



Department of Special Collections and University Archives

Sister Kateri Mitchell, S.S.A. (1940-)

Sister Kateri Mitchell is a Sister of the Sisters of Saint Anne and member of the Mohawk Nation at Akwesasne (adjacent to New York State and Quebec Province). From 1998 to 2017, she served as the longest serving Executive Director of the Tekakwitha Conference, a Catholic Native American association, which in 1977-1980, had transformed itself from a Northern Plains Catholic Indian missionaries' group founded in 1939. In so doing, she developed its standing as an international Catholic Native American association while simultaneously promoting the canonization cause of its patroness and her namesake, Saint Kateri Tekakwitha. In 2014, she moved its national center from Great Falls, Montana, to Alexandria, Louisiana, where it secured a permanent home.



Previously, Sister Kateri had earned several advanced degrees in theology, spirituality, and religious studies, and she had served in several teaching and Native American ministry positions in Canada and the United States.

On October 21, 2012, at St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City, Sister Kateri was a notable participant in the canonization ceremony of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha, during which the Catholic Church recognized her as North America's first Native American saint. With her was Jacob "Jake" Finkbonner (Lummi) and his family. In 2006, when he was six years old at Seattle Children's Hospital, Jake had received the crucial Vatican-authenticated and lifesaving miracle attributed to intercessory prayers through Saint Kateri, which happened while

Sister Kateri and his parents prayed at his bedside.