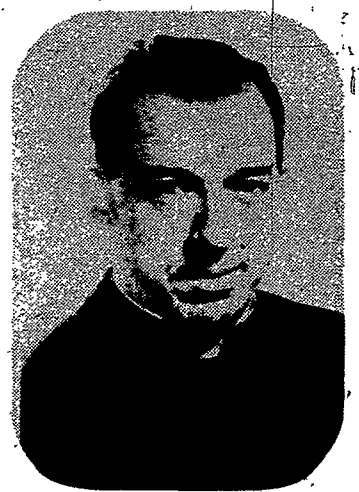


Priest Attributes Sight Restoration To Miracle by 'Lily of the Mohawks'



Abbott

Memphis, Tenn. (RNS) — An American Jesuit Bible scholar, Father Walter M. Abbott, attributes restoration of sight in one eye which has a ruined optic nerve to the miraculous intercession of a Mohawk Indian girl who is a candidate for sainthood.

Father Abbott said he suddenly regained sight in his left eye after he and friends had prayed for a year to Kateri Tekakwitha, who died in 1680 and whose cause as the first native American saint is being promoted.

The 53-year-old priest, who works in Rome as Pope Paul's representative in all common Bible work, said he had letters from two eye specialists who claim that the return of his sight

was "medically impossible and beyond explanation."

Father Abbott lost sight in his eye when he fell down a marble staircase in his Rome residence on June 24, 1975. He fractured his skull and wrist and dislocated his jaw. Physicians said head damage caused a hemorrhage which eventually destroyed the optic nerve in the left eye.

"They said there was nothing left of the optic nerve but dead matter," the priest said. "They also told me, individually, that once the optic nerve is gone, there is no way for sight ever to return."

Father Abbott said that while he was recuperating at Campion Renewal Center, a Jesuit health complex in Weston, Mass., he met

Father Henri Bechard, vice postulator in the cause of sainthood for Kateri Tekakwitha, "The Lily of the Mohawks."

"He was interested in my case," Father Abbott said, "and asked if I would go to the grave of the girl and begin praying to her for a miracle."

Father Abbott said that in October 1975, accompanied by his mother, sister and others, he visited the Indian girl's grave in Caughnawaga, south of Montreal, on an Indian reservation. He began the prayer crusade, which eventually was joined by a cardinal and a Jesuit expert on the life of Kateri, among others.

"I began to hope for sight to return," Father Abbott said, "with that hope, I had

gotten into the habit of opening my left eye when I awoke each morning to see if there had been any change. One morning in mid-November I opened my left eye and I saw the ceiling clearly. I looked around the room and I could see things. I stood up and found that I could see the bottom half of the room perfectly. It was a strange feeling."

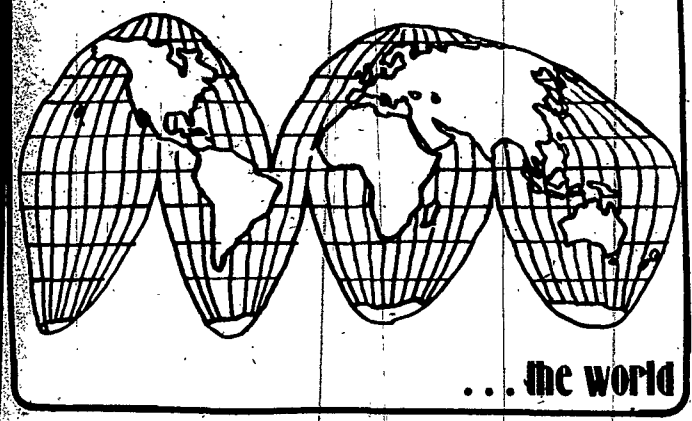
He has had his eye re-examined by two of the doctors who said he had had no chance of ever regaining sight in the eye.

"There was a Catholic specialist in New York and a Jewish expert in Boston and they both came to the same conclusion — the optic nerve was still nothing but dead tissue and yet I had better than 50 per cent vision in the eye," Father Abbott said.

Kateri Tekakwitha was born in 1656 of a Christian Algonquin mother and a pagan Iroquois father in a Mohawk River village now known as Auriesville. She was baptized on Easter Sunday, April 18, 1676, by Jesuit missionary Father James de Lamberville, and a year later ran away to the mission of St. Francis Xavier of Sault Ste. Marie in Quebec. She took vows of perpetual virginity and in 1680 died after being ill for many months.



The nation and ...



Father Theodore Hesburgh, CSC, president of Notre Dame University, has been elected chairman of the board of trustees of the Rockefeller Foundation. He succeeds Cyrus Vance, who resigned on being nominated for U.S. Secretary of State. When he first joined the Rockefeller board in 1961, Father Hesburgh was its first Catholic member. Joseph A. Califano, President Carter's choice for secretary of the U.S. Health, Education and Welfare Department says he is opposed to federal aid for abortion, but does not favor a constitutional amendment to outlaw abortion. Thirty-eight "public citizens groups" including Network, the Catholic nuns' lobbying organization, the Jesuit Conference Office of Social Ministries, and the Catholic Peace Fellowship, have appealed to President Carter to stop production of the B-1 Bomber.

Mairead Corrigan, co-founder of the peace movement in Northern Ireland, recently said in an interview broadcast over Vatican Radio, that failure of the movement could cause serious, hope-dashing, psychological trauma in the strife-torn province. In Dublin, Irish television has banned the showing of an episode of the American series "Executive Suite" which deals with the themes of abortion and lesbianism.

