

"I Wonder"

Eugene Montour, second grader, wants to know, "if I will be wearing false teeth by the time Kateri's statue is erected?"

The Kateri Statue

Let's Not Take Twenty Years :

The future bronze statue of Tekakwitha to be erected in her parish, will cost about \$4,000.00. The Rev. Fr. V.-Postulator gratefully acknowledges the following donations:

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Miss Marie L. Murphy	3.00
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Anonymous	1.00

IN YOUR WILL, WHY NOT LEAVE SOMETHING TO THE CAUSE OF THE VENERABLE KATERI TEKAKWITHA, THE LILY OF THE MOHAWKS? HER CAUSE IS JUST AS POOR AS SHE WAS DURING HER LIFETIME!

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1,448.25
\$1,771.25

THE KATERI NOVENA!

20c postpaid.

8 copies: \$1.00

A GOOD PENANCE ANY TIME OF YEAR: SIT DOWN AND WRITE IN BLOCK LETTERS THE NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF 20 OR MORE OF YOUR FRIENDS: THEN SEND THEM IN TO KATERI.

KATERI

Vol. 5, No. 3

CAUGHNAWAGA, Que.

JUNE 1953



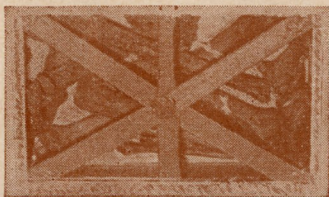


Photo: J. G. Martin

THE RELICS OF TEKAKWITHA

KATERI Vol. 5 No. 3

Editor: Rev. Henri Béchard, S.J.
V.-Postulator

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THE KATERI TEKAKWITHA GUILD

The sodalists of the Blessed Virgin of Caughnawaga, Quebec, who are descendants of the earliest Christian Indians in Canada and New York State, have formed themselves into a Guild to spread devotion to Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha.

Our quarterly bulletin KATERI, intends, above all, to tell her tale, to foster devotion to her and to record the favors both temporal and spiritual you receive through her intercession. As a result, it is hoped that the Cause of her Beatification will progress more rapidly.

A one year subscription to KATERI (\$1.00) will enroll you as a member of the Kateri Tekakwitha Guild for one year to share in the daily memento of the V.-Postulator's mass and in a special mass offered each week for your intentions in the old Mission Church of St-François-Xavier.

Published quarterly to spread devotion to *Ven. Kateri Tekakwitha* by Rev. George Brodeur, S.J., at Mission St-François-Xavier, Caughnawaga, Quebec, Canada.

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JUNE 1953

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The Slough of the Serpent

The Vice-Postulator

IS this the first time the Kateri bulletin has fallen into your hands? To be sure, it's not a bulky publication. But in it, there is something for you. And that something is the echo of the oft-repeated question springing from the heart of the Holy Father.

The Very Reverend Msgr. Funcke of Hogsburg, N.Y., during a recent trip to Rome, saw one of his good friends, the secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Rites.

"His Holiness", Msgr. Funcke was told "often inquires how the Cause of the Indian Maiden, Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha is progressing." Only two first-class miracles are requested of Kateri. The Vicar of Christ on earth has, out of affection for the lovely Lily of the Mohawks, granted a dispensation from the customary third miracle.

The normal manner to obtain Kateri's Beatification is to get as many people as possible praying to God through her intercession for the two needed miracles. Prayers, numerous, persevering, humble, to the Father in Jesus' name, will procure what we seek.

So don't cast the Kateri bulletin aside; read it, reread it attentively and begin praying for your miracle. Pass "Kateri" on to others; send us in the subscriptions, offerings and addresses that will enable us to print this message and forward it to every Catholic home.

In the Metropolitan Blue Hills Park near Boston, where, some thirty-five years ago, as a fifth-grader, I used to enjoy an occasional hike, the finding of the slough or cast-off skin of a rattler would paralyse me. I fear I was not very brave.

