



## Catherine Tegakwitha, First Iroquois Virgin Cholenec

### CHAPTER XVII — REMARKABLE FAVORS

Two days after the first of the apparitions recorded in the previous chapter, Catherine appeared to the good Anastasia in the following manner.

This fervent Christian woman remained alone in prayer that night after the others of her lodge had gone to bed. Feeling herself overcome by sleep, she finally laid down on her mat to rest, but no sooner had she closed her eyes than she was awakened by a voice which called her with these words: "Mother, arise." She recognized Catherine's voice. Far from having any fear, she immediately raised herself into a sitting position, and, turning to the place whence the voice came, she saw Catherine standing beside her, brilliant with light. Half her body was engulfed in this brightness, and the upper part was as bright as the sun. She carried a cross in her hand which was more brilliant than everything else, and from it there shone forth so much light that she thought there could be nothing more beautiful upon earth.

"I saw her," she continued, "in this position clearly, awake as I was, and I heard these words very distinctly: "Mother, look at this cross and see how beautiful it is. It was the source of all my happiness during my life, and I counsel you to make it yours also."

After these few words she disappeared, leaving her mother overjoyed and with a spirit so filled with this vision that after many years her memory of it is as fresh as it was the first day.

It seems that Catherine, in gratitude for the great aid she had received from Anastasia, wished, by the sight of this beautiful cross and by her added words, to dispose her to bear generously the cross which God had prepared for her, namely, the death of three of her children in war, the oldest of whom was one of the captains of the village. These disasters she bore with heroic constancy, so greatly had she been strengthened by this apparition of her dear daughter. Catherine also showed herself to her companion one day when the latter was alone in the lodge. She seated herself near the girl on her mat, reprimanded her for something she had done, and, after having given her some advice for her conduct, retired.

The great affection Catherine had for the cross and the manner in which she appeared to her mother Anastasia, inspired the thought of painting her with a cross in her hand, this being characteristic of her. But God spoke even more clearly of the sanctity and merit of Catherine, His spouse, by authentic proofs,

by the many graces which He has already granted and continues to grant to all kinds of people through her intercession. It is time we spoke of these, as it is one of the most beautiful records of her whole history, and will add a new lustre to all the rest. I have already remarked in the preface that although in Catherine we had such a great treasure at the Sault, we nevertheless kept this fact hidden from the outside world, judging it prudent not to precipitate matters, but to wait until heaven had given a sign to make her known.

It was not long before this occurred through a movement that could have only come from God alone. A few months after her death, Catherine's grave became frequented by the Indians and the French, both alike in their zeal to honor her and recommend themselves to her prayers. Several of them received interior graces for the good of their souls. Thus the knowledge of Catherine spread, and she made herself known by the cure of souls, which is more important than that of bodies. To put it briefly, in order to pass on to the bodily healings, nine months elapsed in this manner. During that time one of our Fathers felt himself strongly impelled to publish the virtues of Catherine, and to make her known to the world, but he steadfastly resisted because he had heard something detrimental said about her during her life, and although this was nothing but pure calumny, as we have seen, he feared lest he himself should be led astray by an illusion, and draw others after him. At times he even went so far as to disapprove within himself of the honors given to Catherine at her grave; at other times he was so moved by her virtues that he himself went to her grave and honored her more than anyone else. Meanwhile, the Father was in doubt and troubled with regard to Catherine, hesitating between the desire and the fear to proclaim her.

It so happened in January, 1681, a year after her death, that someone sought him at

the Sault, where he was pastor, to assist Claude Caron of Prairie le Madeleine, who was dying. The Father felt pleased, believing that he would find the means which he had sought for a long time to enlighten himself concerning our Iroquois virgin, and to test effectively whether she was as powerful in heaven as was rumored. He went to see the sick man, but only after passing Catherine's grave, where he prayed on his knees, begging Our Lord to enlighten him in this matter and to settle his doubts. During his prayer he felt an increasing joy, together with an assured confidence that Catherine was able to cure this sick man, whom he found dying of lung trouble after a third relapse, so that he had great difficulty in making his confession. The Father, having given him Holy Communion, exhorted him to take courage and have confidence in God, and that he might yet recover. Thereupon he disclosed to him his idea of placing him under Catherine's protection; the sick man willingly agreed, and immediately promised that if he were cured he would go to the Sault and thank her at her grave. Then the priest gave him the crucifix that Catherine's hands had held when she was buried, and left him, promising to return the following morning.

