



## She Dared to Be Different

**D**ID YOU EVER hear of St. Agnes or St. Tarcisius? Of course you did. Isn't St. Agnes the little girl who preferred to be put to death rather than commit a sin? And isn't St. Tarcisius the young boy who preferred to be put to death rather than let the Blessed Sacrament he was carrying fall into the hands of the pagans?

Both Agnes and Tarcisius had to face the threat, "Do what I tell you or die," and both of them chose to die.

That happened many, many centuries ago, in the earliest days of the Church. Agnes and Tarcisius are praised for what they did even to this very day, and will continue to be praised throughout eternity.

Just a few years ago there lived a girl who greatly resembled St. Agnes. You have heard of her. Her name is Maria Goretti. She, too, faced the threat, "Do what I tell you or die." She chose to die rather than sin, just as St. Agnes did.

The Church considers Maria Goretti a martyr and has canonized her just as she did St. Agnes. Of course, we are all happy to honor as a saint someone who lived almost in our own time.

There are many people who have carefully studied the courage of St. Maria Goretti. They all admire it, but there is something they say about it that might surprise you. They say that there are thousands and thousands of girls living today who would have done exactly what Maria Goretti did if they had to make a similar choice between death and sin. They say that even today under the same circumstances such good girls would almost *instinctively* make their choice as Maria Goretti did.

To submit to a violent death rather than sin, when death means immediate entrance into heaven, is not beyond the virtue of any number of people. What is sometimes much harder than to die for Christ is to live for Christ.

Have you ever thought of the virtue it sometimes takes for someone to live the way Christ wants one to live? If it is difficult to live as a saint even among good people, just think how difficult it must be to live as a saint among savages who practice nearly every kind of vice.

A short time ago Father Heeg had the privilege of paying a visit to the Indian Mission at Caughnawaga, Quebec. While there he recalled an article written by



These Indian boys are justly proud of Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha. Their school in Caughnawaga has been built in her honor.

Father Lord entitled, *A Lady (Too Long) in Waiting*.

"When I go to Caughnawaga," wrote Father Lord, "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, waiting 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.

"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 carved, 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 faintly sad for the paganism around her; in right profile it is smiling brightly 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. . . .'

"So there she stands in the sacristy of the mission church. And she cannot get into the church, where she rightfully belongs—not until we who profit most from her saintliness help her get there.

"Kateri needs people to ask her for miracles. . . . Too, too few people are asking her for cures, and miraculous cures. She was one whose life proved the miracle of her age, 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 into the church and the veneration of all Catholic mankind?"

When Father Heeg recently visited the *Lady (Too Long) in Waiting*, he met Father Bechard, the vice-postulator in Canada for the beatification of Kateri. Father Bechard told Father Heeg that 1956 would mark the tercentenary of the birth of Kateri. Although Kateri died in Canada in 1680, she was born in what is now the state of New York in 1656. The observance of the tercentenary of her birth should make this observance of special interest to Sodalists in the United States.

Father Bechard also told Father Heeg how much he would appreciate it if he would ask the Junior Sodalists to join in a crusade of prayer for the beatification of Kateri. The crusade aims to get as many people as possible to say a prayer every day that, if it be God's will, Kateri might be beatified in the very year of her tercentenary.

Father Heeg knows what Father Lord would have done if such a request had



been made to him. He would have been most eager to join in any effort to help his *Lady (Too Long) in Waiting*.

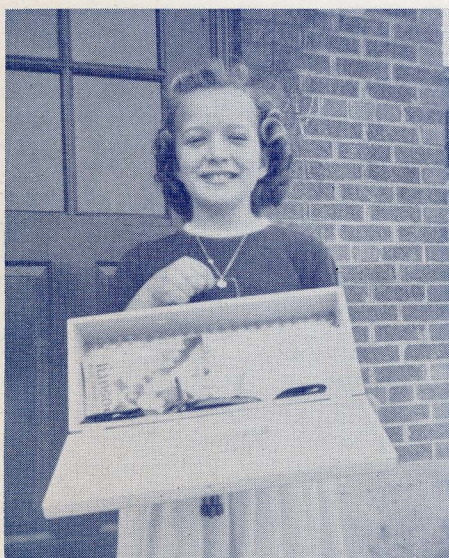
On January 15 it was exactly one year since Father Lord left us to join Venerable Kateri in heaven. We, who knew Father Lord so well, remember a bit of advice he was very fond of giving young people. It is summed up in the expression, "Dare to be different."

If anyone dared to be different, it was Kateri Tekakwitha. Just think what it would mean to have her canonized. More and more people would read and study her life. More and more people would be encouraged to "dare to be different."