Certainly, the devil does not want to see Tekakwitha elevated to the honors of the altar. In my work as vice-postulator, I am still finding the slough of the serpent. Apathy, indifference, forgetfulness and procrastination often paralyse the heart and hand of many.

THERE KATERI BELONGED!

(A yearly account of the foundation of the Mission of the

Sault up to 1685)

by

by CLAUDE CHAUCHETIÈRE, S.J.

Spiritual Adviser of the Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha.

A.D. 1671



THE Iroquois have their internal organization just as all the rest of the peoples of the world, the difference being that theirs may be called of mere nature, wherein much is missing. However, the faith of our newly converted Christians clearly demonstrated that there would be nothing finer on the face of the earth, if the Gospel were followed everywhere. It cleansed the new town with regard to its build-up, of naught but that which had been spoilt by vice in the older Iroquois villages.

Having agreed together during the summer of the present year to inhabit for good and all the La Prairie settlement, they resolved to establish two chiefs, one for law and order and for war, the other for the practice of Christianity and religion. To God they recommended this affair which they considered of the highest importance; they heard mass for this intention; then, assembled together, they all chose, by common consent, the two men who, effectively, were the most worthy and capable of filling these two positions. This election required a majority vote as is generally the case with the Iroquois, among whom the chiefs really make themselves heard, following, however, the suggestions of the village elders. Since then, all have obeyed the captains, who, as experience proved, lose their credit when they are not good Christians. They are strictly obeyed especially in the observance of whatever has been decided concerning public morals.

Let us here admire the power of God, which, in bygone times, banished from the city of Rome all the abominations that the Romans had placed in their Pantheon, and which they had selected from among the spoils of so many nations conquered by them. Today our little flock is being purified of all the outrageous habits

that it contracted among the sixteen nations which it had destroyed by its courage and craftiness. In this manner numerous bad habits were abandoned at once in exchange for all the customs of the Church. This is so much the more admirable as the Indians have the habit of simply following their imagination, and as they are surrounded by superstition which they all see in their homeland. But nobody speaks about it here; nobody takes it into account and all accuse themselves of having even thought about it.

Our new-born Church was thus taking form and getting into order. These barbarians gathered together from among many nations formed only one. Charity united them to such an extent that they owned nothing in particular. This trait agreed enough with the Iroquois mentality for among them fellowship, visits, hospitality, banquets and the mutual exchange of gifts are quite common.

For a long time not even the shadow of vice could be seen there and this charmed those who came to visit them. Reverend Father Frémin, head of the Mission at that time, did not hesitate to prepare them for the reception of the sacraments still unknown to these barbarous nations — confession and communion! Some were predestined, in whom grace grew each day and for whom little time was needed to dispose themselves properly. So it was that the Indians began to be seen at La Prairie going to communion as devoutly and more so than the French. As soon as the fire of the Blessed Sacrament had animated our newly converted Christians, it could not be contained within them; the Fathers of the Mission heard each day from the lips of their children the expression of their hearts filled with the Holy Ghost. Father Pierson even sowed the seeds of the Holy Family (Association) by giving a few rosaries to the eldest Christians of both sexes. The Indians on their trips through the woods made nearly as many Christians as they found other Indians in their hunting grounds, because of their faithfulness to prayer and their good conversation.

Then it was that two noteworthy trees were planted at the entry of the village. To one was attached Drunkenness, to the other Impurity, both of them vanquished by Faith. A proverb was made of this saying concerning the Iroquois: "I am going to La Prairie", that is, I am giving up drink and polygamy, because if someone spoke of residing at La Prairie, these two conditions were put to him, which had to be accepted without restriction or limit, otherwise he was not received.

(To be continued.)



NASTURTIUM AND GERANIUM

Brothers Nasturtium (Allan Stacey) and Geranium (Michael Walker) step out of the second act of "Brother Orchid" for a clap!... (See p. 15.)

The Maiden Called Tekakwitha

(Continued - III)

by

EDMUND J. RHODEBECK, B.S., M.D., FELLOW N.Y. ACAD. MED.

