

# KATERI

## *Iakoia'tatokénhti*

Saint Kateri Tekakwitha - The Lily of the Mohawks - 1656 - 1680



# SAINT KATERI TEKAKWITHA INTERPRETIVE CENTER



## Witkwanonhwerá:in Welcome Saint Kateri Interpretive Centre

I was born in the early 17th century and lived for most of my brief life in the Mohawk Valley of what is now upstate New York, U.S.A. There were indeed very interesting times for my Mohawk people, being neighbours to several First Nations. Some were allies and friends, others quite hostile; adventures, warfare and territorial disputes were common occurrences.

Epidemics of smallpox ravaged our defenceless villages, taking many of our families or leaving us with permanent conditions of diminished health. We included:

The aggressions of the colonizing nations brought continuous tension and turmoil, and First Nations almost always became embroiled in these conflicts.

However, the peace of 1666, which followed the devastating invasion of the French forces, did allow for the peaceful, if somewhat uninvited, presence of the Jesuit missionaries in my village of Caughnawaga. This is when I encountered the Black Robes and eventually embraced the teaching of Catholicism.

My community life was made difficult because of my Christmas fervour, and caused me to flee to the enclave of Christian Natives of the St. Francis Xavier Mission near Montreal. Here, I was allowed to deepen my faith, and with my compassionate companions, to minister and care for our Catholic community.

A particularly severe bout of ill health took my earthly life on Holy Wednesday, April 17th, 1680, when I was just about 24 years old. My spiritual life continues, though, throughout the centuries, and by the grace received from Jesus, I am able to continue to help all peoples of the world.

I was canonized by the Catholic Church on October 21st, 2012. Please come in and relive some of the key elements of my life story.

May Our Saviour give you blessings and love.



**WELCOME**



**WAT KWA NON WE RA:TON**



**خوش آمدی**



**Bienvenue**



**Aniii**



**Ողջույն**

*Kateri Center*



**Bem vinda**



**BENVINGUDA**



**வரவறேபு**



**ласкаво просимо**



SOURCE: Kaia'tano:ron Kateri Tekakwitha – Fr Henri Bécharde (1992)  
The numbers near the citations refer to the page number in the book.

# KATERI'S WORDS

"KATERI would go to Church barefoot in the dark, at four o'clock in the morning and converse with the Good Master, far from noise and distractions. She would attend the first mass at dawn, the next one at sunrise, return to the Chapel several times during the day and in the evening after work, and remain there quite late at night, it could be said that she was the first one in and the last one out. On Sundays and feast days, she spent the whole day in the holy place, coming out only to have something to eat." 95

*"Catherine Tegakwitha will live at the Scull. I ask you to please take charge of directing her; it is a treasure which we are giving you, as you will soon realize. Guard it well and make it bear fruit for the Glory of God and the salvation of a soul which is certainly very dear to Him."*  
- Letter of Fr Jacques de Lamberville (Ossak, NY, USA) to Fr Pierre Cholenec (La Prairie, «Praying Village», Canada) 81

"Who will teach me what is most pleasing to God, that I may do it?" 124

"Thank you, Jesus, for coming to my help in danger..."  
(after recovering: tree crashed on her) 106

"This wooden chapel was not really what God wanted the most, but He wanted to live within us." 167

"My Jesus, I must take a risk with You; I love You but I offended You. I am here to satisfy your justice. Please, Oh my God, discharge your anger on me... I am extremely touched by the three nails which fixed Our Lord to the Cross; yet they are but an image of my sins." 109

"Oh Father; I cannot give in to this; I dislike men and I have the utmost aversion to marriage; this is not possible." 114

"I am not afraid of the poverty with which they threaten me; it takes so little to provide for the needs of this miserable life that my work will be enough to take care of it, and I will surely find a few loose rags to clothe myself." 114

"...renounce marriage in order to have no other spouse but Jesus Christ and that I would count my self fortunate to live in poverty and misery for His love." 116

