

## Father Henri Bechard, S.J.

### 1910 - March 19, 1990

The Kateri League, the Martyrs' Shrine, and his many friends in the Mohawk Valley are saddened by the death of Father Henri Bechard of the Society of Jesus, Vice-Postulator in Canada for the cause of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha since 1949. Father died on March 19th in Montreal. Although he has been a member of the French speaking province of the Jesuits in Canada since his novitiate, Father Bechard was born in Lewiston, Maine, and began his schooling in Quincy, Mass. He continued his education at Saint Charles Borromeo in Sherbrook, Province of Quebec in Canada.

In 1932, at the age of 22 he entered the Jesuit novitiate at Sault-au-Recollet in the province of Quebec. This century-old establishment was closely linked with the history of the native Americans of Canada and of the United States. During his course of preparation for the priesthood he was an instructor at the College Saint Jean de Brebeuf in Montreal for three years. After his ordination to the priesthood in 1944 and before his final year of ascetical training at Mount Laurier, Province of Quebec, he requested to be appointed to the mission of Caughnawaga, Province of Quebec, where Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha died in 1680.

His interest in Kateri and devotion to her led to his appointment as vice-postulator of Canada for the cause of her canonization in 1949. During his



*Fr. Henri Bechard, S.J.*

forty years as vice-postulator he tirelessly promoted the Kateri Cause; her beatification in 1980 and the continuing reports of her powerful intercession were very consoling to him. He was confident that soon she will be canonized – but in God's good time.

He encouraged all to say one Hail Mary daily for her canonization. Recently he advised people to send their guardian angel to Rome to communicate with the guardian angels of the members of the commission regarding the Kateri cause – but to be sure to recall the guardian angel since the angels must be available to their special charges.

Father Bechard has been the

editor of two quarterlies, *Kateri*, one in English, the other in French – for more than forty years. Among the books he has written are *J'ai cent ans*, *L'église Saint-François-Xavier de Caughnawaga*; *The Visions of Bernard Francis de Hoyos, S.J.*; *L'Heroique Indienne Kateri Tekakwitha*; *The Original Caughnawaga Indians*. One book on *Jerome Le Royer de la Dauversiere, Founder of Montreal*, is almost ready for the printer, and Father had completed the rough draft of another biography of Blessed Kateri.

He frequently visited the Martyrs' Shrine at Auriesville and the Kateri Shrine at Fonda. With Father Gerard Lavigne, S.J., of Montreal and Father Thomas Egan, S.J. of St. Regis Mission, Quebec, he frequently celebrated Blessed Kateri's feast day and Native American day in the Mohawk Valley. His courtesy, gently kindness and delightful sense of humor endeared him to the many pilgrims he met.

The Mass of the Resurrection was celebrated at Kahnawake, at St. Francis Xavier Mission, Blessed Kateri Shrine. The principal celebrant of the liturgy, Bishop Bernard Hubert of Saint Jean, was joined by more than thirty priests, including a cousin of Father Bechard, and a congregation that filled the historic church. The church choir sang the liturgy in the native tongue. Father Bechard is buried in the Jesuit cemetery in Saint Jerome.



# An Authentic Response To The Call Of Christ

## Traditional Religions and the Importance of Pastoral Attention To Them

*(A continuation of excerpts from the inspiring Keynote Address of Francis Cardinal Arinze to the members of the National Kateri Conference at Fargo, North Dakota in August 1989.)*

Traditional religions are to be found in Africa, Asia, America and Oceania. They differ widely even within the same country. Here are some of the features which can be identified in some of them: beliefs and an accompanying set of customs handed down carefully from generation to generation, an integrating element in the people's lives, a religion not generally based on a revealed book, a religion that permeates life in such a way that it is often difficult to distinguish between strict religious elements and local custom, a religion which strives to offer its followers an answer to sickness, suffering, and other crises in a holistic synthesis between religion and life, a religion which marks the major moments of life such as birth, adulthood, marriage, and the installation of leaders, and death; a religion which cherishes a permanent link with ancestors, a religion which pays great attention to the earth, to the seasons and to creation, a religion which has no doubt about the existence of a Superior Being and his action on creation.

