

# PILGRIM

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## THE GOLDEN AGE OF NEW YORK'S JESUIT MISSIONS

### EUCCHARISTIC CONGRESS UNITES THOUSANDS OF CHRIST'S FAMILY

"Lord, it is good for us to be here," said Peter, as he beheld Christ transfigured on Mount Tabor. The phrase came easily to our lips as we looked around at the people and the events which made up the 41st International Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia in early August. Father Robert Fleig, Father John Doolan and I, who were there to represent the Martyrs' Shrine, as well as Father Joseph McBride, Kateri's vice-postulator; Father Ronald Sams who came to help him with the spectacular Kateri exhibit, Father Ronald Schultz from the Tekakwitha Shrine and Father Michael Jacobs of Kateri's own Mohawk nation - - we were quite unanimous in our sentiments. Just to sit at the Kateri and the Martyrs booths in the Civic Center and greet the countless members of the Mystical Body from all over the world as they stopped by was an experience never to be forgotten. Then the Mohawk liturgy, the mass in the stadium which opened the All-Night Vigil and the homily by Archbishop Sheen, the concelebration with Father General Arrupe and so many of our brother Jesuits, the chats with Bishop Francisco Claver of the Philippines and Bishop Samuel Carter of Jamaica, who were once simply Jesuits with whom we lived, the glimpses of Mother Teresa and Cardinal Suenens - - all this added up to an ever greater realization of the wondrous unity into which Christ Our Lord has drawn us through baptism and the eucharist. May the effects of the Congress linger with us for years and reach out to all the brethren who could not be there. The Spirit of God still moves over the waters and can transform our lives if only we cooperate.

*TOP: Scene at the Kateri booth (Chet Adams of Detroit at left, Esther Phillips of Caughnawaga at right.)*

*MIDDLE: Tom Constantino of the Noteworthy Company of Amsterdam, surveying the exhibit on the martyrs he planned and assembled. (He did the one on Kateri too.)*

*BOTTOM: Three Mohawks guarding the Kateri display, Thomas Deer, Father McBride, and Colin Phillips. Father was officially adopted by the Mohawks in 1969.*





# THE GOLDEN AGE OF JESUIT MISSIONS IN NEW YORK STATE

In September of 1667, just short of 21 years after the martyrdom of St. Isaac Jogues and his young companion, St. John Lalande, three Jesuit priests, Fathers Jacques Fremin, Jacques Bruyas and Jean Pierron, accompanied Iroquois peace envoys from Quebec to the Mohawk Valley. Before another year would run its course they would be joined by three more Jesuits and missions would be begun for each of the five nations of the Iroquois, stretching between the valleys of the Mohawk and the Genesee.

Many reasons can be cited for this remarkable development. The sacrifice of the martyrs and the example of the Huron and Algonquin captives, clinging tenaciously to their Catholic faith, were undoubtedly silent forces at work on many Iroquois minds and hearts. Moreover the ravages of the plague along with attacks from other Indian nations disposed those, who otherwise would have remained hostile to the French, to seek an accommodation. There was still another factor, a turn of events in the complicated political life of Europe, which had the effect of opening for the Jesuit missionaries the door to the Iroquois.

## THE POLITICAL SITUATION

It was the age of the Stuart Restoration in England. The British had had their fill of Puritan fanaticism and eleven years after Oliver Cromwell had sent King Charles I to the scaffold, his son, Charles II, regained the English throne in 1660. Exile in France had made many friends for the latter and had rendered him somewhat attracted to Catholicism, although not to the extent as was his brother, the future James II, who converted to the Catholic faith in 1668. Within a short time economic rivalry led England into war against Holland. In the summer of 1664 four British frigates sailed into the harbor of Nieuw Amsterdam and effected the bloodless conquest of New Netherlands, which then became the English colonies of New York and New Jersey.

Hostilities with the Dutch thus prompted England to seek a French alliance, but over in France Louis XIV had come of age in 1661 and had begun translating his dreams of empire into reality. It was his new policy which was responsible for sending the troops of the celebrated Carignan-Salieres regiment to Quebec in 1666. After two decades of enduring Iroquois raids on the St. Lawrence Valley, the governor of New France at last had the means of striking back. At the same time a punitive expedition would give him the opportunity to lay claim to the lands of the Five Nations before the English could fully establish themselves in the former Dutch colony.

