

KATERI... on the Honour Wall

It's nice and helpful to have friends who share your work or do part of your work. This happened to me recently when friends from Virginia, Maria and Lester Duffin, visiting again the Smithsonian Indian Museum, found out that Kateri Tekakwitha's name was already engraved with the names of the other famous Indians of the Americas.

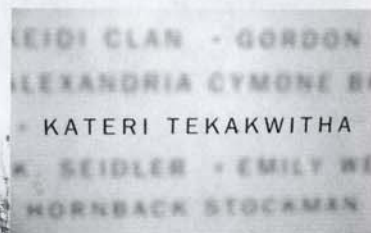
"Father, we have found Kateri's name", wrote me the Duffins, on the Honour Wall in the Indian Museum of Washington. From the beginning we could not find it in the exhibition Hall (2nd Fl.). Then we went up to the Resource Centre (3rd Fl.). We were helped by a very nice and warm Indian man, Dan Davis, who showed us the Honour Roll on the railing wall (3rd Fl.). Les and I started searching from the first section. For some reason, I moved to the third section. With hundreds and hundreds of names and not in alphabetical order, Les and I thought it would take time to find Kateri's name.

I started praying:

"Please Kateri let me find you, where are you?..." Within a minute, I saw her name right in front of me, so clear. Maybe my cheerful voice: "Les, Les I found her", drew the attention of two Security Guards. Then I explained to them about you and the importance of Kateri. They smiled and were happy with us. We are now hoping and waiting for the canonization of Kateri.

Mary and Lester Duffin to Fr Bruyère s.j.

Smithsonian Native American Museum on the Wall, Washington, D.C.



A close-up retouched photo of Kateri's name on the Honor Wall at the Museum.

- VIATICUM - dying don't die alone

The Eucharist is a source for immortality

THE CATHOLIC tradition of giving the Eucharist to the dying ensures that instead of dying alone they die with Christ who promises them eternal life. Death is no longer the darkness feared and avoided, but the loving embrace that identifies us with the Lord Jesus," said the cardinal, president of the Pontifical Council for Health Care Workers.

The council sponsored a May 21 study day on "viaticum" as Communion is called when given to a dying person. The cardinal told participants that the Eucharist is always a source of life, a "medicine for immortality".

When a person is dying, he said, the Eucharist ensures that physical death is accompanied by the fullness of life won for all believers through the death and resurrection of Jesus.

"Through contact with viaticum, our death ceases to be the last frontier and converts the tomb into a cradle, into an authentic birth into eternal life".

"Many speak of the tremendous solitude of death because no one can take another's place and because we each must die individually," the cardinal said. "This is true, but for a Christian, through viaticum, this solitude is not as terrifying as it first appears.

In the Eucharist received as viaticum we find ourselves in a complete and intimate union with Christ, who dies in each of our deaths, not in the darkness of annihilation, but in the light of the resurrection.

So giving Communion to the dying is the most important single pastoral act they can perform, because it leads the faithful to the fullness of new life in Christ. Remember, we don't die alone.

