



Something Never Done Before

This month THE LILY OF THE MOHAWKS begins its fourth year. Its friends have kept faithful. If we could double or treble their number we would increase its pages accordingly and such an increase would enable us to give its readers information which has never been imparted in our language.

Nothing that the authorities of the Church are doing in Rome interests the rank and file of Catholics so much as the process by which Servants of God are judged to be, and solemnly declared, Saints. Yet how little is known about the steps in the process?

Before the Church calls on the faithful to venerate any Servant of God as worthy of the honor of God's altar, as we express it, that is, of our public worship, years of labor are spent by experts specially chosen to scrutinize the life, reputed virtues, renown for holiness, and power of intercession of the one in question. Documents are weighed, witnesses are questioned and decisions are given solemnly as before the judgment seat of God, so that there may be no possible doubt of the heroic holiness of one who is declared Saint.

Now rarely, if ever, is this process made

known in detail to the world generally; but happily we are in a position to do it in the case of Tekakwitha. All concerned in her Cause keep constantly expressing admiration for the documents which prove her holiness. These, twenty in all, fully authenticated, have been examined by the Historical Section of the Congregation of Rites and pronounced genuine and satisfactory evidence for her Cause.

In the July number of 1938 we published the Contents of the volume in which these documents appear, a large volume of pages. It is called the 'Positio,' i.e., the stand or conclusion of the Historical Section. To publish all this in the LILY OF THE MOHAWKS would be impossible, as it would run on for years. However, the more salient parts can and should be made known for all who are interested in the process for the beatification of a Servant of God, particularly of His Servant Catherine, and this we begin to do in this first number of our fourth year. The head of the Historical Section of the Congregation of Rites is named Relator General, and his statement about the Cause of Tekakwitha is as follows:

STATEMENT OF KATERI'S CAUSE BY FATHER F. ANTONELLI, O.F.M., RELATOR GENERAL

The Servant of God Catherine Tekakwitha is a North-American Indian, a genuine redskin, and it is the first time that a member of this great and sorely-tried human family is presented to the Sacred Congrega-

tion of Rites as a candidate for the honors of the altar.

She belongs to the nation of the Iroquois, well known for their warlike unrest in the history of the colonization of North Amer-

ica, and among the Iroquois, she belongs to the tribe of the Agniers, more commonly known as Mohawks, from the name of the river along which they had built their villages.

In 1656 our Servant of God was born in one of these villages, Ossernenon, the nearest to Fort Orange (today called Albany in the United States). It is the same village where about ten years previous three of the eight holy Jesuit martyrs canonized in 1930, Isaac Jogues, John de la Lande and Rene Goupil, had been so barbarously put to death.

Catherine's mother was a member of the Algonquin tribe, and a Christian, having been instructed and baptized at Three Rivers. She had passed over to the Iroquois in a tragic manner, *i.e.*, as a prisoner of war, but was fortunate enough to win the affections of one of the Chiefs of the Mohawk tribe, a pagan who finally married her. Two children were born of this marriage, a boy and a girl, our Servant of God. All too soon, however, the young family was destroyed. Catherine was not yet four years old when she lost her father, mother and brother in a great epidemic of smallpox. The little orphan, who had not escaped from the terrible malady, was taken in by an uncle, another Chief of the tribe, who, being also a pagan, was strongly opposed to Christianity and to the missionaries, whom they at this time prevented from making any approach among the Iroquois. In 1666, however, after a vigorous campaign of the Viceroy De Tracy, they finally yielded. Iroquois delegates were dispatched to the Viceroy and free access for the missionaries was provided among the conditions of peace. In fact three Jesuit Fathers were ordered to accompany the above-mentioned delegates on the return trip to their country and it was on that occasion that Catherine, a girl of eleven, saw missionaries for the first time, as the Fathers sojourned in the very village of the Servant of God, actually received hospitality in her

uncle's hut, since he was one of the village Chiefs, and Catherine was charged with looking after their needs. It seems that this first contact with the missionaries left a deep impression on the young girl's mind.

Three years later, in 1670, a permanent mission was established in the same village. Catherine was then fourteen. One might expect to see her immediately among the first catechumens of the mission; but one must observe, not without a certain surprise, that it is only in 1675, *i.e.*, five years after that, she comes in contact with missionaries and begins the preparation for baptism. It seems that this fact is due in great measure to the family atmosphere which was contrary to Christianity. To this period belong also the repeated attempts made to induce the young girl to marry; a thing which she most firmly refused to do, thereby exciting the wonder and scorn and a veritable persecution by her relatives, who could not be persuaded that a young girl could make such a refusal. Only in time, when they were won over by the firmness and meekness of the Servant of God did they cease to annoy her on this matter. In this state of affairs, and remembering that her family was and remained pagan, it is permissible to believe that the Servant of God encountered many grave difficulties whenever she tried to come openly into contact with the missionaries. Moreover, it must also be remembered that she was timid and reserved by nature.

The biographers agree, however, in bringing out that even during this time Catherine's life was a singularly modest and virtuous one. In particular they give evidence of her love of virginity, a fact which appeared to be in such absolute contrast with the habits and traditions of the country that it was believed impossible of explanation without attributing it to a special grace of the Holy Ghost.

(To be continued.)

Almost every month marks progress in the Cause of Tekakwitha.

