

# NORTH AMERICAN WOMEN

**The Medallion** shows the Statue of Liberty, symbolizing American women.

**Frances Xavier Cabrini** (1850–1917) (November 13), born in Italy, she was the first US citizen to be canonized. She is the patron saint of immigrants. The miner's lantern symbolizes her work with Pennsylvania coal miners.

**Katherine Bouvier Drexel** (1858–1955) (March 3) is foundress of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. She is the patron saint of racial justice and philanthropists and was from a very wealthy family. She founded 145 mission churches, 62 schools for Indian and African-American girls, and Xavier University in New Orleans. She was beatified in 1988 and canonized in 2001.

**Kateri Tekakwitha** (1656–1680) (July 14) is the first Native American to be canonized. She had smallpox when she was four, leaving her severely scarred and partially blind. After Baptism at age 20, she spent the rest of her life caring for the sick. Her work made her sick. She died in 1676 at age 24. Witnesses reported that within minutes of her death, the scars from smallpox completely vanished and her face shone with radiant beauty. Many sick were cured at her funeral and during the weeks after. She is the patron of ecology and the environmental movement.

**Marie Lange** (1784–1882) was born in Haiti and came to the U.S. in 1817. She was the first American black woman to found an order, the Oblate Sisters of Providence, to educate black girls, which was officially illegal in Maryland at the time. At first, the idea of black nuns was not accepted. They were even stoned on the streets of Baltimore. When she died at age 98 in 1882, there were schools in Baltimore, Philadelphia, New Orleans, and St. Louis. In 19th Century America, it was a disadvantage to be a woman or black or Catholic. Mother Lange was proudly all three. She is shown with sisters of her order.

**Rose Hawthorn** (1851–1926), the third child of the American author Nathaniel Hawthorne, was raised a Unitarian and educated in Europe. She married author George Lathrop in 1883. They both became Catholics in 1891. She founded St. Rose's Free Home for Incurable Cancer. After her husband's death, she founded the Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne, New York.

**Dorothy Day** (1897–1980) was inspired by Rose Hawthorne's example. She founded the Catholic Worker movement. She was a writer, social activist, and witness for justice. She was baptized but raised in no faith. As a young woman, she rejected Christianity. She got pregnant and had an abortion, which she became convinced was wrong. She got pregnant again and had her daughter baptized a Catholic even before she herself became a Catholic. She started shelters to house the homeless. She is a patron of those who work for social justice.

