

PILGRIM

from the **MARTYRS SHRINE**

Auriesville, N.Y. 12016

YEAR END
1976

VOL LXXXVII
No. 4

Fifth Bicentennial Issue

FOUR LAY APOSTLES OF IROQUOIS COUNTRY

MARTYRS SHRINE HONORS JUBILARIANS FATHERS DEVANEY AND SHANAHAN

On Sunday October 17 the Martyrs Shrine celebrated the golden jubilee of two Jesuits who by their work at Auriesville became known to a generation of our pilgrims, Father Louis A. Devaney, S.J. colorful and beloved Shrine director throughout the decade of the fifties, and Father James J. Shanahan, S.J., former superior of the Buffalo Province of the Jesuits, acting director of the Shrine in 1967 and Auriesville's superior in the early 1970's.

Regrettably our tribute to the jubilarians had to be arranged on short notice. While Father Shanahan was at the Shrine, assisting on the staff for the latter part of the season, Father Devaney, now a missionary among the poor in Bogota, Colombia, had to come from South America. We did not have much advance warning as to which weekend he could be with us. Newspapers and radio stations in central and eastern New York cooperated in generous measure in disseminating the good news, but understandably there were many good friends some distance from the Shrine who were disappointed at not getting word about the festivities.

Father Shanahan agreed that any donations received should be made over to Projects for the Poor, the agency Father Devaney now directs with the assistance of the Jesuit Provincials of both New York and Colombia. The entire Shrine collection for the weekend was designated for the same cause. It is a measure of the esteem our pilgrims hold for these two classmates who began their Jesuit careers at St. Andrew-on-Hudson in Poughkeepsie back in 1927 that nearly \$3,000 was contributed for Father Devaney's mission work.

Currently residing at Canisius College, 2001 Main St., Buffalo, N.Y. 14208, Father Shanahan now spends much of his time in the work of directed retreats, while Father Devaney has already returned to his mission post, where he can be reached at Carrera 10, No. 65-48, Bogota DE 2 Colombia. If you did not get the chance to wish them well at their jubilee observance, perhaps you would like to write them a letter of congratulations.



ABOVE: Father Devaney with his friends in Bogota.

CENTER: Shrine director congratulates Father Shanahan (right) and Father Devaney (left) at jubilee celebration.

BELOW: Tom Constantino of Amsterdam brings two of his donkeys to meet Father Devaney. Father Egan is at left.



THE IROQUOIS WERE LEADERS AND SOME BECAME CHRISTIANS

St. Ignatius Loyola, in his well-known meditation on the Kingdom of Christ, presents the picture of an earthly leader of noble character and equally noble cause. He uses this devise, knowing full well that people everywhere are drawn by greatness of character and, dynamic leadership. It was true in his day and after allowance is made for changes in culture and condition, it is true today. It was true as well among the Iroquois who first heard the Gospel message from the French Jesuit missionaries in the 1600's.

After years of toil the Jesuits, who followed in the footsteps of St. Isaac Jogues and set up a chain of eleven missions from the Mohawk Valley to the Genesee, had relatively little to show for their efforts. But then, contrary to what is often supposed, they proceeded with scrupulous caution. There were no forced baptisms. Except in the case of a dying infant or a person at death's door, the fathers would not accept a prospective convert until there was strong evidence both of sincerity and resolve to persevere.

Attention has often been called to the effect the baptism of Kateri Tekakwitha had on the Mohawks of her day. Women who visit her shrines are pleasantly surprised to learn that she wielded her influence not only because she was the daughter of a chief, but also because women were listened to with respect by the Iroquois. There were other great personalities, four chiefs of sachems of the Five Nations in particular, whose baptism had great impact among their people. An account of their conversions may well serve as a source of inspiration for the followers of Christ of today.

