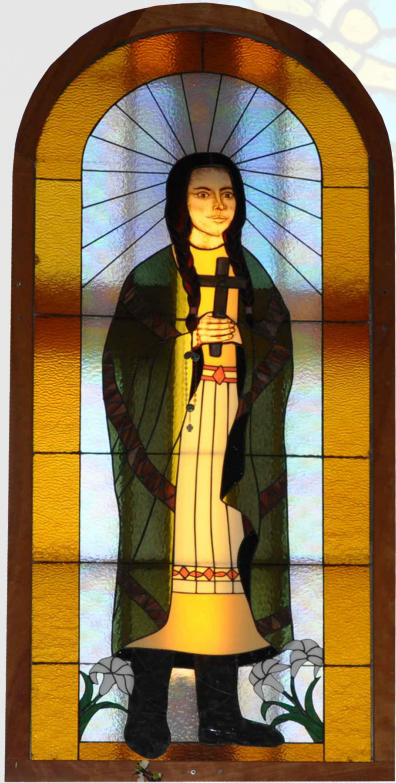


With Katerí,
let us be

« trans-figured » by God



Intergenerational Catechesis

Saint Katerí
Tekakwitha

« she who moves forward slowly »

A model for the
new evangelisation

By Lyne Groulx, **with the collaboration** of Colette Beauchemin and Suzanne Desrochers

A production of Office de catéchèse du Québec with
the collaboration of the Diocese of Saint-Jean-Longueuil



A catechesis with Saint Kateri ...

On October 21, 2012, Kateri Tekakwitha will be canonized [was canonized] by Pope Benedict XVI, thus becoming the first Native American saint. Who is she? Why does the Church judge it opportune to grant her this title now, since she was born in 1656? How can she be a model of faith for us today? These questions and many others are addressed in this intergenerational catechesis, which is an invitation to encounter Saint Kateri, whose life and faith still echo the Gospel today.

Why not an intergenerational catechesis?

When we hear the word « catechesis », we still too often have the impulse to think of an activity solely for children, although catechesis can become an authentic link to mutual evangelisation for the faithful of different generations and open up avenues of hope in the midst of our communities. Intergenerational catechesis is an endeavour to create the conditions necessary so that each one, young or not-so-young, can open themselves to the Word which relates to them, along with others from a variety of backgrounds. Each person is thus encouraged to become a major player in his/her faith journey, both by being recipients of the Word and by making it resound in a personal and meaningful manifestation, in dialogue with others.

This is the goal of the intergenerational catechesis proposed in this document, within the framework of a one hour and thirty minute gathering. This activity brings together children, teens and adults,

either as families or as individuals, in a session which respects the psycho-religious development of each one, while fostering bonds among them and bringing mutual enrichment.

In the first step, the initial activity in the large group allows for the participants of all ages to learn about the life of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha. Following that, the group divides up into different workshops according to their age group and each will reflect on the biblical account of the Transfiguration (Luke 9, 28-36). In these groups, each one will make discoveries which he/she can then share during the celebration when they gather again as a large group. This intergenerational catechesis suggests that the participants enter into an experience of « comm-union » where, together in Christ, all are called to allow themselves to be trans-figured by God, following the example of Kateri.

Objectives :

- To get to know Kateri Tekakwitha through some key elements of her life¹.
- To deepen any aspect of her life which may have touched them.
- To discover in the biblical account of the Transfiguration how the disciples reveal Jesus Christ to us.
- To recognize God's beauty in others and in ourselves.
- To experience a catechesis enriched by the presence and contribution of several generations.

1. The majority of the information on Saint Kateri comes from a book by Henri BÉCHARD S.J., *Kaia'tanó:ron Kateri Tekahkwitha*, edited by the Kateri Kahnawake Center, Quebec, 1992, available in French and English at the Saint Francis Xavier Mission, Kahnawake.

Proposed schedule for the gathering:

(Approximate time: 1h 30)

Step 1: Animated presentation of the life of Kateri:
Who is Kateri? (15 min)
Large-group Meeting: cf p. 5 - 7.

Time for moving into groups: 5 min

Step 2: Integration workshops beginning with a Gospel reading:
With Kateri, let us be transfigured by God! (40 min)

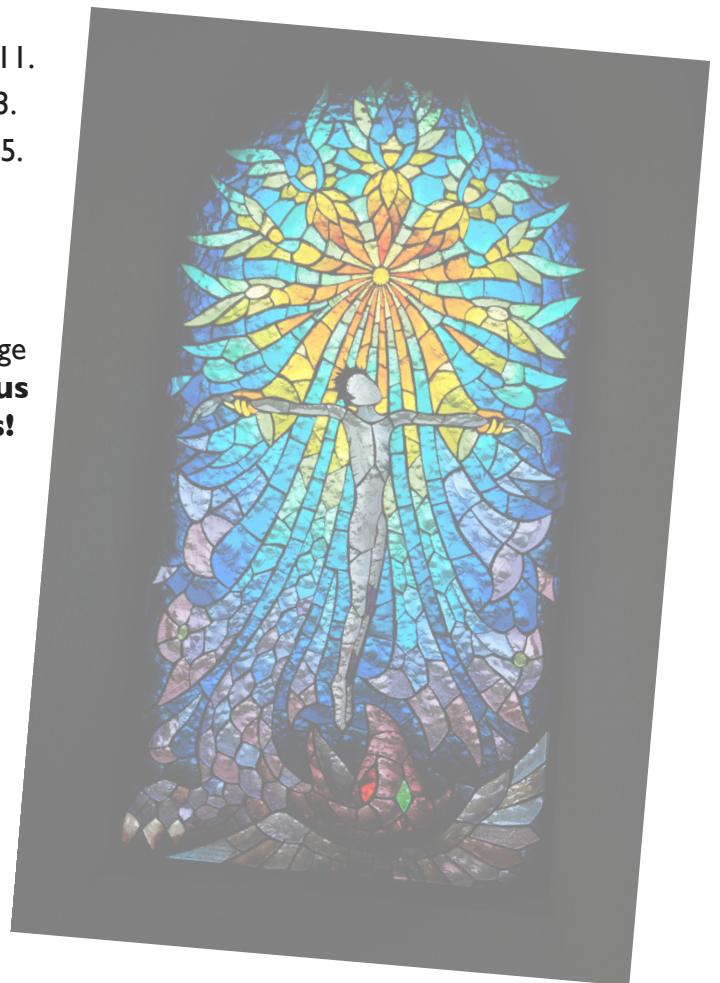
Age-based groups:

