

AUTUMN
1970

from the **MARTYRS SHRINE** Auriesville, N.Y. 12016

40 YEARS AGO — 1 — Canonization of North American Martyrs
2 — Beginning of Building Coliseum



It is instinctive to kneel here
after coming into the Ravine.

DOWN THE HILL AND UP TO HEAVEN

Most memorable of all the experiences of pilgrims to Auriesville is their visit to the Ravine. Here, of course, is the burial place of St. Rene Goupil. The Ravine is also the principal reason why the whole Shrine is so aptly referred to as one vast reliquary. It is on the trip down the hill into it that pilgrims most surely savor the flavor of the atmosphere of the Shrine. Once down in its shady vales, the pilgrim unfailingly senses that he is in a holy place.

To make this memory of Auriesville more keen, and to help the recollection of this moving experience, we are including in this issue of the PILGRIM the story of the death and burial of Goupil as it is recounted by St. Isaac Jogues, and as it is recorded on the several plaques along the pathway leading down to the Ravine.

RAVINE

Rene Goupil, first companion of St. Isaac Jogues, was martyred for the faith September 29, 1642. His body was buried by the loving hands of Father Jogues somewhere in this place.

†
JESUS

THE WAY OF MARTYRDOM a journey into the Ravine.

Dear Pilgrim: Somewhere in this holy ravine in 1642, America's first canonized martyr, St. Rene Goupil, was buried by Father Isaac Jogues. Read the story of the martyr, as you journey along the way of martyrdom into this wondrous valley so full of grace. It is told by Father Jogues himself. Your prayer thoughts and religious experiences here will always be for you a memory to be cherished. We affectionately welcome you, dear pilgrim, to come and pray with us.

The Fathers and Brothers
at Auriesville

†
JESUS

"After Rene and I had been captives in Ossernenon (Auriesville) for six weeks (September 1642) we lost all hope of again seeing Three Rivers. We consoled one another at this decree of Divine Providence and kept preparing ourselves for anything that God might ordain. Rene evidently did not perceive as clearly as I our present peril. For this reason I kept warning him to be prepared for the worst . . ."

†
JESUS

"One evening with sad hearts, Rene and I went beyond the village to pray more reverently apart from its noise. Two Indian youths came after us ordering us to go back to our long house. I sensed some foreboding of what would happen and said to Rene: 'My dear brother, let us com-

(Continued on next page)

mend ourselves to our Lord and to our good Mother, the Blessed Virgin, I am afraid these Indians have some evil design . . . ”

†
JESUS

“A few minutes earlier Rene and I had offered ourselves to our Lord with intense devotion. We begged God to accept our lives and our blood and to unite them to His life and His blood for the salvation of these tribes. We were returning to the village praying our rosary of which we had already said four decades . . . ”

†
JESUS

“We paused near the gate of the stockade to hear what the two Iroquois had to say. One of them drew a tomahawk from under his blanket, and dealt Rene a blow on the head. Rene fell prostrate to the ground, uttering the holy name of Jesus, Jesus, Jesus. We had often reminded each other to end our speech and our lives with that most holy name . . . ”

†
JESUS

“At the sound of the blow I turned around and beheld the tomahawk dripping with blood. I fell to my knees to receive the blow that would unite me to my dear companion. The Iroquois delayed. I rose again and rushed to Rene’s side as he lay expiring but not before I had given him absolution. Since our captivity I had absolved him regularly every other day after his confession . . . ”

†
JESUS

“It was the Feast of St. Michael, September the 29th, 1642, that this angel in innocence and martyr of Jesus Christ, Rene Goupil, gave his life for Christ who had offered His life on the cross for him. The Indians ordered me to go back to my long house. There I awaited that day and the next the same deadly tomahawk. Everyone believed that I would not have to wait long. But our Lord averted this . . . ”

†
JESUS

“Early the next morning I eagerly inquired where the Indians had thrown that blessed body. I wanted to bury it, cost what it might. Some Iroquois who wanted to save my life said: “Do you not see those young braves leaving the village? They will kill you once you are beyond the palisade.” This did not stop me. I went out, I searched, with the help of an Algonquin captive Indian, I found the body of Rene . . . ”

†
JESUS

“After Rene had been killed, the Indian children stripped him. They tied a rope around his neck and dragged him to a torrent which flows through the ravine beyond the village. The dogs had already gnawed at his thighs. At this sight I could not hold back my tears. I lifted up the body and with the Algonquin Indian’s help lowered it into the stream. I weighted it down with large stones to hide it from view. I intended to bury Rene the next day . . . ”