The campaign of De Tracy into the Mohawk Valley in the fall of that year achieved precisely this double effect.

Another outbreak of hostilities occurred when England and France began a joint invasion of Holland in 1672. However the Dutch under William of Orange successfully drove back the aggressors and a Dutch naval squadron recaptured and held Manhattan for six months until it was returned to the British in 1674. Bewildered by this unlikely alliance between French and British, the Iroquois concluded that it was to their best advantage at this time to remain on good terms with the French. Consequently, although they neither sought nor received military protection from their countrymen, the Jesuit missionaries were at liberty to shuttle back and forth over Iroquois trails as they set up their network of mission stations.

## NEW YORK'S CHAIN OF MISSIONS

While Fathers Fremin and Pierron set to work among the Mohawks, Father Bruyas moved on westward to the Oneidas. By the end of 1667 he had a chapel dedicated to St. Francis Xavier in the single Oneida village. The people of this nation, smallest of the Iroquois confederacy, were not particularly receptive. Yet there was more than enough work among the many Christian captives, many of whom had not seen a priest for years, yet were still eager to learn about their faith and practice it. With the help of a zealous Huron named Felix he began a catechetical program for these neglected members of the Body of Christ.

Early in 1668 Father Julien Garnier came from Canada. After assisting Father Bruyas for a time, he moved on to the next Iroquois nation, the Onondagas, who lived in one large village at a site still known as Indian Hill in the town of Pompey, 15 miles south of the present city of Syracuse. This missionary received the warmest of welcomes from Garakontie, the respected Onondaga chief, who had been the staunch friend of Father Simon Le Moyne. Though now an old man, he was still highly respected among all the Iroquois. Delighted that the mission begun by Le Moyne in 1655, tended by Claude Dablon and Pierre Chaumonot from 1656 to 1658, and resumed for a year in 1660 by Le Moyne, the venerable old chief soon had the chapel of St. John the Baptist ready for Father Garnier and then set off for Quebec to make an earnest plea for more missionaries. Fathers Etienne De Carheil and Pierre Millet accompanied Garakontie on his return. The former pushed on to the Cayuga country, where he built a chapel in honor of St. Joseph, while the latter remained at Onondaga to assist Father Garnier. As a people the



Cayugas had never borne arms against the French and in their limited contacts with them had always manifested a friendlier attitude. Their chief had especially fond memories of Father Rene Menard, who had stayed among the Cayugas for some time in 1657 and who had later disappeared on a mission journey in 1661 somewhere in the present state of Wisconsin. As a tribute to this veteran missionary, when two other missions were begun for the Cayugas in late 1668, one was named St. Rene. The other was called St. Stephen.

Only one Iroquois nation remained without a missionary. These were the Senecas, who lost no time sending envoys to Montreal to protest the slight. Their action resulted in Father Fremin's leaving the Mohawk mission to the care of Father Pierron in order to take up work among the Senecas. All five nations now had at least one missionary and all this had been accomplished in the course of a year.

### THE FRUITFUL HARVEST OF CHRISTIANS

The Mohawk proved to be by far the most receptive. Of their three villages, the one where results were most pronounced was Caughnawaga (Gandaouague or Kanawake), the village of the turtle clan and successor to Ossernenon, where Father Jogues and his companions had shed their blood. To meet the growing needs of the Mohawks Father Francois Boniface came from Quebec in 1669 to join Father Pierron and become the resident priest at Caughnawaga. St. Mary's Chapel had been built

at the Mohawk capital of Tionnontoguen in 1667, and a new St. Mary's had been erected when this village of this wolf clan was moved to the north bank of the river near the present Wagner's Hollow. Now in 1669 another mission chapel named after St. Peter was built at Caughnawaga. The next year would see the arrival of still another pair of Jesuits, Thierry Beschefer and Louis Nicolas, giving the Mohawks four missionaries.

Well could Father Francious Le Mercier, superior of all the missions of New France, write to his Jesuit Provincial back in Europe in early 1670: "The Iroquois missions have never presented brighter prospects than at the present time; all the nations have chapels and priests; all listen with interest to the teachings of the Fathers; and all seem to be on the eve of their Christian regeneration."<sup>1</sup>.

