On August 11, 1946,

Pope Pius XII designated

Saint Isaac Jogues

as the special patron of

Bolton Landing.

Take a few minutes and leave the hustle and bustle of the 21st century. Go back more than 350 years to the mid-1600's. We are in the Adirondack mountains. Life is hazardous. Travel is long and arduous – by foot through deep woods, by canoe along the lakes and rivers.

The Indians call the big lake *Andia-ta-rochte*. On the eve of the Feast of Corpus Christi in 1646 (the year he would die a martyr), French Jesuit missionary Isaac Jogues christens the waters *Lac du Sainte-Sacrement (Lake of the Blessed Sacrament)* in honor of the Holy Eucharist.

North American Martyrs

In 1642, Jesuit brother Rene Goupil and Jesuit priest Isaac Jogues were captured by an Iroquois war party near Quebec and taken south (very possibly via Lake George) to an Indian village near what is now Auriesville, not far from Albany. There both men were cruelly tortured. Rene Goupil was killed for making the sign of the cross on the forehead of a native child. Isaac Jogues was held as a slave for over a year.

After reaching freedom and returning to Europe, Father Jogues returned to the New World to continue his missionary work. In 1646, near Lake George, he and lay missionary John LeLande were captured and taken back to the village near Auriesville, where they were tortured and killed.

In 1930, Pope Pius XI canonized Rene Goupil, Isaac Jogues, and John LeLande, along with five Jesuits who were martyred in Canada in 1648-49. These eight are referred to as the North American Martyrs.

The National Shrine of the North American Martyrs is located in Auriesville, about 40 miles from Albany. For information call 518-853-3033. The web site is www.martyrshrine.org.

Closer to home, the statue of Saint Isaac Jogues pictured on the left is located in Battlefield Park in the village of Lake George. The monument includes a frieze of Saints Rene Goupil and John LeLande, and an unnamed Mohawk warrior.

Lily of the Mohawks

Ten years following the martyrdom of John LeLande and Isaac Jogues, the same Indian village near Auriesville became the birthplace of Kateri Tekakwitha.

As a teenager she lived her Christian beliefs despite very forceful opposition from family and tribal members. She eventually had to flee her home, traveling northward through 200 miles of wilderness to a Christian community in Canada. Did Kateri travel Lake George, passing by Bolton Landing on her route north? Her health worsened, and in 1680 – only age 24 – she died.

Although her life was short, her spirituality is felt these many years later. In 1980 she was declared "Blessed" by Pope John Paul II. This is the last step before a person is declared a saint.