"Oh Father! It is true that there is plenty of food for the body in the woods, but the soul

linguishes and starves to death here, while in the village, if the body suffers a little because it is not well fed, the soul is satisfied, being closer to Our Lord. Therefore, I abandon this miserable body to hunger and to all that may happen as long as my soul is content with its usual food." 120

"...center, Sewennio: Lord have mercy *ari asiataokenti, takwiteremiasnas* Holy Mary, pray for us!" 125

"Make a Novena of scourging after my death" (asked Mary to do) 159

"Oh Father, I committed a sin." (excessive penances) 147

"Courage my dear sister oh! How happy I am with the life you are leading: how agreeable it is to all those in heaven...I even know where you are coming from just now, and I can assure you that all you do is well done and most agreeable to Our Lord. Take courage and continue to persevere, pray for me after I die that I may come out of purgatory as soon as possible. I shall repay you in paradise, I promise!" 151

"I'm leaving you, I am going to die. Always remember what we have done together ever since we knew each other. If you change, I will accuse you before God's tribunal. Take courage. Disregard the words of those who have no faith. When they want to persuade you to get married, listen only to the fathers. If you

cannot serve God here, go away to the Mission of Lorette (near Quebec). Never abandon penance. I shall love you in Heaven, I shall pray for you and help you." 152

### Her last words on her death bed:

"Jesus, Mary (Jesus, Mary)... 152  
"Jesus, I love you" (three times)

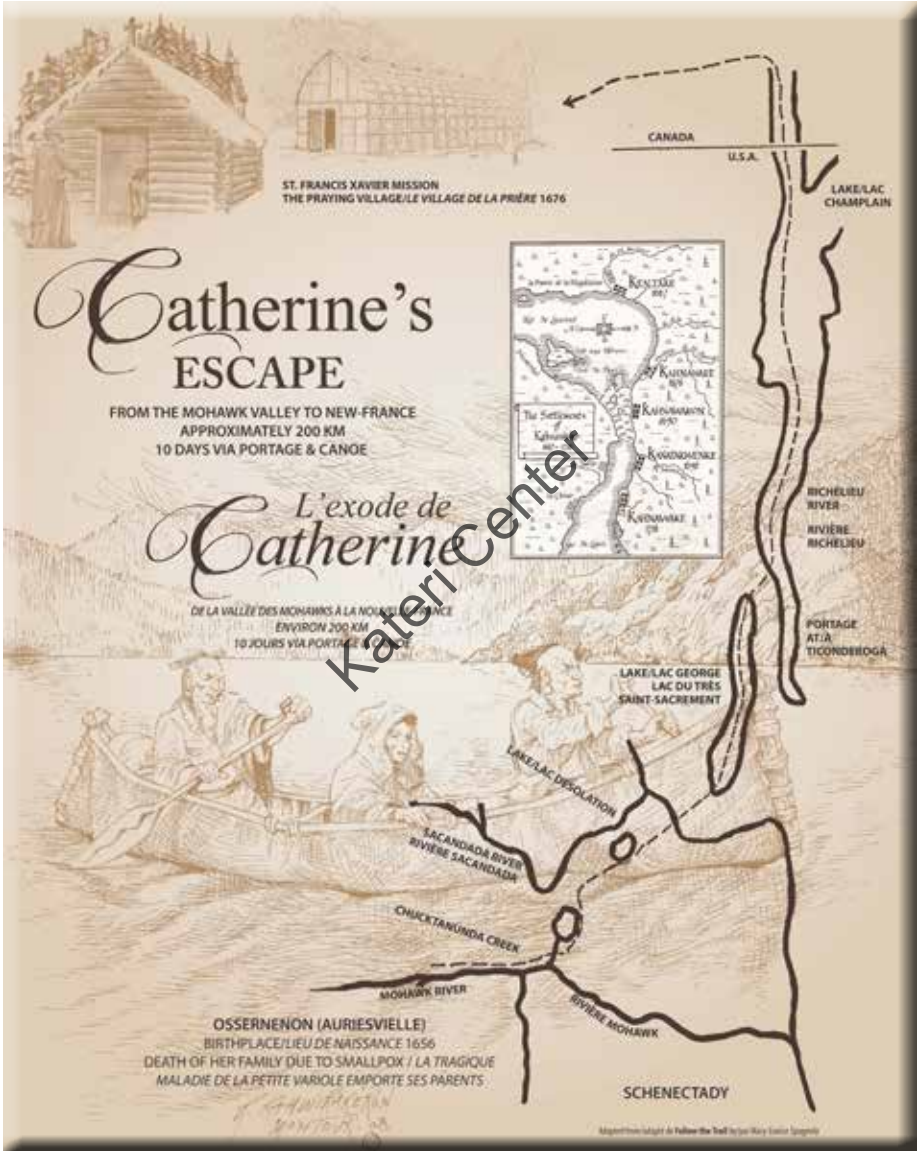
### During apparitions after her death:

