

New York Sisters of Charity

Many a thrilling drama has been written about early American life. Many more could be written. But all of them would concern the bravery or the achievements of great men of history. Yet one truly enthralling drama of brave women, who faced all the grueling hardships of early American life, remains unheralded. The intrepid history of the Sisters of Charity from their foundation in America in 1809 to their work of the present day, tells the story of bravery unequalled, of courage and perseverance without limit, of a work that is pleasing to God.

Whoever dreamed that when Mother Elizabeth Seton made the first foundation of the Sisters of Charity in the United States at Emmitsburg, these religious would grow to have under their charge in New York City alone thirty-five thousand children in elementary schools and four thousand in high schools?

When Bishop Connolly requested Mother Seton's Sisters of Charity to take up the care of dependent children in New York City in 1817, no one thought their marvelous work would expand into the establishment of the many large institutions of which they have had charge. There was a pleasing appropriateness in the advent of the Sisters of Charity into the city of their venerated foundress' birth.

Their work grew by leaps and bounds. It was necessary in 1817 to establish a separate Motherhouse for the New York community. Its first site was located at what is now Fifth Avenue and 109th Street. But this great Order needed still more extensive accommodations, and in 1857 a tract was purchased at Fort Hill where now stands the present Motherhouse, Mt. St. Vincent-on-Hudson. It is noteworthy that the first Superior of the New York Motherhouse, Mother Elizabeth Boyle, had, prior to assuming that charge, labored devotedly for the orphans of Rochester as Superior of St. Patrick's Asylum of this city.

Progress has been the keynote of this great Order. It is to their credit that they established in New York City St. Patrick's Asylum for dependent children, the first of its kind; the first Catholic academy; the first Catholic parochial school taught by religious; the first Catholic hospital; and the first Catholic High School, now the Archbishop Hughes Memorial.

The Academy of Mount St. Vincent formed the nucleus of its registration with forty pupils from St. Joseph's Select-School on East Broadway. Culminating their program of education, the Sisters of Charity founded their own College of Mt. St. Vincent in 1910. It boasts of a faculty of fifty; has an annual registration of five hundred students; has an alumnae organization of two thousand; has graduates in all leading professions.

From its humble beginning, this outstanding Order has had three thousand Sisters of Charity giving their life to the service of God. It is the privilege of the fourteen hundred now living to carry on the work of their noble predecessors. Their work is, indeed, a living testimonial to these intrepid pioneers of Christ.

Under the jurisdiction of the Motherhouse on Mt. St. Vincent-on-Hudson, there are ninety-one branch convents, controlling one hundred fourteen centers of zeal. These include one hundred schools, three homes for dependent children, a day nursery, seven hospitals and three guest houses for convalescents.

In addition, the community also maintains missions for the natives

of the Bahama Islands where it has founded a novitiate for a native Sisterhood to serve as an auxiliary in the missions.

To climax the work of this Order, the cause of Mother Seton, foundress, has now been advanced. The Rev. Salvatore M. Burgio, C. M., of Philadelphia has been appointed vice-postulator of her cause. Father Burgio went to Rome as secretary and clerical conclavist to His Eminence, Denis Cardinal Dougherty, Archbishop of Philadelphia.

With Cardinal Dougherty also were Michael Williams, Catholic editor and Antonio Filicchi great-grandson of the man whose Catholic household in Italy so impressed Mother Seton, when she was still a Protestant, that she became a convert.

Few figures in history hold a more lofty position than does this Sister of Charity, Mother Seton. To be born a Protestant, converted to Catholicism through good example and then to found so great an order as the Sisters of Charity would entitle her to a unique place in history. But to have her cause advanced so that one day she may be declared "Blessed" and ultimately "Saint" is an honor and a blessing given only to a few. In her life she did many things, any one of which would inscribe her name in the annals of history. But to combine all these achievements into one life, as did this Sister of Charity, is something a little beyond the comprehension of man and seems to indicate a strong bond with Him whose work she carried out. Her beatification will crown her life of remarkable achievement. The Sisters of Charity serve as a constant reminder that the work she began has been and will continue to be carried on.

TIME IN ITS FLIGHT . . . 1922

President Harding vetoes the first soldiers' bonus bill. . . . Irish Free State formed. . . . Will Hays accepts an offer to become "czar" of the motion picture industry. . . . Death of Alexander Graham Bell and of John Wanamaker.

Game of bridge is beginning to become an industry, but Mah Jongg looms as a threat. . . . Audit Bureau of Circulations decides to bar free-circulation publications from membership. . . . "Every day in every way I am getting better and better"—as Emil Cope approaches American shores.

Jazz music said to be menacing the morals of youth. . . . Men are turning to soft collars and alarmed laundry owners are advertising the idea that the starched collar is an index of character.

