



TEKAKWITHA CONFERENCE

*"...the Voice, Presence, and Identity of Indigenous Catholics of North America
under the protection and inspiration of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha."*

Dear Friends of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha,

I extend to you my greetings from the Tekakwitha Conference National Center in Alexandria, LA. It is my hope that this letter finds you well, and that you have spent time in prayer and discernment over these next steps in your journey with Christ, our Lord. The establishment of a Kateri Youth Circle is truly a manifestation of the call to "go and make disciples!"

Founding a Kateri Youth Circle is an opportunity to cultivate a strong sense of mission amongst peers within your tribal and faith communities. Through this new opportunity you will grow to share in each other's joys and hardships as you come together to pray, to learn, and to serve. I encourage you not to fear the risks of forming such a community. Rather, come to view these risks as opportunities to bear witness to the vibrancy and potential of your faith. Testifying to the value of a young person's witness, St. Paul, to Timothy, writes, "Let no one have contempt for your youth, but set an example for those who believe, in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity." (1 Timothy 4:12)

We are excited about your interest in forming a Kateri Youth Circle. Taking on a task such as this, in your young age, is a testament to the living faith in Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, which has been handed on to you from your elders. This endeavor will prove to be a great means for strengthening your trust in God's providence as well as your devotion for Saint Kateri, the first Indigenous Saint of North America. The information contained in this packet will guide you in your efforts to establish a Kateri Youth Circle.

We look forward to hearing from you. If you have any questions, please call 1-844-483-3900 or email: tekconf@gmail.com.

Through the intercession of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha,

Robert Barbry II
Executive Director



Saint Kateri Tekakwitha Prayer

*O Saint Kateri, Lily of the Mohawks,
Your love for Jesus,
so strong, so steadfast,
pray that we may become like you.*

*Your short and painful life
showed us your strength and humility.
Pray that we may become
forever humble like you.*

*Like the bright and shining stars at night,
we pray that your light
may forever shine down upon us,
giving light, hope, peacefulness
and serenity in our darkest moments.*

*Fill our hearts, Saint Kateri Tekakwitha
with your same love for Jesus
and pray that we have the strength and courage
to become one like you in heaven.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Prayer by Harold Caldwell



KATERI YOUTH CIRCLES

Local parishes/missions have youth groups consisting of members who seek to emulate the virtuous life of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha, a young Mohawk-Algonquin woman, who was canonized on October 21, 2012 by Pope Benedict XVI.

These groups, known as Kateri Circles, both adult and youth, exist under the auspices of the Tekakwitha Conference. Kateri Circles must register and pay annual dues totaling thirty-five dollars (\$35.00) as a Kateri Circle Membership Fee with the Tekakwitha Conference to receive a Certificate of Recognition and Poster Image of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha. Kateri Circle members are encouraged to abide by the following guidelines as established by the Tekakwitha Conference.

1. WHAT is a Kateri Youth Circle?

A Kateri Youth Circle is a group of Catholic and/or non-Catholic Christian Youth who desire to be in community with one another through a lifestyle of prayer, service, & worship. The spirituality of these communal groups springs from a strong devotion to the intercession and virtuous & holy life of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha – a young Mohawk/Algonquin woman of the mid-seventeenth century.

2. HOW can we start a Kateri Youth Circle?

Kateri Youth Circles begin from a desire among the youth, under the direction of a designated parish/school/community youth leader, to form a small community of faith for the purposes of communal prayer, formation, and outreach to the community.

3. WHO can start a Kateri Youth Circle?

Though not an expressed requirement, it is strongly encouraged that the corresponding youth minister/coordinator, themselves, be individual members of the Tekakwitha Conference. The formation of a Kateri Youth Circle, in general, is open to any youth (under 18) committed to prayer, growing in faith, serving their community, and to the witness & intercession of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha.

GUIDELINES

The purpose of the Kateri Youth Circles is to promote understanding and appreciation for Indigenous cultures and spirituality within the Catholic Church.

It is recommended that each local Kateri Youth Circle implement the following goals:

1. To work towards a greater awareness and understanding of Indigenous values and spirituality.
2. To educate oneself regarding the struggles of Indigenous Peoples with the early missionaries of the Catholic Church and the meaningful developments along the path of reconciliation.
3. To live and share one's faith in a manner that is authentically Catholic as well as reflective of your indigenous heritage. This is realized when one discerns, and participates in, opportunities for dialogue and inculturation relating to matters of expression within prayer and the sacred liturgy.
4. To pray for the needs of the Tekakwitha Conference, its members, and all people of good will.
5. To frequently invoke Saint Kateri Tekakwitha's intercession and, by this practice, grow in devotion to the patroness of the Tekakwitha Conference & the natural world in which we live (ecology).

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL AIMS OF KATER YOUTH CIRCLE MEMBERS

1. Youth Circle members, wherever possible and applicable, are encouraged to learn to pray in the language of their ancestors, including the singing of traditional songs.
2. Youth Circle members are encouraged to strengthen their interior life through daily prayer and recollection (*including the St. Kateri chaplet which corresponds with Saint Kateri's twenty-four years of life, the Holy Rosary and the daily Mass readings*).
3. Youth Circle members are to be actively involved in the worship of their faith community, where possible, as lectors, cantors, and/or as altar servers.
4. Youth Circle members are to be involved in local Indigenous gatherings.



CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS

- I. **OBJECTIVES – Kateri Youth Circles will promote the goals of the National Tekakwitha Conference in the following manner:**
 - A. **SPIRITUAL:**
 1. Pray for the needs relating to family, your community, the Church, and the world
 2. Aspire toward personal holiness in your own lives and in the lives of others by prayer and example
 3. Recommended daily prayers of the Catholic Church, as well as the Kateri chaplet.
 - B. **SOCIAL/COMMUNAL:**
 1. Identify & work toward the fulfillment of community needs
 2. Participate in the interests and needs of families and your community
 3. Work for authentic unity
 4. Encourage and support other Kateri (Youth) Circles

- II. **EXPECTATIONS OF MEMBERS:**
 1. Attend meetings/gatherings of your Kateri Youth Circle.
 2. Help with the activities of your Kateri Youth Circle.
 3. Participate in community service or outreach projects.
 4. Help with fund raising activities.
 5. Attend the Annual National Tekakwitha Conference or local MiniConference and encourage other members to attend.

- III. **MEETINGS – AGENDA:**
 1. Opening Prayer, Kateri Chaplet, song (Gospel, Inspirational)
 2. Time for spiritual and intellectual growth (guest speaker, film/video [inspirational, life of saint or other], discussion of current events affecting your community, etc.)
 3. Old Business
 4. New Business
 5. Social Activity
 6. Closing Prayer
 7. Next meeting date, place and time



Registration of Kateri Youth Circles

We would like to recognize all Kateri Circles with a certificate especially designed by Gus Antone.

Please complete form and return to:

Tekakwitha Conference National Center
Kateri Youth Circles
2225 North Bolton Avenue
Alexandria, LA 71303-4408

Name of Youth Circle: _____

Parish/Mission/School: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Name of Leader/Youth Minister:

Leader/Youth Minister Address:

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Home phone: (____) _____ **Cell:** (____) _____

E-mail: _____

Is the Youth Circle attached to an active Adult Kateri Circle: YES NO

If YES, which Adult Kateri Circle? _____

RITE FOR COMMISSIONING KATERI YOUTH CIRCLE MEMBERS

Introduction:

The Kateri Youth Circle of *(Name of parish/mission/school)* draws its members from our local Catholic parish family. These members of the Youth Circle pledge themselves to support of each other in walking the spiritual path taken by Saint Kateri Tekakwitha. Walking on this sacred path involves growing as role models, developing their own spiritual life, and fostering in themselves and their peers a positive self-awareness. As our youth take this sacred path, they seek the prayers and spiritual companionship of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha. The decision of our youth and all of us that are gathered here is the special blessing that God's Holy Spirit continues to give through Saint Kateri Tekakwitha

Call:

Let those who have chosen to pledge themselves to walk the sacred path shown us by Saint Kateri Tekakwitha come forward.

(Call each youth member by name to come forward)

Prayer of the Community:

Heavenly Father, you are blessed through your Son in all of your Saints. At a young age, you touched Saint Kateri Tekakwitha and invited her to walk in the sacred path of your Son, Jesus. She became an example to all around her as a person living out of your Holy Spirit. Today, the invitation you gave to Saint Kateri Tekakwitha is again being received by these young people. Through the prayers of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha may your Holy Spirit strengthen them to faithfully walk the sacred path that led her to Eternal Life to be with you. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Commitment of Kateri Youth Circle Member:

Leader: *(Announce name of youth member,* Do you pledge yourself to walk in the path taken by Saint Kateri Tekakwitha and reflecting on her example and asking for her prayers?

Youth: I do.

Leader: Do you pledge yourself to take whatever opportunities are available to you for your own spiritual growth, and to help provide such opportunities for your peers?

Youth: I do.

Leader: Do you pledge yourself to work toward the development of a positive mental outlook toward yourself and others so as to promote each person's growth in self-esteem?

Youth: I do.

Leader: Then I, on the part of this Community of Faith, gratefully accept your willingness to accept God's Call to walk the sacred path taken by Saint Kateri Tekakwitha. Your willingness to walk this spiritual path among us promises to be a great blessing for both us and your peers.

Commitment of the Parish/Mission/School:

Leader: Dear members of our parish family, all of us form one body in Christ. It is a special joy when our younger members experience the invitation of God for a special work in their lives. Today, these youth are responding to the call to live a life after the example of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha. To walk in the sacred path taken by Saint Kateri is not easy. We know that Saint Kateri Tekakwitha herself suffered much as she followed the Word of God and the Spirit of God in her life, and daily gave her life over to Jesus. As these youth pledge themselves to a similar walk, they need our personal support and prayer.

(Name of parish/mission/school) Do you promise to support and pray for our youth?

Parish: We do.

Sign of Commission:

Leader: (Name of Kateri Youth Member), receive this as a sign of your commission to walk in the sacred path of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha as a member of the (Name of the Kateri Youth Circle). This sign carries with it the pledge of our own personal support and prayers for you in your path to spiritual holiness.

Blessings: (with outstretched hands)

All: O Saint Kateri, Lily of the Mohawks, Your love for Jesus, so strong, so steadfast, pray that we may become like you. Your short and painful life showed us your strength and humility. Pray that we may become forever humble like you. Like the bright and shining stars at night, we pray that your light may forever shine down upon us, giving light, hope, peacefulness and serenity in our darkest moments. Fill our hearts, Saint Kateri Tekakwitha with your same love for Jesus and pray that we have the strength and courage to become one like you in Heaven. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.