†
JESUS

“The next day as the Indians were seeking to kill me, my Indian “aunt” sent me to her friend to escape them. This forced me to delay the burial until the next day. It rained all that night, the stream became a raging torrent. I borrowed a hoe from another long house, the better to conceal my plan. On approaching the spot I could not find the blessed body of Rene. Alas, my brother’s body had been carried away . . . ”

†
JESUS

“I waded into the torrent already quite cold. I plodded back and forth. I sounded with my feet to see whether the torrent had not risen and carried off the body. What groans did I utter then! I found nothing. How many tears I shed which fell into the torrent! I sang as best I could the psalms which the Church chants for the dead. After all I found nothing. I searched the woods on the opposite bank. All, all in vain . . . ”

†
JESUS

“The young Braves had taken the body up and dragged it to an adjoining wood, where during the fall and winter it became the food of the dog, the crow and the fox. When I had been told in the spring that the body had been dragged there, I went several times without finding it. Finally on the fourth trip I found Rene’s head and some half gnawed bones. These I buried. Reverently did I kiss them as the bones of a martyr of Jesus Christ . . . ”

†
JESUS

“I give Rene this title of martyr, not only because he was killed by the enemies of God and of His Church out of ardent love of his neighbor but placing himself in open peril for the love of God but precisely because he was killed for prayer, and expressly for making the Sign of the Cross . . . ”

(Relation of Isaac Jogues, S.J.
Montreal, Apr. 1, 1646)

†
JESUS

Dear Pilgrim:

You have just read the wonderful story of America’s first canonized martyr, Saint Rene Goupil. Here where you stand the Saint was agonizingly buried by the loving hands of his padre, Father Jogues; here rest Brother Rene’s blessed remains in a ravine which angels seemed to have fashioned. You stand in a reliquary graced with pines and hemlocks and carpeted with lilies hiding a secret and precious grave.

†
JESUS

Dear Pilgrim:

The memory of these martyrs surrounds us everywhere; their holiness in the air; their voices murmuring in these trees and brooks, their blood upon the ground, their bones beneath the flowers. As you kneel before the crucifix, pray for your own loved ones who have gone before you and ask for yourself that great gift of God—a holy and happy death.

PERSONS ABOUT THE SHRINE

Among the thousands of pilgrims who came to Auriesville during the summer was one who is especially dear to the Shrine and to whom the Shrine is especially dear. Sister Ignatius, of the Nursing Sisters of the Sick Poor, after returning from a trip to Ireland, topped off the celebration of her fiftieth anniversary as a nun by making a pilgrimage to the Shrine for the fortieth consecutive year. Her visit gave us a chance to join in the celebration of her Jubilee as well as giving us the inspiration to offer a prayer of thanks to God for dedicated people like her.

Mr. Eugene Tschaepe, from Buffalo, and Mrs. Benny Tresseault with her daughter Mrs. Rita Priest, from Frederick, Maryland were also recent visitors to the Shrine. Mr. Tschaepe is the craftsman who is largely responsible for installation of the many doors of the Coliseum. Mrs. Tresselt is the widow of Benny, who personally smoothed the cement of the Coliseum floor after it had been poured, besides overseeing many other important details of the construction which was begun forty years ago.

In the middle of August Fr. Anthony Keane, S.J. received an appointment to Christ the King Retreat House in Syracuse from Rev. Father Provincial. Fr. Keane spent more than a year as an Assistant Shrine Director and many pilgrims and visitors to the Shrine were the recipients of his kindness and priestly concern. The Shrine is indebted to him for his generosity. The staff and the pilgrims will miss him. May God continue to bless him in his new assignment.

Fr. Thomas Ward, S.J. a member of the faculty at LeMoyne College and formerly attached to the Shrine and the Community at Auriesville, and Fr. Floyd Brey, S.J., a member of the faculty of Campion High School, at Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, assisted at the Shrine during a good part of the summer.