...to Fr Chautetière (Easter Monday, April 22, 1680), Kateri spoke in Latin, "Adhuc veni in dies" (I appear every day) 156

...to her spiritual mother, Anastasia (April 24, 1680), "My mother, look carefully at this cross which I am wearing. See how beautiful it is; Oh! how I loved it on earth, oh! how I still love it in paradise! How I wish that all those of our cabin loved it and valued it as I did!" 154

...to Mary Theresa (around April 24, 1680), "Good bye, I come to say good bye, I am going to Heaven. Go and tell Father that I am going to Heaven." 159

...to Fr Chautetière (Sept 21, 1681), Kateri spoke in Latin, "Inspice et fac secundum exemplar" (look and do according to the model) - He then started painting 162



# Catherine's ESCAPE

FROM THE MOHAWK VALLEY TO NEW-FRANCE  
APPROXIMATELY 200 KM  
10 DAYS VIA PORTAGE & CANOE

## L'exode de Catherine

DE LA VALLEE DES MOHAWKS A LA NOUVELLE-FRANCE  
ENVIRON 200 KM  
10 JOURS VIA PORTAGE & CANOE

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER MISSION  
THE PRAYING VILLAGE/LE VILLAGE DE LA PRIERE 1676



CANADA

U.S.A.

LAKE/LAC  
CHAMPLAIN

RICHIEUX  
RIVER  
RIVIERE  
RICHELIEU

PORTAGE  
AT LA  
TICONDEROGA

LAKE/LAC GEORGE  
LAC DU TRES  
SAINT-SACREMENT

LAKE/LAC DESOLATION

SACANDIAGA RIVER  
RIVIERE SACANDIAGA

CHUCKTANUNDA CREEK

MOHAWK RIVER

RIVIERE MOHAWK

SCHENECTADY

OSSERNENON (AURIESVIELLE)  
BIRTHPLACE/LIEU DE NAISSANCE 1656  
DEATH OF HER FAMILY DUE TO SMALLPOX / LA TRAGIQUE  
MALADIE DE LA PETITE VARIOLE EMPORTE SES PARENTS

Reproduction adapted by Follow the Trail from Way Center, Longport

# FONDA

MOHAWK VALLEY, NY

The Mohawks lived for relatively short time spans in various sites throughout the Mohawk Valley, establishing these villages according to their three major Classes, Wolf and Turtle. The Turtle-Class village, around the time of my birth in 1936, was called *Caughnawaga*. It was one which became relocated around 1670.

Essentially, a small post epidemic was raised & and then was destroyed by an expedition in 1684 of soldiers from New France. The village moved once again to this new site by the Mohawk River, and was called *Caughnawaga*. Our nearest non-indigenous neighbors was the Dutch *Barnhart* town of Fonda, New York.

The early years following 1680 were arduous difficult to our community, and for all the Mohawk villages. Population losses from disease were enormous, much like those that were being experienced at the same time in Europe from the black plague which left the whole region less populated and considerably weaker in influence. The outstanding among nations also regularly threatened us, but by 1685, after the final defeat of the Mohawks, we seemed to regain our momentum having again.

