



## APRIL IN THE LIFE OF TEKAKWITHA

The Blessed in Heaven are commemorated on special days known as their feasts. The feast usually occurs on the day of the death of the one so honored, if there be not already some special feast on any of these days. The feast day is the birthday of a Servant of God into the new and true life, a life that is never to know death or suffering, a life of bliss everlasting.

We do not know the day on which Tekakwitha was born, but we do know the day on which she was reborn in Baptism, Easter Sunday, 1676, April 5—the same as this year—we know also the day on which she died, on Wednesday in Holy Week, 1680, which fell on April 17. Twice, therefore, this month of April we should have her especially in mind, Wednesday, Spy Wednesday, April 1, and the Feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord, Sunday, April 5. How the dates for these days are determined so far back and so precisely is a task for the calendar experts.

When we speak of the birthday of Tekakwitha, as we devoutly believe, into life in heaven, we naturally try to imagine what that life is like. For her it meant no more illness, no more the sight of evil, no more false accusations, no more longing to be with God, but perfect union with Him, with His

Divine Son Our Lord, with His Blessed Mother, the Angels and the Saints.

In this message for March we mentioned some of the terms in which life in heaven is spoken of in the prayers of the Mass, choosing the Masses celebrated during Lent. As Penance in this season is the theme of the liturgy, the joys of heaven are not expressed so exultingly as at other seasons, for instance, during Easter-tide.

Already on Holy Saturday at the Blessing of the New Fire, we beg to share in the feast of glory everlasting and to enter the 'brightness of thy glory.' Glory, celestial or heavenly, seems to be the keynote of references to heaven these days; and happiness also, endless, everlasting happiness. Joy eternal is also besought, "that there our hearts may be set where true joys abide," and where are 'waters of life everlasting.'

On Corpus Christi, the great sequence concludes:

"Grant that with thy saints above,  
Sitting at the feast of love  
We may see thee face to face."

As the Postcommunion for the same feast has it, "dwelling in the everlasting fruition of thy divinity."

## TEKAKWITHA THE VIRGIN

ALFRED BARRETT, S.J.

(By Courtesy of "The Messenger of the Sacred Heart")

This story begins with a coincidence. Or did God plan it that way? Strange how Uncle Sam can sometimes serve the cause of piety—and poetry! But that is the point of the story.

He had been asked to write a poem, this Jesuit Father, who, in company with fellow priests of the Society of Jesus, was stationed on the very spot where Jesuits had died for Christ, three hundred years before, and where Kateri Tekakwitha, the Indian Maiden, was born. He wanted to write that poem about the Jesuit martyrs and the "Lily of the Mohawks," but wanting to is not enough. The inspiration was lacking—until Uncle Sam helped out.

The place was Auriesville, in the beautiful Mohawk Valley of New York State. Government officials charged with the safeguarding of airways had chosen the summit of the hill where St. Isaac Jogues, St. René Goupil, and St. John de Lalande were martyred, and where Tekakwitha was later born, as an ideal site for one of those airline beacons that dot the countryside. But—the thought came one night long after bedtime—how many flashes had the government assigned to the Auriesville beacon? One glance from the window and the symbol for a poem was supplied: pulsing in the darkness were *three* red flashes, followed by a beam of white light—modernity unwittingly honoring the three Jesuit martyrs and the "Lily of the Mohawks."

Ossernenon was the Indian name of Auriesville, and "Ossernenon" is the title of this poem that attempts to memorialize the holiest spot in America. This is the way it goes:

Along the Mohawk River strangers mark  
An airline beacon flashing in the dark,  
Nor pause to wonder why,

Above the piney summit of a hill  
At Auriesville,  
Beauty should so touch this particular sky.  
Look! White—  
A lily of light!  
And now three flashes play  
Rose-red, as the circling beam  
Completes its bright bouquet!

Oh, how beautiful is the chaste generation  
with glory,  
How beautiful with light  
The chaste generation, the elect, the few,  
Whose story  
That beacon tells at night!  
For this was Ossernenon,  
This was an Indian town,  
The heart of the savage wood.  
Here once Father Jogues wept, climbing,  
Gazing down  
In pity upon his Jerusalem;  
Here he stood  
Braving the imminent tomahawk;  
Here he died;  
And with him the woodsman, Lalande,  
And before them René, the surgeon—  
And here in her cradle cried  
Tekakwitha the virgin.

This was Ossernenon  
And they were of those  
Who follow the Lamb  
Whithersoever He goes—  
Martyrs into the fiery furnace,  
Maidens into the snows.  
Look! White—  
A lily of light!  
And now three flashes play  
Rose-red, as the circling beam  
Repeats its bright bouquet!

## RELICS OF KATERI

Relics of Tekakwitha are scarce, so that not every request for one can be honored. It is all very well to desire to have one for personal use and devotion, but not every such desire can be satisfied. Each relic should be used to benefit others as well as oneself, and to lend a relic about is very often to lose it; also to pin a relic on the dress of a patient is almost sure to consign it to the laundry and mangle.