The regular members of the Shrine staff, Fr. Egan, Fr. Schirmann, Fr. O'Dwyer and Fr. Burns are generally known to the visitors to the Shrine. But pilgrims see many other priests about the grounds. These very often are priests and religious who are making their annual retreats at the Retreat House on top of the hill, and spend many of their reflective hours walking the quiet and meditative pathways of the Shrine. This year, moreover, visitors to the Shrine saw many more priests than usual. A frequent

feature of the Sunday Masses was a concelebrated Mass at which several priests, as many as twelve, offered Mass at the same altar at the same time. Sometimes these were priests who came on pilgrimage with their groups or were guests of the Shrine. Most often, however, they were the young Jesuits, the Tertiaries, who also live at the Retreat House on top of the hill, and are completing their last year of training in the Society of Jesus. Eighteen in number, they truly are a cosmopolitan group. They represent thirteen different provinces of the Society of Jesus and their fields of apostolic work cover five continents. Besides their appearance at these special Masses the Tertian

Fathers also spent several hours on Sundays in the confessionals in the Coliseum.

Fr. John J. Scanlon, S.J. died at Buffalo on May 31, 1970. As part of a long and distinguished life as a Jesuit Father Scanlon spent several years at Auriesville and worked as a member of the Shrine staff. Not only was he assigned to the Shrine on two distinct occasions, but during the summer, although he was officially on vacation from a permanent position, he came several times voluntarily to assist the regular staff. Fr. Scanlon was a distinguished linguist and was very much interested in the Iroquois language. He also was interested and competent in history and delved deeply into

the careers of the Jesuits who first came to New York State, as well as into the development of the Indian tribes indigenous to this part of the country. On August 15, 1966 Fr. Scanlon celebrated his Golden Jubilee as a member of the Society of Jesus. We feel certain that the many friends he made while here at the Shrine will want to say a prayer for him, to hurry his entry into the company of those other Jesuits whose memory he helped perpetuate as the heroes of Shrine of the North American Martyrs. Father Scanlon is buried in the Jesuit cemetery alongside St. Rene Goupil Chapel which is behind the Calvary group on the Hill of Prayer. May he rest in peace.

Fr. James Thiry, S.J., who left Auriesville seven years ago to take up his duties as a Chaplain at Coler Hospital, New York City has returned here to assume the responsibilities of Minister and Treasurer of the Jesuit Community. His many friends will welcome the opportunity of greeting him on what we hope will be frequent visits to the Shrine grounds.



Jesuit Community at Auriesville, Shrine Staff, Retreat House Staff and Tertiaries from all parts of the world.

DIRECTOR'S LETTER



Dear Friends and Pilgrims,

The first few days after the close of the Shrine bring a jumble of reactions to the Fathers on the staff—satisfaction at having finished another season, a touch of relief because of the shift from a demanding routine, a tinge of loneliness since there will be no pilgrims to greet until May. But there is also a stream of pleasant memories, like the afterglow of one of our Mohawk Valley sunsets, as they think of the many good people they have met throughout the season.

What sort of season was this first year of the seventies? In many ways a good one, not a record-breaker, yet one which brought many bits of encouragement. Our pilgrims at first had to adjust to the first change in the Sunday mass schedule in over a decade. The introduction of Sunday masses on Saturday in the Albany Diocese made it advisable to think out the Sunday morning program to allow more time in between masses for confessions. We didn't see as much of the local people this year, but pilgrims kept coming from afar. Many more families from out-of-state stopped in at the Shrine on vacation.

Bright among the memories of 1970 was the Legion of Mary pilgrimage back in May, dedicated to the memory of Monsignor Donovan of Albany, who as chaplain of the Legion began this yearly event; there was the restoration of Lithuanian Day, thanks to Monsignor Balkunis of Maspeth, Queens, and the Lithuanian-American priests of this area. The All-Night Vigil in August with its candlelight procession on the bluff above the river was an impressive occasion, thanks to our Redemptorist friends, Father Litz and Father Novak. (The 1971 Vigil is slated for the vigil of Our Lady's Assumption, Saturday, August 14, the exact anniversary of the night of torture endured by Jogues and Goupil in 1642.)

Four Bishops blessed Auriesville by their participation this year in pilgrimage exercises—Bishop Brzana of Ogdensburg on Polish Day, Auxiliary Bishop Pernicone of New York on Italian Day, our own Bishop Broderick of Albany on Knights of Columbus Sunday, and his coadjutor and Auriesville's friend of a lifetime, Bishop Maginn, on St. Ignatius' feast.