As if to fulfill this prediction, a long-hoped-for event occurred in the summer of 170. At a peace conference convened by Governor De Courcelle at Quebec to settle differences between the Iroquois and the Algonquins the venerable Garakontie suddenly rose to proclaim publicly his belief in Christianity, his intentions to renounce pagan practices and his desire to be baptized. Despite his long-time friendship with the Blackrobes the

1. *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents*, Vol. LIII, p. 25 edited by Reuben Gold Thwaites, published by Burrows Brothers, Cleveland, 1896-1901.

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

Send Card to: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

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AURIESVILLE, N.Y. 12016

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Kindly enroll \_\_\_\_\_

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City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

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AURIESVILLE, N.Y. 12016



## DIRECTOR'S LETTER

Dear Friends and Pilgrims,

It was with great regret that we learned a few months ago of the impending departure of the Most Rev. Edwin B. Broderick, bishop of the Diocese of Albany, to assume new duties as episcopal director of Catholic Relief Services.

For the past seven seasons we have looked forward to at least one visit, and often several, from Bishop Broderick. To Jesuits he has been a most loyal alumnus, a graduate of both Regis High School and Fordham University in New York City, who could tell the story of our martyrs as well as any member of the staff. To all of us at the Shrine he has shown himself a dear friend and father whom we shall gratefully remember for his warmth, his wit, and his encouragement. The most recent indication of his interest and support came in his participation in the Mohawk liturgy at Old St. Joseph's Church in Philadelphia on August 6, the contribution of all of us involved in the cause of Kateri to the program of the Eucharistic Congress.

Bishop Broderick will now be concerned about procuring the necessary funds for the works of mercy in mission lands. One of his men in the field will be none other than Father Louis A. Devaney, S.J., still fondly recalled by our pilgrims as director of this Shrine, but



*Bishop Edwin B. Broderick of Albany poses in the courtyard outside historic St. Joseph's Church in Philadelphia with the Shrine Director (far left), Father Joseph McBride, S.J., vice-postulator for the cause of Kateri (second from left), and Father Michael Jacobs, S.J. of St. Regis, principal concelebrant of the Mohawk liturgy in honor of Kateri at the Eucharistic Congress.*

now the representative of Catholic Relief Services in Bogota, Colombia. Since the Shrine's reason for being involves focusing the attention of our pilgrims on the Church's stirring mission history, we shall still have our links to Bishop Broderick. May the Lord bless him abundantly and make his new tasks most effective.

*Devotedly in Our Lord  
Father Egan, S.J.*

THE MARTYRS' SHRINE  
Auriesville, New York 12016

CONTACT US FOR AN ILLUSTRATED TALK  
ON THE SHRINE AND THE MARTYRS  
THIS FALL OR WINTER

KATERI  
TEKAKWITHA

.....

EUCCHARISTIC  
STAR IN THE  
NEW WORLD

Remember the Martyrs Shrine in your will.

PILGRIM, INDIAN SUMMER, 1976 — Vol. LXXXVII, No. 3 — Quarterly publication of the Shrine of Our Lady of Martyrs, Auriesville, N.Y. Thomas F. Egan, S.J., President and Shrine Director; Thomas J. Wade, S.J., Vice-President; Robert L. Fleig, S.J., Secretary and Treasurer; Timothy C. O'Dwyer, S.J., Assistant Director; Paul J. Gampp, S.J., and Francis C. Pfeiffer, S.J. Board Members.

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Onondaga chief had seemingly delayed his acceptance of their teachings until he felt strong enough to live up to their demands. Francois-Xavier de Laval-Montmorency, first bishop of Quebec, conferred the sacrament on the old warrior, while the French governor himself served as godfather. Garakontie chose Daniel as his Christian name, which was that of the governor. A year later the scene was repeated when Saonchiogoua, the Cayuga chief who had so revered Father Menard, received baptism from Bishop Laval and chose Louis as his patron, undoubtedly a gesture in part to the French King.

