

On Palm Sunday, the hunters were back in the village and Kateri was with them. She was allowed to receive Holy Communion a second time on Easter Sunday and, not much later, was admitted into the Confraternity of the Holy Family, made up only of the most fervent and the most missionary-minded of the faithful. Some time after, Father Frémin had her come to his home. He informed her about the suspicions of the hunter's wife and asked her what the truth of the matter was. Very calmly, Kateri simply denied the accusation, for she felt in no way guilty. The Father was satisfied with her answer. However, the Indian woman who had complained and a few other who had learned about the accusation, no one knows how, persisted in the conviction of her guilt. Never had Kateri suffered as much as on this occasion, not even in the midst of her penances and macerations, which she practised to obtain the conversion of her people and her own identification with Christ.

A trial of another sort awaited her. Her adopted sister, who was very fond of her, worried about her. Why did she not marry a good hunter, who would take care of her, providing her with food and clothes? The one time Kateri had gone to Montreal, she visited the Hôtel-Dieu, conducted by the Daughters of St. Joseph, a community founded by Jerome Le Royer de la Dauversière for the care of the ill and wounded. For the first time, she had seen women like herself, who had consecrated themselves to God by the vow of chastity. She felt strongly drawn to a similar calling. Her "sister", who did not succeed in changing her mind, was more successful with regard to old Anastasia Tregonhatsiohgo in convincing her that Kateri was taking the wrong direction. In turn the mistress of the long house tried to impose her point of view on the young woman, who was generally very submissive. Rather sharply, she answered Anastasia, who was a widow, "If you wish to remarry, do so! For me, all I want is peace!" The old woman was annoyed and she decided to speak to Father Cholenec. Kateri forestalled her and convinced the priest that she must not marry.

HER VOW OF VIRGINITY

With her intimate friend, Marie Thérèse Tegaiaguenta and a Huron named Marie Skarichions, Kateri had thought of founding a monastery for Indian nuns on Heron Island in the St. Lawrence River. Father Frémin objected that she had very little experience in Christian living. Only fifty years later, in Mexico, did her dream come true. A biography of Kateri Tekakwitha convinced the viceroy of Mexico that a monastery of Indian nuns was needed in his domains. The monastery of the Poor Clares that was then built, still stands and now serves as a government museum.

If she could not become a nun, perhaps she could dedicate her life to Christ as a lay person. Father Cholenec, her spiritual guide gives us his reaction:

"... The thing was so unusual, however, and appeared so incompatible with the life of the Indians, that I thought it best not to precipitate matters, so as to give her plenty of time to weigh a matter of such consequence. I tried her therefore, for some time, and after I had noted the great progress