The elements of history, integration, communality and the sense of the sacred characterize these systems of beliefs and practices. Traditional religions have helped peoples to know who they are, what their place is in this world, and how to govern their relations with one another and with the spirit world. These religions have taught their adherents the sacred ways through which they strive to walk in the paths of the Great One, the Mighty Spirit, or however the various peoples have referred to God or the Divine, the Catholic Church and also, transcendent that is yet everywhere in their midst.

The Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue has grappled with the question of continuity and discontinuity in regard to African Traditional Religion. In particular it raised the question of the situation of those Christians who have been converted from this religion and urged increased pastoral attention to traditional religion where it is a living force in the lives of the people.

Many Christians, at critical moments in their lives, have recourse to the forms and practices of traditional religion; to healing methods, initiation rites, meditative practices, ascetical regimes, fortune-telling, and consultation of dreams.

The fact that a traditional religion is still alive and dynamic is certainly a factor which motivates us to study and reflect upon it. But also our very Christian faith encourages this investigation and effort at understanding.

It is from the internal dialogue which takes place within individuals and communities who have accepted Christ that the answer to the questions of continuity and discontinuity must, through God's grace, emerge. What are the good and worthy elements of the traditional religion in which we and our peoples have been formed which Jesus Christ came to affirm, strengthen, and integrate into a culturally sound discipleship? Which are the elements of our traditional religion which Christ has come to transform, to give a new and deeper meaning, and to raise to new heights of spiritual significance?

The Good News of Jesus Christ is expressed in and among various human cultures. The faith never changes. Its cultural expression can and should change according to the peoples, times and places.

When missionaries preach the faith to the people, they may unwittingly bring with them their home cultural patterns. It is not an easy matter to distinguish in practice what is essential to the Gospel and what is due to historical or cultural developments. Moreover, the Church lives in time, and grows in her understanding and living of the mystery of Christ.

In order that the delicate and difficult development outlined above may take

place, study is needed in each cultural area. Native Americans need their own experts in history, anthropology, sociology, philosophy and religion who will carefully document and assess traditions, rituals, stories, oral teachings, dances, initiation rites, prayers and, in a word, their religion and culture.

All this will need time, talent, patience, faith, humility, communion within the Church and obedience out of love for Christ and the Church.

One result will be that there will be dialogue, sharing and mutual enrichment within the universal Church and also between peoples and between cultures. The Church promotes healthy variety in her catholic unity. Pope John Paul told you at Phoenix that your customs benefit not only yourselves but the entire human family. In 1984 he had said something similar to native peoples at the Shrine of St. Anne de Beaupre in Canada: "Your encounter with the Gospel has not only enriched you, it has enriched the Church. We are well aware that this has not taken place without its difficulties and, occasionally, its blunders. However, you are experiencing this today, the Gospel does not destroy what is best in you. On the contrary, it enriches, as it were from within, the spiritual qualities and gifts that are distinctive of your cultures."

One culture and people also dialogues with other cultures and peoples and shares with them. We are one human family. We can and should enrich each other. No living culture can remain static.

No people has a monopoly of all that is good, true, noble, beautiful and holy. For example, millions of people have come to this country, especially from Europe, bringing with them their knowledge, skills, religion and culture. By meeting in respectful dialogue, seeking to understand one another and sharing, both sides can grow. This applies to relations within the Catholic Church and also, with the necessary adjustments, to contacts with other Christians and other believers.

*(To Be Continued)*



# Father McBride Memorial

We're deeply grateful to all who are sharing in the renovation of Jogues Manor. A partial list of our generous benefactors is included in this issue. More names will be

**included in future issues. May God reward each of you for your devotion to Blessed Kateri!**

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Yes, I would like to share in renovating Jogues Manor as a memorial to Father McBride, S.J.