THE tribal structure was definitely matriarchal and the woman's position in the family was so important that it makes it difficult to understand what the factor was that made Kateri so determined in her refusal to marry. Surely it must have been something very basic indeed.

● Indian children

Children were more or less allowed to grow up by themselves. Girls were carefully trained in household duties, needlework, cooking, tanning and they helped with the crops; but in the interval they played as modern children do. They had dolls of cornhusks or cloth, played house or dressed a puppy up as a papoose and carried it on their backs, or they played games like cat's cradle or jacks and frequently a game of field-hockey. Since most of these were played outdoors, Kateri was often forced to forego them because of her eyes.

● Puberty rites

When girls arrived at the age of thirteen or fourteen they were initiated into womanhood. Puberty rites were universally observed among all tribes of North American Indians both for girls and for boys reaching the age of maturity. Among the Mohawks, girls were put into a hut by themselves or into curtained enclosure and kept there four or five days, attended only by the mother or another older woman. During this period of meditation and

(Please turn to p. 14.)

fast they were supposed to be under the guidance of the spirits who were to control their future lives. After this, they were regarded as having passed out of childhood and ready to assume all the duties of adult womanhood. It was undoubtedly at this time that Kateri first faced the facts and meaning of the Iroquoian woman's life and her role as wife, housemaker, and mother.

● Marriage rites

Marriage was an arrangement made by the mothers of the two parties involved. The betrothal took place when the children were eight or nine years of age after which no contact was permitted between them until the marriage took place some eight or nine years later. This was a very simple rite and consisted merely in the meeting together and acceptance of one another in the girl's house, the rite being sealed by her offering to the man a bowl of cornmeal or sagamite and seating herself beside him to partake of the meal. This also constituted an inauguration of the man into the family and household of the woman in becoming a member of her family and a provider thereof.

It may be seen from this that it was important that a girl marry and bring into the family one who could add security and honor to the group.

● Handicapped

The foregoing is in general the social



GRANT IS CURIOUS...

Photo: Armour Landry

Fr. Silvio Zarattini, S.J., of Venice, Italy, is questioned by Grant Montour:

"Father, when do you think Kateri will be beatified?"

"When enough Catholics pray for the needed miracles!"

Fr. Zarattini is preparing an Italian biography of Ven. Kateri. The V.-Postulator looks on.



KATERI
set a
perfect
example of
humility for
the youth
of all ages.
Even enough
she practiced
this virtue in
the wilder-
ness of Amer-
ica in the

1600's, before and after her conversion, yet she drew a blueprint for modern youth to follow. She was as happily adjusted to her world and way of life as the young people today are to theirs.

It was just as hard for Kateri to sacrifice a beautiful red dress and to refrain from greasing her hair to a shiny glow in Indian fashion, as it would be for a modern girl to give up wearing shorts in summer, to set formals and party gowns aside in preference to simple dresses, and to avoid beauty parlors.

Kateri wanted to cut off her beautiful braids and wear short hair, but this the missionaries considered too drastic and advised against it. The Indian girl bowed to their wishes in perfect submission, keeping her hair clean but ungreased and taking no pride in it. She wore the oldest clothes she could find which would hide her natural grace. The only time Kateri

Kateri and

Part III

She set a perfect

example of humility. She was ever dressed carefully was when she was going to Holy Communion. For those occasions she kept a simple blue gown, preferring Mary's color to the bright Indian red of her companions.

Kateri's humility takes on a brighter hue when we realize that she was actually a princess. Her father was chief of the tribe until his death and after that he was succeeded by his brother, Kateri's uncle, with whom she made her home. This placed Kateri in an enviable position giving her similar rank in her world as the daughter of the mayor in a fair-sized American city of today. Therefore it was much harder for Kateri to renounce the pleasures and luxuries of her world than had she been a mere nobody in tribal life.

Because of her position it was very hard for Kateri to practice her religion in her native village. It was easier in the winter however during the hunting season. With the men away all day in search of deer and beaver Kateri lived the life of a Religious. She hid in the woods to pray.

