

THERE KATERI BELONGED!

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

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A.D. 1679 (Cont'd.)

IT IS TRUE that the Mission grew as a frond under the weight of afflictions and that the service of God was never so exact and splendid as it was then. The Indians had been separated [from the French] for only three years. They were accustomed to it before, or rather they only used to assist at Mass and Vespers which was sung by the French, but now they do everything by themselves in their own chapel. They had already begun to do so but the church was too incommodious being only a bark chapel. After the old chapel was completed, the appearance of the Mission was quite different. The Indians did all they could to adorn properly the chapel which they had just finished. They had already contributed abundantly the wherewith to build it. The Mohawks distinguished themselves in their generosity.

This affection which the Indians had for their chapel made it easier for them to learn the chant of the Church such as the hymns to the Blessed Sacrament, the hymns to the Virgin and a few others to the Confessors, the Martyrs, *Inviolata, Veni Creator*, the Psalms and more than thirty different kinds for Mass as well as for Vespers and for Benediction without forgetting the ceremonies of the blessing of candles on the Purification, of the ashes, of the palms, of Good Friday, of the Blessed Sacrament processions which people come to see as a rare occurrence, and those of the Assumption. Since their faith gave them much fondness for these things, they learned them at once. In this the women excel who sing quite beautifully and devoutly. It is a pleasure for all those who hear them. The children who have learned to serve Mass and who are most eager to do so, are dressed for all these ceremonies as young clerics and know their duties so well there is never any disorder.

Each day people are astonished, and with reason, that the Indians have learned this so soon, they who can be heard yelling in the woods when they sing in their own way, and who have an upbringing so different from that of other nations.

Indians had not yet been seen instructing one another so successfully as we have seen them here. The missionaries are already beginning to have to teach too many people who at first find these customs so new. It was necessary to show them how to make even the smallest inclinations which are made on entering or leaving the church, before or after having taken Holy Water, to rise for the Gospel, to kneel in church. God raised up this year a number of persons who themselves took care of this and who, also, taught catechism to the children and to the newcomers. Here they are well worth many missionaries, because, having thoroughly understood our mysteries, they express them in their own language with an admirable eloquence which results in the ignorant understanding them immediately and being touched by them. When it is known that the newcomers are put up in certain lodges, the missionaries are not worried about their instructions, for entire nights are taken up instructing them. (To be continued.)



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