



The Lily of the Mohawks

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AMERICA'S MARVELOUS MAIDEN

(CONTINUED)

II

Laughing Waters

And now the Mohawks settled on the north side of the river, on a hill just west of present Fonda, New York. High above the waters of Cuyadutta Creek, a bowshot from the Mohawk River, they built a village fortified by a double stockade. They called it Caughnawaga, "Laughing Waters." Peace had come. Missioners were welcomed. And slowly the Faith took root. Tekakwitha's life was ordinary and happy for a while. Eighty of the four hundred villagers became Christians and they had a succession of Jesuit missionaries to take care of them. Fathers Fremin, Bruyas, and Pierrom were the first; then came Fathers Boniface and de Lamberville. Here a great chief, there a princess—more and more accepted the faith. Many of them went away to the Christian Indian town of Caughnawaga on the St. Lawrence. This was 4 miles above Montreal and was called the Praying Castle. This was to be Tekakwitha's haven also, but not until she had suffered a minor martyrdom. She was to endure this for the eight years of her stay on the north side of the Mohawk, until she was 21.

The Daily Grind

This was where Tekakwitha caught her first glimpse of the Faith. She could peep into the Chapel of St. Peter to see the crib at Christmas time and hear the off-key voices of the children's choir. And she played very well her part in the "grandeur of the daily grind." She was considered quite adept at sewing and embroidering.

Her needle would be a small bone from a deer's ankle; the thread, a sinew from the same animal. She mixed its brain with moss to soften brown leather for tunics and moccasins and leggings. She worked porcupine quills into her dresses. Like other Indian belles she had her hair well oiled, neatly parted, descending in a long plait behind. She wore a fine chemise, met at the waist by a neat knee-length petticoat. Her leggings were rich and her well-fitted moccasins were the chief pride of this dusky Iroquois maiden. Her neck was loaded with beads and she wore a crimson blanket over all. She made ribbons and bands out of eel skins for binding up her hair. She also made large beautiful wampum belts. Her deceased mother's friend Anastasia said that Tekakwitha was a happy girl, that she was as good as a well-bred French girl, and had no faults. While waiting at the trickling spring for water she would make the others laugh. We know that at least once a band of young warriors homeward bound from the Sacandaga country came in view, ready to lay their catch of beaver pelts at some willing maiden's feet. When the others bantered Tekakwitha about this, she scooted with her jug up the hill to her uncle's cabin.

Onsegongo Bristles

Child marriage was, in the Iroquois fashion, nothing more than a bond of friendship between the parents. So Tekakwitha was betrothed in this way to a boy. But neither ever troubled about the matter. When she was 8, according to the Indian custom, a young boy was invited to sit

down beside her in the cabin. If the maiden offered such a boy a bowl of food, it was a sign of engagement. But Tekakwitha even at this early age refused the gesture.

From the beginning her Uncle Onsegongo and her two aunts were very bigoted. Missioners had been coming ever since the peace treaty at the request of the mollified Mohawks. At first Onsegongo was indifferent to them, suffering them out of politeness. First he had been well disposed toward Father Boniface because the priest had made some fine progress in helping to cut down the rampant drunkenness in the village. But when the good priest aided some of the new Christians to get to the Canadian Christian settlement and out of temptation, he was outraged. From that moment he watched Tekakwitha like a hawk and was utterly opposed to her getting involved in the "Prayer."

A Lily Unfolds

It is difficult to flesh out the interior life of Tekakwitha at this time from the skeleton of our knowledge. This we know: When Father James de Lamberville arrived providentially in the fall of 1675, he was to have a profound influence on her future. Some instinct, he says, led him one day into her cabin where she was nursing a sore foot. In spite of the fact that there were several of her townspeople with her, she poured out to the Blackrobe the pent-up desires she had of learning more about the "Prayer" and of being baptized. Father de Lamberville did not quite understand the confidence which this unusual girl had put in him, but he was wise enough to sense that here was an exceptionally delicate soul. He proposed difficulties to her and told her of the heroism required for Christian living in a village teeming with temptation. She answered only that she had made her decision, and nothing, not even exile or flight, would change her. He promised to instruct her and invited her to the catechism classes.

