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Kateri TEKAKWITHA

Model of Bravery

1656–1680

Born in present-day New York state

First native North American saint

Feast Day: July 14 (U.S.), April 17 (Canada)

Patron of nature

Text by Barbara Yoffie

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First Edition

Dear Parents and Teachers

Saints and Me! is a series of children's books about saints. Six books make up the first set: *Saints of North America*. In this set, each book tells a thought-provoking story about a heavenly hero.

Saints of North America includes the heroic lives of six saints from the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Saints Kateri Tekakwitha and Elizabeth Ann Seton were both born in the United States. Saint Juan Diego was born in Mexico, and Saint André Bessette was from Canada. European missionaries also came to North America to spread the Catholic faith, making it their home while they worked with people in the New World. Saints Rose Philippine Duchesne and Damien de Veuster were missionary saints.

Through the centuries, saints have always been dear to Catholics, but *why*? In most instances, ordinary people were and are transformed by the life of Jesus and therefore model Christ's life for us. It is our Lord who makes ordinary people extraordinary. As your children come to know the saints, it is our hope that they will come to understand and identify that they, too, are *called to be saints*. Which saint wanted to work with Native Americans? Who wanted to work with the sick people on the island of Molokai, Hawaii? To which saint did the Virgin Mary appear? Who loved Saint Joseph? Which saint started the first American religious community of women? Do you know which saint is the patron of nature? Find the answers in the *Saints of North America*, *Saints and Me!* set and help your child identify with the lives of the saints.

Introduce your children or students to the *Saints and Me!* series as they:

- READ** about the lives of the saints and are inspired by their stories.
- PRAY** to the saints for their intercession.
- CELEBRATE** the saints and relate to their lives.



The village moved across the river.
It was a peaceful place. Tekakwitha
learned how to pick berries and flowers.
She wanted to help with all the chores.
“I will show you how to plant corn,”
her aunt said.



So Tekakwitha planted corn and pumpkins, too. The men hunted. The women cooked and made clothing for their families. Children gathered wood for the fire. When the chores were finished, the children played in the fields together.







One sunny day, missionary priests stopped at the village. They were called “black robes” because they wore black clothing. The “black robes” told everyone wonderful stories about Jesus. “Jesus loves you,” the missionaries said.



Many people listened to the “black robes.” Some people did not like any of the stories. But Tekakwitha enjoyed hearing the stories about Jesus. I want to learn more, she thought. “We will teach you about Jesus,” the missionaries said.

All the exciting stories made Tekakwitha feel close to Jesus. Perhaps she remembered the songs and stories her mother had taught her many years before. Learning about Christianity made Tekakwitha very happy.