A Chilean Roman Catholic Church agency has added 20 more names to its list of missing persons it charges were detained or kidnapped within the last four months of 1976. The Vicariate of Solidarity, an agency set up by Cardinal Raul Silva Henriquez to provide legal aid to political prisoners and economic assistance to needy persons, filed a brief with the Supreme Court demanding investigation of the fate of the victims. An unrestricted "chair" dedicated to expanding programs in education has been established at the Catholic University in Washington, D.C., and has been set up in the name of Dr. Euphemia L. Haynes. Dr. Haynes earned her doctorate in mathematics at Catholic University, her master's degree from the University of Chicago and a bachelor's degree from Smith College. Pope Paul has hailed the second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture, under way in Lagos, Nigeria, as an event of great significance. Mario M. Cuomo, New York Secretary of State, has been elected president of the Catholic Interracial Council of New York.

FR. ARRUPE MILESTONE

Rome (RNS) — Father Pedro Arrupe, the 70-year-old superior general of the Society of Jesus, marked 50 years in religious life by presiding at a concelebrated Mass in the Church of Jesus in Rome with staff and other Jesuits.

MSGR. BAYER DIES

Vatican City (RNS) — Msgr. Carlo Bayer, organizer of Roman Catholic relief programs that poured hundreds of millions of dollars into developing countries and disaster areas, died here Jan. 16 of a heart attack. He was 61.



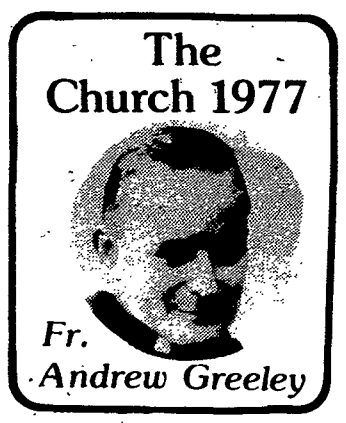
Dr. King's Birthday

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), Coretta Scott King and Detroit's Mayor Coleman Young await the start of a two-mile march for full employment through Atlanta on the 48th birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. More than 800 persons filled Ebenezer Baptist Church, where the slain civil rights leader served as co-pastor with his father, and hundreds more stood outside in the cold to hear an ecumenical service, which was followed by the march and dedication of Dr. King's tomb. (RNS)



Anti-Abortivist

Joseph A. Califano Jr., the new secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, told Congress that he was educationally opposed to abortion and would work actively to bar abortions under all federal health programs. "I believe that federal funds should not be used for providing abortions, but if the courts decide that as a constitutional right in this country there is an entitlement to federal funds for abortion, I will enforce the law." (RNS)



Fr. Andrew Greeley

You have to say one thing for "Commonweal" columnist Peter Steinfels: he is a master of the hatchet job. But Mr. Steinfels surpassed himself on the job he did on Senator-elect Daniel P. Moynihan just before the election. The "Commonweal," of course, doesn't deliver very many votes, but still, as an example of "responsible" Catholic journalism, the Steinfels axing of Moynihan is one for the record books.

Steinfels is superb at creating the appearance of impartiality: "For years I have resisted negative reports of him, often originating from people in government whom I respect." He resists the negative reports but he repeats them: "Matters of personality ... I have no way of checking out." And checking out or not, he slyly hints that Moynihan has a harsh and abrasive personality. (He doesn't, but that's another matter.) Steinfels' principal indictment of the new senator is that he is "bitter toward the Democratic liberal left." By the "liberal left," apparently, Steinfels means those who write for the Op/ed page of the New York "Times," "Village Voice," those who work at Daniel Callahan's sheltered work program at Hastings-on-Hudson, and other such frustrated McGovern lovers. But note the way Steinfels devastatingly summarizes Moynihan's critique of the left: "Ultimately it is hard to tell where Moynihan's

enemies list ends." Aha, "enemies list"; who keeps enemies lists? Well, Richard Nixon and his friends. So, obviously, Moynihan is a Nixonish type character.

Who knows, says young Mr. Steinfels, maybe I'm on the enemies list. "Moynihan extends the adjective 'honorable' to his opponent Mr. Buckley. It has become unclear whether he would extend it to me or, for that matter, to the 'Commonweal'."

Oh, come on, Peter, if it's all that unclear, you might ask him.

Worse still Moynihan is not a "Commonweal" Catholic, he is a "Commentary" Catholic. Because the editor of "Commentary" is a friend and neighbor and some of his articles appear there, it therefore follows that Moynihan subscribes to all the positions indicated in that magazine.

Moynihan's enemies list, then, must include "almost everyone to the left of Henry Jackson and Albert Shanker." The "Commentary" crowd are themselves ideologues of the most uncompromising stripe.

Steinfels senses that he may have gone too far in his guilt-by-association kick: "Is Moynihan in full agreement with this outlook? There is no indication he is not." The only way, you see, that you can prove you don't share everything that "Commentary" stands for is to make it quite explicit. One wonders if Mr. Steinfels were running for public office, he would feel called upon to make it clear that he doesn't agree with everything the "Commonweal" stands for.

Like I say, the "Commonweal" doesn't control many precincts. Moynihan won by a half million votes, including nine out of ten Jewish votes and four out of five black votes. If this is "fratricidal war," the Democratic party and the rest of the country should have it so good.

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