Father Jacobs and his relatives, the Mohawk children who danced, Father Lalonde and the Caughnawaga, choir Fr. Schlaerth, Fr. McBride, and Mary-Eunice with her husband Joe Spagnola, all helped to make the Kateri Week-end memorable. The Boy Scouts had their pageant and ceremonial dances beside an outdoor fire this year on their retreat week-end, and the Girl Scouts came to the Shrine on retreat for the first time. On closing day Father Hogan of St. Ignatius in Manhattan and his able organizer, Jim McCarthy, brought five busloads from the five boroughs, undaunted by the North Wind, to celebrate the new universal feast of the Martyrs for the first time.

To end on a personal note, 1970 will long be significant to me because I had the privilege of welcoming back to the Shrine Father Louis Devaney, truly a molder of today's Auriesville. Actually he stayed with us nearly two months before heading back to his mission work in South America, but on September 27, the day Father Miller brought the Jesuit-sponsored pilgrimage from Buffalo, we celebrated Father Devaney Day at the Shrine. A poignant memory will linger for the many who came that day of the one-time shrine director now turned missionary, like Isaac Jogues before him, blessing the pilgrims just as he had blessed the "descamisados" of Columbia with the relics of the martyrs.

Enough happened here during the past six months to give us confidence that our holy hill will be a sanctuary of prayer considered well worth a visit for many years to come. May God keep you over the winter months.

Devotedly in Christ, Our Lady and the Martyrs,

Father Egan

Director, MARTYRS' SHRINE

THE MARTYRS' SHRINE Auriesville, New York 12016

THIS IS MY
COMMANDMENT
LOVE
ONE
ANOTHER

Fr. Thomas Grassman O.F.M. Conv.



Every season at Auriesville we note a number of dear friends of the Shrine who pass on to eternity. It is impossible to list all of them by name. In fact it is sometimes months before we hear of their death. We do however often beg the Lord to make up for our oversight, and especially during the month of the Holy Souls we ask Him to confer the happiness that is

without end on all who have helped us on Martyrs Hill.

One friend of over three decades must be given special mention this November, Father Thomas Grassmann of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual. He became our neighbor back in 1938, when His Excellency, Bishop Gibbons, asked the Franciscans to start another shrine at Fonda, four miles west of Auriesville, to honor the place where Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha was baptized. She was born here at Ossernenon (Auriesville) in 1656, but it was at Caughnawaga, the new village of her people after the abandonment of the settlement where the martyrs had suffered, that she received the waters of baptism twenty years later.

Father Thomas, as he was affectionately known by people of all faiths here in the Valley of the Mohawks, was born in Elizabeth, New Jersey in 1890. He first came in contact with the story of the Jesuit missionaries whose lives he would later chronicle when he studied under Jesuits of this century at Fordham Preparatory School. Yet it was to the Franciscan Conventuals that he felt the Lord was calling him after his college days at Seton Hall.

Ordained in 1920, he served as pastor of several parishes in New York State until in 1933 he was named Commissary Provincial of the Immaculate Conception Province of his order.

Ill health forced him to seek the dry climate of the Southwest in the mid-thirties, an unexpected turn of events which did much to shape the remainder of his life. Fascinated by the missionary labors of the Friars and the Blackrobes in Arizona and New Mexico, he plunged into the study of archaeology, unwittingly providing himself with a valuable background for his future work in the Mohawk Valley.

Once the Tekakwitha Shrine was begun, Father Thomas resolutely set out to find the remains of 17th-

century Caughnawaga, and in the mid-fifties his efforts were rewarded with the discovery, not too far beneath the top soil, of rotted ends of the poles which once formed the walls of the long houses and the surrounding palisade. Gradually the entire outline of the village was unearthed.

Years of patient study helped Father to gather many details of life among the Mohawks in the 1600's. Last year his monumental work, "The Mohawk Indians and Their Valley," saw the light of day, a vast store of historical research which has already been recognized as a basic tool for all future studies on the early history of the Mohawk Valley.

The Jesuits of Auriesville have long felt indebted to Father Grassmann, not only because of his great contribution to our knowledge of the Indians and the missionaries who made history both at Ossernenon and Caughnawaga, but also because of the deep interest he took in all our activities for the pilgrims. In 1946 on a visit to Belgium he was able to procure two hand-carved replicas of the original statue of Notre Dame de Foye. One of these he intended for Auriesville, the other for his own shrine, for it was to the mission at Caughnawaga that the early Jesuits brought another replica from the shrine at Foye in 1675, the first instance of a statue of the Blessed Virgin to be venerated in New York State.