The village's removal, after three great winters, took 300 souls active. Being non-agricultural, we compensated in growing of crops with fishing, hunting, and animal trapping for food, medicine, and furs.

*Caughnawaga*, however, was not a stand alone village; its leadership was progressively accepted with the assistance of the European methodology of preserving our territorial integrity, and the vast network of trails and the fur trade. The constant pressure coming from the competing and warring interests of the advancing powers Dutch, French and English impacted the lives of all First Nations peoples, some disastrously. Self preservation dictated that all Mohawks had to vigorously defend against these, and effectively to have their people dedicated to hunt. *Kateri* Indians in their powerful influence in every occasion.

*Caughnawaga's* occupation likely lasted no more than 15 years, from 1647 to 1662. The French missionaries began their visit to the community in 1648 and worked there for about 10 years. By 1670 much of the converted population moved to the St. Francis Xavier Mission Catholic community during Montreal (La Pointe-de-la-Magdelaine) by 1675, the remainder of the population migrated to other Nations in the Confederacy.

The location was eventually taken over by farming settlers, later a *Beauregard* known as the "Five Farms". An archaeological site, discovered in 1930 by Franciscan Fr. Thomas Cronan, indicated the layout of three 12 longhouses, an estimated population of 300 people residing within the "circle" on the elevated part of the community. Of course, the most European fortified village and American forts, but everyone found within their walls, many more of the population resided in other dwellings in the larger community.

In 1973, Fonda became part of the American national system of Historical sites. It is the only Mohawk site commemorated in the United States, and it is now the only site where dedicated to honor *Kateri* Indians in their powerful influence in every occasion.

The *Kateri* Indians were Mohawk longhouses of the same period are still seen from an aerial view located in St. Louis, Quebec. There is a museum of how my village might have actually been.















