The Bishops of the United States, assembled in the III Plenary Council, Baltimore, 1884, petitioned the Holy See to institute the process for her beatification, along with the Martyrs, Jogues, Brebeuf and Companions. The Hierarchy of Canada did the same. When the Martyrs were beatified, 1925, preparations were made for the Cause of Tekakwitha. It was instituted in Albany, in which territory she lived twenty years. The Tribunal appointed by the Most Reverend Bishop Edmund F. Gibbons spent a year, from June, 1931, taking testimony of witnesses familiar with the story of her life. In June, 1932, their report was transmitted to Rome. The Historical Section of the Congregation of Rites, after studying the testimony and documents in the case, reported to the Congregation in June, 1938, that they are genuine, and a complete historical proof of her virtue and renown for sanctity.

On May 19 the Holy Father authorized the formal Introduction of the Cause for her beatification. Soon her virtues will be declared heroic and she will be entitled Venerable.

The prayers of countless thousands that she may be raised to the honor of our altars are mounting to God, truly the Father of this beloved orphan, unsullied child of the forest, racy of our soil and, as her people have cut on the granite urn that surmounts her resting-place—

"Fairest Flower That Ever Bloomed Among True Men"

✠ A. G. Cicognani, *Apostolic Delegate*

For the full story of her life, and other information, address:
Rev. John J. Wynne, S.J., V. Postulator for her Beatification
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Kateri Tekakwitha

(TĔ-GĂH-KWĒT-H̲A)

Who would have believed that among the most savage and corrupt of the Indian tribes of North America there could have lived a Maiden so pure that she has been named

"Lily of the Mohawks?"

Who could have imagined that two hundred and fifty years after her death the Church, with its long and fond memory for holiness, would have given time and thought and labor to consider if she be worthy of the honor of God's altars; and that the Holy Father would approve the formal Introduction of the Cause for her beatification and canonization?

Kateri (Catherine) Tekakwitha was born in 1656 at Ossernenon, now Auriesville, in the State of New York. There, not long before, Saints Isaac Jogues, Rene Goupil and John Lalande had been martyred (1642-1646). Her father was a pagan Mohawk Indian, her mother a Christian Algonquin, whom he had taken captive in war and made his wife. Both died of plague when Tekakwitha was four years old. Her uncle, an Indian Chief, adopted her. Partly because the plague had affected her eyes, but chiefly because she shunned the village scandals, she kept to her Long House cabin, devoted to domestic duties and Indian crafts.

The Mohawks were given to idling, gambling, drunkeness, brutality, sorcery and debauchery. After the plague, they moved to another site, and seven years after, 1667, moved again when the French, to stop their invasions in Canada, destroyed their villages south of the Mohawk

River. This time they occupied Caughnawaga, overlooking what is now Fonda. By treaty they received missionaries. As a Chieftain, Tekakwitha's uncle entertained them, though opposed to their mission, and later did not welcome them to his cabin. Thus they could not come to know her, nor could she seek them: it was dangerous for a young girl to move about alone.

Her aunts kept urging her to marry; as she would not consent, they treated her as a slave. They accused her of improper regard for the uncle, and denounced her to the missionary de Lamberville, but he perceived their evil motive and established her innocence. By chance he entered Tekakwitha's cabin. He found her gentle and modest. She asked to become a Christian. After inquiry about her character, he baptized her Easter Sunday, 1676, though Indians had to prepare for the Sacrament two years or more.

Pagans and Christians admired her, but soon malicious tribesmen began to threaten and persecute her. One entered her cabin raising his axe to strike her. She told him: "You may take my life, but not my faith." The missionary helped her to escape from her vicious surroundings and go to La Prairie, Canada, where Jesuits had a village for Christian Indians. It is now St. Francis Xavier's, at Caughnawaga, where over 2,000 faithful Catholic Indians are devoted to her memory. Father de Lamberville recommended her to the missionaries in Canada as a 'soul very dear to God.' This was in autumn, A.D. 1677.

On Christmas Day Catherine was privileged to receive Holy Communion, though the Indian Converts were kept two or three years preparing for the Holy Sacrament. She went on the winter hunt, men doing the killing, women making the cabins, collecting the game and housekeeping. Free time she spent in the woods praying before a cross cut in the bark of a tree.

She missed her chapel, visits to the Blessed Sacrament; daily Holy Mass. Moreover, she had been accused by a jealous wife of familiarity with her husband. She easily convinced the missionary of her innocence and the accuser repented of traducing her; she never went on the hunt again. She was admitted at once into the Confraternity of the Holy Family established by Bishop Laval, of Quebec, for those only who were long and well tried. She became a model even for the more fervent. In life, as after death, she was known as "The Good Catherine."

Tekakwitha's virtues led many to imitate her. Her faith and confidence in God were childlike; her love of Him was proved by affection for her neighbors. She loved the Blessed Sacrament, Holy Mass and the Cross. To her the Blessed Virgin was a mother, and she treasured her Rosary. She was prudent and just; bore with persecution, calumny and privation; obedience only could moderate her penances. She was so chaste as to obtain permission, first of her race, to vow virginity. She is called the Iroquois Virgin.

Her death, like her life, impressed all. She foretold the hour, where she would be buried, how from heaven she would obtain favors for friends. She died Wednesday in Holy Week, April 17, 1680. Immediately her promises came true; she appeared to several, protected her village in storm and warfare; created such fervor among her people, especially for painful penances, that it had to be restrained. Proofs of her favor with God became so convincing that her directors wrote her Life as if to seek her beatification; numerous writers have done the same. Remarkable are the answers to prayer through her intercession, and they keep growing in number and importance.