- Workshop for children: cf p. 8 - 11.
- Workshop for teens: cf p. 12 - 13.
- Workshop for adults: cf p. 14 - 15.

Time for moving into groups: 5 min

Step 3: Celebration of the Word with the large group: **With God, together let us celebrate our transfigurations!** (25 min) Cf p. 27 - 33.

Step 4: Refreshments or a shared meal (optional)



Preparation :

The animation of this intergenerational catechesis requires the collaboration of several people, besides the principal facilitator:

- Step 1:** A young person and an adult: an animated presentation of the life of Kateri, in the form of a dialogue which has been prepared in advance
- Step 2:** People who will animate the different workshops for the various age groups
- Step 3:** People who are to be involved in the celebration

It is suggested that you meet with them beforehand so that they will be familiar with their role and what they have to do as facilitators, as well as to prepare the required material, when necessary.

The material necessary for the different steps is as follows:

- Step 1:** a copy of the dialogue for the facilitator, the adult and the young person (cf p.5-7); the stained glass window of Saint Kateri (cf p.23); a poster bearing the inscription written on Kateri's tomb (cf p. 7, note 2); an area large enough for all of the participants; chairs for the participants.
- Step 2:** the schedule and the Scripture passage for each of the workshop facilitators (cf p.8-15 et 18); the appendices which will help the facilitators to prepare or help with the animation (cf p.16-22); the material needed for the crafts or artwork chosen for the children; the material needed for the group activity for the teens; a copy of the Scripture passage for each participant (cf p.18), if so desired; suitable locations for the workshops
- Step 3:** see preparation and material, (cf p. 27).

Note: To make the stained glass windows of Saint Kateri (step 1 and 3) and of the Transfiguration (step 3), you can photocopy the pictures found on pages X-X onto a transparency and put them into frames sturdy enough to stand and to allow for a source of light to be placed behind them (cf. examples p. X). A colored photocopy may also be used.

Animated presentation on the life of Kateri: Who is Kateri?

Getting Started: (Principal facilitator)

Welcome all those present.

Introduction of the theme, a brief overview of the procedures for the gathering and a short introduction of the team of facilitators.

Who is Kateri?

Dialogue between a young person and an adult¹

Setting the scene:

A young person and an adult come and stand in front of the group. The adult is carrying the stained glass window of Kateri and places it on a little table which is clearly visible to the entire group.

Adult (pointing to the stained glass window)

Let me introduce Saint Kateri Tekakwitha to you!

Youngster *Saint who?*

Adult (pronouncing slowly) *Saint Kateri Tekakwitha...a new saint. She will be canonized [was canonized] by Pope Benedict XVI on October 21, 2012!*

Youngster (with an air of curiosity) *«Canonized»... what is that, to be « canon...ized »???*

Adult *The expression « to be canonized » means that the Catholic Church officially recognizes a person as a saint. So, Saint Kateri can now be considered as a model for our faith today.*

Youngster *A model for our faith, I would like that, but... I don't know much about her! Do you know her?*

Adult *Yes, a little. I know that she was born in 1656, that she was a Native American, with an Algonquin mother and an Iroquois father from the Mohawk Tribe. I also read that she first grew up in New York State in the United States before coming to spend the last years of her life in Quebec. Unfortunately, she underwent something very difficult when she was four years old.*

Youngster *What happened to her?*

1. Prior to this, the young person and the adult should have a proper grasp of this dialogue, by either memorizing it or being able to read it in a lively and natural way.

Adult *There was a smallpox epidemic in her village. The young Kateri lost her parents and her little brother because of this disease. She also caught it, but she survived with some after effects: her face was marked by scars; her vision was blurred and she had difficulty walking without bumping into things. That is why she was given the name « Tekakwitha » which means « she who moves forward slowly ».*

Youngster *Ah! I understand! She received her nickname of « she who moves forward slowly » because she did not see very well and she bumped into things! But, what happened to her after having lost her parents?*

Adult *She went to live with her aunt in another village, as was common with the Mohawks. She then learned to be of service and to work as was the Native American tradition: she helped in the preparation of meals, gathered wood, picked wild fruit, made baskets and decorated clothing with beadwork. At the age of 11, she would have an encounter which would change her life! Some Jesuit missionaries came to her village!*

Youngster *Jesuit missionaries? Are they not priests who came from France? In my history lessons, I learned that they came to America to speak about Jesus and about God.*

