



THOUGH Kateri Tekakwitha was an Indian girl and lived back in the 1600's she had much in common

with modern youth. She lived under similar conditions in many ways and faced the same spiritual and moral problems as Catholic boys and girls of today. Evil surrounded her on all sides, but she did not succumb to it. Wrapping the light of Christ closely about her Kateri emerged unscathed and set her footsteps firmly on the pathways which lead to sainthood.

Today Catholic youth is living in the midst of modern pagans, many of whom do not believe in God and deny His existence. It was the same with Kateri. Her people, the Indians, were pagans who rejected the teachings of Christ as brought to them by the missionaries. Kateri had to keep her Faith a secret and when it was discovered she was ridiculed and actively persecuted. Like many Catholics behind the Iron Curtain in our day Kateri had to flee her native village in order to safeguard her Faith and be able to practice her religion.

The pagan Indians, like many of our modernists ate to the point of gluttony and drank themselves into a state of intoxication. Kateri would have

# Kateri and Modern Youth

by

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## She has much in common with modern youth

been very popular if she had joined her relatives and neighbors in this feasting and drinking, but she was not that kind of a girl, she would not participate in pagan orgies while professing to be a Catholic. Rather than offend God by being "one of the crowd," she remained in her own quarters fasting and praying. Modern girls can remember her example when faced by similar temptations, when the crowd is off to some questionable drinking place or night club.

The Indians with whom Kateri lived were as proud and vain as many of our modernists. The girls painted their faces, strutted about in pretty dresses and adorned themselves with costume jewelry. Rather than follow their example Kateri dressed as simply as possible and wore no jewelry at all after she grew up and could do as she chose. Like some modernists Indian girls as a rule were very lazy and wanted nothing but good times. Unlike them Kateri was

very industrious and never idled a moment. She not only worked for herself but for others as well, in spite of the fact that she was in very poor health.

Another modern evil which was quite prevalent among the Indians was the consulting of fortune tellers. Just as modern youth go to Coffee Annies and Tea Marys, Kateri's Indian friends went to the tents of fortune tellers among the Indians. This Kateri refused to do as it was a sin to inquire into the future through such occult means.

Unfortunately modern youth is quite given to gossiping and slander. These two evils beset Kateri also. The Indians were greatly given to gossiping and told terrible lies about each other. Oftentimes the missionaries had a hard time ascertaining the truth, even among their Christian converts. Kateri never engaged in such practices. Serious lies were told on her, but she took no reprisals and eventually was exonerated. She freely forgave those who had slandered her.



Impurity and sex crimes were as prevalent among the Indians in 1676, when Kateri was 20 years old, as they are today in 1952. It was very hard for a girl to live chaste and pure in Kateri's surroundings, with sin and temptation on all sides, just as it is today when running around with the crowd. Kateri did not run around with any crowd. She chose the companionship of only virtuous and pious women. While others were out having "a good time" offending God, Kateri was praying and doing penance. She might well be called the first Catholic girl on this continent in the full sense of the word, and as such is a worthy patron of modern youth, who, like Kateri, are surrounded by sin and paganism on all sides. Kateri can lead others along the path which she followed, setting the example of a real Lay Apostle.