



National Shrine of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha

Prayer Letter

August 2020

My dear Friends of Saint Kateri,

This August will NOT be uncertain. This August, the challenge is to find and thank a “silent hero.”

For the past few months of 2020, our lives have been changed in many ways. Concern for our health as we live through this pandemic has at the same time opened an awareness of heroes. There are so many stories about individuals who, by being themselves and using their specific talents, have become or continue to be healers, protectors, helpers -- basically, forgetting themselves and unselfishly thinking of others.

These are selfless souls who daily realize that human dignity lives not only in themselves but in their spouses, their children, their neighbors, their patients, their fellow citizens, their fellow countrymen. A “silent hero” never looks for applause or a pat on the back because they know that what they do, how they live their lives in thinking about another, is truly being a human with dignity, truly recognizing that they are made in the image and likeness of God.

This past July 14, here at the Shrine of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha we celebrated a very quiet but a very special Day of Grace thinking about our patron saint. Saint Kateri continues to inspire by being a “silent hero. She is recognized as “The Lily of the Mohawks.” I watched the lily plants on the property and along Highway 5 grow and bloom for her feast day. The unique gift of these lilies is that the majority of them, especially along the highway, grew and bloomed amidst the weeds. The weeds faded into the background, for the lily plants towered above them. This is how “silent heroes” make themselves known. Their lives, their presence allow the negatives to fade into the background.

The month of August is filled with prominent “silent heroes” in our Church's past. We celebrate the transfiguration of Our Lord, when human nature meets God, and two Marian feasts -- Our Lady of the Angels, when Saint Francis began his rebuilding of the Church at the Portiuncula, and the assumption of Our Blessed Mother into heaven. From the Church in need of rebuilding came the Franciscan Order and our relationship with God was again restored by Our Blessed Mother -- known as the “Gentle Woman of Silence,” she draws us, as her children of faith, to the beauty of God Our Father's will. These were actions of faith that were inspired by God and towered above the weeds.

We also celebrate the feast of Saint Clare of Assisi, who heroically followed in the footsteps of Saint Francis. It was she, who like Saint Francis, saw the presence of God not only in herself but in nature as well. As a “silent hero” in prayer and good works, others followed her and Saint Francis, and God's will once again met human nature. There is also the feast of Saint Maximilian Kolbe, who saw in Our Blessed Mother's life, the Immaculate, as the bridge to reuniting once again in faith the deeper reality of offering oneself to the will of the Father and towering above his persecutors. Known as “The Martyr of Charity,” he offered himself to die in place of another prisoner in Auschwitz, proudly proclaiming himself as a Franciscan priest. "For it is in giving that we receive. It is in pardoning that we are pardoned. And it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life."

Pray for a “silent hero” during the month of August. Be a lily that towers over the weeds.

-Fr. Tim Lyons, OFM Conv., Chaplain and Director



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:

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