Kate Center







RESEARCH CENTER - PARTIAL VIEW

# Les Reliques de Kateri

# Kateri's RELICS




**LES RELIQUES DE KATERI**

**RELICS OF KATERI**


**LES RELIQUES DE KATERI**

**RELICS OF KATERI**









**Kateri Center**





MEDIA VIEWING ROOM





CHAPEL

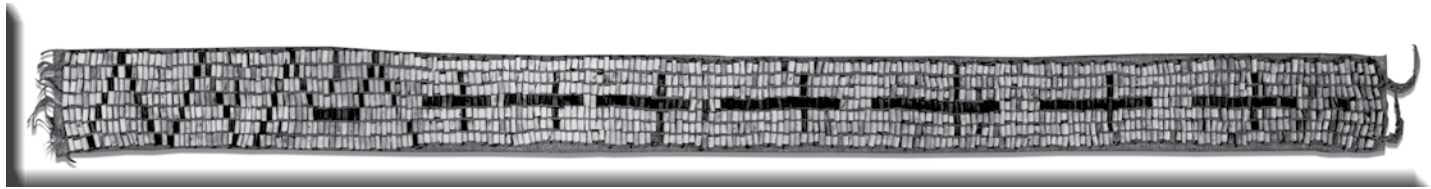


ROAD TO SAINTHOOD - MEDIA COVERAGE

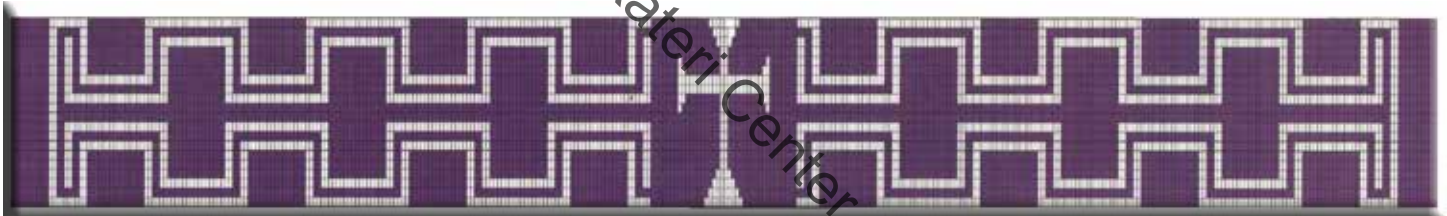
THREE STAGES: VENERABILITY, BEATIFICATION, CANONIZATION



SAMPLE BOOKS ABOUT ST KATERI TEKAKWITHA



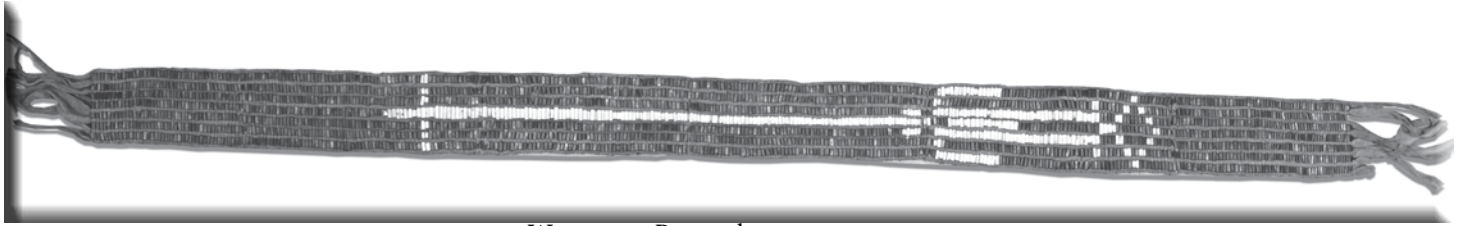
Wampum - Caughnawaga



### **The "Huron Gift" Wampum Belt**

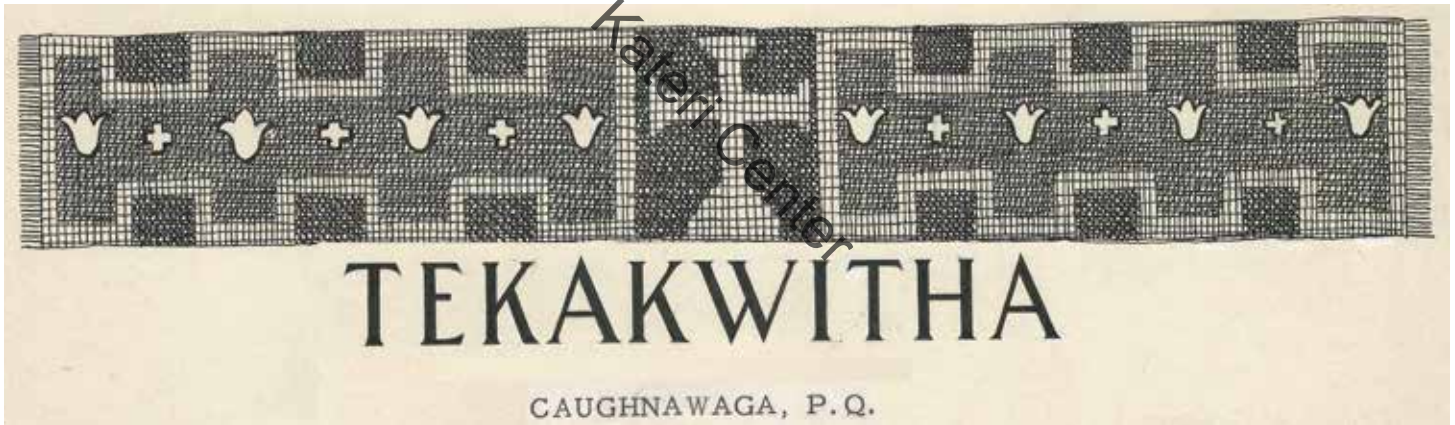
**The year 1677 will be a remarkable one for the Mission, for a celebrated present which was sent from the Mission of Lorette (near Québec) to the Sault. It was a hortatory collar (wampum belt) which conveyed the voice of the Hurons from the Mission of Lorette, encouraging them to accept the faith in good earnest, and to build a chapel as soon as possible; and it also exhorted them to combat the various demons who conspired for the ruin of both Missions. This collar was at once attached to one of the beams of the chapel, which is above the top of the altar, so that the people might always behold it and hear that voice.**