In all the long story of favors received through the intercession of Kateri, especially of cures, objects, such as silk or medals that have been applied to her relics, or dust from her tomb, are usually the medium of the favor or cure. For this reason there are pictures with silk touched by her relics, small scapulas containing such silk, and medals in aluminum and oxidized silver.

## A GOOD EXAMPLE

"Now I am making a home shrine for my living-room consisting of a case for my religious articles, and a kneeling bench. Besides the crucifix on the wall, I have chosen to honor Our Lily of the Mohawks and Our Mother of Perpetual Help." —Selma, Cal.

## A CATHOLIC AT HEART

"Enclosed find \$1.00 to be used the way you see fit for the saintly Catherine. I am not Catholic and I don't know much about it. I have a little leaflet and it has a prayer on it which a lady friend of mine gave me. She was a Catholic and she died. I have been saying the little prayer and my prayer has been answered. Maybe I should make myself clearer: the leaflet has on it Kateri Tekakwitha, Lily of the Mohawks."

—Pittsburgh, Pa.

## PATHETIC

"I have been suffering from a cancer on my lip for many years. I had radium treatment in 1932 and again last April, 1941; the cancer is still there. I must visit the cancer clinic of Regina, Saskatoon, again on April

15, 1942. I am an old man—Catholic—born in New York City, U. S. A., November 16, 1876—two hundred years after Catherine was baptized. I am very poor financially—no home of my own. I live all alone three miles out of town. I walked to town today to Holy Mass. It is snowing quite hard here today."—Eastend, Saskatoon, Can.

## THIS PETITION—NO WONDER

"I was injured May 13, 1940. I was taken to the hospital three times, with no relief. The third time I entered the hospital was December 2, 1940. One doctor said that I would be a cripple all my life. So, while in the hospital, they put traction on me and started giving me typhoid shots, for artificial fever. The first shot left me very sick, with a fever over 105. While I was not in my right mind I kept asking for the Lily. Finally, the good Sisters asked me which Lily and they named several before they mentioned the Lily of the Mohawks. I have been granted many petitions, both financially and physically, through the intercession of Catherine. I also am on the road to recovery after an operation at the Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota. This operation consisted of the removal of disk between the vertebrae and the grafting of a bone ten inches long from my leg into my back. I am asking to petition the Holy See to introduce the Cause of Catherine Tekakwitha." —McVille, N. D.

"For the happy death of a very elderly person for whom there was otherwise no relief."

—Covington, La.

"This donation of \$5.00 is sent in the name of the Mystical Rose Sodality of Holy Angels' Church, Aurora, Ill."

"Tekakwitha has certainly shown her power of intercession and things have patently began to move toward the realization of the desired new hospital addition. We are still praying."

—Toledo, O.



"For two reconciliations, immediate help in an emergency and many spiritual and temporal favors including peace in a family."

—Ponce, Puerto Rico.

"We have obtained, through her intercession, a favor which seemed absolutely impossible of realization."

—Lockland, O.

"Enclosed please find check as an offering for the Cause of Tekakwitha, acknowledging a favor granted to me through her intercession. I am making a novena in thanksgiving."

—Flushing, N. Y.

"A persistent case of acne would not clear up. It has cleared remarkably. I feel that it was through Tekakwitha that I did not get a contagious disease which everyone in my schoolroom got. I also prayed to her for, and received, an increase in salary."

—St. Cloud, Minn.

"The enclosed check goes with our prayers and good wishes for the success of the Cause. Many of our friends here have told us of marked answers to prayers in the way of sales and rentals."

—Omaha, Neb.

"I know quite a few people whose prayers to Kateri have been answered. She has often answered mine. One for a young man across the street who was bedridden for a long time with arthritis. I made a novena to Tekakwitha for him last fall, then I didn't give it any more thought. Imagine when I looked out the window a few days ago to see the young man walking about with a cane!"

—Dayton, O.

"I promised that if I should get out West and become located, regain health and a few favors, I would report it to you to help toward her canonization. Almost at once means were forthcoming, my health and financial condition are both improved and I made the trip myself with a son 17 and one 6 without any trouble whatever. I believe this should be credited to her intercession. Then my youngest son came down with a heavy cold and ran a high fever. I was much upset because the fever was running around 104 and I had to go to work next day and couldn't get anyone to take care of him. At 2 o'clock Monday morning I awakened and so did he and his fever was 102½. I asked him to join me and together we prayed that by morning his fever would be down and his cold and general condition improved. By eight o'clock his cold was better, his fever was less than 100 and he was well enough to stay with a neighbor."

—Tucson, Ariz.

#### ADDITIONAL FAVORS

Cures .....	9	Relief in Distress .....	2
Financial Aid .....	3	Happy Death .....	1
Not Specified .....	30		

#### PETITIONS

Cures .....	3	Conversions .....	2
Financial Aid .....	6	Relief in Distress .....	1
Employment .....	3	Not Specified .....	13

#### Obituary

Sister St. Leonard, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada.

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