Kateri."

Pope John Paul beatified Kateri Tekakwitha in 1980. She was the first North American Indian to be beatified by the Catholic Church. Blessed Kateri was born to a

Christian Algonquin mother and a Mohawk father in 1656 in what is now New York state and fled to Canada at the age of 20 for fear of retribution from neighbours hostile to her faith. In what is now Caughnawaga, Que., she devoted herself to serving needy First Nations people. Blessed Kateri died in 1680. "We are just waiting for one more miracle" said Mike Valdo, who believes the canonization of Kateri is not far away. "We hope that it is soon. There are so many of our native American elders that are passing away. They all had hoped to see Kateri canonized in their lifetime."

"It is a long, long process," he said. "But we all continue to pray. This conference gives us hope. All we can do is be patient and pray. This conference is all about unity and love between different tribes."

Next summer's conference will be held in Sioux Falls, S.D. Welcome!

## THE WORLD in the eyes of the Creator

God who surpasses us infinitely, has a lot of things to teach us. There is another Life in an Another World, invisible, infinite and is incomparably nicer and active than the physical cosmos. It's only in the other world that our hearts, our bodies, our spirits will be satisfied, because we look for a life without death and suffering, neither of the body, of the heart and of the spirit. Another Life of total Happiness, in an eternity, in a Kingdom where reigns the Almighty. In a word: we wish to enjoy the innumerable privileges that only God can give to His creatures.

"It would be a God Creator very small and limited who would have created the Earth only inhabited world! With a quivering of my will, from nothing I created innumerable worlds and I hurled them, like luminous grains of dust, in the immensity of the sky. The Earth which makes you ferociously so proud, is but one grain of dust turning in the infinite and if he is not the largest, he is certainly the most corrupt. Lives and lives pullulate in the millions of worlds which make the joy of your sight in the serenity of the night, and the perfection of God will be manifest when you will be able to see the marvels of these worlds with the intellectual eyes of your spirit, when it will be again united to God."

## The Smile



A smile costs nothing  
But has great value  
It enriches those who receive it  
It lasts an instant  
But you remember it for a long time  
Nobody is rich enough to discount it  
Even the poor people can possess it  
It makes the families happy  
Business prosperous, friendships lasting,  
A smile gives us a rest  
When we're tired,  
Encourages us  
When we are depressed.  
And helps us to fight away all our worries  
Nevertheless, it cannot be bought

Borrowed or stolen;  
It has value  
Only when it is given  
If you meet someone  
Who doesn't give you a smile  
That you deserve  
Be generous, give him yours  
Because no one needs most  
The smile that someone  
cannot give to others.  
Smile lasts but an instant  
But we remember it for a long, long time!!