On January 3, 1943, a Decree was issued, approved by His Holiness Pope Pius XII. That Decree declares that the virtues of Kateri Tekakwitha were heroic. By reason of that Decree, she now has the title of "Venerable."

Let us pray and ask for the necessary miracles that "this little American Indian virgin will become perhaps our first authentic American saint." How wonderful it would be to have her for a patron for all true Sodalists and for all who, for the sake of Christ and His Blessed Mother "dare to be different."

Let us join the crusade and say a prayer every day that the necessary miracles will be worked and that Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha will be declared a saint.



A letter from St. Elizabeth's School, Milwaukee, Wis., says that the picture above shows "Susan Schmidt of Grade 6, Sodality prefect, holding our Travelling Madonna. In a beautiful blue box are a statue of Our Lady of Fatima and the three children, plus a little booklet telling the story of Fatima, and another booklet containing an explanation of the Rosary as presented by Bishop Sheen. With the booklets are four rosaries. The promises of the First Saturday devotion are contained in a folder placed in the cover of the box. This box goes into the homes, where it is opened and used to honor Our Lady of Fatima."

"So there she stands in the sacristy of the mission church," wrote Father Lord. "And she cannot get into the church, where she rightfully belongs — not until we who profit most from her saintliness help her get there."

The poster which Father Bechard is holding in front of the statue, described by Father Lord, reminds us to join in the crusade of prayer for her beatification.



## Junior Sodalists Will Join a Crusade

SISTER MARY ALICE felt that her Junior Sodalists got a great deal out of their study of the story of Our Lady of Guadalupe. One of the lovable characters in that story was the simple Indian, Juan Diego. Juan Diego made her think of another lovable character—the Indian virgin, Kateri Tekakwitha.

So, when Sister Mary Alice suggested a study of the life of Kateri Tekakwitha, all her Junior Sodalists were in favor of it. What is more, a number of them volunteered to prepare little talks on her life and give them at the next meeting. Here is an account of that meeting.

JOAN (acting as chairman): During our last two meetings we studied the true story of Our Lady of Guadalupe. In that story we became acquainted with Juan Diego, an Indian who loved Our Lady very much.

Juan Diego, you remember, lived in Mexico. In our own country, about one hundred years later, there lived an Indian virgin who also loved Our Lady very much. Some of our members are prepared to tell us about her. Joseph, will you please begin?

JOSEPH: The name of the Indian virgin about whom we are to speak is Kateri Tekakwitha. She was born in or near what is now Auriesville, New York. Her father was a Mohawk Indian chief. Her mother was a Christian Algonquin Indian, who had been taken captive by the Mohawks.

When Kateri was about 4 years old an epidemic of smallpox took away her father, mother, and little brother. She then had to live with her father's brother. That meant that Kateri would have to live among savages who were anything but holy.

JOAN: How then could Kateri ever become holy?

MARTHA: When she was still quite

young, she got to meet some Jesuit missionaries. After being instructed by them, she was baptized on Easter Sunday, April 18, 1676. However, that did not mean that things were then to be easy for her. No, it meant that she was to be persecuted. In 1677 she had to flee to Caughnawaga, a village of Christian Indians on the south bank of the St. Lawrence River.

JOAN: What happened then?

JOHN: Kateri led so good a life that on Christmas Day, that very year, she was permitted to make her First Holy Communion. That was a very happy day for her. She had had to wait a long time for it. When she made her First Holy Communion she was 21 years old.

Two years later, her confessor, Father Cholenec, permitted her to make a vow of perpetual virginity. That was on the Feast of the Annunciation, March 25, 1679.

JOAN: Was Kateri a Sodalist?

DANIEL: As you know, the Sodality was started in the year 1563. At first it was only for boys and men. Although there were some Sodalities for girls and women, they could not be affiliated to the Primaria Sodality in Rome until the year 1751. Kateri died in the year 1680.

When Kateri lived in Caughnawaga, there were two societies to which she could belong. One was the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin and the other was the Confraternity of the Holy Family. An historical document tells us that "to be qualified to become a member of the Holy Family, one must have passed through the Sodality and have given unmistakable proofs of fervor, for its members are all really devout souls. . . . Several practice austerities which many a religious would hesitate to undergo."

JOAN: Did Kateri successfully pass through that Sodality and become a member of the Confraternity of the Holy Family?





Father Bechard (center) shows the relics of Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha to Father Heeg, and to Father Brien and two Sodalists from the National Sodality Secretariate in Montreal.

KATHLEEN: There is a life of Kateri written by Father Cholenec. In that life he says that to call a person a saint or a member of the Holy Family was to say one and the same thing. Kateri was admitted to the Confraternity of the Holy Family, when she was still young and had been in the Sodality for only about seven months. Others were admitted into the Confraternity of the Holy Family only at an advanced age and after several years of probation.

