

Saint Katharine Drexel

Why Not You?

Ages about 7-11 | Video 6:11 | Group lesson about 25-35 minutes

Central truth Every person already has God-given dignity. Katharine responded to unjust barriers by sharing her resources, accepting help, and giving herself in service.

Learning goals Children will explain why closed school doors were unjust, identify help Katharine received, and choose a small step toward including someone.

Gather Video access, one handout per child, pencils or crayons, and a Bible.

Watch online [Open this video on Servus Dei](#)

Before watching | 2 minutes

Ask: What helps children learn well? Introduce Katharine's concern for children denied opportunities. Invite the group to notice both the doors she helps open and the people who help her.

Watch and notice

Watch the whole story. If useful, pause after the pope's question. Ask what Katharine had expected and what she now considers. Continue through her years of prayer after illness.

Talk together | 6-8 minutes

1. Why did Katharine want more schools?

Black and Native American children faced unfair barriers to education. Their dignity and abilities already mattered; a school could help their gifts grow.

2. Did Katharine wait until she felt perfect or fearless?

No. She prayed, sought guidance, accepted help, and began. Trusting God did not mean doing the work alone.

3. What was at the heart of the sisters' life?

Jesus in the Eucharist. Prayer and Mass nourished their service; they wanted to learn from Jesus's gift of himself.

4. When illness stopped her journeys, had her love stopped?

No. Other sisters continued the work, and Katharine prayed. A person's worth does not depend on travel, strength, or productivity.

Then respond and pray Allow 6-8 minutes for a handout or the activity on page 2; finish with the closing prayer.

Lead the response

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Short family lesson Watch the video, choose one recall question and one application question, then pray. About 12-18 minutes; the handout is optional.

Choose a handout

Draw & Tell Invite a picture of people learning in an opened school, then a small act of inclusion. Children explain their pictures aloud; an adult may record their words.

Read & Write Children explain an unfair barrier, notice cooperation in the story, and plan a small action. Offer a word bank: learn, welcome, listen, help, pray.

Adapt by readiness

Ages 7-8: explain that skin color never makes someone less worthy of learning. Focus on one fair and welcoming action.

Ages 9-11: distinguish giving someone dignity from respecting dignity already present. Identify why both resources and cooperation mattered.

Open a door together | Optional 4 minutes

Describe a new child who wants to join a group project. Ask pairs to plan an invitation and a way to include that child's ideas. Each pair names one thing it can do and one thing to ask an adult to help with.

Look for understanding Listen for the injustice of racial exclusion, one example of cooperation, and an achievable first step. Avoid suggesting children must solve a large injustice alone.

Closing prayer Jesus, present in the Eucharist, teach us to give with love. Help us respect every person, accept help, and begin the good we can do. Saint Katharine Drexel, pray for us. Amen.

At home Use a gift this week: time, attention, a useful skill, or something shared with an adult's permission. Ask how it can help someone participate.

Handout answer notes Racial barriers to education were unjust. The pope, bishop, sisters, and helpers supported the work. Accept a concrete inclusion plan that respects another child's ideas.

Teach with care

Name racial discrimination plainly as wrong. Black and Native American students and families had their own gifts, cultures, and determination; they were active people, not helpless background characters. The film simplifies a longer history and dramatizes Katharine's thoughts. Native American communities are diverse. Do not use role-play that assigns children racial exclusion. Generosity is more than wealth; rest and receiving care also belong to life with God.

Words to explain Justice: giving people what is rightly due to them. Vocation: God's call to a life of love and service. Eucharist: Jesus truly present in the Blessed Sacrament.

Sources for the leader

Life and mission: [Holy See: Katharine Drexel biography](#)

The call to serve: [Pope Francis, Philadelphia homily, 26 September 2015](#)