A moment later they wished to take him from the bed in order to readjust it, but he fell lengthwise on the floor, as a man about to die. All they could do was to pick him up and place him quickly on the bed so that at least he would die more easily. The contrary happened, however, for he was no sooner placed on the bed than he fell into a light sleep, during which he felt as if a great stone were removed from his chest; when he awoke he was cured and entirely out of danger. He even ate with appetite and slept peacefully during the night. A surgeon from Montreal had come to see him a little while before the arrival of the priest, but had departed to obtain a remedy, more for the sake of pleasing the patient, of whose death he had no doubt,

than with any hope of curing him. When he returned the following morning with the medicine, he was greatly astonished to see the man completely cured, sitting by the fire, eating and drinking. A great weakness was the only remaining sign of his illness, and from this he later recovered by means of nourishment and rest. The surgeon declared that he had never seen a man so sick who had not died from his disease. The priest, who was unable to come to see him until three or four days later, had the pleasure of finding the man whom he had left so sick, in perfect health. He was told all that had happened, and a little later the cured man visited Catherine's grave to fulfil his promise and to thank his benefactress. This was the first bodily cure that Catherine effected. I wished to describe it here at length for her glory, and to show by what method God began to make known the merit and power of His servant.

I shall now relate a second cure that took place at the very village of the Prairie, and which is all the more remarkable because it was accompanied by so many graces that it would be difficult to believe if it had not been witnessed by all the inhabitants of the village.

It was likewise in the month of January, 1681, some time after the preceding cure, that the wife of Francois Roaner, sixty years old, fell seriously ill and was soon at the point of death. She received the last Sacraments from the same Father, who then gave her the crucifix that had been used at the

first cure, exhorting her to recommend herself to Catherine with confidence in her power. She had Catherine's crucifix placed around her neck, and no sooner was this done than, in the presence of her children, she was instantly cured. Believing, with reason, that she owed her health to the crucifix, she had great difficulty in persuading herself to part with it, and could not decide to do so until

the priest, to humor her, had given her a little of the earth of her grave, which she placed around her neck instead of the crucifix.

Some time later, feeling completely cured, she removed this, but at this very moment she became so sick that she would have died had not someone hastened to replace this earth around her neck, which immediately healed her. This miraculous earth, which has since effected so many marvels, was the same as that which obtained the cure on the



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first occasion; but the miracle did not stop there. This virtuous and wise woman always carried the relic on her person out of gratitude to Catherine who had twice cured her, and perhaps because she feared to become ill a third time if she removed it. However, a year later, she did so on behalf of her husband, Francois Roaner, for the latter, who was almost as old as his wife, fell ill, January, 1682, of a violent pain in the back, together with rheumatism. His wife, seeing him in this state, took the dust from her neck to place it around her husband's, who was instantly cured, but the pain passed over to his wife, who began to cry out loud and said that her husband was killing her. It



was necessary, therefore, to take the dust away from the husband, who had been healed by it on the instant, to return it once more to his wife, who was cured for a third time as soon as she placed it on her neck; both lived in good health for a long time after this. All this is so marvelous and appears so unbelievable that it might pass for a myth or a story told for amusement, if it had not happened, as I have already said, before the eyes of all the inhabitants of the *Prairie de la Madeleine*.

#### CHAPTER XVIII — OTHER REMARKABLE CURES

Two months later the power of Catherine also began to be felt at the Sault in the person of one of our Indians, who had received the last Sacraments and whose death was expected, when this same Father decided, without saying a word to the others, to apply some of the dust of Catherine's grave, and again the person escaped death. When the Father saw that the man was out of danger he disclosed to us what had been done. We were not pleased with his action, not because we were not delighted to see that Catherine was beginning to favor our Indians as well as the French, but we wished that the cure had been for some other person, for we thought that it would have been better if God had taken this particular man while he was ready for death, for which he had so well prepared himself. For this reason I said to the priest: "Why do you not rather take these pains for so and so?" naming a young woman crippled in all her limbs, who, since she was eight years old, had been afflicted with this disease every springtime, without being able to obtain a successful remedy.