Catechumens were severely tested by the early missioners who knew the hazards of Christian life among the Indians. Great care had to be used in accepting new candidates, lest, as one missioner said, "we make more apostates than Christians." Two years

was the minimum trial period. Father de Lamberville decided to make no exception for this modest maiden. But a month's observation satisfied him that further delay was not needed. Upon investigating the reputation of Tekakwitha among her people, he could find, even among the scandal-loving Mohawks, not the slightest smudge of suspicion. All admitted she had a perfect record of diligence, docility, and with the one exception — her refusal to marry — obedience. He hesitated no longer and arranged a day to baptize her with due solemnity.

BACK TO THE LONG-HOUSE

With this number of the LILY we greet you from the banks of the gently-flowing Mohawk, "nature's own reliquary" as Pope Pius XII called it. Tekakwitha League and the office of the Vice-Postulator of the Cause for the United States is now established on the site of the martyrdoms of Sts. Isaac Jogues, Jesuit priest, Rene Goupil, Jesuit brother, and John LaLande, devoted lay apostle — all three of them canonized in 1930.

It is natural to return to this place made fragrant by martyred blood, and the beauty of Kateri's early life. We enjoyed our twelve years at Xavier, in Manhattan — and have, through your generosity, left a memorial to Kateri in the future building there, and are anxious to establish ourselves on America's holiest hill, to await the blessed day of Tekakwitha's "coming-out" party. Pray with us that it will not be too long away!

Our new address is:

TEKAKWITHA LEAGUE

MARTYRS HILL

AURIESVILLE, N. Y.

PRESENT SUBSCRIBERS TO THE
LILY ARE ASKED TO RENEW SUB-
SCRIPTIONS AT THIS TIME AND TO
OBTAIN NEW MEMBERS.

QUARTERLY MESSAGE, \$1.00
A YEAR

Thanksgivings

"I asked Tekakwitha to intercede for my son who had an operation. It was completely successful and the tumor which worried us was benign." — Manitowoc, Wis.

"Please send us material to spread devotion to Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha, as we feel she worked a miracle in restoring our mother's toe when it was eaten away by gangrene." — Pittsburgh, Pa.

"I am sure that it was through the efforts of Kateri that I found a cure for a skin rash, which I have had for about twelve years. Enclosed offering is to help further her Cause." — Pittsburgh, Pa.

"Last year I became ill with pain and worry which caused me to go to about four doctors and finally to the hospital. None seemed to be able to find source of pain. I finally prayed to Kateri Tekakwitha and asked her intercession. She has helped me for I have not had to return to the doctors since April of this year. I am sure it was her help which alleviated the constant pain. I shall be forever grateful to her for her help." — Niagara Falls, N. Y.

"Please accept the enclosed offering to help further Kateri's Cause. We are most thankful to her for making a long awaited pregnancy possible, and also for the successful delivery of a baby girl."

— N. Las Vegas, Nev.

"I had a very sore foot for four weeks. The doctor had told me he would have to operate. But thanks to Tekakwitha it is well, all the swelling gone, and no pain. Enclosed offering is to help promote her Cause for sparing me this operation."

— Columbus, Ohio.

"I am happy to report three favors granted our family that I feel is the result of prayers to the Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha. My two sons, who were having difficulty with their studies were successfully graduated from college; and a third boy who had been passed conditionally for 2 or 3 years has been promoted to the next grade. We are very thankful." — Kansas City, Kan.

"Enclosed offering is in fulfillment of my promise to give two percent on the donations from our Wishing Well for the building fund for our new hospital. I am very grateful for all the financial help that we have obtained through the intercession of our beloved Kateri and shall pray that we will soon call her Blessed."

— Baltimore, Md.

"I would like to tell you about a favor Kateri helped me to obtain. I wanted to enter the Convent this September. The only trouble is that I have three stubs and two normal fingers of my right hand. I made a novena to Kateri that the Mother Superior would let me enter anyway. Also the weather was bad and we had to travel sixty miles to see Rev. Mother. I saw her on the eighth day of the novena. She gave me her permission to enter. I finished the last day of the novena, but instead of asking for the favor, I thanked her. Kateri has helped me in lots of little things. I am deeply grateful to her, and pray for her canonization which I hope is not too far away."

— Louisville, Ky.

