

Still, Kateri considered herself the greatest sinner of the village. Her contemporary the Venerable Mother Mary of the Incarnation was convinced she was the scum of the earth, the most despicable person in the world, the weakest and the most wretched of all creatures. Pious exaggerations? By no means. Philosopher Jacques Maritain explains why the saints feel thus about themselves. "In the consciousness a man has of himself, more a soul is elevated in grace, the more it realizes it is a sinner, because it grasps to some degree, as the Master knew to perfection, what there is in man. If the saints accuse themselves in this manner, it is not so much from moral scruples as from a crushing ontological view of human frailty with regard to the inscrutable grandeur and beauty of God, and to the abyss of suffering into which the Divine Mercy of the Father plunged the Son for our salvation."

Not unexpectedly, Kateri's excessive mortifications—excessive in extent but not in intent—coupled with striving to be constantly united to God in spirit, exhausted her strength, so that she fell dangerously ill during the summer of 1679. She had much difficulty recovering and never got rid of the after-effects of her illness—painful stomach trouble, frequent vomitings, and a low fever, which, gradually undermining her, resistance, reduced her to a state of persistent weakness.

By nature Kateri was gentle, kind, and endearing. Despite her frequent illnesses, despite her austerities or perhaps because of them, she was always joyful, always content, never showing any annoyance except the one time that her sister and Anastasia urged her so insistently to get married.

(To be continued.)

✿ **Kateri's smile upon you, Mrs. P.G. !**

I am enclosing a check for one hundred dollars promised to Kateri. She has sustained me through a very difficult school year. Also, my father, who was ill, was allowed a swift and merciful death.

I ask that Kateri now help my mother through this difficult period and help a friend who has personal problems. I pray for Kateri's beatification. (Old Bridge, NJ)

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

A visit to . . .



KATERI'S CHURCH

The Mission of St. Francis Xavier was first established for Indian converts in 1667 at Laprairie, fifteen miles downstream from Caughnawaga. During the next fifty years, it moved four times, finally settling down at its present site in 1717. In 1725, Fort St. Louis was built round it to protect the Christian Indians against their pagan enemies.

THE CHURCH

The First Church. Erected in 1717, it was demolished in 1845. The present church was then built according to plans prepared by Fr. Félix Martin, S.J.

High Altar. It was carved during the eighteenth century by Paul La Brosse or Gilles Boivin and completed by Vincent Chartrand a century later.

Sanctuary Lamp. This massive silver vessel, very chaste in design, was the gift of a Parisian donor during the French Regime.

Paintings. Between 1924-1928, Italian artist Guido Ninchieri frescoed the ceiling with scenes from the New Testament. The paintings above the side altars were given to the Mission about 1825 by Charles X of France.

Cross Above the High Altar. A gift of the Caughnawaga Indians, it honors thirty-five of their men, who were killed in the crash of the Quebec bridge in 1907.

Stations of the Cross. They were brought and offered to the church during the Depression by the Indian population. Note the Iroquois captions.

Statues. The two wooden statues of St. Ignatius of Loyola and of St. Francis Xavier were carved by Louis T. Berlinguet about 1845.

Tomb of the Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha. On All Saints' Day, 1972, in the right transept of the church, the mortal remains of Kateri were laid to rest in a new Carrara marble tomb, gift of the Daughters of Isabella and of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph T. O'Brien of Pepper Pike, Ohio. Bishop Gérard-Marie Coderre solemnly blessed it on December 17, 1972. The statue of Kateri was carved by the well-known Canadian artist Médard Bourgault.



PHOTO ARMOUR LANDRY

KATERI'S TOMB

Kateri Tekakwitha, Lily of the Mohawks, was born in 1656 at Ossernenon, today, Auriesville, N.Y., on the very spot where Sts. Isaac Jogues, René Goupil, and Jean de La Lande were martyred. Baptized at the age of twenty in 1676, she escaped to the Mission of St. Francis Xavier in the following year. After three years of intense spiritual life, she died on April 17, 1680, without having ever seriously offended God. In the course of the last three centuries, many have obtained spiritual and temporal favors through her intercession. Pope Pius XII declared her *venerable* in 1943. When enough prayers are offered for her canonization, she will be declared a saint. (For more information concerning Kateri, subscribe to the *Kateri* quarterly, \$1.00 a year.)

Child Jesus With Globe. This statue on top of the tabernacle, was carved by the Quebec Ursulines between 1671 and 1700.

THE SACRISTY

Tabernacle. Said to be the work of Sculptor Belleville, it was carved between 1780-1810. The reredos may be much older, for it is of the same style as the one in the old Jesuit church in Quebec.

THE MUSEUM

Desk. Fr. F. X. de Charlevoix, author of the monumental *History and General Description of New France*, is said to have used it in the spring of 1722.

Painting of Kateri Tekakwitha. According to Mr. Marius Barbeau, Fr. Claude Chauchetière painted it in 1681.

Painting of Fr. Joseph Marcoux. This portrait was done about 1830, when he had just begun his forty years as Pastor of the Mission. It is attributed to Artist Louis Dulongpré.

Statue of Kateri Tekakwitha. This original woodcarving was the work of Médard Bourgault in 1941.

Monstrance. Here you have a fine example of French classical art. It is a gift of Alderman Claude Provost and of his wife, Elizabeth Le Gendre, "to the Rev. Jesuit Fathers to honor God in their first church of the Iroquois in 1668."

Ivory Crucifix. This exquisite piece was brought back from France by Fr. James Frémin in the autumn of 1680, the year of the Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha's death.

Silver Ciborium. It carries a Paris hallmark. According to Antiquarian Louis Carrier, it dates back to 1687-1691.

Sunday Masses: eight, nine, half past ten, and quarter past twelve o'clock.

✿ Kateri's smile upon you, Miss S.B. !

I hope the renewed efforts for Kateri's beatification will bring God's consent for her recognition. At the same time I pray for and through Kateri, I pray for the canonization of her companions at the mission, especially the martyrs... I am feeling so much better and am sure it is due to mercies obtained through the Immaculate Heart of Mary and Kateri. I am trying to be pleasant and confident during my tribulations, and sometimes I even succeed in my efforts because of the support of our Blessed Mother and Kateri. (Detroit, MI)

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