

# PILGRIM

## from the MARTYRS SHRINE

Auriesville, N.Y. 12016

YEAR END  
1977

VOL. LXXXVIII  
No. 4



## Christmas Day 1677

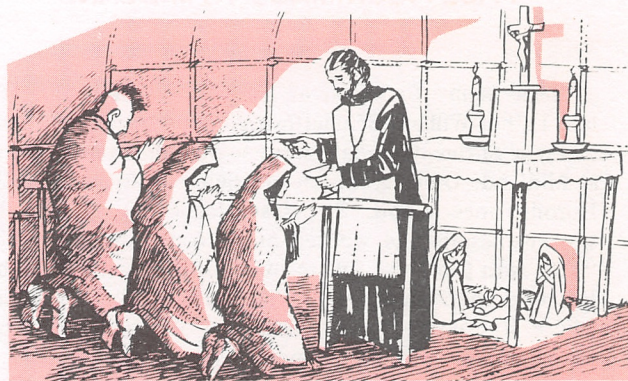
### Kateri's First Communion

The Christmas recently celebrated was the three hundredth anniversary of the day on which Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha made her first communion. Many of our readers have by this time received the Christmas card and accompanying letter by which we commemorated the event. If you did not see the card and would like us to send you one, you have but to make the request.

Kateri resided only a year and a half in Caughnawaga, the village of her people in the Mohawk Valley, after her baptism on Easter Day 1676. Try as best she could to win over her relatives and townspeople by Christ-like charity and eagerness to work, every manifestation of her new Christian faith brought on the reproaches and ridicule of those around her, especially of the uncle who had adopted her and the other members of his household.

Father Jacques de Lamberville, who had baptized Kateri, reached the conclusion that it would be increasingly difficult for the remarkably innocent girl to persevere in practicing her Faith under such pressure. He appealed to the Catholic Oneida chief, Louis Garonhiague, who visited Caughnawaga-on-the-Mohawk in late 1677, for an escort who might bring Kateri to the praying village on the St. Lawrence. This chief, known to history as Hot Ashes, lost no time in assigning a Mohawk brave, the husband of one of Kateri's relatives, and a Huron Christian to spirit Kateri away while her uncle was off trading with the Dutch in Schenectady.

While several routes have been proposed as the one followed by Kateri and her guides, the most logical one, the route favored by Ellen Wallworth, Kateri's first biographer in English, had the party move downstream by canoe along the Mohawk in order to put distance between themselves and the village and then head northward up the valley of the Chuctanunda, which joins the



*Emerson Lamb of the Noteworthy Co. in Amsterdam sketched this conception of Kateri's First Communion. Fr. Cholenec is about to place the host on Kateri's tongue, while her mother's friend, Anastasia, and the great Mohawk Chief, Joseph Togwirui or "Kryn" wait their turn.*

Mohawk in present-day Amsterdam.<sup>1</sup> An Indian trail led up this valley past the Lake Galway of today toward the Sacandaga River, which they probably followed to its juncture with the Hudson. In olden days there was a ford on the Hudson a few miles south of Hadley and Luzerne. From there they certainly made for Lake George which was easily negotiated by canoe. A portage at the northern end along a trail which is actually a street in modern Ticonderoga brought them to Lake Champlain in the vicinity of the famous fort. It was then northward on the lake, down the Richelieu River to the St. Lawrence, and finally westward (upstream) along that river to St. Francis Xavier Mission.

Father de Lamberville had entrusted Kateri with a message for his brother Jesuit, Father Pierre Cholenec: "You will soon know what a jewel we have sent you. Guard it well." Little did Kateri know what had been written about her, yet it was not long before Father Cholenec and the other priests at the mission were fully in agreement. Almost from her arrival Kateri began the practice of daily mass with her mother's old friend, Anastasia. Father Cholenec was quick to observe her piety and saw no reason to delay her first communion.

1. Ellen H. Walworth, *The Life and Times of Kateri Tekakwitha*, 1890, Peter, Paul, and Brothers, Buffalo.



## AURIESVILLE PRIESTS MAKE FALL PILGRIMAGE TO MIDLAND

*By Thomas F. Egan, S.J.*

Back in my first year at Auriesville, I remember the late Father William Schlaerth urging me to visit the other Martyrs' Shrine, Canada's shrine to our sainted missionaries at Midland, Ontario, where old Sainte Marie among the Hurons once stood. St. Isaac Jogues along with his brother Jesuits had worked on its construction in 1639. "You won't get the full meaning of Auriesville," Father Bill told me, "until you've prayed at Midland." Sound advice it was from an experienced Shrine director, but unfortunately it took me ten years to act on this advice.