JOAN: How did the other members of the Confraternity of the Holy Family feel about this?

KATHLEEN: Father Cholenec says that the other members were very happy to have Kateri join them. They believed that her example would be a great help in keeping up their fervor. In this they were right. By her example Kateri gave their confraternity an even greater renown for holiness.

JOAN: Do you think that Kateri would be a good model for Sodalists to follow today?

PATRICK: You know there are four things necessary to be a good Sodalist. One must have an ardent devotion to the Blessed Virgin; be sincerely bent on sanctifying himself; be zealous to save and sanctify his neighbor; and be zealous to defend and spread the work of the Church. These four things are explained in Rules 40, 34, 43, and 33.

If you read the life of Kateri, you can't help seeing how she did the very things that these Rules require. The Rule she reminds me of most is Rule 33. That is the Rule which says: "Good Sodalists ought to be, first and foremost, exemplary Catholics."

To be an exemplary Catholic you have to dare to be different. Just think how different Kateri had to be, if she wanted to be an exemplary Catholic, when she lived among savages. We are sometimes afraid to do the right thing, because it is different from what many boys and girls around us do. The example of Kateri should make us dare to do the right thing no matter what others do.

JOAN: When and where did Kateri die?

ALICE: Kateri died on a Wednesday in Holy Week, April 17, 1680, in Caughnawaga, the village in which she had remained since 1677. She died a very holy death. The Christians who knew her looked upon her as a saint. She is now called "The Lily of the Mohawks."

JOAN: Do you think that Kateri will ever be canonized?

ALICE: The Church has already given her the title of Venerable. This is one of the first steps towards canonization. The next step is beatification.

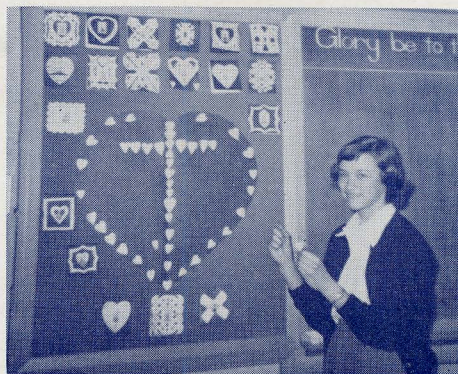
Right now there is a crusade of prayer going on. This year it is exactly three hundred years since Kateri was born.

Wouldn't it be wonderful to have her beatified this very year? I think we all ought to join the crusade of prayer. We can do this by simply saying a prayer each day for the beatification of Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha.

JOAN: Perhaps we should ask Sister Mary Alice about this.

SISTER MARY ALICE: I think the idea of joining that crusade is a very good one. If you all agree, I shall appoint a committee to draw up plans for doing our best in that crusade.

(Here all applauded. Of course, that meant that they would all be taking part in that crusade.)



The Sodalists of St. Joseph School, Battle Creek, Mich., have special valentines to give Our Lady. They cut out little paper hearts and on the back of them write the acts of sacrifice or good works they have performed for Our Lady.

## Reviewing the Rules

DEAR FATHER HEEG:

I am very glad to have this opportunity to write to you. I wish to tell you how we reviewed the Rules at last Friday's Sodality meeting.

The prefect read a question similar to the following, "If we go to Mass and devoutly receive Holy Communion, which Rules do we keep?" Sodalists who volunteered would answer:

Rule 1, because we should try to sanctify ourselves.

Rule 33, because we should be exemplary Catholics.

Rule 34, because we should practice daily acts of piety.

Rule 39, because this Rule recommends frequent and even daily Holy Communion.

Rule 40, because we imitate Mary.

Other questions asked were:

"When we read good books, which Rules do we keep?" Answers with reason for same were Rules 1, 33, 35, and 40.

"When we pray for other Sodalists, especially the dead, which Rules do we keep?" Rules 1, 33, 40, 43, and 45.

"If during the noon hour a Sodalist gets hurt and we stop to help him in any way, which Rules do we keep?" Rules 1, 33, 40, 43, and 45.

There were twelve more questions similar to the above.

It was interesting to note how, after a short time, the number of hands which were raised to answer grew steadily in number.

I hope that this idea will be helpful to other Sodalists.

With every kind greeting, I am  
Sincerely in Mary  
JANET GRUBAUGH, Prefect  
St. Joseph School  
Galion, Ohio

## February Project

Our first mission project was to give our valentine money to our adopted missionary, instead of buying and sending foolish valentines. The second project was the production of a variety show. We made \$41.51 for our missionary. We hope the two projects pleased Our Lady because they were made especially for her. (Ellen Barry, G. 7, St. Francis Xavier School, Kansas City, Mo.)