My donation is

*(If the donation is \$100 or more, please fill in the name to be inscribed on the plaque.)*

**BE SURE TO PRINT CLEARLY THE NAME TO BE INSCRIBED**

★ ★



# Native Spirit Soared Where The Buffalo Roamed

By Francis X. McQuade



*The author admires the seven Bison herd of the Bronx Zoo in New York.*

Along with the eagle, the beaver and the bear, the buffalo has been the animal most associated with the spirituality of the American Indian, preeminently with the native nations of the Plains. The continent thundered with the weight of millions of these animals (according to naturalist Ernest Thompson Seton, there may have been upwards of seventy-five million buffalo in North America by the end of the pre-Columbian era!). Because of its vast numbers and incalculable value to the native Americans, the relation between the buffalo and the Indian went far beyond the flip sides of the nickel.

Indeed, the buffalo dominated all phases of Indian

life: Their natural sustenance, their thinking, their philosophy and their religion. The Sioux word for "buffalo", "takan", has a common root with the word for "Great Spirit", "wakan tanka". The buffalo was seen to be the direct hand of the Great Spirit because it provided a "cradle to grave security." Buffalo meat provided a Plains staple, and eighty-seven non-food uses of the buffalo have been counted. The very sight of buffalo must have inspired a spiritual nexus: the immensity of the Plains covered by an immense count of buffalo, in numbers not comparable to anything less than stars and comprehensible only in terms of eternity and the infinite. Even seen indi-

vidually, the buffalo suggested something greater than natural, standing up to five or six feet tall at the hump, up to nine feet long, weighing over a ton, and living as long as half a century. They seemed to take direction from the Great Spirit, from above, stampeding unpredictably as if by divine direction. Pitted combat between two bulls personified valor.

There is a recurring belief among Plains people that the buffalo came from below the earth, entering the world through subterranean tunnels. Native Canadian Plainsmen locate this mythical point as being beneath a lake near present-day Battleford, Saskatchewan. It is thought in traditional beliefs that the Great Spirit regulated the flow of buffalo to his people by mandating the animals to take their places in the world. The relative degree of abundance or penury reflected divine disposition.

Buffalo parts and buffalo images found their way into a wide variety of Plains spiritual practices. The tongue was used ritually; sacred stories were written onto buffalo skins; tails served as fetishes; buffalo hide shields carried "good medicine" into





*"Return of the Buffalo". Through conservation methods, the buffalo population has increased. Buffalo again can be seen on the open range as well as these in New York's Bronx Zoo.*

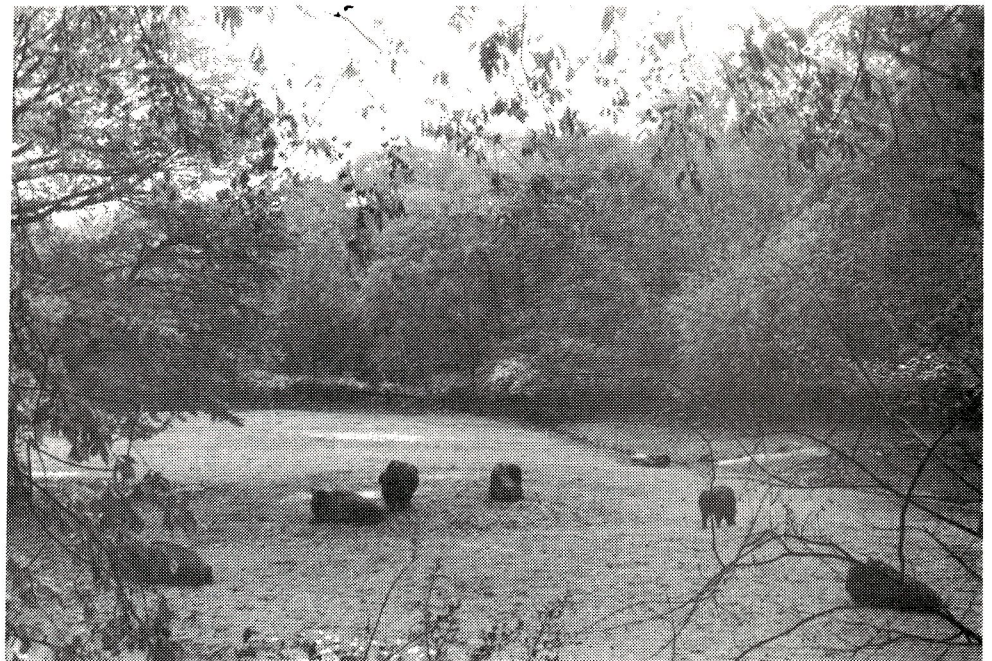
vision theme.

