

THE LILY OF

*Fairest flower that ever*



THE MOHAWKS

*bloomed among true men*

VOL. XX, No. 1

SPRING, 1956

## TEKAKWITHA'S EASTER

The Mohawks were ready for a pageant. So they set themselves with a will to make Easter Sunday, April 18, 1676 a gay occasion. Outside the bark prayer house of the Christians at Caughnawaga on the River Mohawk, the Iroquois chiefs and braves, mothers and maidens were buzzing and grunting in festive confusion. Beaver and lynx pelts bedecked the chapel walls, with loops, here and there, of colored beads and wampum. Up to the front door the braves had planted a double row of evergreens. All the excitement in the air was due to two events — the Great White Feast, and the Baptism Day of the niece of one of their own great chiefs.

The dusky twenty-year-old maiden Tekakwitha walked tremblingly up the wooded avenue and up to the font where Father de Lamberville, S.J., was waiting. 'That day', he was to recall later on, '*was the most beautiful one of my apostolic career*'. Eyes were riveted on this unusually humble and pious girl. There were the usual ritual prayers, the customary anointings and signs of the Cross, that same sign for which Rene Goupil had been tomahawked thirty-four years earlier by these same Indians just across the river and a few miles to the east. Then, amid flowing waters — 'Catherine, I baptize you'. Truly now she was a child of God, — Catherine, — and still so unmistakably an aboriginal — Tekakwitha.

## AND HER FINAL HOLY WEEK

It was the beginning of Holy Week, 1680. Tekakwitha, now called the 'Saint' by her fellows because of her extraordinary piety and penances, — had been stricken a year before with an ailment which left her with chronic fever and stomach pains. And for the past two months her chest had been constricted and her strength ebbed slowly. But she kept up her night watches, fasting and round of works. And when she could do no more she took to her bed. The Indian sick were taken to the Church on a plank of wood. But not Kateri. The priest brought Our Lord to her. The men were out hunt-

ing. The women were in the fields or woods with their daily drudgery. Kateri was left alone with a plate of sagamite and a little water within her reach.

On Tuesday she began to sink and she received Holy Viaticum with conscious fervor. She called for her best friend, Mary Teresa Tegaioquenta, the recovered alcoholic. 'I am leaving you, Teresa', she said. 'I am going to die. Always remember what we have done together. If you change I shall accuse you before God. Keep up your courage. Don't mind the jibes of those who have no faith. Listen to the Fathers. If you

*cannot serve God here, go to the Lorette Mission. Never give up your penances. I will love you in heaven. I will pray for you. I will help you".*

She must have known the day and hour of her death. After Father Cholonec had given her Viaticum on Tuesday morning, he wanted to get the Holy Oils. *'There is no hurry',* she said, *'the time has not come yet.'* So he waited until Wednesday morning. Tuesday night two members of her Sodality were assigned, as was the custom, to stay with her by turn during the night. The younger of the two asked and received Father Cholonec's permission to go to the woods to do penance that Tekakwitha would have a happy death. Kateri sensed this and sent for the girl. She told her: *'You are very pleasing to God and I shall pray for you in Heaven. I know where you have been and what you have done. Keep up your courage. I know you are pleasing in the sight of God and I will help you when I am with Him.'*

Wednesday morning she was anointed. The Fathers thought that she would die before noon. But she knew this was not so. Teresa and some of the sodalists who had formed a small devotional society with Kateri, which was continued after her death as 'Catherine's Sisters', said they wanted to be with her when she died. But they had to go out to get wood for the feast days, and they didn't know whether to go or to remain.

Father Cholonec asked her about it. *'Let them go to the woods',* she told him, — *'they will be back in time'.* And that is how it happened. Until three o'clock her condition did not change. When they returned she waited until they all were in the lodge. Said Father Cholonec: *'I saw this marvel with my own eyes. As soon as the last one was accounted for she entered into her gentle agony. She had kept her promise. Speech left her while she was pronouncing the words, Jesus, Mary. More than that. Her face had been disfigured ever since she was four years old, and her infirmities and penances made it worse. Yet around quarter after three such a beautiful change came about that I cried out in astonishment. I had the Indians call the Father who was decorating the Repository for Holy Thursday. Everybody came on the run. To me it seemed that at that precise moment she must have entered into Heaven, reflecting on her chaste body a small ray of the glory of which her soul had taken possession.'*

Two Frenchmen chanced by her lodge on Holy Thursday morning. *'Well, there's a young woman who is having a nice peaceful sleep',* they said. When told it was Tekakwitha in death, they knelt to pray, and then rushed out to make her a coffin. Other Indians were buried on a board with their faces covered. But not their Kateri. Nothing was too good for her. They all moaned: *'We have lost our saint.'*

**Tekakwitha League wishes Tekakwitha's**

**Clients everywhere a Holy and Happy Easter**



## Thanksgivings

"Enclosed offering I promised Kateri Tekakwitha when my daughter and her husband were again able to receive the Sacraments after many years away from the Church. I feel it is indeed a miracle."

—Rye, New York

"We have received many favors and graces through the intercession of Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha, namely, recently, successfully showing a sound film of 'The Holy Mass' to a large group, after overcoming many obstacles placed in the way."

—Painted Post, N. Y.

"I am sending this offering for a special favor granted to me by Tekakwitha. I think she is just wonderful, and I say her prayer every day. This favor meant my whole future and she gave it to me. I will be forever humble and grateful."

—San Antonio, Texas

"My son just finished his three years service in the Army Signal Corps. He spent sixteen months in Japan and Korea, first half during the war. I prayed to Catherine Tekakwitha and she helped to bring him back safe, morally and physically."