In order to carry out Rule 43 we have collected and distributed Catholic magazines to the inmates of several institutions. We have also cared for babies during the parish mission so that mothers could make the mission. (Assumption School, Lemay, Mo.)





"Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world!"

### *Act of Recollection*

Dear Jesus, help me to make a little meditation on St. John calling you "the Lamb of God."

### *Just as if I Were There*

I see Jesus coming down a road. He is now about 30 years old. The many years He wanted to spend at Nazareth are now past. He has said goodbye to His dear Mother, and is now about to begin His work of teaching the people.

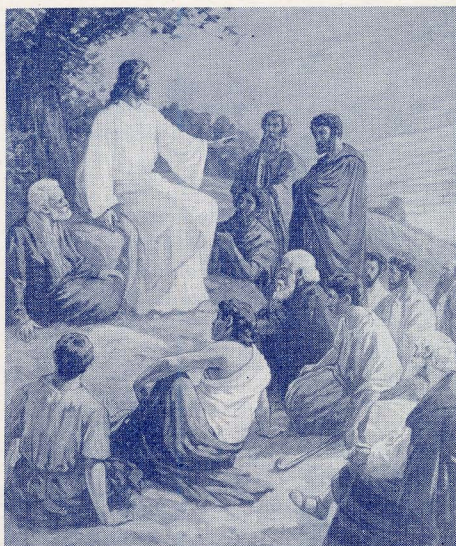
Right now He is coming to the River Jordan, where His cousin, St. John the Baptist, has been getting the people ready for Him. At that time hardly anyone outside of Nazareth knew Jesus. Even those in Nazareth did not know who He really was.

It was God the Father Himself who let St. John the Baptist know. So, as Jesus draws near to him, St. John the Baptist tells his friends who He is. He points to Jesus and says: "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world."

### *Colloquy*

Dear Jesus, you are indeed the Lamb of God, who came into the world to save us. In about three years you will be sacrificed for us, just as truly as any lamb was sacrificed in the Temple. But before you die for us, you will keep on working for us. You will teach us how to live on this earth, so that we can live with you forever in heaven.

Thank you, dear Jesus, thank you!



"Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven."

### *Act of Recollection*

Dear Jesus, help me to make a little meditation on what you said about treasures in heaven.

### *Just as if I Were There*

How happy the people are who live in the time of Jesus. They have Jesus Himself for their teacher.

Jesus knows that His followers will have much to suffer. So He says to them: "Blessed are you when men reproach you, and persecute you, and, speaking falsely, say all manner of evil against you, for my sake."

"How strange," I say to myself. "Why should Jesus call anyone blessed who has so much to suffer?"

The next moment I hear Jesus giving the answer. "Rejoice and exult," He says, "because your reward is great in heaven."

Then Jesus points to heaven. He tells them that heaven is their true home. They should not worry about the things they cannot have on this earth. They should think about the things they can have in heaven.

So, what are they and we to do? I hear Jesus Himself answer: "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven."

### *Colloquy*

Dear Jesus, I want to do what you said. I want to lay up treasures in heaven. I know that I cannot lay up treasures in heaven unless I am in the state of grace. Please help me to stay in the state of grace every day of my life.

I also know that if I am in the state of grace, everything I do out of love for you stores up a treasure for me in heaven.

Dear Jesus, please help me to do everything out of love for you.



"Mary has chosen the best part."

### *Act of Recollection*

Dear Jesus, help me to make a little meditation on what you told Mary and Martha.

### *Just as if I Were There*

I am in the town of Bethany, just about 3 miles from Jerusalem. I see the home of a holy woman named Martha. I enter that home and find Jesus there.

Seated at the feet of Jesus, I see Martha's sister. Her name is Mary. As I look at her, I wonder where I saw her before. Can this Mary be Mary Magdalene, who was once so great a sinner? Yes, I am now sure of it. But, oh, how different she looks now.

Since Jesus forgave her, she has become a saint. And now there is nothing that she loves more than to sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to His words.

Her sister, Martha, also loves Jesus. When Jesus comes to their home, she thinks that they cannot do enough for Him. She thinks it strange that her sister Mary should just be sitting there. So, she says to Jesus: "Lord, is it no concern of Thine that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her therefore to help me."

In answer Jesus says to her: "Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things; and yet only one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the best part, and it will not be taken away from her."

### *Colloquy*

Dear Jesus, when you said: "Mary has chosen the best part," you wanted us to know how much you think of prayer. Let me remember that when I pray, I am like Mary at your feet.

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