

# Saint Kateri Tekakwitha National Shrine and Historic Site

## Prayer Letter



October 2020

My dear Friends of Saint Kateri,

The month of October welcomes in the season of autumn, a time of beauty as nature changes its energy level. Preparing for the winter season, we hold onto memories of warmer days with longer hours of sunshine. As we prepare for changes in our daily routines, we have the option to accept life as it is or to take steps that will improve and renew our relationships not only with one another but also with God.

With all that is happening not only in our country but in our world as well, we can be tempted to look at our immediate futures and "fall back" into a negative mindset. Faith and trust in another has always been a challenge for us as humans as we plan for the future. There are numerous paths to help us choose a spiritual mindset that is healthy for the winter months. October provides two human examples of faith and trust.

The first is Saint Francis of Assisi, whose feast day we celebrate on October 4th. The second is Saint Kateri Tekakwitha, whose canonization anniversary is on October 21st. These two unique human beings are recognized by us and the Church as being spiritually gifted. We are drawn to them to comfort us during times of social injustice, sickness, and personal struggles. We look to them for help because of what we know about their lives and how they responded to God's plan of salvation for them and for the Church. There are numerous accounts that allow us to share in their life stories, trusting that they will respond and intercede to God for our requests.

Both Francis and Kateri are recognized as individuals who accepted God's intervention in their lives to take on roles of rebuilding the Church, being healers of mind and body and, especially through prayer, seeking God's Will in their lives. I believe that the greatest faith gift that each of them can offer us today is to imitate them by their silence. The problems that each lived through daily are very much like our own. Although they lived hundreds of years ago, they too survived times of political change, sickness, mistrust, prejudice, and so many other problems and situations that are present today.

The example that each of them lived and that we can imitate is "Do not become a part of the noise around you." Each of them saw problems that not only affected themselves but those who lived in their societies with them. I am sure that both Francis and Kateri met individuals, as do we, who are "experts" in blaming others for the world's troubles. But the response of these two saints to whatever negative situation they encountered was to ask God for help and to trust that He would respond and then accept God's response, which is His Divine Will.

Winter months can be lonely months. We can complicate these months by using our precious energy to join the "experts" that are all around us and allow them to lead us down a path that is negative and unproductive. At the end of this path we will only find ourselves alone and filled with anger and resentment.

We can uncomplicate these months by using our precious energy to be like Francis and Kateri, ignoring the noise of the world and silently turning to prayer. In doing so, we become who God wants us to be. We rebuild our Church, our society. We heal the physical wounds and social wounds of anger, prejudice, and resentment. Most of all, we allow God to lead us down the path of His Divine Will.

Allow this winter to be a time of renewal. Let both Francis and Kateri influence us to seek God's Will in prayer and not the world's will of division. Let us continue to pray: for one another, our Church, our country, our world, and our health.

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



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

- |          |           |
|----------|-----------|
| 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

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