



*For Kateri's friends
and benefactors*

*Father
HENRI BÉCHARD, S.J.
Vice-Postulator*

*for the cause of her
beatification
and
canonization
prays that,*

*as Our Lady of Foy
blessed the Mohawk Canton
in 1675*

*She and her divine Son
may bless you and yours
on Christmas Day 1975
and on each day of the New Year*

OUR LADY OF FOY

QUEBEC WAS HARDLY FOUNDED when a remarkable occurrence took place in the village of Foy, three miles from Dinant, Belgium.

Our Lady of Foy in Belgium

For planks to build a boat, an oak tree, eight feet in diameter, was felled. The worm-eaten wood did not answer the purpose of the woodmen, and they decided to cut it up into logs. During June 1609, the blow of an ax on one of the billets brought to light a statuette of the Blessed Virgin carrying the Child Jesus in her left arm. It was enclosed in a cavity guarded by three iron bars. Ex-votos, among them a tress of hair, placed within the niche, bore witness to the piety of another age.

The statuette of a very hard, moulded, white stone was only eight inches high including the base. A veil, on which a heavy crown was placed, covered the head and fell on Our Lady's shoulders. The greybeards of the neighborhood were closely questioned: they had never heard the image mentioned. At the latest, it belonged to the first half of the fifteenth century.

The news of the finding soon spread far and wide. The Lord of Celle, on whose land the discovery took place, ordered that the statuette be placed in another oak, in a small niche, with three iron bars, in much the same condition in which it came to light. Immediately, Our Lady showed her love for her earth-bound children. The blind saw, the deaf heard, and the paralytics were able to walk. Even the dead rose from their sleep. Four years later, the Lord of Celle had the statuette placed in his private chapel. Shortly afterwards, it became necessary to erect a chapel, for the number of pilgrims increased constantly. Soon the little chapel could no longer hold the faithful who came to honor Mary, and, in 1623, the present church was built. It is one hundred and thirty-six feet long and thirty-eight wide. Two Flemish artists were hired to decorate the mobile panels of the ceiling with religious paintings. The prince-bishop of Liège, Ferdinand of Bavaria, donated an altar of black and white marble, a token of the public veneration of the Belgians of that period to Our Lady of Dinant. As early as 1668, the sanctuary was rated a national monument and kept up at the expense of the Crown.

In 1907, on the occasion of the tercentenary of the finding of the statuette, in the name of St. Pius X, Bishop Heylen of Namur solemnly crowned the miraculous madonna. In his pastoral letter published for the occasion, the prelate called Our Lady of Foy the Belgian Our Lady of Lourdes.



SCULPSIT P. LEPROVOST

Our Lady of Foy (1719)

PHOTO ROGER CÔTÉ, QUEBEC

Our Lady of Foy in Canada

In 1669, a statuette of Our Lady of Foy, carved from the wood of the old tree, was sent from Belgium to Father Pierre-Jean-Marie Chaumonot, S.J., apostle of the Hurons in the Quebec area. To house it worthily, he had a little wooden chapel built at St. Michel, now Sainte-Foy Street.

The parish of Our Lady of Foy in Quebec contains several historical districts, for instance Jacques Cartier's Charlebourg Royal, later named France-Roy by Roberval, and the Mission of St. Joseph of Sillery. "Since it is the custom," noted Father H. A. Scott, "to estimate that the origin of a town or city goes back to the first efforts that were made to establish it, Ste. Foy is the oldest parish, not only in Canada, but, also, in North America. The miraculous statuette of Our Lady of Foy at Ste. Foy, Quebec, was burnt with the church in 1698. It was replaced in 1716 by another statue, carved by the priest-sculptor, Father P. LeProvost, Pastor of Ste. Foy.

Our Lady of Foy at Agnie

As early as 1675 — exactly three centuries ago — another copy of the statuette of Our Lady of Foy, carved out of the original oak in which it was found, was given to Father Jacques Bruyas, S.J., for his mission of Agnié in Mohawkland.

During that year, the missionary was happy on account of the number of converts he had made — more than eighty-four — and of the fervor they manifested in their lives. Assendassé, one of the most prominent Mohawks, was noteworthy. Despite the trials that his family suffered after his baptism, he remained staunch in his faith. He was threatened and came close to being the first Iroquois martyr.

Where did this steadfastness in the Faith come from, not only with regard to Assendassé, but also to many others? Not from the fear of hell, as a brace of modern historians pretend, but according to Father Bruyas, from the presence of Our Lady of Foy in the village of Agnié!

In 1675, the Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha was nineteen years old. She did not live at Agnié, but in the neighboring village of Gandaouagué (Fonda, N.Y.), the smallest of the Mohawks castles. Father Jacques de Lamberville, S.J., who, from September 1675 to Easter 1676, prepared Tekakwitha for baptism, surely told her the story of Our Lady of Foy, as well as to the other Christians of the little town. Who knows, perhaps Tekakwitha with a few friends, went to Agnié to pray to Our Lady.

Be that as it may, Our Lady of Foy looked with favor on Kateri, and we know that as soon as Kateri became aware of Our Lady, she loved her to the point of ecstasy.

❖ Kateri's smile upon you, Miss G. F. !

Enclosed is my June offering for Kateri. I recently completed another year of entering a "Card of Thanks" in the Montreal Star. Instead of renewing it, I am sending the cost plus a little extra towards her regular offering every month in return for her countless favors to me and to help you fight the mounting costs. . . (Montreal, P.Q.)

❖ Kateri's smile upon you, Mrs. L. K. !

Three of the thirteen dollars are for an enrollment for a deceased cousin. The remaining ten are a "Thank You" to Kateri. I have finally sold my house! Use it for her work where you see fit. . . (Akron, N.Y.)

❖ Kateri's smile upon you, Mrs. E. N. !

. . . A.'s son, James, is a registry policeman. He had lost his wallet in a store. I think it was a pickpocket thief who did it. In it he had a Kateri relic. The wallet was found by a Security Guard, minus some money, with a credit car, pictures of his children, and other important cards. James says Kateri found the wallet for him. (Somerville, Mass.)

❖ Kateri's smile upon you, Mr. G. M. K. !

In a recent issue of **Kateri**, you wrote something to the effect that if every subscriber sent in an additional subscription, the magazine would attain its goal of 10,000 subscriptions. So, here are ten, in honor of the Holy Year and the U.S.A. Bicentennial, in both of which celebrations the Venerable Kateri deserves a share.

(Port Chester, N.Y.)

(When acknowledging favors to Kateri, be sure to indicate details.)

READ THE STORY OF HER LIFE !

To know and love the Lily of the Mohawks, I wish to receive an autographed copy of **KATERI TEKAKWITHA**, the exciting biography by the Rev. F. X. Weiser, S.J., of Boston College, with a Prefatory Note by John Cardinal Wright.

My check is enclosed (Paperback) \$2.25
(Hardcover) \$4.00

Name

(In Block Letters, Please)

Address

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