

THE LILY OF

Fairest flower that ever



THE MOHAWKS

bloomed among true men

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A LOVELY LADY IN WAITING

By REV. DANIEL A. LORD, S.J.

When you visit Montreal — of necessity and joyous choice — you head across for the Indian mission at Caughnawaga. There you find the village that is owned and operated by the Iroquois, the chapel that goes back to early Colonial days, the stalwart descendants of the magnificent warriors whom history knows as Iroquois, and a pulsing interest in Kateri Tekakwitha.

Incidentally, if you talk to the anthropologists who specialize in Indian history, you'll hear strange stories of the origin of the Iroquois . . . that they are not like other Indians, Mongolians, cousins of the modern Chinese, but a race utterly apart. Dr. Jury, who should know, is convinced that this brilliant, warlike, liberty-loving people were originally Celts, which should make them cousins of the Irish.

And while we are in parentheses . . . the Indians explain their origins much more simply. Three times God made the first man. He baked the clay too much the first time, and that was the Negro; He baked the clay not enough the next time, and that was the white; then He baked the clay a perfect golden, reddish brown, and that was the Indian. The Indians — according to the Indians — came directly from God and were placed in North America. No Mongolian or Celtic origins for them!

I went across to hear the famous — and rightly so — Caughnawaga choir. Their broadcast over a Canadian network brought letters of praise from across a continent. The music is classic, of every race and age — Beethoven, Mozart, modern composers; but the lyrics are always in Iroquois. Perhaps you don't know it, but at this mission the Solemn High Mass is sung in Iroquois, a rare and singular permission from Rome.

When I go to Caughnawaga, I always ask to see the relics of the lovely Kateri Tekakwitha, Lily of the Mohawks, as she is called. They lie under glass, carefully sealed, wait-

ing for the time when they will be called for in Rome, and this little American Indian virgin will become perhaps our first authentic American saint. I lay my hands upon the glass-enclosed relics, red as the skin of an Indian, and ask the little Kateri to bless our land and make to walk in her virginal footsteps hosts of young Americans of another age and race.

The Jesuit fathers who knew her well left behind them an extraordinary detailed record of her life. It is a surprisingly complete word-picture of a flower that bloomed in pagandom, a most attractive little girl who lived to precisely the age of the Little Flower and confessed the faith and practiced the Christian life in midst of a people slowly emerging from savagery to Christian culture. She was for them what Agnes and Agatha and Cecilia and Lucy were for the newly converted and the on-their-way-to-Christianity Romans of the apostolic age. (Yes there was an apostolic age in America, and Kateri and those early apostles to America were a glorious and suffering part of it.)

Yet, despite the perfect word-picture, there is little to guide the artists who try to paint or sculpture Kateri. Several have tried, with more or less success.

This time as I stood with my hands on the glass-covered relics, I saw a new statue standing in the sacristy. It had been bought, I was told, by a group of Boston young men, who brought it on the top of a car to the mission as a tribute from New England to the place of Kateri's happiest memory. The statue is unmistakably Indian, her face a Christian symbol (seen in left profile it is fairly sad) for the paganism around her; in right profile it is smiling rightly with the promise of the life ahead.

"Why isn't it in the church itself?" I asked.

Father Lalonde shook his head regretfully. "We can't put her there — not until she has been beatified."

"Not even," I insisted, "as the statue of a famous and illustrious person?"

"Her fellow Indians wouldn't think of her in that way," said the missionary. "And for that matter, I'm afraid that we priests wouldn't, either."

So there she stands in the sacristy of the mission church on the spot that once knew her virginal feet. And she cannot get into the church, where she rightly belongs — not until we who profit most from her saintliness help her get there.

Kateri needs people to ask her for miracles. I understand that she is wonderfully generous with her miracles in money problems. Unfortunately, these miracles don't count toward her canonization. She has helped many young people find their vocations in life. That is wonderful for them; but it doesn't help make her a canonized saint.

Too, too few people are asking her for cures, and miraculous cures. She was one whose life proved the miracle of her age, almost three hundred years ago. She is, no doubt of it, dear to God. The difficulty seems to be that her fellow Americans are not asking her to obtain for them the signs and wonders that mean miracles of healing for her clients and new proofs that she is entitled to her place on the altar . . . in the Church.

When I left Caughnawaga that evening, I regretted that behind me I left in the sacristy of the church a lovely lady in waiting. She has been waiting too long. Could we hope that you who need miracles will turn to Kateri and help her from the sacristy (and the love of thousands) into the Church and the veneration of all Catholic mankind?

