

"COSMOPOLITAN IS THE WORD"

by

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"COSMOPOLITAN" is the word. Yes, we might pick many adjectives to describe New York City, but if we were asked to pick the one word that best would sum it up to a visitor, that is it — cosmopolitan. Webster's dictionary defines this adjective as: "belonging to all the world; at home in any country; without local national attachments or prejudices."

● Six figures

This cosmopolitan keynote is strikingly symbolized at the site of one of the places that a visitor to the city never wants to miss, Saint Patrick's Cathedral. Catholics, Protestants, Jews and pagans pass through the doors of this world famous shrine daily. At the front of this towering edifice are two massive metal



doors. A glance at these doors offers a lesson on the Catholicity of the Church. There, carved in the metal, are six figures. Perhaps as we look at those six figures, the word "cosmopolitan" will come to mind, and the adjective is by no means inappropriate.

On the upper right hand side stands Saint Patrick, the zealous missionary of the Emerald Isle; just below is Mother Cabrini, an Italian; on the lower right stands Mother Seton, an American. On the upper left hand side is Saint Joseph, whom the world seems to have forgotten; he was a Jew. Then Saint Isaac Jogues, a Frenchman. And on the lower left side of the huge bronze door of the main entrance to Saint Patrick's Cathedral, stands the figure of a young Indian girl who is not

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yet a saint, Kateri Tekakwitha.

How fitting that the main entrance to one of the most famous churches in cosmopolitan New York there should be the figure of an Indian maiden.

● A racial problem

In our day very much is made of national and racial origin. Indeed, this is so true that we have a "racial problem." The person who is not living his Catholic Faith fully, at times comes to consider his race as inherently superior to those of another race. The life of Kateri Tekakwitha, the Lily of the Mohawks, can teach an eloquent lesson against racial prejudice.

Kateri Tekakwitha was baptized as a girl of twenty, on Easter Sunday in the year 1677. She was only to live four years as Catholic, for she died in 1680. Shortly after her baptism, because of the difficulties in practicing her Faith in her native town, which was on the shores of the Mohawk River in what is now New York State, she was sent to Caughnawaga, a thriving Catholic village on the Saint Lawrence just outside

Montreal. The words written by Father de Lamberville in the note which Catherine bore to the priests in what was to be her adopted home, are significant: "We are sending you a treasure; take good care of her." Catherine indeed proved a blessing in her new parish and future years have proved her a saintly treasure of North America. We can hardly say that Catherine will go down in history for any extraordinary worldly achievements. But this girl who blossomed as the lily of the Mohawks from among a pagan Indian environment has found a place in countless hearts of all races.

● She belongs to the world

The saints belong to the world. How fitting it is that the life of a simple native Indian maid should become an example of sanctity to cosmopolitan America. How fitting that her image should stand in bronze on the front of one of the world's greatest cathedrals, overshadowing the passers-by on one of the most famous streets in America, Fifth Avenue, New York. Catherine does not belong to the Mohawks. Kateri Tekakwitha belongs to the world.