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FEBRUARY

A Well-favored Infancy

Now at last we are ready for a Life of Kateri Tekakwitha. We know from the October LILY OF THE MOHAWKS the fine names by which she was called during her life and since. The November number began to paint the background of her infancy, the scenery, the surroundings, the character of her parents, some of the redeeming traits of the Indians, especially of the women. After that we read in December and January about the holiness and heroism which the missionaries developed in their Christian converts. In all this the spiritual eye discerns the play of external graces through which this child of grace grew up preserved from dangers and pitfalls that might have marred the innocence so characteristic of her from the cradle to her last resting place.

Cradle is not the word, nor carriage either. The Indian mother was never apart from her little one. No burden was it for her to carry her pet strapped to a board hanging on her back. For rocking, when she had to work in the fields, there was the supple branch of a tree nearby from which the little one would sway with the wind. Then the sturdy child would toddle and yield the board and the tree to a younger brother, both of them absorbing from the tenderness and joy of the mother dispositions which could be cultivated and developed into real virtue if only favored with proper surroundings and watched over by careful guardians. Fortunately, as we shall see, there were, in the midst of the perverse and foul genera-

tion of her homeland and people, some men and many women of unalterable virtue and of the outstanding trait of their race, jealous affection for the young.

Strange how we know the year of Tekakwitha's birth. With all our vaunted statistics, countless men and women to-day do not know when precisely they came into the world; but we know for certain that Tekakwitha was born in 1656, and we also know where, namely, on the site of the Mohawk village then called Ossernenon, but now Auriesville, known as Martyrs Hill. There ten years before her birth, the gentle, but intrepid Father Jogues and his companion, Lalande, were martyred in 1646, and four years before them the gentle Goupil, all three now honored as Saints, as we trust Tekakwitha also will be in due time. The Indians would not know how to name the hill on which their village was located, but with few events to distract and dissipate their memories, such as we have unfortunately, they would recall, some with pride, others with pity, the bleeding and burning of prisoners; and the Christian converts who had been spared would, as the early Christians regarded their catacombs, feel that the precincts and the very atmosphere of their village, or castle, as they called it, had been hallowed by the torture of the gentle but indomitable missionaries.

The missionary, or the Black Robe, as they knew him—there was the trouble! Only as prisoners like Bressani and Poncet, or as

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casual visitors like Le Moyne, could they come to Martyrs Hill at all, and even then how could they attempt to minister to the faithful few, with their lynx-eyed captors watching? How those mothers must have grieved that their children could not have the saving waters of baptism! They could not do the pouring, because they were in awe of the holiness of the sacrament. Long had they themselves been kept preparing for it. The missionaries would keep the best of their candidates waiting for baptism and never would they let them impart the sacrament for fear of abuses. Rather would they trust them, when no missionary was about, to obtain the great grace of baptism by their fervent desire, and to instill the same efficacious desire into their little ones. The great Le Moyne would have done that in one of his visits to Ossernenon, just as

Tekakwitha's mother was expecting the child. We need not the mystery of the massacre of the Holy Innocents to know that little, very little, ones have perceptions of spiritual things and cravings for them altogether beyond our adult ken. They need not the catechism to feel that there is something they need and long for: "Out of the mouths of infants and of sucklings thou hast perfected praise." (Psalms 8, 2.)

Four years passed after Kateri's birth, 1656-1660, and no missionary came either as prisoner or as envoy. Other children besides Tekakwitha were born to captive Christians. Baptism, except by desire, was not available, when a dreadful scourge afflicted the village and Tekakwitha lost father, mother and brother. In her case was verified in a singular manner: "Thou wilt be a helper to the orphan." (Psalm lxx. 10, 14.)

The Court of Holiness — IV

Before any court consents to try a case, it must have sufficient grounds of evidence that there is a real case. To establish the holiness of one who lived so long ago, the evidence must rest on historical documents. What a glorious array are the documents relating to Catherine Takakwitha, as follows:

1680-1695: The annals of the Mission of the Sault, from its foundation to 1696, by Fr. Chauchetiere.

1682: Fr. Chauchetiere, Letter on the Mission of St. Francis Xavier of the Sault.

1688: Saint-Vallier, *Present State of the Church and of the French Colony in New France*, by the second Bishop of Quebec.

1695: Fr. Chauchetiere, *The Life of Good Catherine Tegahkouita*.

1696: M. Remy, P.S.S., Testimony of M. Remy, Curé of La Chine, to the miracles done in his parish by her intercession.

17—: Synopsis of the Life of Catherine Tegahkouita, Christian Iroquois.

1715: Fr. Cholenec, Latin letter to the V. Rev. Mich. Angelo Tamburini: *The Life of Catherine Tegahkouita*.

1717: Fr. Cholenec, Letter to Fr. Auguste Le Blanc, procurator for the Canadian Missions. Translation by Rev. William Ingraham Kip, Episcopalian Bishop.