The most venerated of those rites and beliefs involving "buffalo spirituality" involve the white buffalo. The Mandan used the white buffalo as a healing agent. The Pawnee wrapped their medicine bundles with white buffalo skin. Many Plains peoples believed that the white buffalo was property of the Sun God. To hang a white robe was considered an offering to that deity. Worn in battle, the robe of the white buffalo was supposed to have protected the wearer from harm.

After a period in which the buffalo were over-hunted and otherwise killed through a deliberate extermination policy, the once abundant herds were depleted nearly to extinction. Gradually, through conservation mea-

sures and heightened consciousness, the buffalo herds are expanding once again. The return of the herds, of course, in and of itself, will not radically alter the status of the native American nations of the Plains. For them, the return of the buffalo is a century late. However, in a deeper sense, the return of the buffalo can offer a sense of renewed wholeness. Those who intertwined so much of their spirituality in the trappings, presence, and movements of the buffalo must certainly feel a part of ethnic and spiritual identity restored with every calf born. At the very least, as Americans rally to the support of conserving buffalo in the twentieth century, the American Indian can feel a cultural and historical vindication.

*(Taken from The Circle and the Four Winds by Francis X. McQuade.)*



*New York's Bronx Zoo's herd of American Buffalo. (Photo by F. X. McQuade)*

battle. The Buffalo Dance is an important part of the sacred Sun Dance ceremonial. The Northern Cheyenne used the buffalo skull to represent the is siwun, the sacred buffalo hat. The is siwun is conceived as the "female renewing power" through which marital relations are blessed and through which the herds were replenished. Montana Blackfoot have traditionally worshipped the iniskim, the Buffalo stone (a fossilized marine shell which crudely resembles a buffalo). This stone was ascribed the powers of drawing buffalo into the Blackfoot hunting grounds. Finally, it was generally acceded that the presence of buffalo brought visions. The image of the buffalo was a common



# KATERI'S INTERCESSION – SOME ANSWERS

## A MOTHER'S PRAYER

Enclosed is a check for Blessed Kateri League who has helped me very much in my financial way for the past 2 months. Yes, she answers prayers thru our Lord Jesus Christ. Praise the Lord.

My Prayer Requests are: Tomorrow, Feb. 28 I am to take a test at Mc Keesport Hospital for a colonoscopy. I believe in my heart, I will be o.k. and healed.

Then I have a son who is seeking to be working with and learning Data Base to increase his knowledge in computers. He is living away from home. Yes, I do miss him as mothers do. He lives in Mechanicsburg, which is near Camp Hill where he works at Blue Shield. Please Blessed Kateri help my son with his work and his health to improve. Hoping someday he can meet a girl who is and will be good for him. Am asking too much. Thank you Blessed Kateri.

## FOR A FAVOR RECEIVED

Enclosed is a check in the amount of \$10.00 for a special favor received.

## A GIFT FROM THE HEART

God's Peace, Love and Joy be with you!

I would like to renew my membership in the Bl. Kateri League. However, I am an emotionally disturbed young man, living on welfare and I can't afford the dues for the membership year. Will you be charitable and let me renew my commitment to Bl. Kateri. Thank you!

In return, I will offer all my suffering and prayers to see that the Maiden may soon be canonized.

## IN THANKSGIVING

I am enclosing a donation for Blessed Kateri's Cause.

I, also, would like her intercession for good health for my sister and all her intentions.