Adult *Yes, exactly. And did you know that Kateri was a very curious young girl and was very interested in knowing stories about Jesus, because she remembered that as a young child her mother had told her about them?*

Youngster *Her mother was Algonquin and Christian?*

Adult *Yes! It was she who spoke to her about Jesus for the first time. The Jesuits often came to visit her village during her childhood. One day, she met Father Jacques de Lamberville who agreed to become her catechist and to explain to her how to become a Christian. Kateri then asked to be baptized, but she could not be baptized right away.*

Youngster *It was necessary that she take catechism lessons too! Was Kateri baptized after that?*

Adult *Yes, ten years later, at the age of 21! Don't worry! She did not have to take ten years of catechism! She simply could not be baptized as long as she stayed in her village. She had to leave and came to live along the banks of the Saint Lawrence River, in Kahnawake in the province of Quebec. Unfortunately, three years later when she was 24 years old, because of her declining health, she became gravely ill and died on April 17, 1680.*

Youngster *In 1680? That is a long time ago ... And you said at the beginning that she will become [became] a saint in 2012! I am not sure that I understand why ... Can you tell me more?*

Adulte *First of all, I must tell you what happened right after her death. It is said that because of her great faith in Christ, her face marred by illness, regained its former beauty and gentleness! All her scars had practically disappeared. Then, she was buried in a wooden coffin next to the cross where she loved to pray, along the banks of the Saint Lawrence River. Did you know that she liked to make little crosses with bits of wood and that she left them almost everywhere in the forest? It is said that many people have obtained favors and miracles after praying to her. It is also said that a lily grew in the spot where her heart was. That is why she is also known as the « Lily of the Mohawks ».*

Youngster *Is she still buried in the same place today? Can we go to see her?*

Adult *Yes, it is possible to go and see her tomb today, but in a different place, because in 1717 her relics were moved and placed in a chest made of polished wood in the sacristy of the Saint Francis Xavier Mission, in Kahnawake. In 1972, the chest was placed in a marble tomb in the same church of Saint Francis Xavier Mission. Beneath it is written: **Kaiatanoron Kateri Tekakwitha**² which means « Precious Kateri Tekakwitha ». She became Blessed Kateri in 1980 and will be [was] named Saint during her canonisation in Rome on October 21, 2012.*

Conclusion of Step 1: Principal Facilitator:

Yes, it can be said of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha, a new saint for our Church, that she is a model for our faith! Do you now know a little more about her? Do you know something about her that has not yet been mentioned?

(Allow time for the participants to express themselves.)

Principal Facilitator:

As you have just heard, her life was not easy. But she always sought to draw closer to Jesus and God. She allowed herself to be transformed by God. We might even say that she allowed herself to be transfigured by God. But what does it mean to allow oneself to be transfigured by God? That is what I am now inviting you to discover in the workshops.



The facilitator briefly explains the workshops and gives instructions as to the location assigned to each age group and the time limits.

2. In saying these words, the adult can place near the stained glass window a poster which has been prepared beforehand, bearing this inscription in large letters, along with its English translation.

With Kateri, let us allow ourselves to be transfigured by God!

Getting started:

Welcome the children; invite them to introduce themselves to each other.
Ask the children what they remember about the life of Kateri.

La vie de Kateri¹

Make up teams with two or three children on each. Hand out strips of paper with events from the life of Kateri² and ask them to place them in order.

Based on the sequence which they have pieced together, review with the children the main points of Kateri's life. This step will help them to remember more about the life of Kateri and to get to know her better.

Animate a discussion period about the life of Kateri Tekakwitha, using the following questions for inspiration:

- *What do you think about the life of Saint Kateri?*
(one can refer to the difficult moments or the important events and react to them)
- *How can her life speak to us about the Christian faith? About God?*

Pick up the strip of paper with the text which speaks about the death of Saint Kateri: « About fifteen minutes after her death, the scarred face of Kateri regained its former beauty and gentleness ». Ask the children what they think of this miracle.

1 This activity is meant for school age children. For the little ones, there is a well-illustrated book on the life of Saint Kateri entitled: *Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha* (Anne E. NEUBERGER, Novalis, 2011). The facilitator of this workshop can ask a parent to read the story to them and invite them to draw their favorite moment. As with the older children, their drawings can be integrated into the celebration.

2 See Appendix 1: « Events from the life of Kateri to be copied onto strips of paper » (p. 16)

The transfiguration of Jesus

Introduce the Scripture passage of the Transfiguration of Jesus by saying that something similar happened with Jesus.

Read the text:

The Transfiguration (Luke 9, 28-36)³

Ask the children what they think about this story, what amazes or surprises them. Make some connections between the life of Kateri and the bible story by asking them what is similar and what is different⁴.

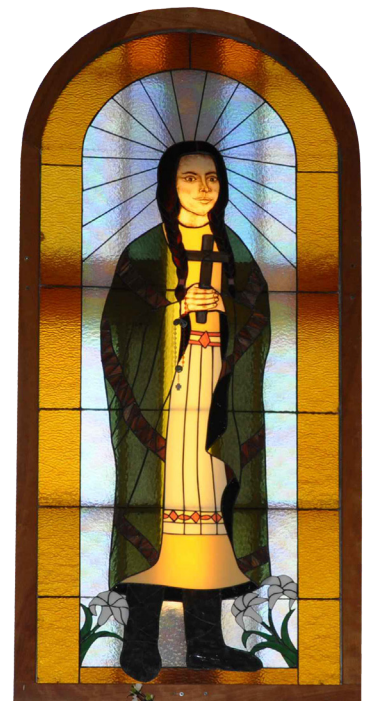
Note: the youngest children will remain focused on the concrete meaning of the story while the older ones can begin to express a more symbolic meaning to the story.

