

# CREATIVITY FOR KIDS

## INSPIRED BY THE STORY OF BLESSED KATERI TEKAKWITHA

### **Stick crosses:**

As a child, Kateri Tekakwitha made crosses from sticks she found. These she placed in various places in the woods, as a reminder to pray.

- **Sticks:** Have children help you gather small sticks outside, or use craft sticks, unsharpened pencils or chop sticks.
- **Twine, yarn or leather shoelaces:** Help children create crosses by tying the sticks together where they intersect.

If there is access to an outside area, the children could place these crosses there as Kateri Tekakwitha did, or suggest they find a special place at home to place the cross.

### **Kateri's bead art:**

Kateri was talented at sewing beads into patterns onto clothing. She prayed her rosary often, wearing it around her neck when not praying with it, so beads were important in her life.

- **Beads:** A large variety of beads can be purchased in craft and fabric stores or made from self-hardening clay. The larger the hole in the bead, the easier it will be for children to work with them.
- **Beads for the youngest children:** Tubular dry pasta (rigatoni, penne) makes good "beads" for very young children to string.

- **String:** Depending on the type of bead used, provide children with string, yarn, embroidery floss, dental floss or thread. For young children using pasta or large-holed beads, wrap a small piece of tape around the ends of yarn (like the ends of shoelaces). With this, the children will not need to use needles.
- **Needles:** The size needles needed depends on the size of the holes in the beads. If a large needle can be used, consider plastic needles used for finishing knitting projects.

**Children aged 7 and up** can also sew beads onto felt squares or rectangles.

- Provide them with needles, thread, scissors and felt pieces.
- Encourage them to plan a pattern with colors, types of beads, etc.
- Depending on the size and shape of the felt, children can create small items such as a small purse, a case for glasses or cell phone, bookmarks, a sleeping bag for a small doll or a doll blanket, and sachets (obtain pine needles or lavender for filling). While these may require simple sewing, a child who is able to sew on beads will be able hand-sew seams.
- For a group project, have children decorate with beads an even number of felt squares (at least four); then sew the squares together to form a wall quilt.

**Painting:** As Kateri Tekakwitha enjoyed the seasons, provide children with painting supplies, including colors that reflect the seasons. Suggest they paint what they imagine she saw in the autumn, spring, etc.

**Drawing:** If reading to very young children unaccustomed to listening, provide them with drawing paper and crayons or

markers. Suggest they draw while you are reading Kateri's story to them.

Have more experienced listeners draw their favorite scene or incident from the story after you have finished reading.

**Preparing "canoes":** If you will be encouraging dramatic play around Kateri Tekakwitha's story (see section on Dramatic Play), give children large cardboard boxes (ask at appliance stores) which can become "canoes". Before playing, children can decorate the canoes with markers, getting ideas from the illustrations in the book.