**Kateri Tekakwitha would see this belt when she would come to pray at the chapel.  
-Claude Chauchetière, s.j. (Jesuit Relations)**



Wampum - Remembrance

20



“ Wampum Belt ”

**Beads of polished shells strung in strands, belts, or sashes and used by North American Indians as money, ceremonial pledges, and ornaments.**



Kateri's motto



Mohawk



Seneca



Oneida



Tuscarora

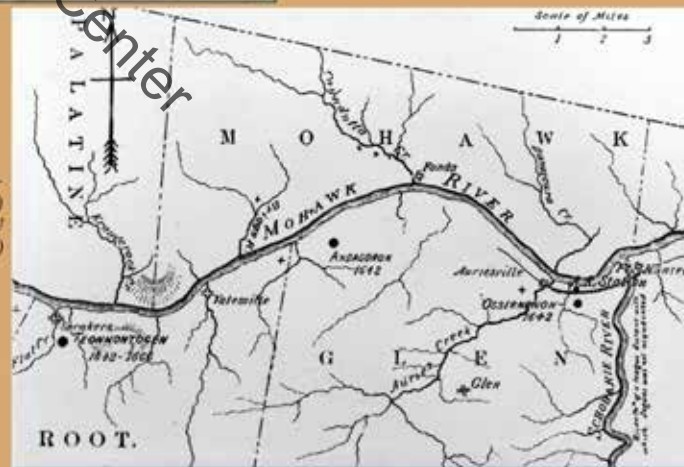
# LONGHOUSE

Gallery Center



LOCATIONS OF VARIOUS NATIONS IN  
NEW FRANCE  
EMPLACEMENT DES DIVERSES NATIONS EN  
NOUVELLE-FRANCE

VARIOUS LOCATIONS OF MOHAWK CASTLES - 17TH CENTURY -  
WITH ACTUAL NEW YORK STATE LOCATIONS (USA)  
DIVERS EMPLACEMENTS DES VILLAGES MOHAWKS AU  
17E SIÈCLE - ENDROITS DANS L'ACTUEL ÉTAT DE NEW-YORK (É.U.)



ROOT.



**THANK YOU FOR WALKING IN  
SAINT KATERI'S FOOTSTEPS.  
JESUS LOVES YOU.**

**TEKWANOHWERá:tONS tSI SKáTNE WEtiatháHíta  
tSI IAKOthá:tE NE IAKOia:tatOKÉNHTI  
KATERI TEKAHKWì:tHa.  
IaNORóNHKHwa NE IÉ:sOS**

***MERCI D'AVOIR MARCHÉ  
SUR LES TRACES DE SAINTE KATERI.  
JÉSUS VOUS AIME.***



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## SAINT KATERI TEKAKWITHA INTERPRETIVE CENTER

Where: Kateri Hall, right next to the Saint Francis Xavier Mission

What you will see:-

- Hundreds of photos related to the Canonization and Beatification ceremonies
- Visuals of the various Church' authorities (about 100 years) that were in charge of the 'CAUSE OF KATERI TEKAKWITHA'
- Over a dozen **BILINGUAL** large panels describing:
  - Kateri's life and environment & "Caughnawaga" home
  - Her exodus from Fonda (USA) to LaPrairie (Canada)
  - History of her Relics
  - The Final Miracle & Kateri's powerful intercessions
  - Maps & Cenotaph
  - Kateri's impact on the media (books and artwork)
- A 17th Century scaled-down Chapel
- Over 40 statues of Kateri
- An Iroquois Longhouse (cut-away)
- Native Culture & Artwork
- A media viewing room: extracts of the Canonization DVD

Please contact the Saint Francis Xavier Mission for opening hours.  
(450 632-6030)

Our sincere thanks go to the following people:

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