

❖ **Kateri's smile upon you Mrs. L. de B.!**

"I am happy to inform you that through Kateri's intercession, my husband had just obtained a position much better than we had expected. As a result of financial difficulties, my husband had only an ordinary job and no answers from the many applications he had put in for something better. With my children, I began a novena to Kateri. The first day of my novena, my husband received a letter from an important firm, requesting that he set the date for an appointment so they could get to know him. The last day of the novena, he was hired at a very good salary. The future of the family is assured. I thank Kateri, and we shall all go together to visit her . . ." (Montreal North.)

❖ **Kateri's smile upon you, Third Graders of Notre Dame School!**

". . . In the last issue of "Kateri", you suggested that one dollar from each friend of Kateri would be a Christmas gift to the Lily of the Mohawks. One class of third graders saved their pennies to contribute a dollar. One child is sending a dollar herself . . ." (Malone, N. Y.)

❖ **Kateri's smile upon you, Mother Provincial, C. N. D.!**

". . . I am indebted to Kateri Tekakwitha through whose intercession we were able to sell our house and buy another. Let us hope she will favor us in the future with other financial favors, such as the acquisition of some land, the collection of a debt. If Kateri finds these favors too material, she surely will not hesitate to intercede for us with the Lord for the spiritual benefits which we need . . ." (Sherbrooke.)

The Forlorn Lover

In an amphitheater of pine and oak at Indian River, Michigan, pilgrims visit a Shrine. As yet it has no patron saint. When your prayers obtain Kateri's beatification, it will be known as the Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha Shrine.

Father Charles D. Brophy was the soul and drive behind it. Father Charles F. Decker and Father Edgar Therriault of the Society of Mary, who were entrusted with the Shrine in 1954, brought to effect Father Brophy's project that a fourteen-ton wooden cross be planted on the grounds. Erected on August 5, 1955, the redwood cross, 55 feet in height and 22 feet in width, stands out from the twenty-foot high Calvary Hill, an earthen mound atop a bluff overlooking Burt Lake. It is the largest wooden cross in the world. Already, during the summer of 1952, Father Brophy had brought ground from Kateri's grave in the Province of Quebec, and placed it in the sands of the Hill.

On August 16, 1959, Bishop Babock blessed the five-ton, thirty-one foot bronze figure of Christ, before it was lifted from the ground by a giant crane, carried gently upward, and bolted into place.

Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha, as the official prayer for her glorification proclaims, was "a lover of Jesus and of his cross". After her death, she appeared to her old friend Anastasia who had inspired her with the spirit of penance.

Her instructress was awakened one night with the words: "Mother, arise!" She recognized Kateri's voice. "Far from having any fear," wrote one of the missionaries, "she immediately raised herself into a sitting position and, turning to the place whence the voice came, she saw Kateri, brilliant with light, standing beside her. 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 shone forth so much light that she thought there could be nothing more beautiful upon earth”.

“Mother,” she said affectionately to Anastasia, “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”.

Kateri’s words, echoing the Savior’s are also meant for us. Jesus loved each and every one of us so intensely that He took up his cross and after carrying it to Calvary, stretched Himself out upon it and let Himself be nailed to it.

Kateri’s extreme penitential spirit was never morbid as she was known for her level-headedness. It was an outpouring of love for Christ, a search for identification with Him, a spiritual harmonizing within herself of the strong Iroquois pattern in which her life was integrated.

Kateri fasted, for since the Bridegroom has ascended into heaven, it is time for fasting.

Kateri mortified her will and her intellect, her imagination and memory, and all her senses, for by our sufferings we are able through a divine dispensation to help complete the sufferings of Jesus Christ.

Lent is the proper time to take up one’s cross, whatever it may be. Sickness, abstention from some legitimate pleasures, alms-giving, moral trials, solitude and lack of human affection... What are these compared to the all-encompassing anguish of Jesus, the forlorn Lover?

Kateri, if we but listen closely, will teach us anew the long-known and perhaps half-forgotten lesson concerning the necessity of suffering. This, I believe, is the meaning of the huge cross at the Indian River Shrine.

Kateri's Cross at Indian River, Michigan
Photo : Gregg Smith