The Senecas were greater in number during this period than the other four nations put together, since over the preceding three decades they had adopted far more captives into their tribal structure than the other nations had done. One of their four villages, Gandougare, located a few miles south of the present village of Victor, was composed almost entirely of Huron captives. As this was the logical choice for the first Seneca mission, Father Fremin built his chapel of St. Michael there and soon had gathered many of the older Hurons who had been converted by St. Jean de Brebeuf and his companions before the dispersal of their nation in 1649. On one occasion, when he and Father Garnier were making their rounds of the Seneca villages, the pair of missionaries narrowly escaped death at the hands of a Seneca warrior who was under a compulsion to act out the dictates of a dream. Father Garnier stayed on at St. Michael's when Fremin, who had served as superior of the Jesuits on the Iroquois mission, was recalled to Canada. Meanwhile a second chapel dedicated to the Immaculate Conception was built in the Seneca country in 1672 and entrusted to the care of Father Pierre Raffeix. Still a third mission for the Senecas known as St. James was begun by Father Pierron.

In 1674 Father Bruyas succeeded Father Fremin as superior and moved to St. Mary's (Tionnontoguen) among the Mohawks to replace Father Pierron. Father Millet then transferred to the Oneidas, leaving the care of the Onondagas to Father Jean de Lamberville, a newcomer destined to be associated with that nation for many years.

While it would be futile to single out any member of the valiant band as most effective, it was the lot of the young missionary to the Mohawks at Caughnawaga, Father Boniface, to be the first to receive converts in any number, 30 adults in 1672 alone without counting those who asking for baptism at death's door. The Indians were deeply moved by his kindness, and the Nativity scene which he put together to celebrate Christmas of 1672 at St. Peter's chapel made a profound impression on them. As Father Bruyas was later to confirm after he procured the little statue of Our Lady of Foy for the

Mohawk Christians in late 1675, the concept of the Blessed Mother holding out her Infant Savior made more of an impression on them than any other feature of the gospel message.

Father Boniface literally wore himself out in less than four year's time. He was escorted back to Quebec in 1674 and died soon after, literally a martyr of charity at the age of 39. His replacement at St. Peter's, Father Jacques de Lamberville, brother of the apostle to the Onondagas, would have the privilege in 1676 of baptizing one who in our day has been designated by the Church as a candidate for sainthood, Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha. The roster of missionaries to the Iroquois is completed with mention of Father Francois Vaillant de Gueslis, who came to the Mohawks in 1678, but that is to get ahead of the story.

