

THE LILY OF

*Fairest flower that ever*



THE MOHAWKS

*bloomed among true men*

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## TEKAKWITHA'S LAST ILLNESS AND DEATH

The last days in the life of a saint often resemble the close of day, when the sun, sinking upon the horizon, kindles with its expiring rays of gold and purple the sky it is so soon to leave.

This spectacle will be offered us by Catherine Tekakwitha.

We must first reveal the cause of her last illness, and for this purpose resume the narrative of Father Cholenec at the point where he says that Catherine died upon the cross; for by an act of penance she shortened her life.

"The noble girl," he continues, "about two or three months before her death longed more and more ardently to associate herself with Our Saviour's Cross, and to prove to Him by some heroic act how intensely she desired to share in His sufferings. In spite of her continual illness, and as if she had suffered nothing until then, Catherine sought, I repeat, to imitate St. Aloysius, of whom I happened to speak to her, by going to the forest, and collecting a large quantity of

sharp prickly thorns, which she brought back with her and hid in her cabin.

"At night, everyone being asleep, she strewed these thorns upon her bed. She then lay down with only her blanket for covering, and had the fortitude to roll herself all night long upon these thorns. She did this same penance for the three following nights, with indescribable suffering, as she acknowledged to me a little later.

"Catherine was so worn-out and exhausted, as a result of this, that her face looked like that of a corpse. We attributed this change to her chronic infirmities which seemed to us to be daily increasing, not of course being aware of the real cause. Her friend, Mary Teresa, suspected, however, that there was some hidden reason, and succeeded so well in gaining her confidence, that Catherine at last admitted what she had done and furthermore her intention of continuing this penance until she died.

"'Yes,' replied her companion, 'but you know very well that you offend God when

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you go to such extremes without your confessor's permission.'

"No more was needed for Catherine; the fear of the least shadow of sin sufficed to make her reveal her noble act which, without this fear, she would have concealed all her life. She came, therefore, at once to me with these words:

" 'O Father, I have sinned.'

"She then told me of the whole matter. Though I inwardly admired her, I did not refrain from showing my displeasure, and scolded her well for her imprudence; to prevent a recurrence, I ordered her to throw the thorns into the fire, which she at once did, very submissively, for she possessed the virtue of obedience in a high degree, and was always ready to do or not to do, equally content with both, and without any attachment to her own opinion, an infallible sign of her being led by the Spirit of God."

It was the middle of the winter of 1680. Catherine's weakness was increasing. "As long as she could she dragged herself to church," Father Chauchetière tells us, "and spent part of the day there kneeling or leaning on a bench. When unable to go to church, and alone in her cabin, as often happened with those who were ill, because their companions, men and women, had either to go off on a hunting expedition or to work in the fields, she would converse with God, and it is true that at this time she had Him ever before her either meditating, reciting her Rosary, or," adds Father Cholenec, "making spiritual Stations of the Cross during which she united her sacrifice to the Saviour's, to take the place of her visits to the Blessed Sacrament."

One of the Fathers at the Mission was appointed to visit the sick. He saw them every day. He held Catherine in great esteem and always found her with a smiling face in spite of her excessive sufferings. Occasionally he took a few children with him, to amuse her, and also to give her the pleasure of a short

instruction. For he had with him at the same time pictures from the Old and New Testaments, which he explained very clearly.

"Then," Father Chauchetière continues, "that she might take a greater part in the instruction, and see the pictures better, she would try, weak as she was, to sit up. The gratitude she showed and her earnest entreaties that he should soon return, were signs of her hunger and thirst for justice, or, in St. Paul's striking expression, 'to know Christ,' and this continued until the very last moments of her life, since she had then only two months more to live."

Father Cholenec relates how during these two months, "Catherine's sufferings were extraordinary. She was obliged to keep in the same position day and night; the least movement caused her acute pain. When her sufferings were most intense, she appeared most contented, esteeming herself happy, as she smilingly said, to live and die upon the Cross and to unite her sufferings always to those of Our Saviour."

Holy Week was approaching. This was naturally a period when the sick girl asked permission to perform some special penance, to fast, for instance, during the whole day. She was told, however, that God would be satisfied with her good will.

The dying moments of the holy girl are described somewhat differently by her two biographers, Father Cholenec and Father Chauchetière, who were, as we have said, her confessors at different times, and both eye-witnesses of her holy death. Each narrative complements the other. The two are here combined.

"On the morning of Tuesday in Holy Week, Catherine appeared to be much weaker. They told her that she had not long to live. She rejoiced at this, but was overcome with happiness when they also said that the Body of Our Lord would be brought to her as Viaticum.

*(To be continued)*



## PHYSICAL RELIEF

"Ten years ago, there was born to me a pair of tiny twin boys. They were delivered more than two months prematurely which made them struggle desperately for life. Doctors and nurses worked day and night four days, doing all things possible for them. Then on the evening of the fourth day, a head Sister at the hospital came into my room and told me that she would rather tell me that night that they did not expect them to be alive in the morning. It was then as I laid awake for hours that I appealed to the Lily of the Mohawks for her intercession, and if God's will be that they should live I would let it be known to the proper authorities that my prayers were heard. That week the same Sister came in and said the babes had a good chance to live, and today are two healthy boys and much happiness to us. My doctor, of course not having heard of my prayers to Kateri, said these babies are surely miracle babes. I feel that they having lived, when all hope was gone, was a direct answer to my prayers to Kateri."