1923

President Harding dies in San Francisco and Calvin Coolidge, vice-president, takes oath of office at Plymouth, Vt. . . . National Vigilance Association formed at Washington, D. C. to wage fight on the Ku Klux Klan. . . . Treaty of friendship, commerce and consular rights signed with Germany.

Briton Hadden and Henry Luce establish *Time*, weekly news magazine. . . . Edward W. Bok establishes the Harvard Awards for the best newspaper and periodical advertisements. . . . A new soft drink is named "Goo-Goo."

Alfred P. Sloan, Jr., heads the General Motors Corporation. . . . 10,087 students learning advertising and merchandising in American colleges and universities. . . . *The American Mercury* begins publication with George Jean Nathan and H. L. Mencken as editors. . . . Frank A. Munsey buys the *New York Globe* and consolidates it with the *Sun*. . . . Banana trade drops off as nation carols, "Yes, We Have No Bananas."

Trinitarian Sisters

The Missionary Servants of the Most Blessed Trinity, an American community founded within the last quarter century by the late Very Reverend Thomas A. Judge C.M., an account of whose life and work was carried by the *Courier* in recent issues, opened its first foundation in the Rochester diocese in 1926. Blessed Trinity Missionary Cenacle, 30 Lorenzo Street, in Holy Family Parish, opened in that year with three Sisters. The Sisters gradually became acquainted with the people and sought out the children, thus discovering where missionary work was needed. Besides the home visiting and missionary work the Sisters have Sunday School and daily gather the children from the public schools for catechetical instruction, preparation for the Sacraments, etc. Classes during the school year and during the Summer School session are held at Holy Family School and also in a small one-story building on Mt. Read Boulevard.

Christ the King Missionary Cenacle was opened by Bishop O'Hern at 77 Woodward Street in October, 1929, for work in the parishes of Mt. Carmel, Our Lady of Sorrows, and Annunciation. A few months later a Sister began work at St. Patrick's, at that time the Cathedral, parish. The Sisters at this Cenacle have also done census-taking in the parishes of Blessed Sacrament, Holy Rosary, and Corpus Christi at different times. In November 1935, with Archbishop Mooney's advice, the Missionary Cenacle was moved to much more spacious and comfortable quarters at 82 Prince Street, in a house belonging to Corpus Christi Parish.

The first thing to be done in every parish was to make a friendly visit to each family in order to ascertain just how well the various members might be living up to their Religion.

MISSIONARY WORK NEEDED

It is hard for good Catholics to realize how many people there are in our country, baptized and brought up Catholics, who have fallen away to utter neglect of Mass and the Sacraments, who contract invalid marriages and allow their children to remain unbaptized and without religious life and instruction.

All of this work is remedial. What is more important is how to prevent further falling away, especially by the children. The Missionary Servants assist the priests with Religious Instruction classes from the public schools and with Sunday School at St. Patrick's and Annunciation. And in all parishes there is constant visiting at the homes to urge attendance at Mass and Confession and Sunday School. There are clubs and parties and outings of all sorts to make the children enjoy themselves while they are being brought closer to their Church.

Ever since the Missionary Servants have been in Rochester, many good persons have made a practice of bringing articles such as discarded clothing and furniture, old Catholic magazines, prayer-books, and other articles of devotion, to be distributed among the poor. This is very much appreciated by the Sisters.

LYONS

The year 1929 saw the opening of another Missionary Cenacle in the diocese, that of Blessed Trinity Missionary Cenacle at 29 Catherine Street, Lyons, N. Y. Earlier in the year two Sisters took a census in St. Michael's Par-



In memory of the late Rev. Francis X. Kunz of Rochester, who, for nearly twenty-five years, was the guide and inspiration of the Order of Martha, the Ladies' Auxiliary of Extension Society, in that city. Father Kunz, a humble parish priest, contributed his share to the missionary efforts of the Church in our country, and by his wise direction enabled a zealous group of Catholic ladies of his own city to share in the many phases of Extension's Missionary Apostolate, namely: assisting in the erection of parish buildings for needy places; contributing to the support of priests living in the poorer districts; supplying altar plate, vestments, altar linens and other church goods for the poor missions; aiding in the education of poor students for the missionary priesthood, and in general, sharing in the efforts being made to extend the Catholic Church in the United States and its Dependencies.

—May God reward his Charity—

The Catholic Church Extension Society
360 NORTH MICHIGAN AVENUE
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

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Court No. 10, Rochester

—take this timely occasion to express their appreciation of the Catholic Press movement in the Rochester diocese and to congratulate our Most Reverend Bishop on the 50th Anniversary of the Catholic Courier.

Catholic Women's Club

— of ROCHESTER —

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