On July 18 the Decree '*de non cultu*' was issued. This means that the Congregation of Rites accepted the evidence proving that no public worship of the Servant of God had been permitted.

On August 5 the Congregation issued a Rescript dispensing from the Apostolic process inquiring into the reputation of Kateri for holiness, since it is so well established as existing ever since her death.

Soon will follow the theological inquiry about her virtues. Concerning this all is ready for the session of the Congregation which is promised at an early date. Then we may call her venerable.

A final step will be to examine the miracles attributed to her. So all is proceeding favorably. Roma no longer means *mora* (delay): there they are not slow.

Has Tekakwitha a special mission? Will her acceptance of the true faith, after waiting twenty years for Baptism, attract others to follow her example? Well, it looks like it. There is a trend; very frequently we receive letters like the following:

"Father: I have been reading the Prayer you sent me for Catherine Tekakwitha. I have received two favors, and I have passed the prayer on to all my friends. Mother also reads it. She is not a Catholic."

—Philadelphia, Pa.

"I am a non-Catholic, but I work with Catholic people. I have a very devout friend who is truly a devout Catholic. This friend is a great worker in the Church, but is ill most of the time. I wonder if there is something I might do for her. Is it possible for a non-Catholic to make a novena to Tekakwitha?" [Why not?]

"The remaining \$4.00 for Tekakwitha's Cause is from my non-Catholic friend."

—Miss R. T., Terre Haute, Ind.

It was only on a small scale with what is going on overseas, but comparatively it meant as much for the village in which Tekakwitha had lived as it does for the people over there today. She saved her people from an incursion of the Iroquois, just as St. Genevieve had saved Paris from the invasions of Attila and Merowig. Why not invoke her to check invaders today?

To satisfy many inquiries about honoring Tekakwitha, it is permitted to have Mass celebrated in her honor, to have Mass offered in thanksgiving for favors obtained through her intercession, to have outdoor shrines without public worship, to have stained glass windows in church without the aureola above her head.

"Dear Father J. J. Wynne, S.J.:

"At long last I have managed to get the story of Kateri Tekakwitha a wide circulation. The *Revista Catolica* got copies of the Spanish life your Reverence had published with us here in San Antonio and it will be run in serial form in the *Revista*. This is a triumph that I had hardly dared to hope for."

—San Antonio, Tex.

"Dear Father: The LILY OF THE MOHAWKS comes regularly and I have noted with pleasure the progress of Kateri's Cause. She has been and is still a great help to me in my missionary work. I made her the financial Patroness of my missions, and though the problems have been very acute at times, she has never failed me. For some time now I have been asking her to obtain a suitable piece of property for one of my missions. Please remember this intention."

—Linstead, Jamaica, B. W. I.

Requesting prayers for the late Archbishop Paul Bruchesi reminds us to request from our subscribers the names of friends, clients of Tekakwitha, deceased, so that we may recommend them to the prayers of all subscribers to THE LILY OF THE MOHAWKS.

"My mother who lives in British Columbia was cured of a distressing illness after praying to Kateri." —Juneau, Alaska.

"In answer to a Novena to little Catherine, we received a great favor, which we promised to make known."—D'Hanis, Texas.

"Would you be so kind as to publish thanksgiving for favor received by a Poor Clare of our Community."

—Bordentown, N. J.

"Please publish our sincere gratitude to Catherine for a very great favor received through her intercession."—Hohokus, N. J.

"My little girl had T.B. A year ago an x-ray showed no progress. I prayed she would be able to go to school. The x-ray shows her condition is now healed."

"My story this time is: A little girl, 12 years old, made a Novena to the Lily of the Mohawks, in the hope that her widowed mother would find steady employment. Her prayers were answered and she wants to show her appreciation in some day."

—Beechview, Pittsburgh.

"About six months ago my little girl became critically ill. I prayed to Lily of Mohawks and St. Rock that she would be spared with a successful recovery. Last February I was forced to have the second operation in five months which I was afraid would not be a success. Both petitions were granted."

—New Orleans.

"My petition was answered within a week, from the time I wrote you. Before then my husband and I had said the Rosary and finished it August 15, so I feel Blessed Catherine interceded to Our Lady for us. Enclosed is a little remembrance for the expense of the Cause of Catherine Tekakwitha."

—Watervliet, N. Y.

"My brother was taken sick last June and they thought it necessary to amputate the leg. I hurried a relic I had given to a friend whose little boy was in an auto accident to the hospital. The doctors agreed to try to melt the blood clot and it responded to the treatment. My brother is at home walking on crutches, but this past week all the swelling went down and it now seems normal."

—East Orange, N. J.

"Before I went to the hospital, three doctors advised me not to have any surgical work done, as I did not have the symptoms of appendicitis. I went to the hospital, the operation was performed and I got along very well. All credit goes to Kateri Tekakwitha and to Father Baker in whose hands I placed the entire affair."

—Erie, Pa.

"Enclosed find \$6.00 we promised Catherine Tekakwitha, Lily of the Mohawks, if she would help us, and thank God she did just in our dire need. A good friend of ours gave us a leaflet a few months ago and told us she would help us, so we put our faith in her. I asked her to help me get one hundred dollars."

—Carrick, Pittsburgh.

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.

(Prices include postage)

Pictures, colored, large 13 x 10 in., 40c.

" sepia, 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 when and where she was born, Auriesville, 1636.... 5 3/4 x 3 1/4 in., 40c. each

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