Early this past October in the company of Father Raymond Fullam, latest Jesuit to join the Shrine staff, but long-time friend from seminary days and Army years, I made my pilgrimage to Midland. We had a perfect day to travel — clear autumn skies, bright sun, riotous colors everywhere. As we drove westward on the Thruway, we recalled how Father Jogues and Brother Rene Goupil had been prodded along this same route by their captors in 1642, who were taking them from Ossernenon for more "sport" at the other two Mohawk villages. Fathers Fremin, Pierron and Bruyas had hiked along the same trail in peace 25 years later when after reestablishing the mission of the Mohawks they started off to visit the western Iroquois nations.

At Herkimer we turned northward on Route 28 and later along the Black River Valley on Route 12, very close to the trail used by Mohawk warriors on their way to join their Seneca and Cayuga allies in the attack on the Hurons in 1649, which brought an end to the Jesuit presence there, and the destruction of the very mission we were about to visit. Father Joseph Poncet was possibly the first European to see the region when, in 1653, the Mohawks, true to the promise they made to the Dutch at Albany, conducted the missionary back along this route to Canada. By late afternoon we were crossing the Thousand Islands Bridge, surveying from on high the many little patches of land dotting the wide St. Lawrence where it now forms the United States-Canada boundary. Father Simon LeMoynes left a description of this picturesque scene in the diary he kept while on his peace mission to the Onondagas in 1654.

It was a vain effort to catch up with the setting sun as we sped along the MacDonald-Cartier Freeway on the north shore of Lake Ontario. After refueling and dining at Oshawa, we again pointed north through the darkness on Ontario Route 12 toward the Georgian Bay country. By nine we were crossing the bridge into Orillia on the north shore of Lake Simcoe. Another 45 minutes brought



*A photographer captures an attractive springtime view of the transept of the Shrine Church at Midland.*

us to our destination where Brother Michael de St. Croix and Brother Gerard were waiting up for us.

Next morning at breakfast we made the acquaintance of Father James McGivern, who first served on the staff at Midland over 30 years ago. After a renowned career as a chaplain in the Canadian armed forces, he returned to the Shrine to resume a priestly work dear to his heart. This genial Jesuit jubilarian and worthy representative of the Catholic Scottish tradition in Canada is exceptionally well versed on every aspect of the days and deeds of the early Jesuit missionaries. He invited Father Fullam and me to concelebrate the votive mass of the martyrs with him in the Shrine church, which was dedicated in 1926, the year after our saints were beatified. Chatting with him was like taking in all 51 years of the history of the Midland Shrine, for he had known all the great Jesuits who had contributed to its growth: Father J.M. Filion, Father T.J. Lally, Father J.F. McCaffery, Father D.J. Hegarty and the rest.

In late morning the youthful Shrine director, Father Winston Rye, arrived back from Toronto. His acquaintance I had made four years ago when he stayed with us at Auriesville before assuming his present post. He had already made plans to take the two of us down the hill to the reconstruction of Old Sainte Marie, undertaken by the Ontario provincial government in 1964 after years of painstaking excavation. Entering the spacious reception center adorned with attractive murals of missionaries and explorers, we made for the theater to view a wide-screen movie on the life of the early Jesuits and the *donné* helpers at Sainte Marie in the glorious decade of the 1640's before Iroquois incursions forced the abandonment and destruction of the settlement. As the movie ends in a fiery recreation of the burning of the mission, the walls give way and there before the eyes of the is the restored real-life mission. We went through the granery, the cookhouse, the stables, the storehouse for



the beaver pelts, the bakery, the shops of the carpenters, the cobblers and the blacksmiths. There was the Jesuit residence to explore, rebuilt on the very spot where our brethren of another century tried to live a community life in the midst of the wilderness. The chapel of St. Joseph for the use of the Indian converts was actually the first parish church in the Province of Ontario. All the while there was the realization for us that over this same plot of ground Saint Isaac Jogues, his classmate Saint Charles Garnier, the veteran missionary Saint Anthony Daniel, the towering giant and first superior Saint John de Brebeuf, his companion at the stake Saint Gabriel Lalement, and the timid, yet resolute Saint Noel Chabanel, yes and other pioneer missionaries like LeMoyne, Bresani, Chaumonot, Ragueneau and Pijart, had all passed many times each day.