1717: Fr. Cholenec, Life in ms. form, at the Hotel-Dieu of Quebec.

1722: La Potherie (M. Bacqueville de), *History of North America*, vol. i, p. 351, portrait of Catherine.

1723: Annals of the Hotel-Dieu of Quebec, by the Rev. Mother Juchereau de S. Ignace.

1744: Charlevoix, *History and General Description of New France*.

1756: Translation of Charlevoix into German.

1797: Chateaubriand, *Voyages in America*.

1819: Third edition of *Lettres Edifiantes*.

1836: Chateaubriand, Natchez. *Parallel between St. Genevieve and Catherine*.

1843: Spanish translation of *Lettres Edifiantes*.

1843: *Letters on the New Missions of Canada*, pp. 59, 187, 197.

1848: William I. Kip, *The Early Jesuit Missions in North America*.

1850: *Catherine, or the Virgin of Canada*, Limoges, France. Reprint of her life by Father Cholenec.

1855: J. G. Shea, *History of the Catholic Missions*.

18—: Felix Martin, S.J., *Life of Catherine Tekakwitha*. Original ms. in French in Jesuit Archives, Montreal.

1865: Ferland, *History of Canada*, vol. ii, p. 129.

1866: Charlevoix, *History and General Description of New France*, translated, with notes, by J. G. Shea, vol. iii, p. 117; iv, pp. 283 seq., and 295.

1876: Life of Catherine Tekakwitha in Iroquois.

1886: J. G. Shea, *The Catholic Church in Colonial Days*.

1893: Ellen H. Walworth, *The Life and Times of Kateri Tekakwitha, The Lily of the Mohawks*.

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1894: N. V. Burtin, O.M.I., *Life of Catherine Tekakwitha*.

1897: *Catharina Tegakwita eene Lelie onder de doornen gevolgd*. (Catherine Tekakwitha, a Lily among Thorns.)

1898: *Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, Montreal, April, 1906. Remarkable cure.

1900: Msgr. Forbes, *Almanach Iroquois*.

1904: N. E. Dionne, *Biographies of the Servants of God in Canada*.

1906: Miss Hewlett, *The Lily of the Mohawks*, Track, London.

1908: Father T. J. Campbell, S.J., *Pioneer Priests in North America*, vol. i, p. 301.

1922: E. J. Devine, S.J., *Historic Caughnawaga*, Montreal.

1927: Fr. Edouard Lecompte, S.J., *Catherine Tekakwitha*, translated and adapted by Fr. John J. Wynne, S.J.

Numerous short lives by Frs. John J. Wynne, S.J., E. J. Devine, S.J., and E. Lecompte, S.J.

Practical Devotion

The best way to prove devotion to the Lily of the Mohawks is to make her known by spreading the leaflets, booklet *Life* and this monthly message as listed on page 4. The novena leaflet Number III is meeting a demand that her clients have been making on us for some time. Is there a book-rack in the vestibule of your church? If there is, let us know and we shall send copies of the LILY OF THE MOHAWKS for it. This is why:

"Dear Father Wynne: Enclosed please find check for 20 subscriptions for the LILY OF THE MOHAWKS 'for our book-rack.'

"Rev. Charles J. Trinkhaus,
"Washington, D. C."

What to pray for is very important. When age, or various complications, make a complete cure unlikely, patience, courage, relief from suffering are the proper objects of prayer.

A good counsel for praying well is first to do all in our power to obtain what is needed as if it largely depended on us, and then to pray so earnestly as if our efforts would fail of results; or as the famous Jesuit Gracian puts it in his *Art of Worldly Wisdom*: "Use human means as if there were no Divine ones, and Divine as if there were no human."

Many pray that an operation may not be necessary and that is proper enough if remedies be taken to get well without the operation. Often doctors know how difficult it

is to diagnose an ailment or to hit upon a sure remedy. That they may succeed is a worthy object of prayer. So it is for everything else, for obtaining employment, bringing about a reconciliation, a solution in money difficulties.

Last month the reports about the Holy Father were so alarming that we actually had ready for the printer the Missal prayer for a Pontiff deceased. Instinctively we held it back. Invocations were mounting to heaven to preserve him and they were addressed without limit to Tekakwitha in whose Cause he is so interested. Then there were the unnumbered prayers of the worldwide Apostleship of Prayer, foreseen and heard, as are all prayers, even before they are uttered. Is it not a special providence that made the Holy Father designate the first great "intention" for this year as one for his own designs? Still the alarm set us thinking of the desire of the hill climber for the eternal hills, of Christ welcoming His Vicar, of the whole court of heaven acclaiming one who has dignified and sanctified its courts here below. "The Lord preserve him and quicken him and make him to be blessed upon the earth."