The priest went to the cabin of this woman, and the strange state in which he found her making him compassionate for her sufferings, he gave her Catherine's crucifix to place around her neck and made her begin a novena in her honor. This was the first no-

vena made to her, and it was not without effect, for on the ninth day this woman was cured and has now for thirteen or fourteen years been without this sickness. Seeing that she had completely recovered, the Father told her to remember that she had promised Catherine not to gamble any more, of which she was inordinately fond. She gave it up entirely and has never gambled since. The man who was cured before her spent five years in fighting a vice to which he was subject, and of which he promised Catherine to rid himself. It has been noticed that she usually cured the soul of those whose bodies she healed, if they were in need of this double assistance, even though they did not pray for it.

This woman had hardly been restored to health when her husband, the oldest son of the good Anastasia, became a victim of the same sickness. In the month of April, Catherine cured him after her aid had been invoked. She did more than this: having restored his health and kept him from a death which might have taken him to heaven, she later wished to deliver him from despair, which nearly drove him to hell. This Indian, a few days after his cure, having had an argument with his mother, left the lodge abruptly. He was of a hasty temper, and ran along the road of the great river so as to hurl himself into it. Fortunately for him, he had to pass by Catherine's grave, and when he was opposite it, his feet suddenly halted and remained immobile, so that he could not move from the place, until he realized his sin and begged God's pardon. He went and confessed immediately, and told, to Catherine's glory, what had happened.

#### CHAPTER XIX — VENERATION FOR TEKAKWITHA

All these miraculous cures made Catherine's name so famous that the people began to ask to have Masses and novenas said in her honor. The cures became so numerous that

they ceased to be noticed. Not a month, in fact, hardly a week of this year passed that great miracles did not take place on all sides and in the French habitations. It was noticeable, however, that Catherine limited herself to the country and the poor people for several years, without entering into the cities. She wished first to gratify the Sault where her body is, and then the Prairie and the Mission of Lachine, which are the two French settlements nearest to the source and to the mouth of the river. The healing power which emanated from her grave fortunately began by communicating itself and spreading in the neighborhood.

Mr. Cuillerier, now residing in the city of Montreal, but then living on the side of the Mission of Lachine, heard of Catherine and the miracles she brought about when he was at the Prairie on business. He was the first to introduce this devotion into his home, where a little later one of his children was cured by the invocation of this virtuous maiden. A little later his wife was in extraordinary pain at childbirth. She recommended herself to Catherine, and promised to go and thank her at her grave if she brought forth her child safely. Her husband did the same; both without communicating with each other. The woman then fell into a gentle sleep during which she was delivered without pain and from which she did not awake until the child she had borne cried out. Then she said to her husband: "I promised to make a pilgrimage to Catherine's grave." "So did I," he replied, and both discovered that each had made the same promise in private. Some time later they came to thank Catherine who had heard their prayers. This event made her known at the Mission of Lachine, and she has since effected so many and such astounding cures there that she has become famous under the name of "Good Catherine." (This is what the good people have always called her.)

Father Remy, priest of the Seminary of

Saint Sulpice, the former pastor of the Mission of Lachine, could not at first forbear to criticize so new a thing, which, among poor Indians, appeared strange and suspicious to him. However, when he became afflicted with deafness and sciatica, as a last resort and after the example of his parishioners, he turned to Catherine for help and was twice cured by her. After this he became the first to proclaim her everywhere. We have had the pleasure of seeing him come twice to say Mass at the Sault to thank God for the grace He had given Catherine, and to thank Catherine for the graces she had bestowed on himself and his parishioners for several years. So great were these that, as he once told us, there were not more sick people in his parish, because the earth of Catherine's grave had been a prompt and assured remedy against all kinds of disease. He even allowed his people to come here two consecutive years, 1694 and 1695, to have High Mass sung with the blest bread, and many communions in honor of their common benefactress.

Nor were they content with this. In 1696, the Tuesday of Holy Week fell on the seventeenth of April, the anniversary of Catherine's death. On that day he himself came with his parishioners for the same devotions. Mrs. de Rane, the wife of the commanding officer of Fort Remy, donated and presented the consecrated bread to thank Catherine for having some time previously cured Mr. de Rane of severe vomitings from which he expected soon to die, and from which he recovered after he and his wife promised this pilgrimage and the consecrated bread. They came that day to fulfil their promise, together with their pastor and the others. We shall see Mr. de Rane's attestation at the end of this history. It should do much towards Catherine's glory, coming from a person of such merit and of such recognized virtue in Canada, who is greatly respected by the best people of the country.

(To be concluded.)

Holy Week was a foretaste of heaven for Tekakwitha. The observance intensified two of her favorite devotions, love of the Cross and of the Holy Eucharist. Was it providential that she died on Wednesday of that week? April 17, 1680, was the day.

