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December 13, 2016
St. Lucy

Dear Reverend Boyer,

Thank you for the Winter 2016 **KATERI**, received with much joy yesterday, on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe! Reading **KATERI** in this particular season, during Advent, always brings to me countless memories of solemn and festive joy because of her. For so many years, this holy season was leavened with biographies of Kateri, miracles and favours wrought by Kateri, Novenas to Kateri, and especially the daily prayer for her canonization. She made the season holier by the sweet-smelling fragrance of her 24 years on this earth! And the gallant knight of Kateri's Cause, Father H. Bechard, was the charcoal fire that ignited our imaginations to aspire to be like her, A.M.D.G.! He was the first for me, following in the footsteps of the Jesuit missionaries who actually ministered to her and directed her on the path to sanctity. The blood of Martyrs is the seed of Christians! And Brebeuf and his brethren, what Christians they were! But that is another beautiful story altogether that you probably well know even better than I do.

Once Kateri was canonized, and the dream we all shared for her finally came true, I more or less felt like the job was done. She made it to the altars! Everyone could pray to St. Kateri Tekakwitha and feel confident that they were praying to a canonized Saint, with all the rights and privileges that accrued to her new dignity, especially for the Native Peoples! And so when I was reading your magazine, I was wondering what new purpose and energy it might have for devout Catholics. And now I see that you, like Father Jacques Bruyere before you, are a man of holy and delightful surprises! He laboured so heroically to promote Kateri's Cause and did so by inspiring others to follow her Lord, nailed to the Cross, as he was wont to often write. With him there were no short cuts. Kateri set the lofty summit of Mount Carmel, uncompromisingly, as her goal, the Royal Road of the Cross, and Father Jacques could see no other path than to follow in Kateri's footsteps. He was a man of great sanctity and who loved Kateri passionately.

It seems to me that you have an incredible legacy. Once again, I go back in memory to Father Bechard. Years ago I related to Father Bruyere that I had once sent a very modest donation of about \$5.00 to the Kateri Center with a brief note. I was just another pilgrim and devotee of the Lily of the Mohawks among countless others. But I received a warm-hearted and generous response personally from Father Bechard, thanking me heartily and blessing me and offering to remember me in his prayers to Kateri. It seems like this has always been the case with those associated with her from the beginnings, such as the letters from parish priests to Father Cholonec in the late 17th century! And Father Bruyere

was the same. Every letter I wrote was answered and answered with characteristic Jesuit zeal for the salvation of souls! I believe God must have created Kateri also as a special seal to mark the particular charism of the Society of Jesus! And yet they shared her. To be sure, I am certainly not a Jesuit ; but they assisted me in appreciating her.

Finally, I feel a little like the character of Kent, on the one hand, and the character of Edgar, on the other, from Act V, Scene 3 of Shakespeare's *King Lear*. We all worked so lovingly for Kateri's canonization, as though it all depended on God's strength and on our trusting prayers, but finally we come to rejoice that she is a Saint!

Kent : I have a journey, sir, shortly to go.

My master calls me ; I must not say no.

Edgar : The weight of this sad time we must obey,

Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.

The oldest hath borne most; we that are young

Shall never see so much, nor live so long.

In the Winter **KATERI**, I read that 'Deacon Ron Boyer was advised against the mission by his doctors.' Therefore, I will be praying for you especially during the Christmas Octave and for the young man (the brother of a Grade 12 student of mine) for which reason I wrote to you in September. Wishing you the joyous and solemn Feasts of the Nativity of Our Lord and Mary, Mother of God!

Sincerely,

in the Lord,

through Our Lady and Kateri,



F. Tonelli