The northern end of the complex was the area reserved for the visiting Hurons and Chippewas. Those already baptized would actually come on a sort of weekend pilgrimage, while non-Christians often came for trade or out of mere curiosity. The walk through a typical Huron longhouse — much like the longhouses of New York State Indians, for the Hurons were also an Iroquoian people — was an experience long to be remembered. Hides and tobacco leaves hanging from the ceiling to be cured, fires burning in pits along the central aisle, holes in the roof intended for the smoke to escape, but not particularly efficient — these were the impressions we gathered as we tried to catch our breath and shield our eyes. We thought of the gasmask drill to which we were both subjected during our basic course as chaplains. Brebeuf

has left us a description of a missionary trying to adjust to life in a longhouse. He even tried to read his breviary despite his smarting eyes.

Father Rye was anxious for us to inspect the interpretative museum built and maintained by the Ontario Ministry of Culture and Recreation. In a series of attractive exhibits the visitor is introduced to the Europe of three and four centuries ago where the story of Sainte Marie began, the world-wide voyages of exploration, a divided Christendom in Mother Europe, the way of life followed by the Indians before the advent of the white man, the inevitable clash of cultures, the grand designs of the Jesuit missionaries, their eventual failure in Huronia. The Catholic visitor, especially the Jesuit visitor, would no doubt like to qualify and in a few places take issue with certain subjective interpretations of missionary aims, but the research and artistry employed in assembling such a unified presentation deserve unqualified commendation.

In the early evening Father Rye drove us over to the site of the second Mission of St. Ignace, just a few miles from the Shrine. There amid a light drizzle in the lengthening shadows of dusk we walked through a little clearing surrounded by thick forest growth to a huge rustic cross, erected two decades ago after two exceptionally deep fire pits had been located. They have been identified as the place where Saints John de Brebeuf and Gabriel Lalement were subjected to fire and eventually put to death in March 1649. The original mission of St. Ignace had stood near the present town of Wau-  
baushene, but the Hurons had moved the village to this

## 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.

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**

### 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.

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**

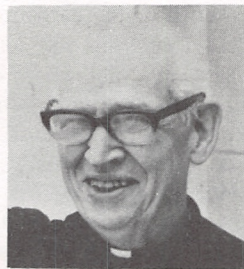


## IN MEMORIAM

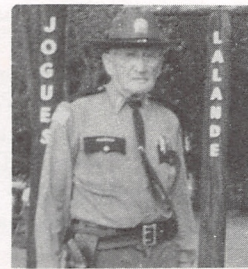
Last April 15 Father Thomas J. Wade, who came to Auriesville as superior in October 1974, passed from this world to the Lord. After a long career as a professor of classics and of scripture at Canisius College, St. Peter's College and LeMoyne College, he had accepted the task of superior, eager to give of himself despite ill-health of long standing. A year ago he suffered a severe relapse. Although he made a remarkable recovery, doctors advised against his resuming his duties as superior. Accordingly he returned to LeMoyne and began thinking of resuming work among the Mexican Americans on the West Coast, an apostolate which claimed much his vacation time during the past decade. He had been down to visit the Auriesville community just three weeks before his death.

Many of our local friends will remember Father Wade from his boyhood days in Schenectady and from the assistance he gave the Latin American community in Amsterdam when the regular priest was not able to come from Albany.

Many a veteran pilgrim has inquired these past few years about the resolute, efficient and friendly deputy sheriff who for nearly 40 years directed traffic on Route



**REV. THOMAS J. WADE, S.J.**



**FRANK J. ZAGOLA**

288 outside the main gate of the Shrine. Frank J. Zagola of Amsterdam found it necessary to relinquish his cherished post at the end of the 1974 season at the age of 82.

