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The Martyrs' Shrine Message, Midland, Ontario

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NOVENA TO THE MARTYRS

September 11 - 19, 1980

The masses for the Novena intentions will be offered
at the Shrine at 7:30 p.m. on each of these days.

MARTYRS' SHRINE MESSAGE

FALL 1980

VOLUME 44, NUMBER 3



The Holy Father joins you in spirit in your celebration at STE. MARIE AMONG THE HURONS of the fiftieth anniversary of the canonization of the first Canadian Martyrs *STOP* He hopes that this jubilee will help the faithful to draw profit from the example of their ancestors, martyrs, founders of the Canadian Church; and from their compatriots recently beatified a new vigor in the faith and in the strength of their witness to the gospel, and he is pleased to send to all the participants his Apostolic blessing. — *June 29, 1980.*

wonderful church of St. Peters. I suppose the Indians, with their fan-shaped feathered headdresses and bright sashes, together with the women's deer-skin gowns and coloured head-bands, as they mingled with the scarlet robes of the Cardinals and the purple of Bishops, provided a splendour that had never been equalled in that holy centre. These Indians represented at least 35 tribes from Canada and the United States and they came bearing gifts for Pope John Paul II. It was a sight that I do not think I can ever completely forget.

And the final event of that morning was to me the striking thousands who joined Pope John Paul II in the Piazza of St. Peter in the recitation of the Angelus. It is one of the happiest events of my life and I would like in this article to share with you something

of the overwhelming feeling and spiritual consolation that was mine at this time.

In the evening I attended a reception of Father Arrupe, the General of my Order, given to a goodly number of those present for the Beatification. At that reception three other Canadian Jesuits of the Upper Canada Province were present, Fathers Driscoll, Bazinet, and McKey.

And then disaster struck. I managed to choke on something that I ate and had to go to the hospital for the next five days. I missed, therefore, the Mass and reception given by Cardinal Carter and the Mass and reception given by Cardinal Roy. I returned to Canada and the Martyrs' Shrine immediately after my bout in the hospital and am still thinking of the wonderful time that I had.



A group of North American Indians, together with hundreds of the faithful, were present at the Sunday Angelus in St. Peter's Square.



MARTYRS' SHRINE MESSAGE

VOLUME 44/NUMBER 3/FALL 1980

Editorial communications write to:
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Martyrs' Shrine
Midland, Ontario
L4R 4K3

In your charity pray for your
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Organization see the inside back cover of each issue.

CUM PERMISSU SUPERIORUM

Cover:

His Holiness Pope John Paul II

MacKenzie, S.J., of Regis College, Toronto, will be the guest homilist. This will also be an occasion to honour a number of the 12 Jesuits who were ordained at Martyrs' Shrine twenty-five years ago. The special Feast Day Mass will be at two o'clock.

The Martyrs' Shrine Association

As you probably noticed from the last Message in the statistics I offered in my letter there, our membership numbers are quite modest. We are attempting a promotion this year of the Family Membership, and there seems already to be some increase of that. If you haven't yet used the insert of the last message for renewal of your membership, please consider doing so as soon as you can; we appreciate your support, and it helps immensely. The advertisement for the Association and a form are usually supplied on the inside back cover of each issue.

Thank You

If you dropped in to the Shrine this summer, thank you for coming; we enjoyed having you; and if you haven't yet, we will be glad to have you make your own personal pilgrimage to this place of prayer and healing, especially during this summer that marks an anniversary, and that saw the beatification of Kateri. Thank you all for your continued generous support of this ministry. May God bless you all with his peace and joy, and answer all your prayers through the intercession of the blessed Martyrs.

Sincerely,

(Rev.) Edwin Merchant, S.J., *Director*



Cardinal Sergio Pignedoli, a friend of the Shrine, shown with Father McCaffary, died Sunday, June 15, 1980.

My Trip To Rome

by J. S. McGivern, S.J.

After years of waiting, it has happened. Canadian and American Catholics have been praying and patiently waiting for the Church to honour Kateri Tekakwitha. Joy filled our hearts as the story flashed out over radio, television and the newspapers in early April that on Sunday June 22nd, 1980, in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, His Holiness Pope John Paul II would beatify Kateri Tekakwitha and some four others who had lived and worked for the Church in South, Central and North America. Almost exactly 300 years after the death of Kateri, the long expected and desired honouring of Kateri would take place. She died in 1680, in 1980 she would be beatified.