—Cheboygan, Mich.

"Please accept enclosed for the advancement of the sanctification of the 'Little Indian Maiden.' She has, I am sure, interceded for me in the past, and for a recent favor granted about ten days after I promised an offering. It concerned the selling of my home in order to secure working capital to build a new home."

—East St. Louis, Ill.

"It is with gratitude in my heart I enclose this small offering in honor of Venerable Tekakwitha. My daughter who had been out of the Church for some years went to confession and Holy Communion."

—Pittsburgh, Pa.

"As usual, Kateri has responded to my novenas. I am especially grateful to her for granting my last request which concerned my profession and was therefore very important to me."

—Chicago, Ill.

"Just a few lines to inform you of a pretty wonderful favor granted through the powerful intercession of Venerable Kateri. On the suggestion of an ardent follower of hers, I decided to make a triple novena for a very general intention. The day I started it, I received word that my godfather was ill in a mental home. Naturally I put a plea for his prompt cure at the top of my petition list. Before completing the third novena, I received from my mother a letter sent by my godfather thanking us for prayers and the prayer card I had sent. His words: '... while at the hospital, I said the prayer each day to Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha who no doubt helped me, as I was allowed to come home when my wife and son called to see me.' Thus even before the second novena was finished Venerable Kateri had granted our request."

—Peosta, Iowa

"Enclosed donation, in honor of Kateri, is in thanksgiving to her for a number of favors received, one of which was a successful operation for a relative; an eye situation which cleared up for another relative; and a good medical report for a friend. Of course, there are many instances when I am not feeling well, and a request to Kateri always helps."

—Gary, Indiana

"The enclosed is towards Venerable Kateri's beatification. It is in thanksgiving for a truly remarkable cure of a skin disease which physicians pronounced incurable."

—Chester, Pa.

"Several years ago, I was given a holy card of the Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha, with her novena and secondary relic on the back. Whenever I have made her novena, the results have been quite amazing since I only asked for blessings for others that were not material. Last June, the husband of one of my dear friends, fell from a platform and suffered a ruptured eardrum and severe head injuries. He had suffered from epileptic attacks (more than once a month) for years, and the attacks were more severe each time. I made a fervent novena for his complete recovery at the time of the accident in June, 1955. He recovered quickly and has not had even the slightest epileptic seizure up to date."

—Coronado, Calif.

"Our little Lily of the Mohawks has helped me so, so much. Recently, I prayed to her for the recovery of my grand-niece, and like a miracle, my prayer was answered."

—E. Orange, N. J.

"I am always invoking little Tekakwitha in all my daily needs, and she comes through. I have been operated three times in the past year and a half, and with her help, I am in good health today."

—Brooklyn, N. Y.

#### ADDITIONAL FAVORS

Cures .....	22	Relief in Distress ....	13
Employment .....	6	Safe Delivery .....	3
Financial Aid .....	9	Successful Operation ..	2
Property Sold .....	5	Not Specified .....	117

#### PETITIONS

Cures .....	114	Safe Delivery .....	4
Apartm'ts & Homes ..	9	Sale of Property .....	7
Conversions .....	11	Spiritual & Temporal ..	9
Employment .....	9	Studies .....	3
Financial Aid .....	22	Successful Operation ..	1
Peace of Mind .....	3	Vocations .....	3
Relief in Distress ....	19	Not Specified .....	107

#### Obituary

Most Rev. Francis T. Roche, S.J., D.D.,  
Tuticorin, India  
Rt. Rev. Msgr. M. A. Irwin, New Bern, N. C.  
Rt. Rev. Msgr. Joseph G. O'Donohue,  
Fort Worth, Texas  
Rt. Rev. Msgr. Andrew Schonhart, Westwood, N. J.  
Rev. Neil Boyton, S.J., Shrub Oak, N. Y.  
Rev. Joseph F. Carroll, S.J., Milwaukee, Wis.  
Rev. John P. Delaney, S.J., Novaliches, P. I.  
Rev. James M. Duff, S.J., Washington, D. C.  
Rev. Frederick R. M. Frohnhoefer, S.J.,  
Brooklyn, N. Y.  
Rev. D. R. Harnett, Grays Lake, Ill.  
Rev. James B. MacElwane, S.J., St. Louis, Mo.  
Rev. James J. Reilly, Brooklyn, N. Y.  
Bro. Michael S. Broderick, S.J., Shrub Oak, N. Y.  
Bro. Francis X. Daly, S.J., Poughkeepsie, N. Y.  
Bro. Claude Ramaz, S.J., Poughkeepsie, N. Y.  
Mother M. Berchmans Reed, Mt. St. Vincent, N. Y.  
Sister Adeline, O. P., Amityville, N. Y.  
Sister Maria, S.P.S.F., New York, N. Y.  
Sister Alice Regina, Elizabeth, N. J.  
Sister Carmita Vincent, Mt. St. Vincent, N. Y.  
Mrs. Anna Behrendt, Bellerose, L. I., N. Y.  
Mrs. Mary Cartisano, New York, N. Y.  
Miss Rose Cunningham, Cleveland, Ohio  
Miss Anne E. Gaskins, Washington, D. C.  
Mrs. Charles Grundmann, New Orleans, La.  
Dr. Joseph S. Hory, New York, N. Y.  
Mrs. Mary Rohan, New York, N. Y.  
Miss Joretta K. Smith, Honesdale, Pa.  
Mr. W. P. Smith, Baker, Ore.

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#### TEKAKWITHA LEAGUE

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REV. THOMAS J. COFFEY, S.J., *V. Postulator for Her Canonization*