

## A Bit of Detective Work ... ... Concerning Kateri's Mother

KATERI'S MOTHER, whose name is unknown, was an Algonquin. Two missionaries intimately connected with the Lily of the Mohawks, Fathers Claude Chauchetière, S. J., and Pierre Cholenec, S. J., give us the following information about her.

### *Father Chauchetière:*

Kateri's mother was a devout Christian Algonquin woman, who had been taken by the Iroquois at Three Rivers during the wars waged against the Hurons and the Algonquins under the rule of M. de Tracy and M. de Courcelles. It was the lot of this poor captured Algonquin to be married to an Iroquois. From this marriage between a Christian woman and a pagan, our Kateri was born. The woman, whose baptismal name I do not know, lived with her husband and children at Gandaouagué, a small village of the Mohawks.

### *Father Cholenec:*

"Kateri's mother, who was of the Algonquin nation had been baptized and raised among the French in the city of Three Rivers. It was there she was captured by the Iroquois, who were then wageing war with us, and who carried her off as a slave to their country. She lived among them and soon after was married to an Indian of that nation, by whom she had two children, a boy and a girl, Kateri . . ."

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"Tegahkouita (which is the name of the sainted young woman about whom I am going to inform you), was born in the year 1656, at Gandaouagué, one of the settlements of the lower Iroquois, who are called Agniez. Her father was an Iroquois and a heathen; her mother, who was a Christian, was an Algonquin, and has been baptized at the village of Three Rivers, where she was brought up among the French. During the time we were at war with the Iroquois, she was taken prisoner by those Indians and remained a captive in their country . . ."



"Kateri Tekakwitha, a new star in the New World, had for a mother an Algonquin woman, who was baptized by the Jesuit missionaries at Three Rivers and brought up a Christian. While the Iroquois were making an incursion into Canada, this woman was taken captive and carried off to the Iroquois country, where she married one of the chiefs of the village and by him had two children—Kateri (of whom we write) and her brother."

Both writers claim Kateri's mother was:

1. an Algonquin;
2. a Christian;
3. captured during the Iroquois wars;
4. married to a pagan Iroquois.

Cholenec adds that she was:

1. baptized at Three Rivers;
2. raised among the French;