Somehow memories of her are interwoven with the Christian year. Thus again this month Easter was the day of her baptism. St. Joseph's Solemnity, April 26, was not yet established as a special feast, but the Saint was a favorite of her's as of all Canada. Then April 30 is St. Catherine's Day, after whom she was named.

There is more than an affinity between the Cause of Mother Philippine Duchesne and that of Tekakwitha. The Venerable Mother came to the United States expressly for work among the Indians. Never was there a more heroic life, thrilling with pioneer and frontier privations and hardships. Now at last the final steps are being taken in Rome for her Beatification. The death of Pius XI caused a slight delay, but fortunately only a very slight one.

Ireland has a love for saints who are already, or who are to be, canonized. Tekakwitha is a favorite over there. This is like a sweepstake.

"I say a prayer for her canonization every day and hope she will soon be numbered among the Saints. We had to get electric light installed in our house lately, so I said three *Aves* to Kateri to help us to pay for it; my sister went to a whist drive and won a pool of £5; also a beautiful electric lamp, so don't you think she is listening to me? Enclosing 2/6, will you kindly send me your monthly message and sometimes say a little prayer for me." —Tralee.

"I am enclosing order 10 S. Please send leaflets Nos. One, Two and a few of Three, Little Indian Maiden. I'm doing my best to get prayers said for her Cause. This will be the fourth amount from you. I sent some

to the schools to be distributed. I have got three great favors through her intercession work for three of my sons." —Limerick.

It is still a further cry to Sui-yan, China. There a devotee of Tekakwitha is eager for help to endow young girls like Kateri to become Sisters. He sends copies of religious paintings by Catholic artists in China, very attractive. If his artists will do a Tekakwitha picture, we are sure dowries will come.

"At your suggestion I wrote to a friend artist and sent him the very nice picture of Tekakwitha that he may prepare another one, in Chinese style, etc. I gave him all information he may have to make use of and hope that ere long I may let you know that the desired picture is in preparation."

—Tsining, China.

"When the present trouble in China broke out in Shanghai we were forced to leave our school, which was situated in one of the danger zones. After a few months we leased a house in another part of the city, but it soon became too small to accommodate the growing enrollment. It became necessary to find another place. This was difficult as rents had soared to a prohibitive height. We began a novena to your little protégé and soon we were most unexpectedly directed to a suitable place in a safe location, and at an unbelievable low rent. For two years the property had been vacant and the owner had refused all offers to rent. It was given to us almost as soon as we applied for it."

—Shanghai, China.

From far-off Nigeria, South Africa, come several letters like this: "The favors I want from Kateri Tekakwitha are:

- (a) Love of God to end in a happy death;
- (b) Love of God by our whole family;
- (c) A good training to pass my third class;
- (d) Posted in a new bush mission to teach, the grace of God to carry out the work Christianly."



What we like most of all are the reports from many communities and schools that veneration for Tekakwitha is growing. Forty times a day the Sisters of St. Francis Convent, Springfield, Ill., make a brief petition for her Cause. The senior boys and girls of St. Paul's, Scranton, send a contribution for the Cause. At St. Peter's, Belleville, N. J., the prayer for her canonization is recited each morning. "Nor would the children let me forget it. Of course they have their little petitions, some of which they say have been granted."

So many are making Tekakwitha known by distributing pictures of her and leaflets telling of her holiness and power of intercession, the V. Postulator for her Cause is planning to invite them and others to become Promoters for it. Just after her death her tribespeople formed what was then known as Tekakwitha's Band in order to imitate her virtues and induce the members and others to invoke her aid for favors such as she was obtaining for them. Ever since she has been obtaining such blessings, too many to put on record. We are preparing a certificate, or rather a souvenir, for all who encourage veneration for The Lily of the Mohawks.

"Needless to say, we do all in our power to foster devotion to our dear little Indian Maiden, and it is encouraging to see how our dear Navahoes respond to our zeal to have her more known and honored. There is so much in common in the life of Kateri and our own Indians, that they are quick to appreciate a friend of their own nature and temperament."—St. Michael's Mission, Ariz.

"Recently a good parishioner brought me a picture of Kateri, Lily of the Mohawks. Our colored people have manifested a fervent devotion toward her." —New Road, La.