A Creative Activity

Suggest a creative activity inspired by Kateri, from among the 3 following options⁵ (let the children choose what is of interest to them, or suggest one of the activities in keeping with the age of the children present):

- A coloring page with a illustration of the stained glass window of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha⁶ or have them draw and color a picture from her life (a suggestion for the youngest children):

Now that you know Saint Kateri a little more, I invite you to color her stained glass window [or draw a picture from an event in her life which you liked best].



3 See Appendix 2, p.18.

4 This section can be concluded by using some of the suggestions given in Appendix 5: « Some connections between the life of Saint Kateri and the story of the Transfiguration of Jesus » (p. 22).

5 If you would prefer to guide the activity on the Scripture passage of the Transfiguration, I invite you to consult the website idées-caté.com: www.idees-cate.com/index.php?page=cate&seance=luc&titre=La%20

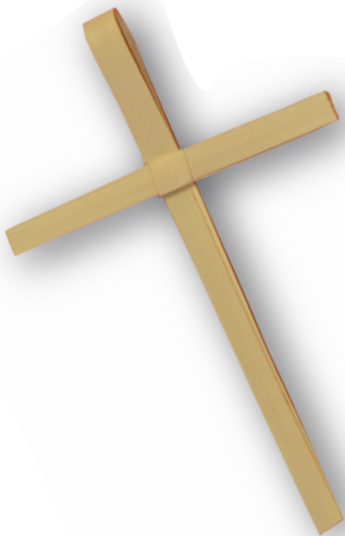
6 The illustration of the stained glass window is one page after appendix 2, p.19.

- Making little crosses

with pieces of wood (children of all ages):

Kateri had the habit of going to pray in the forest and of making crosses with little pieces of wood which she planted almost everywhere. No doubt, that is why she was named as patron saint of ecology and of the environment.

Like her, you too can make a cross to help you to pray.



- Making a lily⁷
(for older children) :

Recall that Kateri was nicknamed « Lily of the Mohawks », because a lily had grown in the place where she had been buried, where her heart had been.

For the steps in folding a lily,
you may refer to the following or you can find
detailed instructions and videos to guide you:

- jeuxdecouleurs.com/?Fleur-de-lys-en-origami
- www.aerono.fr/fiche-58-Le-bouquet-de-fleurs-de-lys-origami



Concluding the Workshop:

Facilitator:

It is now time to return to the large group and share the discoveries we have just made about the life of Saint Kateri and about the story of Jesus' Transfiguration. God is the Source of all that is beautiful in the life of Saint Kateri. And we know this because others have told us about it. In the story of the Transfiguration, it was Jesus' disciples who saw God acting in Jesus and told us about it. What is of beauty in you also comes from God. Let us go and celebrate together with God!

The workshop facilitator invites the children to decide who will bring up the artwork which they have made and indicates the point during the celebration when this is to take place.

⁷ Note: folding the lily in its entirety can take between 20 and 30 minutes. To speed up the process, the first steps can be done beforehand.

With Kateri, let us allow ourselves to be transfigured by God!

Getting started :

Welcome the young people; invite them to introduce themselves to each other.
Ask the teens what they remember about the life of Kateri.

Discussion period on the life of Kateri Tekakwitha:

Animate discussion using the following questions:

- *What do you think about Saint Kateri's life?*
(one can recall the difficult moments or important events and react to them)
- *Have you encountered or witnessed experiences similar to those of Kateri?*
- *Do you think it was easy for Kateri to become a Christian and to live her faith in her era and in her culture? Why? Is it easier for you today? Why?*

Account of Jesus' Transfiguration :

Remind the young people that an extraordinary thing happened to Kateri after her death: her disfigured face regained its former beauty and gentleness. There was only a slight trace of her disease.

Introduce the Scripture passage of the Transfiguration by saying that during his life on earth, Jesus' face was also transformed before the eyes of his three disciples.

Read the text :

The Transfiguration (Luke 9, 28-36)¹

¹ See Appendix 2, p.18.

Ask the young people what they think about this story, what astonishes or surprises them. The facilitator can guide the discussion using the suggestions for reflection on the Scripture passage provided in Appendix 4².

Invite the young people to make links between the life of Kateri and the Scripture passage by asking what is similar and what is different. The facilitator can conclude by using suggestions for the links between the life of Kateri and the Scripture passage, provided in Appendix 5³.

Creative Activity

Suggest to the young people that they express what they have learned in the workshop through a group activity of their choice: a rap, a short poem, a comic book, a PowerPoint presentation or any other activity.

Decide at what point and how it will be presented during the Celebration of the Word (Step 3).

Concluding the Workshop

Facilitator:

It is now time to return to the large group and share the discoveries we have just made about the life of Saint Kateri and about the story of Jesus' Transfiguration. God is the Source of all that is beautiful in the life of Saint Kateri. And we know this because others have told us about it. In the story of the Transfiguration, it was Jesus' disciples who saw God acting in Jesus and told us about it. What is of beauty in you also comes from God. Let us go and celebrate together with God!

2 See Appendix 4, p.20-21

3 See Appendix 5, p. 22.

With Kateri, let us allow ourselves to be transfigured by God!