1. *Daniel Garakontie.*

The greatest Iroquois leader of the seventeenth century was in all likelihood the Onondaga chief, Garakontie. He first encountered the Blackrobes in 1654 when he gave the official welcoming speech to Father Simon LeMoyne whom the French governor had sent as ambassador to the Iroquois.¹ A year later he was building a chapel for Fathers Claude Dablon and Joseph Chaumonot², who are credited with having offered the first recorded masses in the future state of New York. Even though the mission had to be discontinued three years later and the palisaded French settlement on the shore of Lake Onondaga hastily



*WHERE CHRISTIAN MOHAWK HISTORY BEGAN. . . .
Assendase, Ganea-gawa, yes, and Kateri all knew the view
of the big bend on the Mohawk as seen today from
outside the Shrine Coliseum.*

abandoned because of growing Indian hostility, Garakontie never ceased to be a voice among his people for peace and friendship with the French. His efforts were rewarded by the reestablishment of the mission by Father LeMoyne from 1660 to 1661 and then, after another turbulent era, by an even more lasting foundation by Father Jules Garnier in early 1668.

Despite his admiration for the Blackrobes and respect for their teachings, Garakontie delayed his decision for Christ until late in life. It was at a Quebec peace conference in 1670 that he publicly proclaimed his belief in Christianity and asked for baptism, receiving it at the hands of the first bishop of Quebec, Francois-Xavier de Laval-Montmorency, who christened him Daniel. Returning to his home at the great Onondaga village (in the present-day town of Pompey south of Syracuse), he was a great example to his people for the remaining six years of his life. It is estimated in the Jesuit Relations that he was possibly 80 when he died.³ He contracted a severe cold by coming through a storm to attend the Christmas midnight mass. Realizing his end was near, he begged Father Jean de Lamberville to prepare him for death. Gathering his friends for a banquet, he advised them to maintain peace with the French, to abandon their superstitions and to become Christians. The missionary wrote in Relations that scarcely a sin sullied the chief's soul after he entered the Church.

2. *Louis Saonchiogoua.*

Saonchiogoua the Cayuga was another respected Iroquois leader who accepted the Gospel. The Relation for 1671 traces the first stirring of grace in the soul of this chief to the two-hour harangue delivered to the assembled sachems of the Five Nations by Father Chaumonot upon his arrival at the Onondaga capitol in

1. *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents, Vol. XLI, p. 115, edited by Reuben Gold Thwaites, published by Burrows Brothers, Cleveland, 1896-1901.*

2. *Relations, Vol. XLII, p. 125.*

3. *Relations, Vol. LXI, pp. 21-33.*

1655.⁴ A year later the chief became greatly attached to Father Rene Menard, who began the first Cayuga mission. Later the same chief would play a major role in prevailing upon Father LeMoynes to return to the Iroquois in 1660, insisting however that the veteran missionary divide his time between the Cayugas and the Onondagas. His devotion to the Blackrobes was rewarded when Father Etienne de Carheil came to work among the Cayugas in 1668 and established three mission chapels in their district.

Long the ally of Garakontie, Saonchiogoua was impressed by the decision of his friend to become a Christian. Accordingly, when in 1671 the Senecas, his neighbors to the west, asked him to represent their cause with the French in Quebec, he secretly resolved to search out Father Chaumonot, now stationed there ministering to the Hurons. Opening his heart to the Father whose oratory had so moved him sixteen years before, he declared that he was resolved to become a Christian and to renounce forever all the customs of his country which were not in harmony with the Gospel. Bishop Laval again did the honor of baptizing the Cayuga leader, conferring on him the name of Louis.

3. Peter Assendase

A chief of the Mohawk country, Assendase, was credited by Father Jacques Bruyas in the Relation for 1673-74,⁵ for greatly improving the climate for conversion by his own entry into the Church. A doughty old warrior of 65, he

resided at Tionnontoguen, the Mohawk capitol just west of the Two Noses near the present-day community of Sprakers. In 1673 he was among those who took part in the great assembly of Iroquois sachems summoned to Fort Cataragui on the northern shore of Lake Ontario to meet the newly appointed French governor, Louis de Buade, Count de Frontenac. The latter strongly urged the deputies of the Five Nations to embrace the Christian faith, after which Garakontie, speaking to his fellow Iroquois, gave a similar exhortation. So profoundly moved was Assendase that as soon as he had returned to the Mohawk Valley he sought out Father Bruyas for instruction.