During the last three years of his life, we were linked to him in another way. His brother's widow is the sister of Father Thomas H. Moore, S.J., who is on the staff of the Retreat House at Auriesville.

Simple but impressive ceremonies marked the funeral which his brother Franciscans arranged for him at St. Cecilia's Church in Fonda. Another Franciscan friend of Auriesville, Father Cyril Orendac, a classmate of the deceased, spoke at the mass of his friend's sense of dedication to the will of God. There were Mohawk friends on hand who made the trip down from St. Regis and the Canadian Caughnawaga, among them Father Michael Jacobs, S.J., who along with Father Henri Bechard, S.J., Vice-Postulator in Canada for Kateri's cause, the director of Auriesville, Father Egan and Father Moore joined the Franciscans in concelebrating the mass.

At his own wish Father Grassmann was buried at the site of the Indian Village he had discovered, high on the hill overlooking the Mohawk, near the plaque which he proudly presented for Bishop Gibbons to bless 32 years ago. What a wonderful setting in which to rise from the tomb on Judgment Day!

CONCERNING MASS CARDS

1. Address all Mass requests to:
Rev. Thomas F. Egan, S.J., Shrine Director
Martyrs Shrine
Auriesville, N.Y. 12016
2. Write in lower left hand corner, "Attention Desk M."
3. Write or print your own name, address, city, state and zip code clearly on the ENVELOPE.
4. Enclose your offering for each Mass. (The usual offering is \$2.00, but larger stipends for the upkeep of the Shrine are gratefully received.) Check or Money Order are preferred.

The attached form will serve as a typical Mass request.

Date

Dear Father Director:

Enclosed find my offering for Mass(es)
for M. (living) (deceased).

Send Card to:

Name

Address

City

State Zip Code

Before mailing sign card

ENROLLMENT IN MARTYRS' MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION grants a sharing in a daily Mass offered for all Benefactors of the Shrine. The usual offering is one dollar for an individual, five for a family, living or deceased. A perpetual enrollment remembrance for a deceased person is twenty-five.

SEVEN-DAY VIGIL LIGHTS are lighted in the Coliseum upon request. The usual offering is one dollar.

Remember the Martyrs Shrine in your Will. (The Legal Title: Shrine of Our Lady of Martyrs of Auriesville, N.Y.)

Cardinal Cushing . . .



Just before our PILGRIM was to go to press, the radio report reached us of the death on All Souls' Day of His Eminence, Richard Cardinal Cushing, Archbishop of Boston.

Many a pilgrim to Auriesville will remember one of the largest throngs of worshippers ever to gather in the Coliseum, Catholics from New England and elsewhere, who on August 31, 1959 participated here in a pilgrimage led by this greatly loved prince of the Church. Many a visitor in the intervening years has stared at the wide-angle photo just inside the main door of the chapel, showing the Cardinal preaching to the congregation of over 10,000 from "the altar in the sky" in the center of the Coliseum.

Auriesville long has counted Cardinal Cushing among its special friends. Duties at the Vatican Council followed by prolonged illness prevented His Eminence from returning to Martyrs Hill in subsequent years, but he never ceased to encourage the Catholics of his flock to pray at Auriesville for the courage and zeal of the North American Martyrs. Only last year he wrote to express his regrets at not being able to participate in the events of Boston Day. Because it reveals much about a great man, we reproduce parts of that letter for our readers:

Dear Father:

I am sorry to tell you there is no possibility of me joining the Boston Pilgrimage to Auriesville. I haven't been out of the house more than a few times in the past month. I have had a terrible summer.

It was very good of you to invite me and to offer me deluxe service but, really, I could never make it.

I would like to retire but I must wait until I am seventy-five. That will be in August of 1970. At that time I will be almost fifty years a Priest, thirty years a Bishop and twenty-five years Archbishop of Boston.

Say a prayer for me, please, at the Shrine in honor of my seventy-fourth birthday. (Ed. note: This was the day the Boston pilgrims were to be at the Shrine) I am overwhelmed with problems and as far as I can make out, they can only be solved by prayer and sacrifice.

With affectionate greetings, highest esteem and abiding gratitude, I am Yours fraternally in Christ,

Richard Cardinal Cushing
Archbishop of Boston

The letter was written fifteen months ago. The Lord saw fit to bring His Eminence to his seventy-fifth birthday and his longed-for retirement. His work was done. How timely the Lord's conferring of the reward! Whatever the problems were, His Eminence certainly sought their solution by prayer and sacrifice.