



"I Wonder"

Gayla Montour, Caughnawaga first-communicant wants to know, "if I will be wearing my wedding dress before Kateri's statue is erected?..."

The Kateri Statue

Let's Not Take Twenty Years :

The future bronze statue of Tekakwitha to be erected in her parish, will cost about \$4,000.00. The Rev. Fr. V.-Postulator gratefully acknowledges the following donations:

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IN YOUR WILL: — "I GIVE AND BEQUEATH TO THE CAUSE OF VENERABLE KATERI TEKAKWITHA (CAUGHNAWAGA, QUE.) THE SUM OF \$....."

THE KATERI NOVENA !

20c postpaid.

8 copies: \$1.00

A GOOD PENANCE ANY TIME OF YEAR: SIT DOWN AND WRITE IN BLOCK LETTERS THE NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF 20 OR MORE OF YOUR FRIENDS: THEN SEND THEM IN TO KATERI.

KATERI

Vol. 5, No. 4

CAUGHNAWAGA, Que.

SEPTEMBER 1953



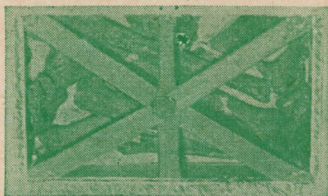


Photo: J. G. Martin

THE RELICS OF TEKAKWITHA

KATERI Vol. 5 No. 4

Editor: Rev. Henri Béchar, S.J.
V.-Postulator

Art Editor: Rev. Camille Drolet, S.J.

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Rev. Albert Burns, S.J.,

THE KATERI TEKAKWITHA GUILD

The sodalists of the Blessed Virgin of Caughnawaga, Quebec, who are descendants of the earliest Christian Indians in Canada and New York State, have formed themselves into a Guild to spread devotion to Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha.

Our quarterly bulletin KATERI, intends, above all, to tell her tale, to foster devotion to her and to record the favors both temporal and spiritual you receive through her intercession. As a result, it is hoped that the Cause of her Beatification will progress more rapidly.

A one year subscription to KATERI (\$1.00) will enroll you as a member of the Kateri Tekakwitha Guild for one year to share in the daily memento of the V.-Postulator's mass and in a special mass offered each week for your intentions in the old Mission Church of St-François-Xavier.

Published quarterly to spread devotion to *Ven. Kateri Tekakwitha* by Rev. George Brodeur, S.J., at Mission St-François-Xavier, Caughnawaga, Quebec, Canada.

All subscriptions, remittances and correspondence should be addressed to KATERI, Mission Saint-François-Xavier, Caughnawaga, Que., Canada

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SEPTEMBER 1953

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of Superiors.

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Ottawa.

TEN YEARS AGO!

DECREE

Approved by His Holiness Pope Pius XII Declaring Heroic the Virtues of The Servant of God

The Venerable CATHERINE TEKAKWITHA

(Born at Auriesville, 1656; Baptized at Fonda, 1676; Died at Caughnawaga, 1680; declared Venerable January 3, 1943.)



The reputation for holiness which Catharine had when living spread wonderfully after her death and keeps growing in our day, as appears by the very many letters from every group of the faithful, even from some of no faith, addressed to Pope Pius XI, of happy memory, petitioning that the honors of the blessed be conferred on this virgin, first among the forest peoples of North America.

Observing, therefore, all that is required by the Canons, our most Holy Lord Pope Pius XII signed the Commission for the Introduction of the Cause May 19, A.D. 1939, after receiving and approving the decision of the Historical Section of this Sacred Congregation. Since, moreover, this Cause is historical, waiving the Apostolic process, in accordance with the ruling of the Motu Proprio of Pope Pius XI on historical causes, it has all been entrusted to this same Section of ours. After carefully collecting all the documents and weighing them strictly with all its acumen, it drafted a favorable report in a complete and satisfactory statement. All this along with the objections of the R. P. Promoter General of the Faith was submitted for examination at the Antepreparatory Session of this Sacred Congregation before the undersigned Cardinal Proponent, or Relator, of the Cause November 26, 1940; again in the Preparatory Session November 10 the year after; finally in the General Session in presence of our Most Holy Lord June 9, last year. In this Session the Cardinal Relator proposed for discussion this question:

Join the Tekakwitha Guild: a mass is offered weekly for the members both living and dead. 23

Has it been proved in this instance and for the purpose under consideration that the theological virtues, Faith, Hope, Love of God and neighbor, and the cardinal virtues, Prudence, Justice, Temperance, Fortitude, and their subordinates, were of heroic degree?

