



# National Shrine of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha

## Prayer Letter

August 2019

Dear Friend of Saint Kateri,

It is August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 and I am flooded with memories this morning, for it was one year ago today that I drove onto the property of the Shrine of St. Kateri and darkened the door of the Friary.

In just 365 days I realize what I have learned, what I have experienced, and that I am just as excited about what can happen here on this most holy and blessed part of God's Country as I was when I made a right off of Highway 5, twelve months ago. Not much has changed weather wise regarding this part of New York State. I have reminded myself numerous times this past year that the weather hasn't changed much since my study of Theology at St. Anthony-On-Hudson in Rensselaer, New York more than 35 years ago. The summers are hot and at times muggy. The winters are bitter cold with a generous supply of snow. But the spring and fall are beautiful months of new life and natural beauty.

What has truly helped me grow in a spiritual way is the inspiration of the Native American culture and traditions that were founded on a deep respect for nature in their recognition of "The Creator Spirit." These original inhabitants of New York State humbly recognized that their lives were meaningless without including a Wise Spirit from which they came and continued to provide for them as a Protector and Guide.

I can see how St. Kateri, not only as a young girl who listened to her mother teach her about the Christian faith, but also as a young woman, allowed her mind and her heart to recognize and respect "The Creator Spirit" as a loving and merciful Father. Through prayer and the Jesuit Missionary Fathers' spiritual direction, she placed her heart and mind into the hands of Jesus Christ.

What is truly inspiring to me not only as a priest, but as a human being as well, is that St. Kateri recognized that the handicap of the smallpox and the loss of her father, mother and brother to this virus was not a curse from God but a healing trail to His Will. Such human bravery is indeed a "leap of faith." She could have sought her own trail in life led by anger which would have been justified by this physical handicap and loss. If she had followed this trail, who would have remembered her!? But instead she sought the trail of God's comfort by offering her dimmed eyesight, facial scars, and loss of loved ones as gifts back to God. She used the negative as divine signposts in her Christian journey to become another Christ. St. Kateri humbly found her inspiration, her meaning in life's ups and downs by finding Jesus Christ in life's negatives. She certainly has much to offer all of us in our own lives. Let us pray her prayer each day of "Jesus, I Love You" to see God's Will in our handicaps and negatives. Place them into the Hands of Jesus Christ.

In closing, I must thank not only the staff here at the Shrine but the Shrine Council and those who have "prayed with me" at Mass for your patience with me and your inspiration to see God's Will at all times. Let us continue to "pray for one another." -Fr. Tim Lyons, OFM Conv., Chaplain

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*Dear Friars, please include the following intentions in your daily prayers:*

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|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____  |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____  |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____  |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____  |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

Please return prayer intentions and donations to:

Saint Kateri Shrine, PO Box 627, Fonda NY 12068-0627 • 518-853-3646

nationalkaterishrine@gmail.com • www.katerishrine.com • Follow us on Facebook, Twitter & Instagram August 2019