Now that the whole story can be told, I would like to give my impressions and reactions to the announcement of this honouring of the first Indian of Canada and the United States. Quite early this year Father Paolo Molinari, S.J., who is the Postulator General for the cause of Kateri's beatification and canonization, informed the Vice-Postulator of her cause in Canada, Father Henri Bechard, S.J., and his counterpart, Father Joseph S. McBride, S.J., in the United States. One of these informed Father Fred Power, S.J., that a commission of Cardinals had recommended to the Holy Father the honouring of Kateri. Father Power, knowing of my interest in this cause, made known to me this fact, but I was told to keep it quiet. It was then that I began to dream and to hope that I might be able to go, but I was almost sure that this would not be,

and then very shortly after, Father Provincial (Father Ryan, S.J.) called me to ask if I would be one of the representatives of the Canadian Jesuits in Rome for this occasion. Actually, it took me really by surprise and I was almost speechless. So much so that he thought I was going to refuse. This was the farthest thing from my mind. I actually wanted to jump at the offer, and did.

From that time everything seemed to be rather muddled. The question of getting a passport and arranging for my tickets and my flight was upper-



At the Offertory Big Chief Jim Shot Both Sides presented the Pope with a jewelled headband together with a parchment expressing the homage of the tribes to the "great holy White Father".

ers and non-believers, people from every ethnic and racial group, pilgrims and tourists from around the world. I've heard people speaking in languages I've never even heard the name of. In that way the Shrine is a microcosm of Canada.

The Shrine is also special because it is a place of pilgrimage and healing. These are things one doesn't hear too much about in the rather secular everyday life of an average Canadian. When one thinks of pilgrimages, one thinks of the Middle Ages or the Holy Land. It doesn't strike us that someone living in Toronto or Vancouver has the opportunity to make a pilgrimage today in his own country to a place made holy by the blood of Martyrs. Nor are many aware of the great graces given to those who make a pilgrimage.

Physical healings occur here too. But more importantly many spiritual healings take place. People wounded in heart and soul can find forgiveness and peace. And which is the greater miracle: to receive physical healing or to receive the ability to bear one's infirmity as a sacrifice of love to God?

I have come into close contact here for the first time with the devotion of people to the relics of the Martyrs — pieces of bone from the bodies of some

of them. This sort of thing was never part of my "Catholic culture" growing up. My scientific and philosophical education had left me skeptical about many popular devotions. Besides, relics seemed a gruesome, if not grisly, preoccupation. I wondered if the use of relics wasn't a form of "magic".

My question received its answer the first time I blessed people with the relics as they came in tens and hundreds after Mass. One has only to see the faith shining in their eyes to realize the truth of Jesus' statement, "Your faith has made you well". There is no special power that attaches to the relics as such. But people do believe that God will show His love for them by means of the relics. God, not the relics, is the object of their faith. And if God grants someone this faith, who am I to give advice to God! I am grateful, rather, that God has strengthened my faith through the faith of others.

Again and again I see that the mysteries of the Kingdom are revealed to God's little ones. The simple faith of simple people is the enduring strength of Christ's Church. I leave Martyrs' Shrine enriched far beyond what I have given and blessed as a priest, a Jesuit and a Christian.



Homily at the Martyrs' Shrine — June 19, 1980

by His Grace Angelo Palmas, Pro-Nuncio to Canada



His Grace Angelo Palmas.

Brethren, may I welcome you to this encounter of charity and grace.

We are gathered here not only to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the canonization of the Canadian Martyrs, but also, and above all to live again the mystery of God's Love for men.

This Sanctuary, so dear to the Church of Canada, is becoming for us at this moment the true calvary. Because, through the saints who offered their lives for the salvation of their brethren, we are adoring in gratitude the Redeemer himself. Hence it is to God, and to him alone, that we address our first thoughts of thanksgiving and praise. Let us praise him and thank him for having instilled in these first missionaries in the Canadian soil the spirit of consecrating their lives and for having led them to

the extreme sacrifice of martyrdom.

Yes Lord, it is you who chose them to represent you in this land and to manifest to it your love. They did preach the mystery of salvation but it was you who spoke through their mouths. They were everything to everyone but it was you, Good Shepherd, who acted through them. When it was time for them to offer their very lives for glorifying your name, it was you who renewed your sacrifice of the cross in them.

Their martyrdom was your martyrdom. When their bodies were afflicted and tormented, their heads were scalped and their lips were cut, their eyes and hearts were plucked, it was you Lord who underwent those abominable afflictions surpassing any human imagination.

