

To Kateri's Friends — A Strange Easter Wish!

MY Easter wish to Kateri's friends will seem strange to many: May they always enjoy the cross that God lays upon their shoulders! Enjoy is the word.

Who could love suffering? A cancer-wasted patient, a husband with a run-away wife, a wife with a drunken husband, parents whose only son was killed in a stupid automobile accident, an aging person, alone in the world, feeling unwanted and unloved? Even they must learn the happiness of pain. If they but accept it, their own cruciation will make them more Christlike, and from it will break forth a pure and radiant joy.

During 1733, to the Spanish mystic, young Father Bernard de Hoyos, was exposed the Sacred Heart crowned with thorns and a cross. "I saw," he wrote, "the aperture where the most pure blood which redeemed the world looked visible. Jesus my divine Love, beckoned my heart to enter within through the opening of this wound: it would be my palace, my castle, and my rampart always. As mine accepted, the Lord said: 'Do you not see that it is barbed by thorns, and that they will prick you?' All this was the more to prod my love and only after entering into the confines of the Divine Heart, did it discover the thorns were roses."

Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha also drew similar happiness from suffering. On April 25, 1680, eight days after her death, she appeared to an old friend, Anastasia, who had helped lead her in the way of holiness.

Father Peter Cholenec, S.J., Anastasia's spiritual guide, gives us her first-hand account of it:

This fervent Christian woman remained alone in prayer that night after the others of her lodge had gone to bed. Feeling herself overcome by sleep, she finally lay down on her mat to rest, but no sooner had she closed her eyes than she was awakened by a voice which called her with these words: "Mother, arise." She recognized Kateri's voice. Far from having any



"Don't! There are other ways of finding friends for Kateri!"

fear, she immediately raised herself into a sitting position, and turning to the place whence the voice came, she saw Kateri standing beside her, brilliant with light. Half her body was engulfed in this brightness, and the upper part was as bright as the sun. She carried a cross in her hand which was more brilliant than everything else, and from it there shone forth so much light that she thought there could be nothing more beautiful upon earth.

"I saw her," she insisted, "in this position clearly, awake as I was and I heard these words very distinctly: 'Mother, look at this cross and see how beautiful it is. It was the source of all my happiness during my life, and I counsel you to make it yours also.' After these words she disappeared, leaving her mother overjoyed and with a spirit so filled with this vision that after many years her memory of it is as fresh as it was the first day.

HAPPY EASTER TO ALL KATERI'S DEVOTEES!