"My trips to Alvina during the past months had always been irregular, but she would foretell them with, 'Father is coming today.' As I was lighting the candles she thoughtfully called out to her mother, 'Light the lamp for Father.' In her right hand she held a small crucifix I had loaned her containing small pieces of bone from the body of Kateri Tekakwitha and from some of the Jesuit Martyrs of North America. At times she pressed it to her lips. She had eagerly received 'Woyute Wakan' (the Holy Food) about twice a week since early summer, but this time with increased fervor. In less than an hour she went to heaven."

—Pine Ridge, So. Dak.

### Last days of Pope Pius XI and Tekakawitha

A short time before the death of Pius XI, the Bishop of St. Jean de Quebec, Anastase Forget, then in Rome, wrote:

"I presented to Pius XI the book of Guilberte Bouvier, *Kateri Tekakwitha*. He opened it with interest, saying that he would read it that night, explaining that sleepless nights afforded him leisure to read all that was given him, and then he expressed his admiration for little Kateri.

"From His Holiness I went to the Cardinal Secretary of State. I gave him a copy of *Richelieu*, mentioning specially, as I had done to Pius XI, the propaganda made by this journal in favor of Kateri. I also told him that I had given to Pius XI a new book on Kateri.

"Only two days before the death of Pius XI, February 8, I received this beautiful message from the present Holy Father, then Cardinal Secretary of State Pacelli:

"'His Holiness is pleased to express the wish that the life of Kateri may make known the attractive personality of this maiden and develop admiration for the marvelous work of divine grace in a soul so docile.'"

"I gave one of the medals you sent to me to the father of a sick child and the child was wonderfully cured."

—5th British Nigeria Regt., West Africa.

"I have just been re-elected to the Board of Assessors for another three-year term; I left my election in the hands of Tekakwitha and came through with a flattering majority of 334 votes in a five-cornered contest."

—Adams, Mass.

"We had great difficulty in securing Old-Age Pensions for our aged guests who have no other means of subsistence. We were successful beyond our expectations and so am sending this small offering for her Cause."

—Little Sisters of the Poor, Seattle, Wash.

"I asked her to help me receive payment of a policy which seemed impossible for me to get and had almost given it up as lost, when through a friend I heard of Tekakwitha and asked her to intercede for me. I made a novena to her and on the eighth day received word that I was to receive payment."

—Hartford, Conn.

". . . Although a house sold at a sacrifice, nevertheless, I firmly believe it was through Kateri that I was relieved of the burden. I told her that if \$300 more were offered I would accept the offer, but she saw to it that \$400 was offered, therefore, I believe she did the good work."

—Richmond Hill, N. Y.

From one hospital: Two conversions attributed to recoveries of very sick patients following the application of the relic and prayers to Catherine.

The safe delivery of a child, whose mother was 40 years old. This was the first child, and there was great danger for both mother and child. However, the baby is now two months old; mother and child doing nicely.

A little girl's recovery from a very serious accident. The father was a fallen-away Catholic, the mother a non-Catholic. This miraculous recovery brought not only the father back to the Faith, but the mother and older brother took instructions and are now practical Catholics.

—Mercy Hospital, Elwood, Ind.

Thanksgiving for saving a life after a ruptured appendix; for recovery of sight by an elderly woman by application of a relic of Tekakwitha; for the cure of a serious laryngitis in a few days though the doctor thought it would require drastic treatment for several weeks.

"Our hospital was threatened with losing its approval by the State. We confided the matter to Catherine, and thanks to her aid our hospital remained on the approval list."

"I have been suffering with dyspepsia for the past 10 years. I prayed to Tekakwitha for help. I am feeling much better."

—Washington, D. C.

**Life**, by Wynne, 64 pages, 3 illustrations, containing in detail reports of remarkable favors.....15c. a copy

**Leaflets** .....5c. each; 25c. a doz.; \$1.50 a 100

**Tekakwitha Novena Leaflets** ....5c. each; 25c. a doz.

**Medals** ..... Oxid. silver, 15c.; aluminum, 50c. a doz.

**Pictures**, colored, large ..... 13 x 10 in., 40c.  
" " small ..... 5 x 3 in., 5c.

**Pictures**, colored, silk applied to her relics, 5 x 3 in., 10c.

**Image of Kateri** in wood admixed with oak growing where and when she was born, Auriesville, 1656.....  
5 3/4 x 3 3/4 in., 40c. each

(Prices include postage)

REV. JOHN J. WYNNE, S.J., *V. Postulator of Her Cause*

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