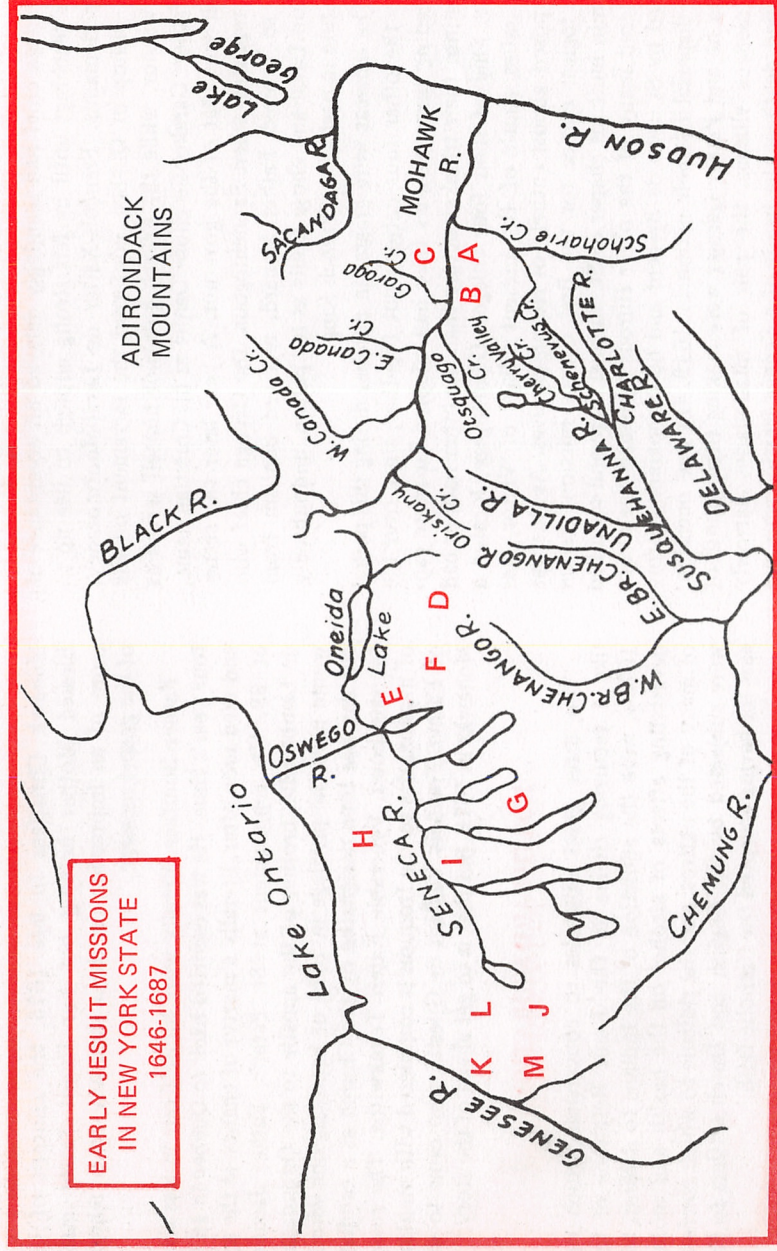
### NORTHWARD MIGRATIONS

The three great obstacles to conversion, which run like a recurring theme in the Jesuit Relations of the 1670's, were the addiction of the Indians to dreams, the devastating effects of alcohol on the health and morals of many of the natives, and the ridicule to which converts were subjected by the English and Dutch settlers to the east for having accepted the Catholic faith.

So difficult did the practice of the faith become in the face of these obstacles that the missionaries encouraged their converts to migrate northward to form Christian villages of their own. The most celebrated of these settlements was the Mission of St. Francis Xavier at La Prairie in the vicinity of Montreal, begun in 1668. Moved several times, the mission finally became known as Caughnawaga on the St. Lawrence, which has existed to the present day. At least half the Mohawk nation left the valley which bears their name to take up residence in this new Christian community and among them was Venerable Kateri. Still another Christian village was begun in 1673 at the urgings of the new French governor, Louis de Buade, Count de Frontenac, at the Bay of Quinte on the north side of Lake Ontario near the present city of Kingston. Some of the Cayuga and Onondaga Christians left their homes to join this community which was put under the spiritual direction of the Sulpicians.

Once the policy of having the Christians leave their homeland was pursued, the fate of the Iroquois missions was sealed. Every success in conversion was met with ever growing resentment on the part of the non-Christians who felt that the missionaries were thus depopulating their villages. The closing years of the Jesuit missions in upstate New York will be told in the next issue.





LEGEND: Each of the bold-faced letters on the above map represents one of the 17th-century Jesuit missions in New York State. Data on each mission can be found by referring to the corresponding letter in the table below.

MISSION	INDIAN NAME	LOCATION	FOUNDER	DATE
<b>MOHAWK:</b>				
A. HOLY TRINITY	Ossernenon	Auriesville	Fr. Jogues	1646
B. ST. MARY	Tionnontoguen	Sprakers d.	Fr. Frenin	1667
C. ST. PETER	Caughnawaga	Fonda	Fr. Boniface	1669
<b>ONEIDA:</b>				
D. ST. FRANCIS XAVIER	Onneyout	Oneida Castle	Fr. Bruyas	1668
<b>ONONDAGA:</b>				
E. ST. MARY	Gannantaa	Lake Onondaga	Fr. Dablon	1656 <sup>b</sup> .
F. ST. JOHN BAPTIST	Onnontague	Indian Hill	Fr. J. Garnier	1668
<b>CAYUGA:</b>				
G. ST. JOSEPH	Goyogouen	E. of Lake Cayuga	Fr. de Carheil	1668
H. ST. RENE	Onontare	Seneca River	Fr. de Carheil	1669
I. ST. STEPHEN	Thiohero	N. of Lake Cayuga	Fr. de Carheil	1669
<b>SENECA:</b>				
J. ST. MICHAEL	Gandougare	S. of Victor	Fr. Frenin	1668
K. CONCEPTION	Sonnontouan	Honeoye Falls	Fr. Raffex	1673
L. ST. JAMES	Gandagaro	Victor	Fr. Pierron	1673
M. ST. JOHN	Gandachiaragou	Lima	Fr. J. Garnier	1674

a. Both the village and mission were moved to the north bank of the Mohawk River near Wagner's Hollow around 1668.

b. St. Mary of Gannantaa was abandoned in 1658, but reopened for a year when Father Simon Le Moyne returned to the Onondagas in 1660.