On the day following his baptism, the chief gave a public feast at which he declared to all the guests that he had renounced dreams and other superstitious customs and that he would never again be present at meetings where dreams were discussed. According to the missionary, Assendase was so faithful in keeping his promise and practicing all the Christian virtues that he soon became a model for the Christians. While it was not long before other began asking for instructions, the conversion had an opposite effect on some of the villagers. Relatives took to blaming him for the sicknesses which subsequently affected his family. Some carried the persecution to the point where he almost became the first Mohawk martyr. One of his kinsmen, unable to endure his being a Christian, sought courage in drink and then fell on

4. Relations, Vol. LIV, pp. 269-273.

5. Relations, Vol. LVIII, pp. 171 ff.

USE THIS ENTIRE FORM FOR REQUESTS YOU HAVE OF THE SHRINE STAFF YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS ARE ALREADY TAPED ON THE REVERSE SIDE

CONCERNING MASS CARDS

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 is preferred.

CONCERNING ENROLLMENTS

In the Martyrs' Memorial Association

The usual offering is one dollar for an individual annual enrollment, five for a family, living or deceased.

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 _____

Mail to: FR. DIRECTOR, MARTYRS' SHRINE,
AURIESVILLE, N.Y. 12016

Dear Father Director:

Kindly enroll _____

in the Martyr's Memorial Association for _____ year (or years) or perpetually.

Send enrollment to: _____

Name _____

Street _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Before mailing sign card _____

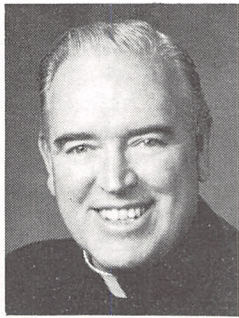
Mail to: FR. DIRECTOR, MARTYRS' SHRINE,
AURIESVILLE, N.Y. 12016

DIRECTOR'S LETTER

Dear Friends and Pilgrims,

A Christmas card from one of our pilgrims perked us up a few weeks ago with its words of encouragement. The sender expressed himself as dismayed by the number of appeals he receives from charitable organizations, all thoroughly computerized. Of course our own appeal letters and this quarterly PILGRIM makes use of computer techniques - - necessarily so today because of increasingly complicated postal regulations - - but this gentleman appreciated the fact that the majority of our acknowledgments are hand-addressed and that as much as possible we try to add a personal line or two to show that we appreciate.

To be honest, though, we don't have a perfect record. At certain periods of the year we are deluged with mail and with a meager staff we sometimes fall behind. Our team has been plagued by sickness for the past two years, and when one of our reliables is out of action, a donation or two can get misplaced. Then an embarrassing note will arrive, asking for an explanation. Just the same, I am proud that the Jesuits and lay people who handle the mail try very hard to be



efficient and in particular to maintain the personal touch.

This brings us to a problem. The cost of mail and ever-more stringent requirements from the post office have forced some religious groups to ask their friends to consider their cancelled check as an acknowledgment. We'd like to avoid this solution and plan to keep sending our thanks for every bit of help we receive. At the same time we trust our pilgrims will understand when in the case of very small donations the acknowledgment is a form letter or even a card. In this way we can employ our third class non-profit permit to cut postage costs to the minimum and thus put your donation to better use.

Do we give your names to others? We have never had to do this, and we shall continue to keep our mailing list to ourselves. We are still glad that everyone on our list has had some personal relationship with the Shrine, membership in our Shrine family, you might say. Because you are family, you continue to share in our prayers and masses.

It is easy to give thanks at Christmas. All through the holy season we shall thank the Christ Child for blessing us with the support of many devoted pilgrims and ask Him to keep in His special care.

Devotedly in Our Lord

Father Egan

*Rev. Thomas F. Egan, S.J.
Director, Martyrs' Shrine*

THE MARTYRS' SHRINE
Auriesville, New York 12016

**CONTACT US FOR AN ILLUSTRATED TALK
ON THE SHRINE AND THE MARTYRS**

**A
HAIL MARY
EACH DAY
THAT KATERI
WILL SOON BE
BEATIFIED**

Remember the Martyrs Shrine in your will.



PILGRIM YEAREND 1976 — Vol. LXXXVII No. 4 — Quarterly publication of the Shrine of Our Lady of Martyrs, Auriesville, N.Y. Thomas F. Egan, S.J., President and Shrine Director: Paul J. Gampp, S.J., Vice President; Robert L. Fleig, S.J., Secretary and Treasurer; Timothy C. O'Dwyer, S.J., John M. Doolan, S.J., and Francis C. Pfeiffer, S.J., Board Members.