—Fargo, N. D.

"My daughter went to the doctor and he asked about me. He said, 'you know I have a lot of rare cases but your mother's was surely a rare case.' I had been sick just about a year and a half—the last eight months I got a drainage from my nose. At first the doctors thought it was sinus; then I was to a specialist, in fact to three—they advised X-rays which I had taken and they found it was a spinal fluid, and I was given up by at least four doctors. They said I should console myself to the idea that I would have to live the rest of my life with that trouble. One day my daughter came home and said, 'mother, I have a new saint to pray to,' for that was all we were all doing, just praying, so my two daughters and I prayed to Tekakwitha, and within two weeks I was helped. The doctors just could not believe it. That

is now over a year, and I have seen nothing of the fluid and am better in every way."

—Cleveland, O.

## RESTORED TO HEALTH

"I am enclosing a check to help further the Cause of Kateri's canonization in thanksgiving for the recovery of my granddaughter. At birth she had a harelip which was to be operated on in two weeks' time. The eleventh day she contracted an infection in her system which hospitalized her for twelve and one-half weeks. Several times the doctors thought it was the end. She suffered much and it was not until two weeks ago that the operation could be performed. It was a success and she is doing very well. It seemed a very slow process, but I never gave up praying to Catherine Tekakwitha and I sincerely believe it was her intercession that promoted the cure for which I am very grateful."

—Chicago, Ill.

"Enclosed is an offering in thanksgiving to Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha as promised for the recovery of a friend from a relapse after a serious cancer operation."

—Redlands, Cal.

"Please offer a Mass that we may soon have the miracles necessary for our Kateri's beatification—this is a promise I made for a successful tonsillectomy on my little granddaughter."

—Cleveland Heights, O.

## FROM KOREA

"Just received a letter from my nephew in Korea. I quote from his letter: 'Tekakwitha is with us here, and no mistake. We could never have done what has been done without her help and intercession. We feel we owe our lives to Tekakwitha every hour of the day.' It makes me very happy to know he and the other Catholic boys in his division share my love for Tekakwitha."

—Lexington, Ky.

## RELIEF IN DISTRESS

"I am enclosing a small donation. I promised this and others later because my sixteen-year-old son was threatened with meningitis or polio. I pleaded with Kateri and I know it is through her that he recovered within twenty-four hours. Many thanks to her."

—Thibodaux, La.

"Just a little offering to Tekakwitha for many favors granted. One I prayed for was that a dear friend would be alive after going through quite a bad ordeal, of pain, and drinking too much and taking drugs. He has been saved, and his friends are helping him."

—San Francisco, Cal.

## FINANCIAL AID

"Thirteen years ago I received from Father Wynne a picture of Venerable Kateri and took to her right away. I carried her relic picture with me everytime I left the house because I felt safe. When in financial difficulties after my dad died, I'm sure she helped mother and I, and still say to the rest of the family, 'she is for all those who honor her.' One day I gave a picture of Kateri to a convert from England and in an off way said, 'she may send you something you need today.' That evening her husband came from work all smiles and said, 'Guess what? I got a raise today.'"

—Chicago, Ill.

"Please use the enclosed check to further the Cause of Tekakwitha's canonization. It is ten per cent. of some extra money we received. We read with much interest, 'Tekakwitha on Fifth Avenue.' It is wonderful she has a place on the doors of St. Patrick's."

—Kansas City, Mo.

## ADDITIONAL FAVORS

Cures .....	16	Relief in Distress .....	15
Apartments .....	1	Safe Delivery .....	1
Employment .....	3	Sale of Property .....	2
Examination Success ..	1	Spiritual .....	5
Financial Aid .....	24	Successful Operation ..	2
Not Specified .....	129		

## PETITIONS

Cures .....	20	Relief in Distress .....	7
Apartments .....	5	Safe Delivery .....	4
Employment .....	6	Successful Operation ..	5
Financial Aid .....	10	Not Specified .....	35

## Obituary

His Eminence Dennis Cardinal Dougherty, Philadelphia, Pa.  
 Most Rev. James E. Cassidy, Fall River, Mass.  
 Rt. Rev. Alcuin Deutsch, O.S.B., Collegeville, Minn.  
 Rev. Michael J. Ahern, S.J., Boston, Mass.  
 Rev. John J. Collins, S.J., Morristown, N. J.  
 Rev. William H. McClellan, S.J., Woodstock, Md.  
 Rev. Charles J. McIntyre, S.J., Philadelphia, Pa.  
 Rev. Edward C. McManus, Brooklyn, N. Y.  
 Rev. Louis F. Ott, S.J., Morristown, N. J.  
 Rev. Blasius J. Zeiser, O.S.A., Villanova, Pa.  
 Miss Catherine Bowler, Willimantic, Conn.  
 Mr. Gerald G. Casey, Albany, N. Y.  
 Mrs. N. J. Delehanty, Rutland, Vt.  
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 Mr. Patrick Sullivan, Kansas City, Mo.

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