

Fr. Ferdinand Antonelli, O.F.M., was its Relator General and the Vice Relator was Fr. Joseph Law. The Consultors were Monseignori Ravanat, Curesi, Kirsh, Paschini and until lately, Tisserant and Mercati, promoted cardinals. The priests of this Section, all religious, were Frs. Callacy, O.F.M., Cap., Delahaye, S.J. and Bollandist, Dom Mguanez, O.S.B., Newdigate, S.J., Peters, S.J., Pouy Mart, O.F.M., Silva Taronca, S.J., Tacchi-Ventura, S.J., and Thery, O.P. To these add two names well known in intellectual circles: Dr. Franchi de' Cavalieri of the Vatican Library and Mr. Georges Goyau of the French Academy. Msgr. Ruis y Sera served as Assistant. The names of these scholars indicate the patient work that must go into the preparation of a Cause, particularly that of Kateri Tekakwitha. Everything must be examined and weighed with the greatest care in order to prepare the articles about the life of the Iroquois Maiden, about her particular virtues, about the proof of her reputation for holiness, and about her response to the prayers addressed to her in order to obtain her intercession with God. One hundred articles were submitted, 36 on her life, 31 on her virtues, 19 on her reputation for holiness, and 14 on her response to prayers. Each article had to be accompanied with one or more references to the books or documents in which they were mentioned and finally, with a complete list of all the writings or printed material in different languages pertaining to "good Kateri."

Is it necessary to note that all these articles had to be written conscientiously, for they would be used by the witnesses for the Cause as well as by the Promoter of the Faith or, if you prefer, "the devil's advocate," who needed them for his investigation? Besides, each member of the Congregation of Rites was to receive a copy in French, English, Latin, and Italian. Fortunately the sources of



In 1938, Fr. Georges Mongeau, S.J., organized pilgrimages to Caughnawaga and to Côte Sainte-Catherine-de-Laprairie.

information were abundant and of incontestable value. All concerned soon discovered that no other Servant of God from a primitive people in an obscure mission had ever been so well memorialized as this young Indian of the 17th century.

All this work aimed only at proving Kateri Tekakwitha's holiness. But what is holiness? First of all, let me recall that it is the greatest homage that a soul can offer to its Creator. It proves one's total consecration to Him. It is religion at its best. Since true religion consists in union with God, holiness is nothing else than the link of this union.

If we speak of holiness, it is necessary to note that we are not alluding to ordinary virtue, but to virtue elevated to perfection, which is practised despite all opposition and every difficulty, to the point of being truly heroic.

No one will be surprised to learn that the Congregation of Rites uses very precise criteria to verify the holiness of candidates for beatification and canonization. It begins with the examination of the three theological virtues which directly unites them with God: faith, hope and charity.

To believe in Jesus Christ and to live this belief, there is no greater adventure proposed to any man. It is the heart of Christian life. Thanks to it, we hold as true that Jesus of Nazareth is "Christ, the Son of the living God," sent by the Father and who, by his death and resurrection brought to mankind the gifts of pardon, of justice and the Spirit of holiness. Faith's vistas can open out on martyrdom, as millions of followers of Christ have demonstrated, and then it is heroic.

Christian hope leaves one to desire God as the supreme good and to await with the greatest trust grounded on the goodness and power of God eternal beatitude and the means to attain it. This virtue becomes heroic as soon as it manages to focus all its aspirations on eternal life with the Almighty.

To love God with all one's strength, is pure heroism as well as one's neighbor for the love of God if one realizes the commandment of the Lord Jesus: "There is no greater love than to give one's life for one's friends." If not through martyrdom, at least through a life of devotion and sacrifice.

Then follows the brochette of cardinal virtues, on which depend all the others: justice, prudence, temperance and strength. They may be practised in a purely profane manner or again by taking into account the fundamental ideas of Christianity, or finally in the heroic manner of the saints.

The Congregation will take up the life of the Servant of God and, detail by detail, it will see if it squares with what these virtues and many others demand, with the word "heroic" as exponent.

*(To be continued)*