

VENERABLE



KATERI TEKAKWITHA

THE LILY OF

THE MOHAWKS

*Fairest flower that ever**bloomed among true men*

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VENERABLE TEKAKWITHA'S STATUE AT AURIESVILLE

The Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha, in her new statue form, has gone to her birthplace, Martyrs' Hill, Auriesville, New York. In the same form, she has gone to the Sault, Canada, West of Montreal, where the design for her statue was conceived and lithographed. Soon a replica of this image of her will be on its way to the Tekakwitha Friary at Fonda, New York, the place of her baptism.

By birth she belongs in all three places — at Auriesville by her natural birth; at Fonda by her supernatural birth in the Sacrament of Baptism; and in Canada by her entrance into everlasting life at Caughnawaga, across the St. Lawrence, opposite Montreal.

When alive her holiness shed its influence in all three places. At this long interval since her death, nearly 270 years, this memorial of her will revive the same influence and realize what the Church has meant by pronouncing her Venerable.

There is already a statue of Venerable Tekakwitha at Auriesville. It has been there many years. It is at the entrance to the Shrine grounds, along with statues of the Martyrs, Jogues, Goupil and Lalande. It represents Kateri as a princess by her garb, since she was the daughter of an Iroquois Chieftain, and on his death, adopted by her uncle, another Chieftain of the same tribe. At the entrance she is like a guardian to the holy Martyrs' Hill.

Now she is to be where she really belongs, in a prominent position on the site of the Mohawk village which was palisaded, or fortified, as a refuge in case of attack during war. When we say she was born at Auriesville we do not mean she was actually born within this fortress. In peace times the Mohawks scattered their cabins outside their palisade and took refuge in it only when attacked. Still it was considered their common home, and that is why we say that with her statue on the site of this palisade, Tekakwitha is now where she belongs.

The statues at Auriesville differ, as they should, from one another: the one at the entrance is in the civil costume of her rank; the one on the Hill in an Indian Maiden's ordinary dress; but this difference is not very remarkable. The remarkable difference is in the expression of the countenance and in the attitude of the figure. The self-assurance and boldness of posture that become a princess are manifest in the statue at the entrance; the simplicity and the spiritual yearning for things heavenly strike one as characteristic of the statue adorning Martyrs' Hill.

This statue will be reproduced. It is admirably suited for church and school lawns, and for meeting halls. Until Servants of God are canonized it is not usual to display their statues in churches, although it is permissible, without the aureola, or gilt crown. Their images may be represented in stained glass windows, or in a painted altar piece, in the case of the Blessed.

It will create a sensation when Tekakwitha will be canonized and this statue will appear in our sanctuaries, nothing ever like it before. The artist is carving it in smaller sizes for homes.