The Most Reverend Cardinals, Official Prelates, and Fathers Consultors gave their votes, on receiving which the Most Holy Father deferred publishing his decision until today in order that after repeated prayer God might deign to bestow on his mind greater light.

Wherefore, having summoned the Cardinal undersigned, the Promoter General of the Faith, R. P. Natucci, and the Secretary, after devout celebration of Mass, His Holiness proclaimed:

It has been proved, in this instance and for the purpose under consideration, that the theological virtues of Faith, Hope, Love of God and neighbor, and the cardinal virtues, Prudence, Justice, Temperance, Fortitude, and subordinate virtues of the Venerable Servant of God, Catherine Tekakwitha, were heroic.

This decree, he has ordered, should be properly promulgated and recorded in the proceedings of the Sacred Congregation of Rites.

Given at Rome, January 3, 1943.

C. CARDINAL SALOTTI, *Bishop of Palestrina,*
Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Rites.

[L. S.]

A. CARINCI, *Secretary.*

IN MEMORIAM *(Continued from page 15)*

or hymn to our native tongue which should have been spent in much needed rest. We are, indeed, immeasurably grateful for the work he did for us. We are extremely grateful that it was his choice to work with us.

As the shepherd summons his flock, so are we called each in turn to face our Creator. Our Reverend Father has been called to reap the everlasting merits of a chaste and pious life. His work has been completed and in our hearts his lasting memory will remain.

And as the choir continues to intone the beautiful polyphonic harmony of "*Et incarnatus est*", there is a definite feeling of Father Bernier's presence. His forceful, yet subtle, manner of direction is envisaged. His barely audible utterance of "*piano*" or "*forte*" is heard. His piety and love of God and goodness are again revealed in full warmth and reality. All this was our Reverend Father Bernier. All this is his memory. R.I.P.

EARL SAYLOR



Another statue of Kateri
On the grounds of the Lithuanian
Franciscans at Kennebunkport, Me.
Perhaps, with your help, there will be, next
year, a similar statue in her own parish, too!

THERE KATERI BELONGED!

(A yearly account of the foundation of the Mission of the Sault up to 1685)

by CLAUDE CHAUCHETIÈRE, S.J.

Spiritual Adviser of the Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha.

A.D. 1671, (Cont'd)

THE village of Laprairie with all its qualities became an argument of credibility for all the Iroquois who went through it every spring. Most of them did not believe what had been said about it at home. They came to see for themselves, and having seen, they admired the marvels they had already heard about. Many, who were not naturalized Iroquois, thought of stealing away to Laprairie. A good deal of them fled there during the following years.

A.D. 1672

THOSE who had already been baptised in their homeland preferred to lose all they had in their country of origin rather than lose the faith which they could not keep there. They came to Laprairie unobtrusively on their own impulse as well as at the suggestion of the preachers of the Gospel. We know from as many pairs of lips as there are Christians here, that one cannot be without some sort of miraculous aid, either a good Christian or a persevering Christian among the (pagan) Iroquois. Laprairie has thus always been the sanctuary of those who wanted wholeheartedly to pray to God and to be Christians. These holy fugitives acted in such a way that in the woods around here the hunting trails began to appear quite beaten, for hunting was the pretext given to come and dwell at Laprairie.

KATERIANA

A beautiful film slide in color (35 mm.)

KATERI'S PARISH

HER TOMB HER RELICS

HER PEOPLE TODAY

Over 40 splendid pictures by Landry of Montreal

Accompanying text by the Vice-Postulator

To be released: November 1953

The Maiden Called Tekakwitha

(Continued - IV)

by

EDMUND J. RHODEBECK, B.S., M.D., Fellow N.Y. ACAD. MED.

SO we find Kateri lonely, insecure, and with a tendency to stay by herself or in the company of older women, and as she grew up, the tendency to retire into solitude seemed to grow more pronounced. She is pictured as timid, shy, and as spending much time in the dim light of the long-house making bead and quill work designs and doing the house chores. Needlework seemed to be her specialty. She loved embroidering pretty designs with colored beads or porcupine quills, but the adornments were for others and not for herself.

● A life apart

Iroquoian women loved to adorn themselves with pretty clothes and trinkets as most women do, and much trading was done for beads, necklaces, ear pendants and colored cloths.

Kateri loved pretty things too; but what was the use of adornment to one who was scarred and not at all attractive? If she had been pretty, things might have been different, very different indeed.