Entered as second class matter July 6, 1942 at Auriesville, N.Y. act of March 3, 1879.

FATHERS BECHARD AND McBRIDE SPEAK ABOUT KATERI'S CAUSE

A long-time friend of the Martyrs' Shrine from Montreal, our brother-Jesuit, Father Henri Bechard, spent a week on our hill just after the close of the Shrine season to make his annual retreat. We were all especially happy that he was strong enough to make the trip because of his serious illness of last winter. For years Father Bechard has promoted the cause of Kateri in Canada just as Auriesville's Father Joseph S. McBride, S.J. has done in the United States.

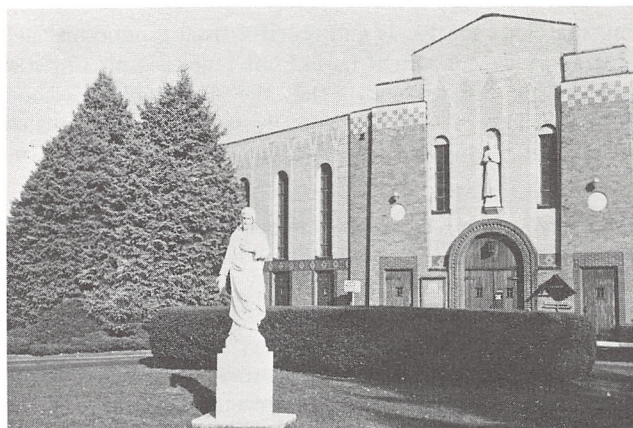
Both vice-postulators were anxious to use the occasion for a conference on the prospects of Kateri's beatification. They met with Father Schultz of the Tekakwitha Shrine and with Father Fleig and Father Egan of the Martyrs' Shrine for a session which all felt most profitable, and next day offered a concelebrated mass in the Jesuit Retreat House for the advance of Kateri's cause.

Of greatest interest to our pilgrims is the report of three distinct miraculous cures, two in Canada, one in the United States. Investigations have been begun and word has been sent to Rome. If but one of these cures is authenticated, Kateri's beatification will be a high probability in the not-too distant future.

We all had urged prayers for her beatification in 1976, a development which does not seem to have been in the divine plan. A genuine cure in 1976, however, may have been God's way of hearing our petition. Let us not grow weary in our prayer.



Goupil Creek with the approach of winter - the Shrine's precious reliquary where St. Rene Goupil was first buried by Father Jogues.



Christ The Savior points to His Sacred Heart as He waits at the Coliseum entrance for next year's pilgrims.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ANNE SCHEUERMAN

The editorial staff of *Who's Who of American Women* has selected Anne M. Scheuerman of suburban Rochester for inclusion in the tenth edition of their yearly publication.

Not too many of our pilgrims know Anne, but this is all the more reason for the Shrine not only to congratulate her on her achievements, but also to thank her for long hours of professional efforts volunteered in the cause of Kateri Tekakwitha.

For the past five years she has brought to life in modern color photography the various locations which were home to Kateri during her brief sojourn on earth — Auriesville, Fonda and Caughnawaga in Quebec. Last year she directed the filming of a 20-minute movie of Marie-Eunice Spagnola impersonating Kateri in the well-known dramatic monologue. With painstaking care she reproduced on modern film the valuable collection of colored glass lantern slides which Father John Wynne, S.J. and Father John Brosnan, S.J. prepared a half century ago to spread devotion to Kateri and the Martyrs.

In everyday life Anne resides with her husband Ray and her four children in Pittsford and since 1962, has served on the faculty of Monroe Community College in Rochester, where she presently holds the position of Associate Professor of Health and Physical Education Leadership.