Thank you, Father, for all that you do. May God bless you!

## A NEW ARRIVAL

I am sending \$5.00 for a small favor by Blessed Kateri to pray for my daughter who is expecting her first baby and that everything turns well for her and also for the rest of my family.

## Prayer for the Canonization of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha

O God, who, among the many marvels of Your Grace in the New World, did cause to blossom on the banks of the Mohawk and of the St. Lawrence, the pure and tender Lily, Kateri Tekakwitha, grant we beseech You, the favor we beg through her intercession; that this Young Lover of Jesus and of His Cross may soon be counted among her Saints by Holy Mother Church, and that our hearts may be enkindled with a stronger desire to imitate her innocence and faith. Through the same Christ Our Lord.

Amen.

## ALL IN THE FAMILY

Enclosed is a check for a Mass for my Father who believed in her so much and passed it down to me, who passed it to her daughter Kathleen ("19 years old").

## A GRATEFUL HEART

Attached is my check for \$100.00 to help renovate Jogues Manor.

Please have the plaque in the name of my son.

I hope the "Lily" keeps helping my son thru my prayers as she always has. He is doing wonderful at present. Thank You. God bless all at the Shrine.

## A HELPING HAND

I am asking for prayers to Blessed Kateri for the intention of my son to be able to negotiate a favorable deal (price) for the duplex he hopes could be his. He wants to own it so he can rent it to his sister and her husband, so they do not have to pay the high rent of an apartment complex. My son is 34, unmarried and quite lonely. But, he likes helping his family (Mom, Dad, 4 brothers and 3 sisters). He would also like to find a decent girl to marry if this be God's will.

Enclosed find \$6.00 donation. Thank you.

## FAITH IS REWARDED

Thank you for hearing my prayer. I know my request is granted – continue prayers please. Thank God in his goodness.

## – Deceased Members –

Sr. Mary Murphy – Latham, NY  
 Sr. Lillian Parker – Latham, NY  
 Sr. John Aloysius Leonard – Latham, NY  
 Sr. Yvette – Latham, NY  
 Sr. Isabel Murphy – Latham, NY  
 Mrs. Loretta Matteo – Mechanicville, NY  
 Benjamin F. Monette – Phoenix, AZ  
 Dorothy Tayloe – Fairfax, VA

Melina Baker – El Paso, TX  
 Fr. Henri Bechard, S.J. – Montreal, Canada  
 Gertrude O'Donnell – Mayfield, NY  
 Fr. Thomas P. Walsh, S.J. – Auriesville, NY  
 Mrs. Renée Gendron – Shirley, MA  
*Please commend these souls and those of all deceased Tekakwitha League members to the Lord for his mercy.*



# Mary Productions Schedules Presentations

MIDDLETOWN – Mary Eunice and Florence Cunningham of Mary Productions have announced their schedule of programs on the lives of the saints and other historical figures for the month of March.

On March 4, they will be the guest speaker at the Rosary Altar Communion breakfast at Immaculate Conception Church, Somerville at 10 a.m.

Mary-Eunice will present two monologues, Our Lady of Guadalupe and Sister Lucia of Fatima. Mrs. Cunningham will explain the work of Mary Productions between monologues.

Mary Productions will present the life of Bl. Kateri Tekakwitha for the Holy Name Society of St. Clement's Church, Matawan, on March 5 at 8 p.m.

The Senior Citizens Club, Leonardo, will see Mary Productions' presentation of the life of Clara Barton in Croyden Hall, on March 8, at 1 p.m.

The life of Molly Pitcher plus a comedy presentation will be held at the AARP building, Atlantic Highlands, March 15 at 8 p.m.

Mary Productions will present the life of Sr. Lucia and the Fatima story plus the life of Bl. Margaret of Castello for



*Florence Cunningham - L., Mary-Eunice in Kateri Program*

the Supreme Columbiettes Convention, Staten Island, N.Y. on March 29 at 7:30 p.m.

In addition to presenting programs on the lives of the saints and historical figures for organizations and schools, Mary Productions also sends out its royalty-free plays all over the world.