So for many reasons Kateri lived a life apart. I do not think that she was very happy; but it is evident that living more or less alone as she did, she would be more occupied with wiser thoughts than by the distractions of the average Indian girl whose thoughts were occupied with her work and play, with local

gossip and chatter about boy friends. It is evident that day by day and trial by trial, the soil was being cultivated and I certainly do not think that without such cultivation Kateri would have been so ready for the light when it came. It certainly is an edifying example of God's grace acting through natural means to supply what was badly needed at that time, an example for the new pagan converts to Christianity.

● Her refusal to marry

Now we come to Kateri's refusal to marry. Certainly such a refusal was entirely out of character for a Mohawk maiden of her time. Remember that the husband becomes one of the woman's family, another provider so to speak; so a good deal of pressure would be brought to bear upon her in order to force a marriage. Remember also that Kateri belonged to a childless family and from a social standpoint it was her moral duty to provide a helper for her ageing uncle and aunt. One would think that her own insecurity would move her in that direction. But no; Kateri would have none of it. Why? There is no way of knowing. What she may have seen, heard, or experienced, we cannot ascertain; but whatever the cause, it constituted a threat to her which completely overbalanced any other consideration.

(Please turn to p. 14.)



HER MODERN SISTERS

Indian girls of Mission St. Francis Xavier
smile thankfully
thus acknowledging your fervent promise
to pray daily for Kateri's speedy Beatification !...

Photo: ARMOUR LANDRY.



LIKE all great saints Kateri was noted for her zeal; she loved God above all things and longed to bring all men to Him, but she never preached to anyone. The sermon which she wrote was her own example. In order to see living proof of the perfect life all the Iroquois had to do was look at Kateri and observe her behavior. After her death the tale of her sanctity spread far and wide and exerted considerable influence in Christianizing the Indian people of the Northland. Kateri was a Lay Apostle by example.

Modern youth can see in Kateri much to follow. A truly Christian life today stands in just as sharp a focus as the spiritual life of Kateri Tekakwitha among the Iroquois in the 1600's. One of her greatest virtues, an outgrowth of true zeal, was her charity; she was never known to speak an unkind word to any human being. No matter what she thought of the deflections and sins of others she said no word of criticism against them, instead she redoubled her prayers for their betterment.

☞ Don't forget to give us a detailed report of the favors received through Kateri's intercession! ☞

Kateri and

Part IV

She was a

All through her short life Kateri sought only what was most agreeable to God. She tried to find out God's will in everything and then did her best to follow it or accept it. Her only fear was lest she should fall into the sins which afflicted her people. While she had charity for them she did not want to be like them.

One day while cutting down a tree for firewood, the tree in falling struck Kateri a glancing blow knocking her to the ground. Her companions rushed to her assistance, fearing that she was badly injured, or dead. As soon as Kateri regained consciousness she said aloud, "My Jesus I thank Thee for having preserved me from this accident." Then picking up her hatchet went back to work.

Kateri displayed her zeal and gave excellent example to the youths of following generations when she made the acquaintance of another Indian girl named Maria Theresa, who had gone through grave temptations, had

Modern Youth

by Anne Tansey

Lay Apostle

fallen into sin and then repented. The two girls became almost inseparable, aiding each other to higher and higher realms of sanctity.

Kateri had a profound devotion to the Blessed Virgin. She was never without her Rosary and said it on every possible occasion. Winter and summer she attended two masses every day, the first at four o'clock in the morning. In winter she would walk through the snow to church in her bare feet. She went to Confessions once a week, received Holy Communion as often as possible and spent every spare moment in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament.

Although she worked hard Kateri fasted a great deal, she tasted no food on Wednesdays or Saturdays. When she was weak from hunger and the Indian women forced her to eat, she sprinkled ashes in her food so that she would not enjoy eating it. Such penance was as rare in Kateri's environment as in ours, for like our modernists the Indians ate and drank a great deal.

Kateri did not diet, as many girls do today solely in order to acquire slender figures, she fasted for the good of her soul, for self mortification and to atone to God for the sins of her people.

Kateri's zeal embraced another form of devotion which is very pleasing to God and one which is of special merit as an example to modern youth, the complete acceptance of the physical infirmities which God had pleased to send her. Having had smallpox at the age of four Kateri was left with serious eye trouble. Her sight was dim and she suffered greatly from headaches. The delicate membranes of her eyes could not stand the glare of the sunlight and during most of her life Kateri had to wear a partial shield over her eyes. Her general health condition was so bad that much of her life was spent in invalidism. She did not *blame* God for these discomforts, she *thanked* Him for letting her bear a part of His Cross.

From these brief glimpses into the life of Kateri Tekakwitha we can see how worthy the Lily of the Iroquois is of sainthood. She has already been declared Venerable while her cause for beatification is going forward. American boys and girls need look no farther for a saint to emulate, Kateri was truly an American girl.