Getting started

Welcome the people; invite them to introduce themselves to each other.
Invite the participants to talk about the important things in the life of Saint Kateri: what do they remember? What touched them, surprised them or raised questions for them?
Help the participants to see the links between the life of Saint Kateri and their own experiences, reflecting back to certain aspects of her life.

Discussion

Kateri was a young woman who underwent many trials during her life: the loss of her parents, sickness, physical handicaps, misunderstandings by her own milieu due to her conversion, in certain cases, going as far as persecuting her.

- *Do you see any similarities with our lives today? Do you see any differences?*
- *When we say « Christians » today, what are the reactions of people around us?*
- *Do you see any paths of hope through Kateri's witnessing?*
- *What can inspire us or give us courage today?*



Church Mission de
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Account of Jesus' Transfiguration :

Introduce the Scripture passage by drawing a parallel with what happened some time after Saint Kateri's death.

Right after Saint Kateri Tekakwitha's death, people saw something extraordinary happening: Do you remember what it was?

Recall the incident in which Kateri's face, scarred from smallpox, was transformed and took on its former beauty. Conclude by saying that something similar happened with Jesus.

Read the text :

The Transfiguration (Luke 9, 28-36)¹

Ask the adults what they think about this story, what astonishes or surprises them. The discussion can be guided using the suggestions for reflections on the Scripture passage².

Invite the adults to make links between Kateri's life and the Scripture passage by asking what is similar and what is different. The facilitator can conclude with the help of the suggestions for links between Saint Kateri's life and the Scripture passage found in Appendix 5³.

Bring the sharing to a close by allowing each one to name something which he/she remembers from the discussion. The participants can express their discovery during the Celebration of the Word which will follow this step or immediately, if there is no celebration planned.

Conclusion of the Workshop :

Workshop facilitator :

The time has now come to return to the large group and to share the discoveries which we have just made about Saint Kateri's life and the story of Jesus' Transfiguration. What is beautiful about the life of Saint Kateri is that God is the Source of all that is beautiful in it. And we know this because others have told us about it. In the story of the Transfiguration, it was Jesus' disciples who reveal to us how they saw God acting in Jesus and not through what Jesus had told them about himself. In this same way, it is others who reveal to us our interior beauty which finds its source in God. In the celebration which follows, you will be invited to acknowledge what is beautiful and good in another and allow yourself to be transfigured by God. What is of beauty in you also comes from God. Let us go and celebrate together with God!

Designate people to participate as needed and to do the readings during the Celebration of the Word.

¹ See Appendix 2, p. 18.

² See Appendix 2, p. 21-22.

³ See Appendix 2, p. 22.

Events from the life of Kateri to be copied onto strips of paper

Kateri Tekakwitha was born in 1656 in Ossernenon (known as Auriesville today) in the State of New York in the United States.

When she was 4 years old, Kateri was orphaned. She lost her mother, father and little brother through a smallpox epidemic which left her face scarred and left her with difficulty in seeing and walking.

The people in her village gave her the nickname of Tekakwitha or «she who moves forward slowly ».

Raised by her uncle and aunt, Kateri met some Jesuit missionaries, one of whom was Father Jacques de Lamberville, who would accompany her on her faith journey.

After having heard the stories about Jesus, Kateri wanted to be baptized.

On April 5, 1676, at the age of 20, Kateri was baptized on Easter Sunday. She took the name of Catherine or Kateri, in the Iroquois language.

Persecuted because of her Christian faith, Kateri Tekakwitha left her village in the United States to go and live at the Saint Francis Xavier Mission in Kahnawake in the province of Quebec.

During the Christmas celebration in 1677, Kateri Tekakwitha received her First Communion when she was 21 years old.

In 1680, Kateri became seriously ill and died on April 17, at the age of 24.

About fifteen minutes after her death, Kateri's disfigured face regained its former beauty and gentleness.

In the years following her death, numerous people prayed to Kateri and asked her for favors. Several of them were granted.

On January 3, 1943, Kateri was proclaimed a Venerable Servant of God by Pope Pius XII who recognized in her the virtues of faith, of hope, of love of God and neighbor.

In 1980, Kateri was beatified by Pope John Paul II and, from then on, was known as Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha.

October 21, 2012 is the official date of the canonisation by Pope Benedict XVI, of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha, the first Native American Saint.

The Transfiguration (Luke 9, 28-36)¹

Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah'—not knowing what he said.

While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, 'This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!' When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

¹ The text is taken from the NRSV edition of the Bible.



With Kateri, let us be « trans-figured » by God
Church Mission de Saint-François-Xavier, Kahnawake (Photo: Lyne Groulx)

Some suggestions for reflections on the story of the Transfiguration

(for the facilitator's preparation)

Now about eight days after these sayings (v.28a) :

The liturgical version of this passage which is used on the 2nd Sunday of Lent does not include this short excerpt. However, it is interesting because it refers to circumstances preceding the event of the Transfiguration. What are these important words? Part of the answer can be found in verses 23 to 25 of the same chapter when Jesus describes the way to become his disciple:

Then he said to them all, « If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it. What does it profit them if they gain the whole world, but lose or forfeit themselves? »

Then the text adds a declaration about the moment when the Son of Man will return in glory (vv.26-28). And how many days separated the text about the Transfiguration? Eight days! A glimpse of Easter morning!

