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## **Thy will be done**

Tanya Watterud

The art of Nellie Edwards transforms gradually, based upon what the Lord seems to be telling her.

While creating the image of Jesus in the Garden of Olives, entitled "They Will Be Done," Edwards, a member of St. Cecelia's Catholic Church in Velva, felt drawn to have the hands of Jesus with palms pointing upward, but she wasn't sure why.

One day as she was praying, offering up her suffering with the agony of Christ, she said the inspiration came to her, "to place the symbols of his horrific passion in his sacred hands." She quickly added to the image "the tools of his torture," completing a work she had long been called to create.

Through this act of revising her art, she was reminded of the efficacy of "offering up" our sufferings. "When I do that," she said, "the Lord allows that his grace make known his holy will and there always seems to be a corresponding progress to the paintings."

Edwards' artwork can be found in many places throughout the state, nation and world. Her image of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha was selected for inclusion in the 2011 Saints Calendar produced by the Catholic Extension Society. The calendars are sold throughout the United States and the proceeds benefit the mission dioceses that Catholic Extension serves.

Her pastor, Father James Gross, purchased canvas prints of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Heart of Mary for the parish sanctuary, and canvases of the two hearts and Blessed Kateri were purchased for Assumption Abbey in Richardton. Edwards also takes on commission work, as she did for Father Roger Synek of the Bismarck Diocese. She created an image of St. Bridget of Sweden for his parish, which can be seen, along with her other works, at [www.ImmaculataArt.com](http://www.ImmaculataArt.com).

Edwards said interest in purchasing her art has been growing "and this is a tremendous grace to me, as I have strived to discern God's will for the artwork . . . which, again, has been a great spiritual exercise and, I pray, serves to be a visual of Truth for those who need it."