Saint Kateri's Thank-You Walk

Kateri loved to pray among the trees and thank God for everything he made.
Go outside, find three beautiful things God made, and draw them here.

1. Thank you, God, for _____

2. Thank you, God, for _____

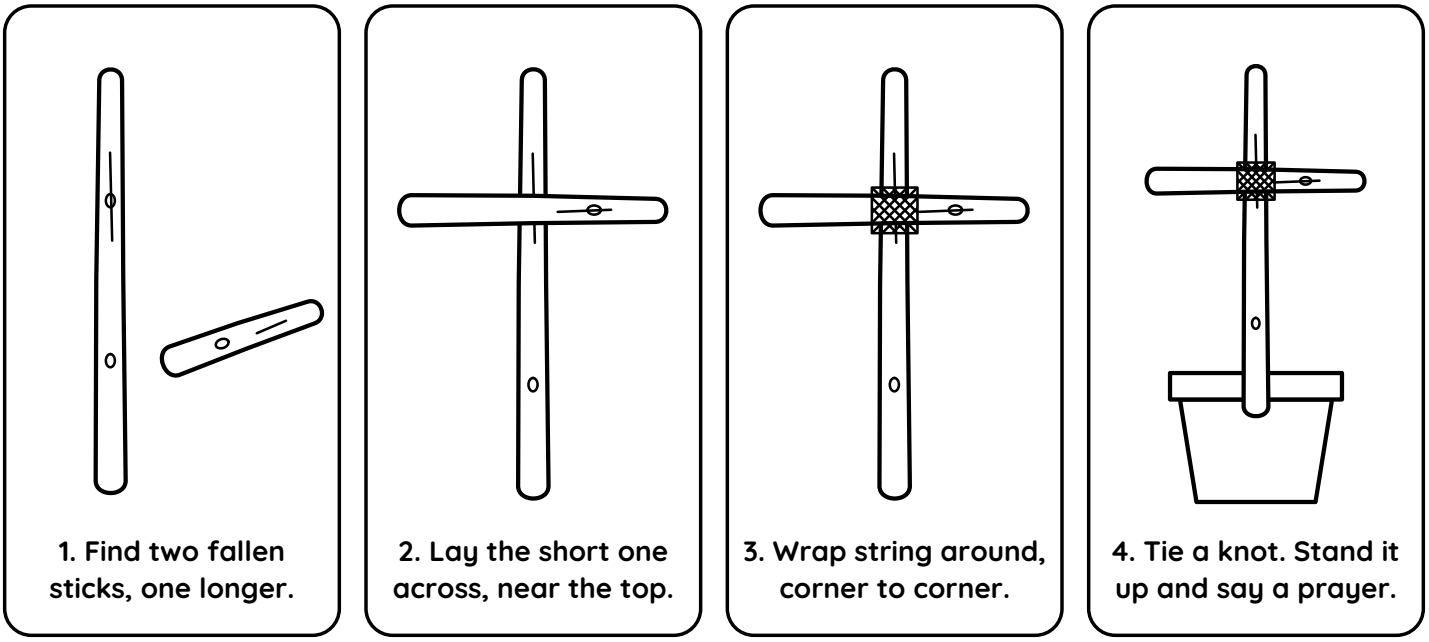
3. Thank you, God, for _____

My name: _____

From Kateri and the Whispering Woods by Joseph Glazier. Free to copy for your class or family.

Make a Little Cross of Two Sticks

Kateri would make a little cross out of two sticks and kneel down to pray before it in the woods.



1. Find two fallen sticks, one longer.

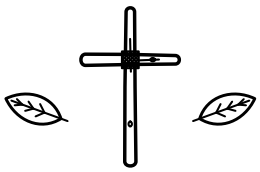
2. Lay the short one across, near the top.

3. Wrap string around, corner to corner.

4. Tie a knot. Stand it up and say a prayer.

Grown-ups: gather only sticks that have already fallen, and help with the knot.

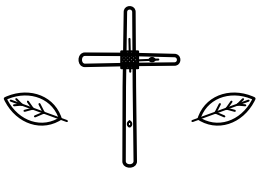
Cut out a prayer card to keep by your bed.



A Little Prayer

Dear God, thank you for the trees and the rivers, the birds and the bright blue sky. Help me to see how beautiful your world is, and to love you with my whole heart the way Saint Kateri did. Amen.

Saint Kateri, pray for us.



A Little Prayer

Dear God, thank you for the trees and the rivers, the birds and the bright blue sky. Help me to see how beautiful your world is, and to love you with my whole heart the way Saint Kateri did. Amen.

Saint Kateri, pray for us.

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Saint Kateri's thank-you walk: leader's guide

A walk and a prayer for children aged 4 to 9, for Saint Kateri's feast day (July 14 in the United States, April 17 in Canada) or any time of year: in September, the Season of Creation, or in November, Native American Heritage Month.

You'll need

For each child: the walk page and a prayer card (each page has two). Crayons and scissors. For the crosses: two fallen sticks per child (gather a few spares beforehand) and string or yarn.

Tell her story

Tekakwitha was born in 1656 in a Mohawk village in what is now New York State. Her father was a Mohawk chief and her mother a Christian Algonquin woman. When she was about four, smallpox took her parents and left her with scars and eyes that bright light hurt. On Easter Sunday 1676 she was baptized Kateri. Being a Christian in her village was hard: she would not work on Sundays, so she was given nothing to eat that day, and some children threw stones at her, but she stayed gentle and kept praying. With a priest's help she journeyed to a village of Christian Mohawk families near Montreal, where she prayed among the trees, cared for the sick and old, and taught children to pray. She died at twenty-four, and in 2012 she became the first Native American saint.

A plan for one session (40 minutes)

- **Story (10 minutes).** Read the book or tell her story. Ask: what did Kateri thank God for in the woods?
- **Pray first (2 minutes).** Pray the book's prayer together before you go out, so the walk answers it: *Dear God, thank you for the trees and the rivers, the birds and the bright blue sky. Help me to see how beautiful your world is, and to love you with my whole heart the way Saint Kateri did. Amen.*
- **The walk (12 minutes).** Walk around the school or church grounds together. Each time a child spots something beautiful, stop and say together, "Thank you, God!" Stay together, look but don't pick living plants, and collect fallen sticks only.
- **Draw (10 minutes).** Back inside, each child draws three things they saw. Little ones can tell a grown-up what to write on the line.
- **Crosses or cards (6 minutes).** Tie little crosses of two sticks (a helper per table makes the knots), or color and cut out the prayer cards. The crosses can go home or stand together on a prayer table.

Rainy day? Walk to the windows instead, or bring in leaves, pinecones and pictures of rivers and birds, and thank God for each one.

Answer gently, and tell

Read the Sunday page and ask what Kateri did. Then make sure every child knows the book's whole challenge: answer gently, and if teasing keeps happening or hurts, tell a grown-up you trust. Name who those grown-ups are. If a child tells you they are being hurt, follow your school's or parish's safeguarding procedures.

Be the first to be kind

Ask: who might feel new or different in our class or church? What could we do? Saying hello, sitting together and inviting someone to play are all ways to be the first to be kind.

Her people

Kateri was Mohawk, one of the Haudenosaunee nations, and the Mohawk people live on today. Speak of them in the present tense, and if children draw or dress up as her, a simple dress, a braid and a little cross are enough; leave out feathered headdresses, which weren't part of her dress.

More ideas for her feast day, and the book *Kateri and the Whispering Woods*, are at littlesaintsbighearts.com/saint-kateri-feast-day

Free to copy for your class, program or family. Please don't sell it.