They took up the sufferings like innocent sheep ready to offer themselves for those who tortured them, without complaints but always praising your holy name. In their passion it was your passion that was repeated and in their death, your death on Calvary.

They died for the salvation of many and their blood did produce true fruits of the resurrection.

The very moment the enemies thought of destroying your name became the moment of a new spring of grace to the Church in Canada. The blood of the martyrs became the fertile soil for new Christians. The Church in Canada would

not have had the extreme dynamism and vitality which was its characteristics until now, except for the sacrifice of our first martyrs.

Kateri Tekakwitha, Marie de l'Incarnation and Msgr. Laval could not be upon the altars today without the sacrifice of the first Missionaries to Canada. Brethren, after praising and thanking the Lord for the love he manifested through these martyrs, let us now turn to these saints themselves for imploring the divine mercy and favours through their intercession. Likewise, let us receive the message of our salvation from them of which they were the bearers.

Over three centuries have passed since the martyrdom of these saints. But their example and their message are still fresh to our minds. Let us listen to them with faith. They constantly remind us that our lives are from God and we are to dedicate our lives totally to him. God loves us and we are to love Him in return not merely through our words and dry sentiments but through our action. He has given us everything and we are to offer him everything what we are and what we do. Giving their own lives, these saints saved their brethren according to the will of the Redeemer. We are to love our brother as Christ himself giving everything we can. Love is self-giving.

Our martyrs are reminding us now of the need of sacrifice in our mission of universal redemption. Today more than ever, we need courageous and well disposed souls, ready to sacrifice everything for the redemption of the world. Our times truly demand heroism.

Let us remember our brothers throughout the world who suffer persecution and who are hated because they are Christians.

Let us be witness of the Lord in the Sacrifice and let us be true imitators of our holy martyrs. Let us witness above all and everywhere to our faith. Let us be apostles of the Divine Love whereall the Providence is leading us to.

If one day the supreme sacrifices of our own lives are demanded of us for the cause of faith, let us not be afraid of it. God is there to help us. It will be He himself who will take our place in sufferings and death.

My dear brothers and sisters, may God the Father fill you with his mercy. May Jesus Christ, his Son, give you the grace to imitate him and may the Holy Spirit lead you through the path of eternal salvation.

May each step of your way home be blessed.

Renewed and revived at the fountain of Divine Love in this sanctuary, when we enter our home let us be able to say "Lord, I thank you for loving me through these martyrs. Imitating their example, I will be a messenger of your love always and everywhere."

Martyrs' Shrine, June 29, 1980

Brief Reflections

by Father Art Menu, S.J.



knew that following Christ meant taking up one's cross in joy. I knew that a member of the Society of Jesus was called to desire that companionship of the Cross above and beyond all other things, out of a tender love for the suffering Christ.

I also remember seeing Ste-Marie-among-the-Hurons, as painstakingly reconstructed by the Government of Ontario on the original site. It made history come alive. And to attend Mass in the Chapel of St. Joseph at Brébeuf's gravesite, darkness falling, singing in the candlelight, "Lord Jesus of you I will sing as I journey . . ." — I thanked God for bringing me to that place and that time.

That night was also memorable for being the coldest night I have ever spent. It was late in September and the nights were frosty. The group of us novices were to spend overnight there. Alas my sleeping-bag was inadequate and when the fireplace finished-off the wood I spent a miserable night. Perhaps this was the truest taste of what life for the original inhabitants of Ste-Marie was like.

If ever my life as a Jesuit leads me to choose the missions as an apostolate, I shall attribute it to the influence of Martyrs' Shrine and Ste-Marie.

There is no doubt that Martyrs' Shrine is a special place in Canada. I know, because there is nothing like it out West. The Shrine is different from a parish church in a number of ways. The Shrine is visited by people from every background and condition of life: Catholics and Protestants, believ-

After a very enjoyable month working at Martyrs' Shrine I am most pleased to be able to share some brief reflections with the readers of the *Message*.

Being a native of British Columbia, all Ontario was *terra incognita* to me before I entered the Jesuit novitiate in Guelph in 1972. Not long after that I saw the Shrine for the first time. As I walked up to the look-out I began to be aware of the spiritual presence of the Martyrs. They were here — as close to me as if they had been standing at my side — in fact closer, because they touched my heart. I sensed the quality of their love and it changed me in a way I do not even now fully understand. When I left the Shrine that day I