Peter, John and James:

They are three apostles whom we find connected in this way on three occasions: the resurrection of the daughter of Jairus, the Transfiguration and the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Going up to the mountain to pray:

In biblical language, the mountain is a symbolic place for an encounter with God. Whether it is Moses' Sinai, the prophet Elijah's Horeb, the mount of the beatitudes or Golgotha, mountains are the bridge for communication between heaven and earth.

Jesus prays:

Twice, Luke mentions Jesus' prayer journey. He places the event of the Transfiguration on the level of an intimate experience with God. It is then in the midst of this face-to-face encounter between the Father and Son, that Jesus finds his true nature.

His face changed, and his clothing became dazzling white:

The intimate encounter with God in prayer changes and transforms what we are. After his encounter on Sinai, Moses' face was also shining when he came down (Ex. 34, 29-30). The white garment is the sign of Jesus' affiliation with God's world. The ritual with the white garment at baptism has the same meaning because it signifies that the newly baptized is from now clothed with the risen Christ.

Moses and Elijah:

These are two of the greatest personages in Judaism: Moses is associated with the transmission of the Law and Elijah with the prophets. The new covenant in Jesus Christ is in continuity with the first covenant. Jesus did not come to abolish the Law but to fulfill it.

In glory:

The vision of the glory of Jesus should not deceive the spectator: it is not a human success, a passing victory or a magic power but it is the radiance of God's Love. The theme of the glory of God in the Bible speaks not only of the efficacious presence of God in history and in Creation, but also his importance, his power, his constancy and his worth in which everything and everyone is immersed. And for us, God's glory is fully manifested in Christ's resurrection.

A voice, a cloud and the disciples' fear:

In biblical language, the symbolism of the cloud refers to God's presence. The disciples' fear is understood here in the sense of a respectful fear of something which they do not yet understand. Their silence witnesses to the difficulty which they have in finding meaning in what they are experiencing at this time. However, in the text these words are added « in those days » which are interpreted as later, after the death and resurrection of Jesus, who is becoming the Christ and Lord, who would send the Spirit to them to lead them along the path of faith. If looking at the event leaves the astonished disciples speechless, hearing the event requires active listening. It identifies Jesus as the Son of God, the One chosen by God. He is the new Moses and the new Elijah. He is the Word of God made flesh. The vision disappears but the Word remains. It now only requires that the witnesses, ready to transfigure their lives, reflect on it.

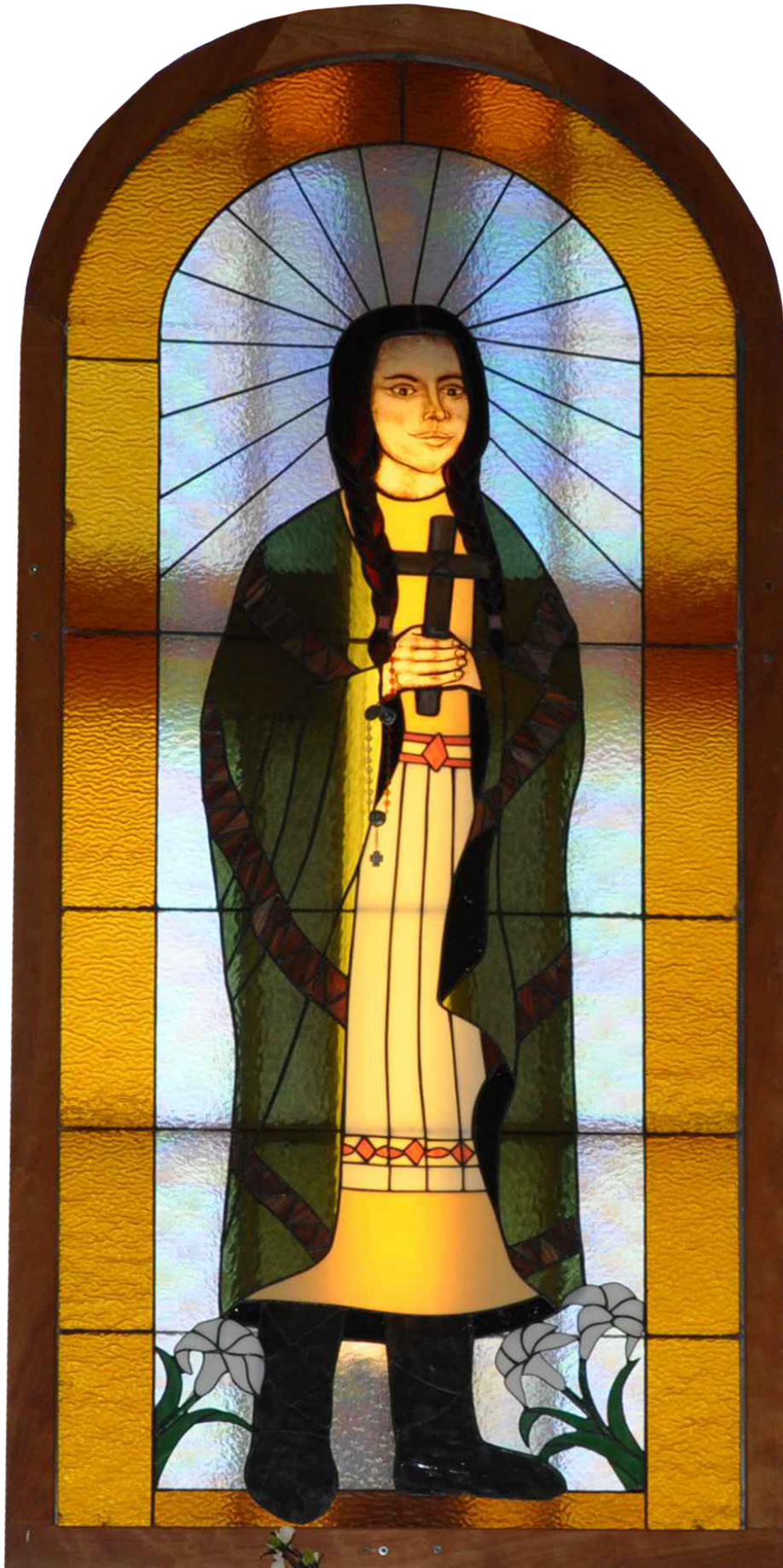
« This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him! »:

If these words bring to mind other words, you are right. They replicate those heard at the time of the baptism of Jesus (Luke 3, 22) except that they are accompanied by « Listen to him ». This imperative is well known among Jewish people because it can be found at the beginning of their daily prayer: « Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. » (Dt. 6, 4-5)

Some links between the life of Saint Kateri and the account of Jesus' Transfiguration

Here are a few examples of links (similarities or differences),
which can be made between the life of Saint Kateri and the Scripture passage:

- prayer and the relationship with God
- the appearance of Kateri's face and that of Jesus
- the presence of two religious traditions (Native American and Christian spiritualities for Kateri; Judaism and Christianity for Jesus)
- a personal approach to the faith journey which is different for each one (Kateri, Jesus and the disciple)
- the need to try to master a situation which escapes them (Kateri's departure from her village or Peter's suggestion to pitch three tents)
- the way of living and explaining their faith





THE STAINED GLASS WINDOW OF MY LIFE

Lord, you invite me to live my life in the manner of the stained glass maker who gathers the different pieces of a stained glass window to produce a work of art.

In it, I will put the RED of my love and enthusiasm, the MAUVE of my pain and grieving, the GREEN of my hopes and the PINK of my dreams, the BLUE or the GREY of my commitments or my struggles, the YELLOW and gold of my harvest...

I will save the WHITE for the most divine days And the BLACK for those in which you are not present.

I will cement it all with my prayer of faith and my serene confidence in you.

Lord, I simply ask that you illuminate, from within, this stained glass window of my life by the light of your Presence and the fire of your Spirit of Life.

And so, through transparency, those whom I meet, may perhaps discover there the face of your Beloved Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Inspired from a text by Gaston Leclair;
Revue Prier no. 308, January-February 2009

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Vitrail de la chapelle Saint-Roch de Noailhac,
à 7 km de Conques, sur le chemin de Compostelle



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Together with God, let us celebrate our trans-figurations!

Preparation :

Make sure that people have been designated to do the following:

- An animator for the celebration
- Someone to light the candle
- Someone to light up the stain glassed windows
- A child (children) to bring up the drawing(s) they have made
- Teens to present the activity which they have created in their workshop (according to what they have done)
- A lector for the Scripture passage
- Lector(s) for the six prayers of the faithful
- Volunteers to hand out the bookmarks at the end of the celebration

Matériel :

participation sheets or a PowerPoint presentation for the celebration (to be prepared using the parts of the celebration which involve the participants; cf. Marked with in the outline), a table, the stained glass window of Kateri (cf. p. 23), the stained glass window of the Transfiguration (cf. p. 24), a source of light for behind the stained glass windows (example: see the illustrations BELOW), a cross (or the crosses made by the children), a vase and the paper lilies (made by the children) or the natural ones, a Bible, a candle and matches, Saint Kateri's motto written on paperboard (cf. p. 31) and the bookmarks to be handed out at the end of the celebration (cf. « The stained glass window of my life », Appendix p. 25-26; print these pages recto-verso on color paperboard, and cut in 4 bookmarks).

How to light up the stained glass windows: two examples



A window can be used as a source of light



An electric lamp lights up the stained glass windows

Together with God, let us celebrate our trans-figurations!



Opening Hymn: (Stand)

Gather Us In (Marty Haugen - the theme song for Catechetical Sunday 2008 which can be found in Catholic Book of Worship III – number 587 OR any other hymn which you consider to be appropriate for this celebration.)

Opening of the celebration:

Facilitator:

Let us begin by making the sign which unites us as Christians, the Sign of the Cross.
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen

Facilitator: (with a gesture, invite the people to be seated)

We are gathered today to celebrate the Lord's Transfiguration and to get to know Saint Kateri Tekakwitha, the first Native American saint, a little better. Two stained glass windows have been placed in front, one of Saint Kateri, to which I have added that of the Transfiguration.

God, our Father, you manifested your glory on your Son's face in front of his disciples on the mountain.

Together we say:

All:



Praise to you, Lord, for your transfigured face which allows God's glory to shine forth!

! Cette icône  indique les éléments à intégrer au feuillet pour les participants/tes ou à la présentation Power Point.

Facilitator:

Then, through the death and resurrection of your Son, your glory was fully manifested. As a sign of your presence among us, we light this candle near the Bible, the Book of your Word, par excellence.

(Someone who has been designated in advance comes up to light the candle)

Facilitator:

And, because we want to recall the gift of love which you have given us, we also bring up a cross [or the crosses made by the children].

(A person [or the people] designated in advance stands up to bring up the cross(es) and places them near the stained glass window, and then lights it up through the source of light which has been placed behind it.)

Facilitator:

Together, let us say:

All:



All: Praise to you, Lord, for the disfigured face of Christ on the cross, which shone forth with the glory of the Risen One!