Modern Youth

by Anne Tansey

example of humility

She made a little shrine near a running stream, fashioning a cross out of the branches of a tree.

At the same time Kateri did not neglect her share of the work. She did all she was told to do by the older women, chopping wood, cooking soup, making collars from deerskin, taking care of the younger children, refusing no task no matter how menial it might be.

While Kateri often dreamed of the Mission of St. Francis by the banks of the St. Lawrence, she was afraid to try escaping from her own village. She not only feared her uncle but was afraid she might be guilty of filial disobedience. When Father James Lamberville assured her that it was a part of God's plan for her to flee to the Christian Indian Village, Kateri risked her uncle's displeasure and made plans to leave the village unnoticed. In this as in all other things she laid aside her own ideas and obeying the will of her superior set forth upon the long and dangerous voyage to the banks of the St. Lawrence.

Even though all inhabitants of the village were Christians, Kateri's life stood out like a lighted torch among them. Not many of them tried to live as perfect a life as Kateri led. They marvelled at her and no one ever whispered one word against her, which was most unusual in any Indian village. They spoke of her as gentle, affectionate, even gay of spirit, very patient and always ready to lend a helping hand.

The entire village was plunged into sorrow when Kateri took sick. For the last two months of her life the Indian girl suffered torments but no word of complaint ever crossed her lips. Speaking of her humility her spiritual director relates, "She considered herself the greatest sinner in the village and had such an humble opinion of herself that she could not bear anyone to say the least word in her praise, but immediately fled, or, if she was unable to retire, she would hide in her blanket in order to conceal her blushing face. It even pained her when I spoke to her of the glory that awaited her in heaven, for she was unable to imagine how a wicked creature, such as she conceived herself to be, had any right to think of this heritage of the just and the Saints. On the contrary she admired all others, praising and approving where it was deserved and excusing the rest with great charity."

LETTERS TO KATERI

(When acknowledging favors to Kateri, be sure to indicate details.)

Peterborough, Ont., April 23: I enclose \$2.00 to pay my subscription to "Kateri", and to ask for a Mass in thanksgiving for two favours received. In one case, my sister in England recovered her health without a feared operation. In the other case, employment was found for someone after a difficult time of waiting. That news reached me on the fourth day of the novena I was making. I sent leaflets and particulars to these persons, giving Kateri all the credit, and they were both impressed and grateful... Mrs. W. A. Mac K.

Philadelphia, Pa., Feb. 27: I am very happy to tell you of the wonderful favours received through the intercession of Our Blessed Mother and Kateri from the Sacred Heart. For the last four years, I have been doctoring a thyroid condition and was told by one doctor that an operation would not correct my physical condition. So I prayed faithfully for the guidance to the right doctor. My prayers were answered with a successful operation last month. I have also prayed to Kateri to help my brother select the right order for the priesthood. That request has been answered... Enclosed please find five dollars for Kateri's statue... Miss L. M.

Toronto, Ont., Feb. 26: Enclosed please find money order for \$10.00. This is only a small acknowledgement for two more favours I have received from Kateri. I am ashamed to say

that the first answer to the novena was received in Nov. 1951 and it seems as though the mishap I suffered (Jan. '53) was a sharp reminder that I had been ungrateful. However Kateri answered my prayer a second time, so I am hastening to tell you about it.

In Nov. '51, I fell and sprained my left ankle which swelled badly and in spite of attention did not seem to reduce. I could not lay up with it as I have to do all my own work. After a time I was discouraged and suddenly remembered the little relic that you had sent me the year before. That night I slipped it between the folds of the bandage and asked Kateri to help me. The next day about noon, as I was doing the washing I felt a queer sensation in my foot as though something had happened, but I could not give a name to it. I looked down at my foot and there was not a trace of swelling and it felt fine...