"On vacation we visited the Indian River Shrine and obtained prayer leaflets containing relics touched to Venerable Kateri. These I put in the glove compartment of our car. Traveling on, the unexpected happened. A busy highway — two small girls across the road at the family mail box — a curve in the road, and just as we approached the smaller girl ran directly into our car. A little blonde head — and suddenly nothing!!! How we stopped — why was the child at the side of the road? She got up — walked. It was a miracle before our very eyes. At our insistence, we took child (and mother) to a doctor. Very minor abrasions only! Having three children in the back seat of our car — the sudden stop — verification in writing from the victim's mother days afterwards that all remained without complications — I firmly believe that it was the hands of Kateri Tekakwitha that reached out (through the relics in our car), and saved the life of that child, the life of all five occupants as well as our car itself which was not even scratched." — Milwaukee, Wis.

"Enclosed please find a donation which I promised in thanksgiving for the intercession of Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha to Our Divine Lord in saving my young nephew from serious injury. He was thrown from his bicycle in the school yard and received a slight concussion. However, he was up and around in a few days, and apparently has had no ill effects. I started praying to Tekakwitha about six years ago, when a friend gave me her relic to place on mother who had suffered a heart attack. Mother recovered and is still enjoying fairly good health despite her age (early 80's). A few weeks ago, I very nearly seriously injured my sister in an automobile accident, and I again feel that it was through the saintly Indian maiden's intercession that she was only slightly injured. These are only a few of the favors I have received, and I will continue praying to her as long as I am able." — Philadelphia, Pa.

"I have had great devotion to Kateri for almost seventeen years, and have received many, many favors, particularly for my daughter, whose name is Mary Kateri. Everytime she is to take an examination I make the novena. When she was operated on I said it for nine hours in succession." — Evansville, Ind.

"This little offering is made in gratitude for the intercession of Venerable Kateri which resulted in my nephew's recovery from a serious illness." — Somerset, Mass.

ADDITIONAL FAVORS

Cures	5	Safe Trip	2
Conversions	2	Sale of Property	2
Employment ...	2	Successful	
Financial Aid ..	6	Operation	1
Relief in		Not Specified ...	51
Distress	14		

PETITIONS

Cures	78	Sale of Property	6
Conversions	6	Spiritual &	
Employment ...	13	Temporal	5
Exams	7	Successful	
Financial Aid ..	12	Operation	3
Relief in		Vocations	2
Distress	21	World Peace ...	3
Not Specified ...	46		

Obituary

Most Rev. Cletus J. Benjamin, D.D., Philadelphia, Pa.

Rt. Rev. Msgr. Joseph V. Stanford, New York, N. Y.

Rev. J. Harding Fisher, S.J., Woodstock, Md.

Rev. John H. Klocke, S.J., New York, N. Y.

Rev. A. F. Jarzembowski, Detroit, Mich.

Rev. N. A. Maisano, Oakland, Calif.

Rev. A. C. Schnellenberger, Celestine, Ind.

Miss Ursula Donovan, Yakima, Wash.

Mrs. Walter Dowd, Buffalo, N. Y.

Mr. Thomas E. Murray, New York, N. Y.

Miss Nellie Smith, San Antonio, Texas

Mrs. Victor B. Stader, Latrobe, Pa.

Mrs. Edith Trarbach, Cincinnati, Ohio

Miss Mary J. Walsh, Cincinnati, Ohio

TO MAKE TEKAKWITHA KNOWN AND LOVED

MEMBERSHIP

in Tekakwitha League, including quarterly "Lily of the Mohawks", one dollar yearly.

LEAFLETS

Sketch, picture, Novena and prayers, 5c for 2; 25c doz. With silk applied to relic 10c.

Sketch, lithograph picture, Novena and prayers, 5c; 50c doz. With silk applied to relic: 20c.

PICTURE

Small, lithograph with prayer, 5c for 2; 25c doz.; silk applied to relic; 15c ea.

Large, 6 by 8 in., brown leatherette frame, acetate face, 75c.

SHORT LIFE

32 pp. by Fr. Coffey, S. J. with picture and prayer. 15c.

MEDAL

Image and title, special metal 20c; silver 60c; gold; inquire prices.

Reduction on quantity.

TEKAKWITHA LEAGUE

AURIESVILLE, NEW YORK

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