For further information on these programs or to receive a list persons and events dramatized, write to Mary Productions, Tomaso Pl. No. 212, Middletown, N.J. 07748 or call (201) 615-0134 or (201) 671-8744.

## Pilgrimage Itinerary

July 16 – Following Mass in Blessed Kateri Chapel, Martyrs Chapel, Martyrs Shrine, Auriesville, Depart for St. Joseph's Oratory, Montreal.

Visit to St. Francis-Xavier Church and Blessed Kateri's tomb.

July 17 – Travel from Montreal to Martyrs Shrine, Midland, Ontario.

Arrival at Highland Inn, Midland for two night stay.

July 18 – Morning tour of the Midland Shrine and Mass.

Visit to Sainte Marie among the Hurons Indians Village Museum.

July 19 – Depart from Midland following breakfast.

Arrival at Our Lady of Fatima Shrine, Youngstown, NY, for Mass and lunch. 6 p.m. return to Auriesville.

(Complete, Detach and Mail In)

Enclosed is \$\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ reservations for the Kateri-Martyrs' Pilgrimage, July 16, 17, 18, 19, 1990. (\$100.00 deposit, per person, required for each reservation. Deadline is June 1st, after which deposit is not refunded unless a replacement is found. Balance is to be paid by June 15th). Make checks payable to TEKAKWITHA LEAGUE.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1-bed - 1 person, \$310.00  
\_\_\_\_\_ 1 bed - 2 persons, \$235.00

\_\_\_\_\_ 2 beds - 2 persons, \$245.00  
\_\_\_\_\_ 2 beds - 3 or 4 persons, \$220.00

Print each name and address:

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# NOTES FROM THE BARK

Anna Marie Adach, Secretary for the Kateri League and coordinator of activities in the Kateri Center, is recovering from surgery. May your convalescence be a time of rest and special graces, and may you return to good health and full strength in the near future.

Father Thomas P. Walsh, S.J., who has served for two summers on the Shrine staff and was assigned permanently to the Shrine in November, died suddenly on February 11, 1990 at the Jesuit Retreat House in Auriesville. He was injured in an automobile accident in mid-January; and never fully recovered.

Following a Mass of the Resurrection at Murray Weigel Hall on Fordham University Campus which was concelebrated by many of his classmates and fellow Jesuits in the presence of his family and other friends, the remains were brought to Auriesville where his friends from the Shrine joined with the family and the Jesuit community in the liturgy and prayers of commendation.

During the time he served on the Shrine staff his gentle manner and sunny disposition endeared him to many pilgrim visitors. They found him easy to talk to and a willing



REVEREND THOMAS P. WALSH, S.J.

listener; they were enriched by their contact.

Father is buried at the Jesuit cemetery at Auriesville, in the company of more than three hundred members of the Society of Jesus, Brothers and priests who as members of the New York Province dedicated their

lives to the greater honor and glory of God.

We heard the good news that Father Ronald Schultz, O.F.M. Conv., former Director of the Kateri Shrine at Fonda, visited China recently. Now the people of that nation are aware of Blessed Kateri and her power of intercession.

The volunteer helpers are busy preparing the Kateri Center and the Kateri Chapel for the opening of the Shrine season. They are also involved in transferring the offices of the Kateri League and the Apostleship of Prayer from the trailer affectionately known as the Longhouse to Jogues Manor. Even though renovations are not complete – we need your help to finish the project – the transfer is going smoothly.

The recipient of the Kateri Award for 1990 will be announced in the next issue of The Lily. The liturgy will be offered at twelve noon in the Coliseum. There will be a celebration dinner in the evening at six o'clock in the cafeteria. Tickets for the dinner will be available at ten dollars a person. Reservations will close out on July 10th. Further details will be announced.

## *Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha League*

(MARTYR'S SHRINE)

Rev. Robert J. Boyle, S.J.  
Tekakwitha League  
Auriesville, N.Y. 12016  
Phone 1-518-853-3153

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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