In July of this year this devoted friend of the Shrine reached the end of his days. Frank had kept in touch with the Shrine staff since his retirement and only last winter had come to our Christmas party. We ask our pilgrims to recommend him to the Lord and to remember his wife and family in their prayers. The Shrine director was privileged to concelebrate the mass of Christian burial in St. John the Baptist Church in Amsterdam with Father Vincent Jaracz, pastor of St. Cecilia's Church, Warrensburg, and godson of our beloved officer of the law.

**THE MARTYRS' SHRINE**  
Auriesville, New York 12016

**PLAN A PARISH PILGRIMAGE  
TO AURIESVILLE IN 1978**

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

Remember the Martyrs Shrine in your will.

PILGRIM, YEAR END, 1977 — Vol. LXXXVIII, No. 4 — Quarterly publication of the Shrine of Our Lady of Martyrs, Auriesville, N.Y. Thomas F. Egan, S.J., President and Shrine Director; Robert L. Fleig, S.J., Secretary and Treasurer; Francis C. Pfeiffer, S.J., Timothy C. O'Dwyer, S.J., Paul J. Gampp, S.J., John M. Doolan, S.J. and Vincent P. McCorry, S.J. Board Members.

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







*Father General Pedro Arrupe, superior general of the Society of Jesus, when taken on a visit to Saint Ignace II during his stay with the Jesuits at Midland in 1967, knelt in the rain at the spot where Saints John de Brebeuf and Gabriel Lalement stood in bonds during their ordeal in 1649.*

new location and the mission had moved with them just a few months before the fatal attack by the Iroquois. The two martyrs were actually captured a mile or two away at another mission, St. Louis, but had been dragged to St. Ignace II for their great ordeal. Father General Pedro Arrupe had knelt and kissed the ground, we were told, when he was shown the spot during his visit to Midland in 1967. Mindful of a tradition of which Father McGivern had informed us, the three of us said the fifth decade of the rosary there together. It was the fifth decade, as Father had explained, because we were symbolically finishing the rosary of which St. Isaac Jogues and Saint Rene Goupil had said four decades when the latter was struck with a tomahawk at Auriesville.

That evening as I stayed up beyond my usual bedtime, pouring over back issues of the *Martyrs' Shrine Message*, the publication which like our *Pilgrim* appears four times a year, I found myself drawing contrasts between the two Martyrs' Shrines. Our shrine at Auriesville was established a half-century before the Midland Shrine, just a few months after General John Clark had confirmed his identification of the site of ancient Ossernenon in 1884. On the other hand, while the Shrine church at Midland was not constructed until after the martyrs had been beatified, the actual site of Old Sainte Marie had been known since 1844, since many of the stone foundations of the buildings of the one-time mission were plainly visible above ground. There was great interest among the Catholics of Canada to erect a permanent shrine to the martyrs in 1925, but at that time it was not possible to acquire Sainte Marie site. Accordingly, Father J.M. Filion, first

provincial of the newly erected English-speaking province of the Jesuits in Canada, sought permission of the Archbishop of Toronto, the Most Rev. Neil MacNeil, to build a sanctuary on the hill overlooking the site. This proved to be a providential decision, for when in 1940 the Jesuits eventually acquired the mission site, it consisted of open fields and marsh land with no obstacles to excavations.

Auriesville is blessed with a somewhat milder climate, thus permitting a slightly longer season, and with a location astride a main east-west trade route, easily accessible from numerous cities in the northeastern states with large Catholic populations. At the same time, because of the involvement of the Ontario provincial government in the reconstruction of Sainte Marie, the Canadian Martyrs' Shrine has a distinct advantage in that it is far better known than its counterpart in the United States. Every tourist information center in Ontario can supply directions to the Midland Shrine, whereas Auriesville is still regarded as just one of many historic sites in the Empire State.

Next morning at nine Father Rye had arranged for us to offer mass in the reconstructed chapel of St. Joseph which we had visited the previous day. Not more than twenty feet from the altar is the spot where St. John de Brebeuf was first buried shortly after his martyrdom. While St. Gabriel Lalement was also buried in the area, his grave has not as yet been identified. A few months after the burial the bones of the two martyrs were exhumed when the mission had to be put to the torch. The high phosphorus content in the soil where Brebeuf's coffin was found in 1954 is evidence that some of the remains were left there. Not only were two of the martyrs buried there, but our own St. Isaac Jogues had offered mass there in the months before his journey to Quebec which would eventually lead to his captivity at Auriesville.