There is room to learn

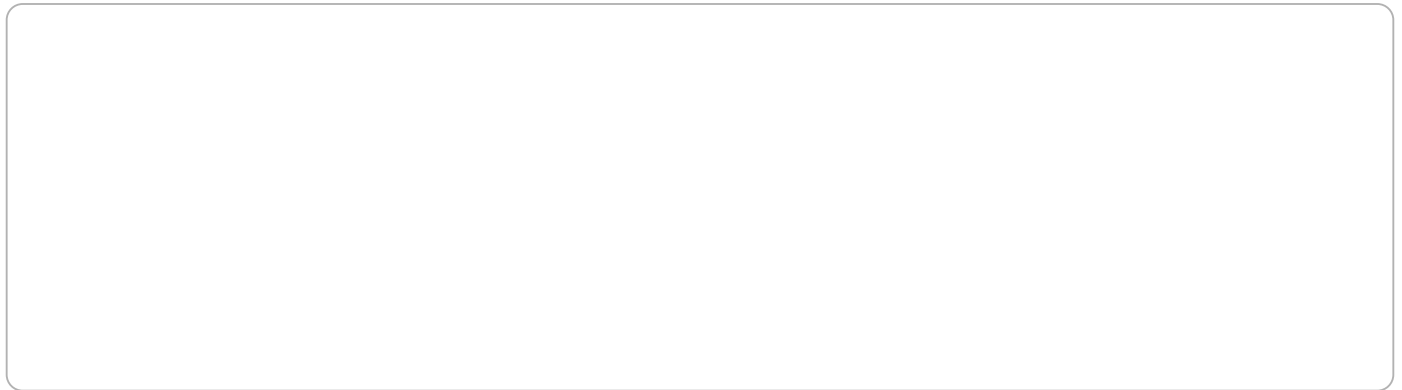
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God gives every person dignity and gifts to share.

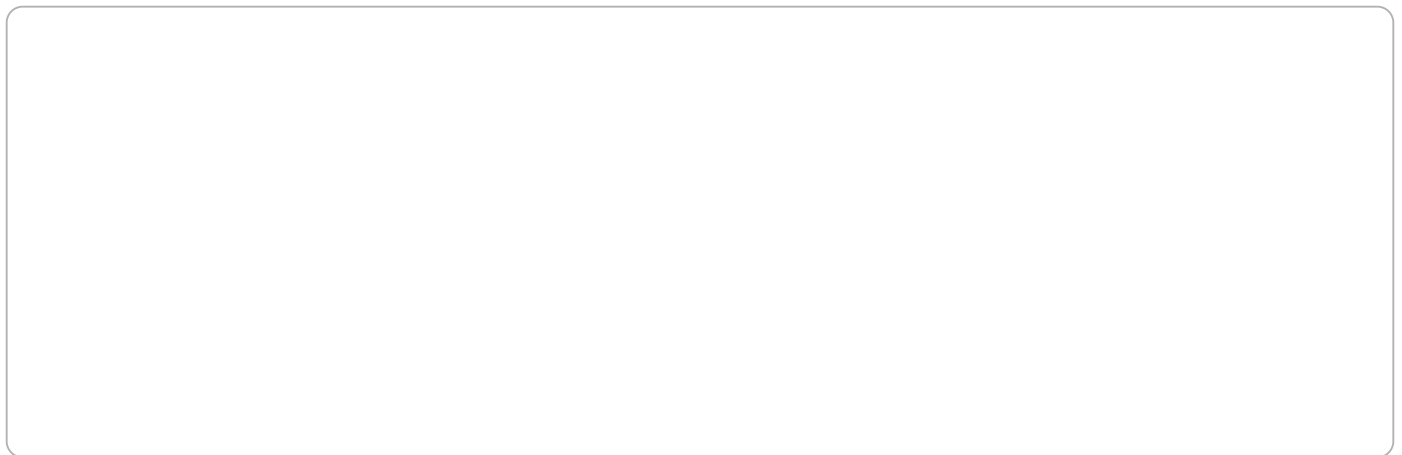
Name _____

Adult helper Read aloud. Invite drawing, pointing, or spoken answers. Writing is optional.

1 Draw people learning in a school Katharine helped open.



2 Draw one way you can help someone join in.



Tell What can you offer? Who can help you?

Pray Jesus, help me share my gifts with love. Amen.

At home Share your picture and one thing you learned about God or following Jesus.

A first step toward welcome

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Use the story to think about fairness, help, and service.

Name _____

1 Remember

What unfair barrier did Katharine want to change?

Some children were denied ...

2 Understand

Who helped Katharine, and why did accepting help matter?

Katharine did not work alone because ...

3 Put faith into practice

What small step can you take to help someone participate?

My first step will be ...

Pray Jesus, help me share my gifts with love. Amen.

Go deeper Why is helping someone use their gifts different from deciding everything for them?