



Kateri at the Martyr's Shrine

ancestor was cured by Kateri in 1689.

On this hallowed ground and in the near vicinity died Saints John de Brébeuf, Anthony Daniel, Gabriel Lalemant, Noël Chabanel, and Charles Garnier. According to Father Claude Chauchetière, a contemporary of the Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha, she is spiritually linked with Father de Brébeuf.

In the course of the evening, I had the privilege of offering the Holy Sacrifice at the Shrine for Kateri's beatification and for all her friends everywhere.

Sunday morning, August 29, dawned cold and bleak. Even so the weather did not deter the Indians from honoring their forefathers. According to Miss Annette writing in *The Catholic Register* of September 25, "thirteen

buses and many cars rolled in, some from Heron Bay and Moberg, 600 miles away, bringing over 500 native people from twenty missions to the Shrine in Midland to honor the Indian Martyrs of Canada." Some had traveled for thirteen hours or more.

All morning long they came in, young and old, among them two recently ordained deacons, Sam Debassige and Angus Neganigijig as well as several deacon candidates. My good friend, Father Michael Kaharienton Jacobs, first Iroquois Jesuit, had arrived on the previous day. Many Jesuit missionaries accompanied their flock.

At half past one, Auxiliary Bishop Thomas B. Fulton, D.D., J.C.D., of Toronto, presided the Eucharistic Celebration with ap-

proximately twenty priests concelebrating. The choir from Wikwe-mikong sang at Mass in Objibway. Mr. Peter Johnson, Indian deacon candidate, was the homilist. (His homily, quite in point, appears on page 24.)

After the Mass, the entire congregation, with Bishop Fulton, the priests, deacons, and deacons to be, made its way up the incline to the cairn with its bronze plaque on which were inscribed in embossed letters:

"In memory of the native people who accepted the faith, lived it and died for it, August 1776. 'Many other native people became so fervent that we shall never be able to thank God sufficiently for leading these chosen souls, in life and in death, with such loving Providence.' Paul Ragueneau."

A few feet away the statue of the Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha, recently regilded, gazed serenely down upon the throng of faithful of her race.

Bishop Fulton spoke movingly of the native people who so resembled St. John de Brébeuf and his Companions. The Martyrs, he stated, were proud to suffer and to shed their blood as Christ did, and, following His example, forgave their enemies. Father Michael Jacobs, S.J., then slowly and distinctly read the complete inscription, and Bishop Fulton solemnly blessed it.

At the close of the ceremony, pictures of the Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha were distributed to those who came forward to

venerate a first-class relic of the Lily of the Mohawks.

In her article, Miss Wesley noted that the decision to erect the cairn was made after a recent research emphasized that there were Huron Indians among the Martyrs as related in Father James McGivern's book, *Some Hidden Glories of the Canadian Mission Church*, a review of which appeared in the December *Kateri* on page 33. The first step was taken in November 1975 during the Indian Holy Year celebration at Sault Ste. Marie, at which time a collection of \$321.00 was turned over to a Cairn erection fund. The total cost is estimated to be \$2000.00, which will be raised on Indian missions.

On Monday morning, Father Farrell invited Father Rolland and me to drive back to Toronto with him. Sunshine, which we had hoped for on the previous day, brightened up the return trip to the capital of Ontario or more exactly to the Manresa Retreat House at Pickering with its beautiful grounds and stately elms. After lunch, Father Farrell, who is the superior of Manresa, offered to take me to the airport and graciously consented to stop on the way at the home of Kateri's faithful friends, Miss Mary Gallagher and her two brothers, Frank and Joe on Fallingbrook Drive in Scarborough. An hour later, I was at the Dorval Airport and at home in Montreal for dinner after a rewarding trip to the land of the Martyrs, Indian as well as European-born.