The staff of the Pilgrim is indeed grateful to Father Paul J. Gampp, S.J. Director of the Auriesville Jesuit Retreat House for the snapshots of our sacred grounds which appear on this page and on page 2.

him, snatching the beads and crucifix from around his neck, threatening to kill him if he did not renounce his Christian faith. Father Bruyas reports that the chief replied without alarm: "Kill me! I shall be happy to die in so good a cause. I shall not regret having given my life in proof of my faith."⁶

For two years, Assendase seemed to be the foundation stone for the church in the Mohawk country, yet in August 1675 after a sickness of nearly six months, he was called to his reward. His last words as reported by Father Bruyas were: "I wish to die a Christian and to keep the promise I gave to God at my baptism. I do not attribute my death to my baptism, as my relatives falsely imagine. We shall all die, and the heathen will die as well as I. God will do with me what it pleases him. I accept willingly all that comes from his hands, be it life or death."⁷

4. *Joseph Togwirui-The Great Mohawk*

Still another Christian leader was raised up among the Mohawks who would have a great influence on his nation for two decades to come. Togwirui was regarded by all as the hero of the great battle of Kinaquariones in 1669.

Shortly after the turtle clan had moved their village from a location near Auriesville to Caughnawaga near present-day Fonda, the new settlement was besieged by a war party of Mohicans, an Algonquin people from western New England. Unable to capture Caughnawaga, the attackers withdrew after two days. Leaving the Mohawk River at Hoffmans, midway between Schenectady and Amsterdam, they camped overnight and then headed up a well-known trail to the northeast. But the leisurely retreat proved fatal. The Mohawks had enlisted reinforcements from nearby villages, moved out in hot pursuit and set up a perfect ambush in a deep gorge now known as Wolf's Hollow, a mile up from the river. Father Jean Pierron, resident missionary among the Mohawks, paddled his way downstream in hopes of stopping the carnage, but by the time he arrived, there were over 50 dead Mohicans and the remainder had fled. Were it not for the report of the engagement written by the missionary in the Relations,⁸ posterity would never have known about this first recorded battle in the Mohawk Valley, just over a century before the Revolution.

For his valor and display of tactics Togwirui was acclaimed as "the Great Mohawk" or Ganea-gowa by his people. A familiar figure to the people of nearby Schenectady, he was nicknamed Kryn by the Dutch burghers there.

Like many a Mohawk of his day he was not particularly

drawn to the Blackrobes. Consequently he fell into a rage when he learned the next year that his wife had asked for baptism. Striking out on a solo hunt to work off his anger, he wandered far to the north and stopped in at the new village on the St. Lawrence where the Christian Iroquois had begun to migrate. In no time he was moved by the kindness and prayerfulness of so many of his own people. He was instructed and baptized by Father Jacques Fremin, the pastor of the new mission, who two years before had worked in the Mohawk Valley. Soon the Great Mohawk, now known to the Christians as Joseph, was back in his own village, much to the joy of his wife, openly urging the Christians there to migrate to the "praying village" where they could practice their religion without harassment. Fully thirty of the Christian Mohawks agreed to go with him and his wife, and among this number was Anastasia, who had kept a watchful eye on Kateri Tekakwitha all through her early years. Despite the taunts of his former comrades who now branded their one-time hero as a traitor to the nation, the Great Mohawk was far too fearless to be swayed.

For years the Great Mohawk was a leader of his people at the "praying village." After Kateri Tekakwitha arrived there in 1677, he took delight in calling her "his niece." In the Relation for 1683 he is mentioned as taking part in the prayers which the villagers had begun to address to the saintly Mohawk girl who had died three years before. It was further related that when a severe storm destroyed the village chapel, the Great Mohawk immediately turned over the new cabin he had just built for his family for use as a chapel.⁹

In the war which broke out between France and England in 1689 he again commanded the Caughnawaga Mohawks, who allied themselves with the French, and led his warriors southward for the attack on Schenectady in February 1690. The following year on a hunting party near the Salmon River, he and his men fell into an ambush laid by a detachment of Algonquins. The eventful life of the Great Mohawk was over.

God thus works through men, lay apostles as well as priests and religious, to get His message to other men. While all four of these Christian converts had great influence among their people, it is but natural to wonder how much greater that influence would have been in the case of the first three, Garakontie, Saonchiogoua, and Assendase, had they lived for another ten years on this earth as the followers of Christ. This effect might have been far reaching both in the history of the Iroquois and in that of the white men who came to their shores.

6. *Relations*, Vol. LXI, p. 177.

7. *Relations*, Vol. LXI, p. 179.

8. *Relations*, Vol. LIII, pp. 137 ff.

9. *Relations*, Vol. LXIII, p. 231.