☞ Send in the names of your friends who may be interested in the Lily of the Mohawks! ☞

LETTERS TO KATERI

(When acknowledging favors to Kateri, be sure to indicate details.)

Montreal, Que., May 24: The present letter is to notify you of a favor obtained through the intercession of the Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha. My grandfather was sick; there was no place for him in the hospitals; besides we did not have enough money to meet the expenses entailed by a serious operation. Everything turned out for the best. I am very grateful to Kateri for this and that is why I am not hesitating about entrusting the problem of my vocation to her... Miss J.M.

Espanola, Ont., May 25: For the last two months my husband had been looking for a steady job. Trying to keep my courage up I finally decided to pray to dear Catherine. How happy I am to inform you that after two weeks of prayer I at last obtained this great favor which I had been hoping for such a long time. My husband also promised to go to communion every month instead of once a year as he used to go before. We warmly thank dear Catherine Tekakwitha for this great favor... Mme L.T.

Milwaukee, Wis., June 29: Enclosed find two dollars towards Kateri's statue, which I promised her if my Son's trial would come out favorably. It has so far... We left it up to the Lord and Kateri to intercede for him which I think they did... Mrs. D.H.

Brooklyn, N.Y., June 6: Recently I underwent two very serious opera-

tions and I sincerely believe that it was only my faith in God that pulled me through the last one. As a result of the operation and the extreme loss of blood, I've practically lost all balance of body. When I look at things they dance before my eyes. Consequently I have been unable to walk for the past nine months and there has been little change in my condition. I earnestly believe that if I spread the word of devotion to the cause of the Kateri Missionaries and pray for the Beatification of Tekakwitha, through her intercession, I may become well again. Enclosed is One dollar for a one year subscription to Kateri... Mrs. E.R. ▶ *Editor's note:* Kateri's friends are invited to have a special thought in their prayers for her Brooklyn client.

Brighton, Mass., June 26: ... I received a raise in salary through the intercession of Kateri. My Mother is now ill and I hope God and Kateri will restore her to good health. Miss C.A.F.

Port Austin, Mich., June 15: I am enclosing a check for ten dollars in thanksgiving and petition to Kateri. We ask her to protect all of our family and friends in traveling to and from our summer home, also those who fish and swim. I am sending you a clipping about the recent hurricane. We feel as though our cottage was protected by the Grace of God, through the intercession of Kateri. The blue mark on

the map is the location of this place; it is about ten miles north of Sand Point... Mr. & Mrs. A.

Providence, R.I., July 6: Enclosed please find check for \$10.00 as a mark of gratitude for the wonderful favors received. I have informed my friends of all the good that has come to me through the intercession of Kateri and have asked them to pray for her beatification... Mrs. E.M.R.

Detroit, Mich., June 29: Enclosed you will find a small donation toward Kateri. When my baby was sick, someone told me of her, so I asked Kateri to take care of my son, and now he is much better. Please send me more information about her... Mrs. E.A.

New Sudbury, Ont., June 12: I am writing to tell you the great favor that we have obtained from Catherine Tekakwitha. We have obtained a church which we were trying to get for four years. After we started praying to Catherine Tekakwitha we started to get answers from our letter that we wrote to different places and everything went fine. We had promised her that if she gave us a church we would give her relic and prayer to all our friends and we did... A priest had told us that if we got a church it would be just like mining the mountains, but we never got discouraged... I also prayed to Catherine for my son who was in active service. Soon after he came home and we learned that he had been in immediate danger of death. So I told him that I had prayed to Catherine for him and I am sure that she brought him home to us today... Mrs. A.T.

La Salle, Ill., July 7: Enclosed are two dollars for the Kateri statue fund—sent you by Mrs. H.B. in thanksgiving to Kateri for a safe delivery: she and baby are fine... Thanks for the prayers for my dad; he is home now and improving... Miss A.E.G.

Montreal, Que., July 6: Enclosed my check for \$5.00 for the Cause of Catherine Tekakwitha. I had promised this donation for my wife's health, which I obtained. I have always obtained favors through her intercession and I have great faith in her... Mr. T.S.

North Adams, Mass., July 14: I am enclosing \$1.00 in thanksgiving for my son's employment. I will send an offering of \$5.00 every time he gets a raise, for the cause of Kateri and her beatification... Mrs. X.

Detroit, Mich., July 6: I promised myself I would send \$5. for Kateri's statue or whatever other way you can use it to further her beatification, if I could. I had good luck. It must have been through her... Mrs. A.P.