Facilitator:

Disciples from all time have illuminated their lives with the light of the Word. Saint Kateri Tekakwitha was an example of this. With her, who was known as the « Lily of the Mohawks », we want to express our desire to draw closer to you with all our heart.

(Someone who has been designated in advance stands up to place the lilies made out of paper [or the natural ones] near the stained glass window of Saint Kateri and then lights it up through the source of light which has been placed behind it. If available, the colored drawings made by the children can be brought up at this time.)

Facilitator:

Together let us say:

All:



Praise to you, Lord, for Saint Kateri Tekakwitha's face filled with beauty and gentleness!

Facilitator:

Praise to You, Lord, who loves us in your Beloved Son and in the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

All: Amen

Évangile :

Facilitator :

Praise to You, Lord, who loves us in your Beloved Son and in the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

All :



Amen.

Lecteur/Lectrice :

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Saint Luke :

Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah'—not knowing what he said. While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, 'This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!' When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

Sharing on the Scripture passage :

Facilitator : (Invite the people to be seated)

In the workshops, you have had the opportunity to explore this Scripture passage and to make interesting discoveries. I would now ask you to share them with us.

The teens can present their activity at this point in the celebration. Allow a maximum number of people to freely express themselves. If no one speaks, you can stimulate the discussion by using the following questions :



- *What have you learned through this Scripture passage that is new to you?*
- *Does the Scripture passage provide some ideas for improving or changing parts of your life?*
- *What basic values are revealed through this Scripture passage?*

Prayer of the Faithful :

Facilitator :

Since he is the Father's Beloved Son, let us turn with confidence to the Risen Lord and ask him to help us so that we may, in our turn, follow the example of Saint Kateri and be to witnesses to God's love in our world.

We will respond to each of the intentions with a request inspired by Saint Kateri's motto: « Teach me what is most pleasing to you, Lord, that I may do it ».

(This phrase can be written beneath the stained glass window of Kateri.)

Lector:

Lord, I see people who are sick and suffering around me. Grant me the courage to draw closer to them and the patience to listen to their concerns with kindness.



All : (after each intention: **R**)

Teach me what is most pleasing to you, Lord, that I may do it.

*Lord, I see people's faces around me that are disfigured through discouragement and sadness. Grant me the strength to go to them to offer comfort and hope. **R***

*Lord, I see our world marred by violence and injustice. Grant me the courage to make it more peaceful and just. **R***

*Lord, I see the distance that separates me from our brothers and sisters in Native communities. Grant me the words and actions with which to draw closer to them. **R***

*Lord, I see people around me who are thirsting to hear your Word of Love which profoundly transforms lives. Grant me the words and actions to transfigure the image which we have of God and of the world, so as to build your Kingdom now and forever. **R***

*Lord, I see your community gathered here. Grant to each one of us the deep joy of seeing your glory in the faces which are part of our daily lives, in moments of doubt and difficulty, as well as in moments of conviction and happiness. **R***

Facilitator :

Lord Jesus, Son of God, hear our prayer and transfigure our history, you who are with us forever and ever.

All : Amen.

Act of mutual blessing: (Stand)

Facilitator:

For the disciples, to see the glory of God in Jesus' transfiguration on the mountain was a unique experience which transfigured their lives. In daily life, the disciples of Jesus must also be attentive to words and actions which allow them to get a glimpse of the glory of God. These bursts of God's light exist for each of us. We need only recognize them as such. As you look at each other, I invite you to share a moment of mutual blessing. To bless literally means « to say something good». When God blesses us, he acknowledges what is good in us and desires our happiness. We also are able to bless, to acknowledge what is good in others and to wish for their happiness. To bless the person in front of you, you can begin by saying: « Blessed are you for ... » and complete it with a quality, a good word or an act which you most appreciate about this person. For example, you can tell him/her about it by saying: « Blessed are you for your smile or your good humour which allows God's light to shine through you », « Blessed are you for a service rendered or a word of encouragement which allows you to show a glimpse of God's love » or « Blessed are you for your support which is a sign of the presence of God himself. » Choose a person close to you and, in turn, share an experience of mutual blessing by saying: « Blessed are you for ... ».

(Allow time for this mutual blessing. Perhaps prior to those present being asked to carry out this action which they are not used to, you can choose a person close to you and give an example! Don't hesitate; the experience can be very rewarding!)

Facilitator:

*Lord, we have shared a moment of blessing which has brought us closer to others through their transparency in allowing your light, which illuminates their hearts and their lives, to shine forth through them. We can draw even closer to others through the prayer which you have taught us, your beloved daughters and sons. Let us stand and say together: **(To illustrate how our Father draws near to us, people can be asked to join hands.)***

All:



*Our Father, Who art in heaven hallowed be Thy Name;
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. (Amen.)*

Facilitator:

Today we have contemplated the glorious face of your Son, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. May the glory of God transfigure our hearts and lead us to eternal life for to him is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever!

All:

Amen

Facilitator:

May God bless us, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit!

Tous:

Amen

Facilitator:

Go in the peace of Christ!

Tous:

Thanks be to God!

Hand out the bookmarks at the end of the celebration.

Optional:

Continue the celebration with light refreshments or a shared meal.

This intergenerational catechesis was written by Lyne Groulx, in collaboration with Colette Beauchemin (diocese of Saint-Jean-Longueuil) and Suzanne Desrochers (Office de catéchèse du Québec).

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