We had agreed on the first eucharistic prayer for our concelebration, the more closely to follow the prayers used by the martyrs. Almost instinctively we both thought to switch the language to Latin when we reached the consecration. We were offering the Holy Sacrifice in the exact words the martyrs once had uttered on the very spot.

Soon it was lunch time and a farewell to Midland and our brother Jesuits. We had one final treat ahead of us. Fr. McGivern was due in Toronto to prepare another issue of the *Martyrs' Shrine Message*. If we had time to drop him off, we could save him a bus trip. Thus on our sunny ride southward, we had the veritable chronicler





*The restored community chapel with the residence of the Jesuit missionaries very much the way it appeared in the 1640's. — Ontario Department of Tourism and Information.*

Father Paul Gampp, S.J., genial host to all retreatants at Auriesville since early 1975 has assumed the added responsibilities of superior. He is assisted by Father Frank C. Pfeiffer, S.J. as administrator. The latter needs no introduction to the pilgrims, as he served a previous term in this capacity from 1966 to 1969 and always showed himself concerned about all phases of the Shrine program.

#### *FIRST COMMUNION — continued from page 1*

any longer. In a letter written in 1715 the veteran missionary relates the following:

"Virtues so marked did not permit me for a very long time to refuse her the permission which she so earnestly desired, that on the approaching festival of Christmas she should receive her first communion. This is a privilege which is not accorded to those who come to reside among the Iroquois until after some years of probation . . . but the piety of Catherine placed her beyond the ordinary rules." 2

All the records of the period attest to the fact that reverence for the Blessed Sacrament and ardent personal love of Christ were characteristics of this fervent Mohawk maiden. As we cherish her memory here in the Valley where the martyrs first brought the gospel to her people, we pray that through her intercession we may all experience an increase in our faith in Christ's presence in the Eucharist and a growing desire to direct all our efforts toward showing Him our gratitude and sharing Him with others.

2. Letter of Father Cholenec to Father LeBlanc, August 27, 1715. cf Document XII, p. 341, "Positio on the Cause for Beatification of Kateri Tekakwitha," published in English by Fordham University Press, 1940.

#### *MIDLAND — continued from page 4*

of the Martyrs' Shrine at Midland to pull all the strands together for us.

As Father Fullam and I drove on homeward, we thrilled anew to all we had learned about the involvement of our brother Jesuits of the seventeenth century with the American Indians. At the same time we were sadly aware of how little is known of their story by the average American Catholic of today. We prayed for new opportunities to bring to God's people of this generation the inspiration and enthusiasm to be gained from the story of these martyrs and the missionaries who carried on their work well into the succeeding century.

#### **CAUGHNAWAGA HOSTS SHRINE JESUITS**

In the spirit of these four years which commemorate the brief span of time three centuries ago which Kateri lived out on this earth as a baptized follower of Christ (1676-1680), four of the Jesuits on the Shrine staff made recent visits to St. Francis Xavier Mission in Caughnawaga, Quebec. The village where Kateri breathed her last was subsequently moved three times until in 1717 the community settled at its present location across the St. Lawrence River from LaChine. In the present-day church which dates from 1844 Kateri's remains are now entombed in a marble sarcophagus.

Father Robert Fleig was the most recent visitor on the weekend of St. Francis Xavier's feast when he concelebrated a mass there with Father Henri Bechard, vice-postulator in Canada for the cause of Kateri's beatification, and Father Thomas Egan of the Shrine. In November, Father Egan and Father Fullam were both participants with Father Michael Jacobs of St. Regis and Fr. Paul Beaudoin of Caughnawaga in a festive celebration to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Caughnawaga Choir.

Reflecting on his own recent visit to Caughnawaga, Father John Doolan penned the following lines:

"The stone houses, the Jesuit residence, the church and the walls of the enclosure have an ancient strength about them. A force of goodness, if you will, emanates from the place. The character of Kateri is here. The Church where she is buried is central so that there is about it a spirit that is starkly pure. It is quiet, immaculate, simple and orderly. Kateri's presence is there in the Church and it evokes a respect for what she is — a living symbol of love, born of strife, a trail-blazing witness. There is an unfinished quality about Caughnawaga, a hint of great things to come with regard to our Indian maiden. Somehow I felt that this will be the site of a celebration, a triumph in times to come, which will bring great glory to God."