I fully intended to send \$2.00 as a little donation towards her statue, but kept putting it off. Now comes the sharp reminder. About the middle of Jan. I was sitting in the kitchen knitting. I was on the far side of the room away from the stove where one of the boys was melting some white metal in a tin... He took hold of the tin with the pliers, but as he lifted it, it slipped and fell to the floor. The metal splashed in my direction and some went on the front of my ankle (the same ankle that had been sprained before) and a

spot on the instep. I bent down to knock off the metal and burnt one finger from the tip to the palm. Like the sprain, I was not able to rest much with it. I was not able to put a stocking on for 2 weeks. I put the relic on again, and I am glad to say that they (I had four burns) healed up wonderfully... Mrs. M. C.

Duson, La., Feb. 26: ... Let me quote from a letter I have at hand from an intimate friend, to whom I had sent a prayer and a medal of Kateri:—

"Sept. 2, 1952: My son has been in the hospital for 1½ weeks now. At first they suspected meningitis because of his symptoms. But even though his condition was poor, I interceded to Kateri Tekakwitha for help. Thanks to her and God, my son's 105.6 fever (carried 1 week) left him and he is completely normal and he shows no mental or spinal defects. Incidentally, I had prayed to her also for a job by Sept. 2nd. It seems as though I may go to work tomorrow, the 3rd, so you can see why I am happy after all my woe-begone feelings the last two weeks. I never gave up; I just kept praying. In case you are interested in the job, I will be secretary to the Librarian at D. University... Mrs. G.L.

So much for the first favor granted. The other was in my own favor. Some time last year I was bothered with what could have developed into a bad case of bursitis, especially since as a priest I have to do much kneeling. When I consulted the physician about it, he gave me a penicillin and told me to keep off my legs for a week or more. When the knee didn't seem to show

any sign of improvement, I had recourse to Kateri and promised to publish the favor should it be granted. In a short time after I began praying to her, the knee became altogether normal and the condition has not returned, and so I think I should make public acknowledgment of it also. (Rev.) M.R.

Winnipeg, Man., April 26: Enclosed herein is a cheque for \$20.00 towards the Statue of Venerable Kateri in Thanksgiving for a very special favor received. My husband was transferred to Toronto and, unless our home was sold before his leaving here, I would have had to stay here indefinitely. Through Kateri's help our home was sold within the week from the time it was up for sale and at a profit. Now I hope she will help us find a house in Toronto... Mrs. H. J. Fox.

Mont Laurier, P.Q., March 19: I am happy to let you know of a favor obtained through the intercession of our dear Kateri Tekakwitha. From Sept. 1952 to Jan. 1953, I was suffering more than usual from arthritis in the feet and knees and to such an extent that I accomplished my daily work with much difficulty. A sympathetic person advised me to pray to little Kateri, which I did without any delay. I put aside all remedies and began a novena with a charitable companion. From one day to another the pain diminished and at the end, I felt no more pain. My deepest gratitude to the Indian Maiden!... Sister M. de S.-P.

Union City, N.J., Feb. 16: I am enclosing \$1.00 in Thanksgiving. I wrote you regarding a novena for my Mother's legs to get better. They have improved and we are so grateful. Miss E.F.

pattern in which Kateri lived. But fortunately for us and for her, as it turned out, Kateri was not able to fit into the pattern adequately. She was handicapped by being badly scarred and not very pretty, and with eyes seriously damaged, as a result of smallpox. Also she was an orphan and had no understanding mother to whom she could turn and get help in her attempts and adaptation. Save for these things it is possible, nay probable, that she would have followed the normal pattern of Indian childhood and adolescence.

Kateri was the offspring of a Mohawk chief and a captive Algonquin mother who was a Christian. It is possible that her mother may have instilled a few Christian ideals into the child's mind; but it is doubtful, in a child surrounded by a late Stone Age culture, that they could have had any great impact. Heredity may also have played a part, the gentler temperament of the Algonquins moderating the more active and ruthless one of the Iroquoians. At any rate the mother did not have much time for guidance; for when Kateri was but four years of age an epidemic of smallpox hit the village killing her father, mother, and little brother and nearly killing Kateri.