Caughnawaga, Que., July 17: ... I am grateful to Kateri for the favors she granted me, in particular for a successful stay at the hospital some time ago, when the doctors reassured me about health: they had feared T.B. but there was none... Miss A.L.

Quebec, Que. June 10: The Catholic Girl Guides of the Province of Quebec have recently obtained a great favor through the intercession of Kateri Tekakwitha: the renewal of the indult authorizing mass at camp. We promised to spread devotion among the Guides and also outside the mouvement. Kateri is already much loved by the Guides... Miss M.J.D.

Certainly she knew nothing of virginity at that time, nor of the idea of consecrating oneself to God. We do know that she had a real revulsion against the idea, for we have Father Cholenec who probably knew her better than anyone else, quoting Kateri as saying: "I hate marriage and am horrified at it." These are the words of a woman who was physically repulsed by the idea of giving herself to a man.

● *Much of a recluse*

What a safety device that was for a woman who was eventually to give herself to God! Her dislike of the very idea was so great that neither her own security nor her moral duty to her adopted parents could overcome it.

Here then was Kateri when she first came into contact with a Black Robe, a shy retiring girl, much of a recluse, much liked for her pleasant smile and for her desire to be helpful to everyone, a characteristic of those who, for one reason or another, need some protection. We find a girl not caring for the usual pleasures of women of her race, content with her needlework and the making of things for others. She was undoubtedly mature in her thinking and certainly was one who knows her own mind.

● *Fertile ground*

Can anyone say the soil was not properly prepared? At any rate, when Father de Lamberville came into contact with Kateri, he realized almost immediately that there was fertile ground and was amazed at the avidity

with which she grasped the new doctrine and with the understanding which she had of it.

For this last, Father Boniface who preceded Father de Lamberville as chaplain at Gandawague was probably partly responsible. Although there is no evidence that Kateri ever came into personal contact with him, the influence which Father Boniface gained amongst the Indians, and the number who flocked to him must have made a deep impression on Kateri and must have caused a great deal of thought and some discussion with the Christian converts in the village.

Kateri, shy and retiring, would not go to Father de Lamberville. It was he who came to her. And what a jewel he found! To a human being whose life, condemned by circumstances to loneliness, lovelessness and unrest, could be given that which she was so unconsciously seeking. One in whom she could find faith, One in whom she could find security, One whom she could love.

● *Through natural means*

That is the story of Kateri Tekakwitha the Mohawk Maiden. It is a story that the human mind can understand and profit by. That is the way God works through natural means to form a person who was badly needed at the time, who by her life and example could crystallize the fervor which was spreading among the newly formed Christians, Kateri Tekakwitha, the Lily of the Mohawks.

IN MEMORIAM

It was indeed a great shock to all who knew the Reverend Alfred Bernier, S.J., when news of his sudden death on April 24th was received. But it was still a greater shock and untold loss to us who, as members of the Iroquois Mixed Choir in Caughnawaga came to know, to love and to respect our Reverend Director as an Apostle of Christ and as a man who possessed an abundant wealth of talent in the field of sacred music.

The late Father Bernier came to our little mission twenty years ago as guest conductor of the choir which had its inception with the Reverend Conrad Hauser, S.J., in 1927. From him, we received the very special guidance and direction which we needed and which he gave wholeheartedly in spite of the many other exigencies which demanded his presence. His renown as choir master and conductor was not unknown in the world of liturgical music. But, as he often told us, he loved his work with us and would continue to coach and instruct us long as he was permitted to do so. Yes, permitted is the word invariably used by Father Bernier who, in his extreme humility, could think of no more appropriate word. He *was* "permitted" to come back to us again and again. A trip to Rome, where he received his Doctorate in Music, neces-

sitated the only extensive absence from his work with us. Then, again we were to benefit further from this for he returned to impart to us the augmented wealth of music which, he felt, was not his alone.

His untiring efforts were not in vain. Our many invitations to sing in churches in and outside of the Province and Country are testimony to the success which we achieved under Father Bernier's training and direction. And our invitation to sing the mass at Midland, Ontario, 1949, to celebrate the tercentenary of the Canadian

Martyrs was one of the highest honours which could have been bestowed upon us and a definite tribute to our Director for this would not have been possible without the invaluable tutorship which had so freely been given to us. It was his vision and courage and capacity for accomplishment together with his persistence at perfection which raised our choir to its high standing in the field of choral work.

And Father Bernier's devotion to us did not falter when in October 1950, he was appointed Dean and organizer of the Faculty of Music, newly created at the Université de Montréal through his inspiration. Many hours were spent in transposing or adapting a new mass