FROM THE PHILIPPINES

(1) "My only son, who is in the second grade, goes to school on foot. Coming home one day, he happened to take a ride on one of the buses. As soon as the car started to go, without the knowledge of anyone, he jumped out of the car for he saw he was going in a different direction from where he lives. His ears, arms and other parts of the body were seriously bruised. The doctor reported that the accident might lead to insanity. I related the case to my sister who is in the cloister; with much confidence she recommended it to the Lily of the Mohawks by sending me medals of the Venerable and the prayer, together with the different issues of the monthly message. Trusting in her intercession, I prayed to her and in less than a month the boy got perfectly well and went back to school near my office. What good news for my sister! Thanks be to Venerable Catherine Tekakwitha!"

A DOUBLE GRACE

(2) "About a year ago, I felt the symptoms of appendicitis. Being too cowardly for treatment, especially of an operation, I suffered the ailment resulting from it. One afternoon, on the first Friday of the month, while I was in the class, I felt acute pain and had to go to the doctor of necessity. Instantly my blood was analyzed and the doctor told me to come in that same afternoon to the hospital for an operation the following morning. I was able to go back home to inform my mother and then returned to the hospital. Through the intercession of holy Catherine I was bold enough that very morning to face the serious operation. I felt mild

pains. I had a nice operation and now I resume my office and teaching work. Good Catherine! I thank you for this double grace."

A SUCCESSFUL NOVENA

"I promised that I would spread devotion to Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha and also write you if she helped me. The cure came on the seventh day of the novena, but I will tell you in more detail. I had a growth on my left thumb which was getting larger and very sore. I knew it would have to be removed. However, a priest friend of the family came to visit us and told me how Kateri Tekakwitha had helped him and that I should make a novena to her. I started the novena that very day and on the seventh day of the novena, while at work, I looked at my finger and was stunned to find the growth had disappeared and not a sign to show where it had been. Thank God and Tekakwitha."

—Philadelphia, Pa.

A BUSINESS SAVED

"A young couple in business here in Brown's Town sought my advice when they were faced with having their business closed by the bailiff. They were both my catechumens. There was nothing at that stage that I could see as any way in which I could stave off disaster for them. I told them of Katherine and how I had never read her Life, but I had heard from a certain priest (yourself) that she was supposed to have a reputation for helping in financial distress. I got them to promise to read her Life and give publication if their favor was granted. To my great surprise, after I had apparently failed in a personal interview with the creditors in

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Kingston, they came to me later and said that at the very last minute they had sent a telegram to the bailiff not to close, granting them a whole year more in which to pay.

"The same trip to Kingston required my interviewing the bank in behalf of the Catholic Supplies Co-operative for an extension of their overdraft (this was not a very serious difficulty). Nevertheless I did put the matter in care of Katherine. It was granted without much trouble."—Jamaica, B. W. I.

"I am sending this small donation to the Tekakwitha League in thanksgiving for a favor received. Through the intercession of Venerable Catherine, my husband received a salary increase last January and another one this past month. Thank you very much for the bookmark with the prayer to Venerable Catherine Tekakwitha on it. I have said this prayer at least once each day since receiving it. The bookmark is such a handy size to carry in a purse as a continual reminder to pray to Venerable Catherine."

—Ridgefield, N. J.

"Enclosing small donation for which please send me several more copies of the novena prayer to Catherine Tekakwitha. This is the second lot I've sent for—in thanksgiving. I am attempting to spread a little devotion to her. I came to know of her through my brother who insists he obtained considerable financial aid from her. She has helped me, too, I know."

—Parma, O.

"A short time ago I wrote you enclosing a small donation and requesting you to pray to Venerable Tekakwitha that my husband obtain employment. A week ago he obtained a temporary position which may lead to a permanent one, so enclosed please find a check in thanksgiving." —New York, N. Y.

"My sister, who had been away from her faith for over thirty years, returned, on her death-bed, just four hours before she passed away. I have great faith in Kateri Tekakwitha. For months past I prayed to her and through her our prayers were answered." —Cleveland, O.

"Enclosed please find a donation for the Cause of Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha, who has again answered my prayers. I promised to send a certain percentage of the amount, if she would get money that was due me. She never fails!" —Adams, Mass.

ADDITIONAL FAVORS

Cures	3	Relief in Distress	3
Financial Aid	5	Not Specified	42

PETITIONS

Cures	6	Apartments	5
Financial Aid	8	Not Specified	18

Obituary

Rev. Theodore A. Rcman, Brooklyn, N. Y.
Mrs. Mary R. Wiegand, Cleveland, O.
Mrs. Joseph Stein, Spearville, Kan.

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