As a result of this, Kateri was left an orphan, was badly scarred by the disease, and had eyes damaged in vision and very sensitive to light.

After the death of her parents, Kateri was adopted by an uncle who was childless and living with his wife and his sister. This meant that Kateri was to be brought up an only child in a family in which she had a mother only by proxy. A child under such circumstances is perfectly aware of its loneliness and the lack of a mother to turn to in its need. Seeing the relationship of other children with their parents, it is conscious of a definite void in its own life, engendering a feeling of insecurity and consequent inferiority.

It is true also that a child under such conditions, having no brothers and sisters, has another handicap in the lack of close association with others of its own age-group. It is forced, therefore, to make its adaptations in an adult environment. The child is lonely and more or less dependent upon itself.

● A lonely child

Yes, Kateri was a lonely child. Because of her eyes she could not play as other children played. She had to keep her eyes shaded and could not romp around in the sunlight as they did, nor play the games that they played. She undoubtedly spent more time in the house with the women and so acquired an adult point of view very early. This may account for Father de Lamberville's surprise at Kateri's quick grasp of the elements of Christianity.

(To be continued.)

☞ Gift suggestions to Kateri:
The promise to say daily the prayer for her beatification!
Each prayer helps further the cause.
20 or more addresses of would-be friends!
Each new list helps further the cause.
The offering that will help us make her known!
Her cause is relatively as poor as she herself was here below! ☞

CALENDAR TIDBITS

Jan. 20, 1953. — The new steeple is up! Much credit goes to Fr. Brodeur, our Superior, who supervised part of the work himself, to Mr. Piché, architect, who drew the plans with great care from a simple photo of the first steeple without any charge whatever. Our Iroquois, also are to be warmly congratulated for they have already paid two-thirds of the thirteen thousand dollar debt. (See *Kateri*, Vol. 2, No. 1, Dec. '49.)

Feb. 10. — Gala day at the Mission! Sr. Mary Alma, S.S.A., celebrated her



silver jubilee as a religious and her twenty years of teaching at Caughnawaga. Thursday, Feb. 12, the First Year High girls and those of the special course prepared a chicken dinner in her honor. The hall was decorated in blue and white. Fr. Béchard, the principal, thanked Sister Mary Alma in the name of the Fathers of the Mission, of the students and of their parents. In the afternoon, a mother and daughter St. Valentine's card party was organized in honor of the Jubilarian. Sr. Mary Alma is assured of the prayers and good wishes of all those who really love the Mission.

Feb. 15. — The Rev. V.-Postulator was guest-speaker at the

communion breakfast of the Holy Name Society of the St. John Fisher Mission at Valois, P.Q.

April 12. — At Côte-St-Catherine, where Ven. Kateri died on April 17, 1680, the V.-Postulator preached at the two Sunday masses, urging all to pray for her speedy beatification.

April 15. — The V.-Postulator was guest-speaker at the annual banquet of the St. Mary's Rosary Society of Fort Covington, N.Y., which was served at the Dupuis Hotel at Dundee, P.Q. The subject of the talk: "Kateri and her devotion to Mary." A very special attraction was the singing by a quartet of the Mission Choir, Attorney Norman Saylor, Q.C., his brother, Earl, Miss Esther Kane and Mrs. Annie Lahache.

April 20. — The Freshmen of Tekakwitha School offered the public on the remodeled and recurtained stage of Kateri Hall, "Brother Orchid", a play in three acts by Leo Brady. Since last October, Fr. Burns has been working with the boys and the fine success they achieved was certainly merited. The scenery was by Madam de Groot, our cover illustrator.

April 25. — The Rev. Dr. Bernier, S.J., director-extraordinary of the Iroquois Choir for more than 20 years, died of a heart attack. The news came in as *Kateri* was going to press; in our next issue, a more fitting homage will be rendered this tried and true friend of Caughnawaga. FATHER ANGUS.

