

LIVING WITH CHRIST THIS WEEK

Sunday, July 4:	Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C) - green
Monday 5:	Ferial - green
Tuesday 6:	Ferial - green
Wednesday 7:	Ferial - green
Thursday 8:	Ferial - green
Friday 9:	Ferial - green
Saturday 10:	Ferial - green
Sunday 11:	Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C) - green

Our Saintly and Historical Heritage



2. Kateri Tekakwitha

Her beauty is completely interior. This statement refers to this First Nations woman who died at an early age (1656-1680). Kateri Tekakwitha was born in Auriesville, New York State. She was the daughter of a Mohawk father and an Algonquin mother who transmitted her Christian faith. Kateri was orphaned at the age of four when her parents died during a smallpox epidemic. She herself suffered from the ravages of this disease as her face was scarred and her vision profoundly affected. Adopted by her uncle who was the clan chief, Kateri was destined for a prestigious marriage. However she was persecuted because of her desire to remain celibate for love of Christ. When the missionary Father Jacques de Lamberville traveled to her village, Kateri asked him to baptize her. He was amazed by the depth of her faith and Kateri was baptized on Easter Sunday in 1676.

Kateri was no longer able to endure the persecutions in her village and wanted to find a place more favorable to her faith. She emigrated to Kahnawake, which was 400 kms from her village. She made her First Communion on Christmas Day in 1677 at the Saint Francis Xavier mission.

Her ardent love for Christ led her to make a private vow of chastity on March 25th, 1679. Kateri consecrated the rest of her brief life to caring for the sick and aged and praying that people would welcome Christ's message. When she died on Good Friday, April 17th, 1680, her last words were *Jesus I love you*. The priests and lay people who were present at her death witnessed a miracle. The disfiguring facial scars disappeared and her face became beautiful. Two colonists from La Prairie who had come to the mission to celebrate Holy Thursday remarked her beauty and the peace that emanated from her face as they built her coffin. Over the years, there have been so many cures attributed to her that we have lost count.

Claude Chauchetière, a Jesuit missionary, painted her portrait around 1690 and wrote her biography in 1695. On June 22, 1980, Pope John Paul II declared her Blessed. Today many parishes in North America are dedicated to Kateri Tekakwitha who is known as *the Lily of the Mohawks*. The remains of Blessed Kateri are found in the Church in Kahnawake (approximately 20 kms from downtown Montreal). There we find the painting by Father Chauchetière, as well as the monstrance before which Kateri spent many hours adoring the Blessed Sacrament. This sanctuary is open every day from spring to autumn. More information is available at: 450-632-6030.

Georges Madore

Translated by Honore Kerwin Borrelli