To every member of his choir and music staff Msgr. Reilly, of St. John's, Schenectady, presented, for Christmas, a copy of *The Saint of the Wilderness* (Saint Isaac Jogues). It was written by his fellow townsman, Dr. Birch, a devout Protestant.

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FAVORS ATTRIBUTED TO TEKAKWITHA

"Financial help for three people."—Pittsburgh, Pa.
 "Property sold after long waiting."
 —San Antonio, Tex.
 "... for finding jobs for two men."
 —Lafayette, La.
 "... for a personal grace that I obtained."
 —Philadelphia, Pa.
 "I asked Catherine for a job—I got one."
 —Lafayette, La.
 "It must be to her credit that I am a convert."
 —Rahway, N. J.
 "My mother and I had just made three novenas. We sold our property on the last day."
 —Vancouver, B. C.
 "I feel that Tekakwitha helped my husband to get work and he still has it."
 —Bridesburg, Pa.
 "Last month I sold my house unexpectedly. I feel sure Catherine helped me."
 —Pittsburgh, Pa.
 "... am asking for no less than a miracle, a cure from arthritis. I know I am not worthy of it. God is good."
 —Hollywood, Cal.
 "I asked Little Catherine to pray that my wife would have a safe delivery. Thank God, she had a beautiful boy, and both are fine."
 —Roslindale, Mass.
 "I promised Catherine Tekakwitha that I would distribute her leaflets if she would obtain for us money we needed. Enclosed is offering for leaflets."
 —Atlantic City, N. J.
 "I suffered continuously with severe headaches. X-rays and medical aids gave me no relief. After making novena to Kateri Tekakwitha, I have had no headaches."
 —New Orleans, La.
 "Twice I have petitioned Kateri to intercede for me and twice I have been rewarded. Both of these favors were money when it seemed quite hopeless to obtain any."
 —Savannah, Ga.
 "I promised to write this if Catherine would help me obtain a little money I needed. I received far more than I expected. This is the second time she has answered my prayers."
 —Brooklyn, N. Y.
 "At the suggestion of a fellow priest, I began a novena to Tekakwitha to assist me in my financial difficulties. Within a week, it seems almost miraculous, a check for a very considerable sum was received."
 —Mars, Pa.
 "My gentleman friend and I have been making a novena asking for her help in securing a new and better job for him. He is making very good money now."
 —Pittsburgh, Pa.

"I had been trying to make a sale to a certain prospect, but met with what seemed insurmountable obstacles. I asked her help. Presently I received a phone call to come and get the order."
 —Milwaukee, Wis.

"My boy was never allowed by a Protestant father to practice the faith. As he came of age he was engaged to a fine Catholic girl, he took ill, asked for a priest and had a holy death, all through prayers to Tekakwitha."
 —Canada.

"A daughter-in-law was in difficult straits and a most unusual result came through the intercession of Kateri. The mother-in-law was astounded because there has been no set form used by this woman."
 —Des Moines, Ia.

"Enclosed find offering for literature to show my gratitude to God and little Catherine for a spiritual favor which I believe I received through her intercession."
 —Hamilton, O.

"Again Kateri came to my assistance. My atheist called me and in a few days made his profession of faith, received all the sacraments and three days later died kissing the cross with a smile on his lips."
 —Port Angeles, Wash.

"I asked our good friend, Kateri, the 'Lily of the Mohawks,' to have an eye operation turn out successfully and also to effect a cure of serious ear trouble. Both prayers were answered."
 —Brooklyn, N. Y.

"A girl friend of mine, whose father was out of work for a very long time, made the novena at my suggestion. Her father has now secured work of exactly the type he wanted."
 —San Francisco, Cal.

"I promised Catherine Tekakwitha that I would distribute her leaflets if she would obtain for me money enough to pay our taxes. In a few weeks the taxes were paid by a sum of money received unexpectedly."
 —Philadelphia, Pa.

"I was practically idle for three years. The following week I received a phone call and was asked if I could take a certain position. Two weeks later I received the position."
 —Carbondale, Pa.

ADDITIONAL FAVORS RECEIVED THROUGH THE INTERCESSION OF TEKAKWITHA

Cures	9
Positions Obtained	5
Financial Aid	5
Relief in Distress	2
Not Specified	39

Make Tekakwitha Known

The Lily of the Mohawks Monthly Message Subscribe at 60c. a year; 2 copies, 1.00
 Leaflets—I, cures—II, money aid, employment, etc.—III, Novena . . . 5c. each; 25c. a doz.
 Life, by Wynne, 64 pages, 3 illustrations . . . 25c. a copy; 5 for \$1.00; discount on quantities
 Pictures, colored 5 x 3 in., each 5c.; 10 x 13 1/2 in., each 40c.; discount on quantities
 Medals Oxidized silver, 15c.; \$1.50 a doz.; aluminum, 50c. a doz.
 (Prices include postage)