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**Sodality of Our Lady**  
**Shut-in Sodalis**  
BY REV. ROY B. MORPHY  
Diocesan Director for Sodalis

Sometimes ago I had heard of this special group of Sodalis and was very anxious to learn more about them. It was not until last week in an excellent article in the September 26 *Authentic Messenger* that I found a full description of these unusual and unique companions of Mary. They are all members of the National Sodality of Our Lady, but they are so physically handicapped that they can take no active part in Sodality affairs. So they sanctify their lives with spiritual activities, setting aside several days each month for special union devotions.

They are not hypochondriacs or minor sufferers. They are bedridden, permanently sick and long-distilled, with very little hope of becoming well. They see and know one another only through an exchange of missives and letters and through their own Sodality paper called *Second Sacrament*. Their life is one of intense physical pain but also of sublime dramatization of submission to the Will of God. They accept their fate not in any cynical sense but in joyful faith and trust in God's Divine Mercy and Wisdom.

They choose resignation to God's Holy Will instead of the withering despair that engulfs so many sufferers. They radiate from their beds of pain a cheerful and saintly patience that is a model of Christian living. They live no life of monastic reclusion. Current affairs and present-day social problems occupy their attention as well as all things religious.

Founder Nov 23  
Mary Ellen Kelly of Sioux City, Iowa, is the founder of this group. Although with an unusual form of arthritis twelve years ago, she has not walked in five years. She is now twenty-three years of age. It was during 1942 when she had a particularly bad spell, that she was taken to St. Joseph's Hospital. It happened here at this same time in this hospital that Father James L. McShane, S.J., was giving a retreat to the nurses. In a visit to Mary

Ellen, Father McShane learned of her idea for a League of Shut-in Sodalis. Contacting the Sodality National Headquarters in St. Louis at the advice of Father McShane, Mary Ellen discovered that although a Sodality is bound to diocesan limits, yet a league could be formed with the members belonging to their own parish Sodalis.

Contact with other shut-ins was arranged. Names were exchanged and soon every state in the Union was represented in this new league. Its membership has even now extended into Canada. It was not long before episcopal approval came from Bishop Heelan of Sioux City, who appointed Father Theodor Schulte, S.J., as spiritual director. Father Schulte's legs are both amputated.

Militant in Faith  
This league aims at enlisting every shut-in of Sodality culture in order to bring before the throne of God through the Intercession of Our Lady of Sorrows a petition for the welfare of the world. There is nothing sentimentally heroic in this. Toughened and sanctified by pain they are militant Catholics in the real sense of the word, determined to help save a world lost in material engrossment.

Their voluntary devotions challenge the faith and courage of every healthy Catholic. They consider it an extreme honor to share, through the agency of letters, the sufferings of Christ carry His cross. The spirit they know is best expressed in the words of one of the twenty-nine year old members from Nova Scotia: "The first ten years are the hardest."

These Shut-in Sodalis are all very busy Sodalis. Using the medium of the telephone, the pen and occasional personal contact they join with other members in making their confessions as useful to Christ and His Church as they can. One example of these is Madonna E. Fox of Westchester, Rhode Island. Suffering from atrophic arthritis and heart trouble this twenty-three year old girl's mind and pen are never still. Writing profusely for the League's *Second Sacrament*, poetry, news, special features and comments stream out from her bed of pain. Once a secretary in a bank president, Madonna Fox looks into the future through eyes of faith. With a sickness that has made doctors and medical specialists stop and wonder, she merely remarks, "My future plans are definite. I believe that nothing is impossible with God; perhaps sometimes I may return to my former work." Madonna, I understand, is the author, among other things, of an article entitled, "The Advantage of Being an Invalid."

In the near future I will give you some more information on these Shut-in Sodalis. In the meantime those who are interested in its activities and in making their painful affliction beneficial to their souls and the souls of others may contact me for specific information on where and how to join this "wheel-chair brigade" of Sodalis.

**APPRECIATION TO NCCW**



James S. Mitchell, executive director of the National Catholic Community Service, Washington, presents to Mrs. Thomas G. Garrison, of Golden, Colo., vice president of the National Council of Catholic Women a citation for distinguished service rendered by her organization and related groups in behalf of the spiritual, moral and recreational welfare of servicemen and war workers. N. C. C. S. is a member agency of the United Service Organizations, Inc., which is engaged in a current appeal for funds to continue its work for the members of our armed forces. (NC Photos)

**Belgian Mass For GI's**  
New York — (NC) — A solemn High Mass was offered in the U. S. Military Cemetery at Henri Chapelle, Belgium, for the repose of the souls of American GI's buried there, according to a letter received by the Military Ordinateur here from the Rev. John F. Hafferty, Army chaplain and priest of the Diocese of Raleigh.

**Address All Communications to Catholic War Veterans, Inc., Public Relations Bureau, 1129 Republic State Bldg., New York 17, N. Y.**

**Q.** This vet received a blue discharge in February and upon returning home applied for a review, as provided by the G. I. Bill. He has just received an honorable discharge and asks if he can now obtain mustering out pay as he served overseas for 18 months.

**A.** Yes. While the deadline was Feb. 2, 1946, for vets who while eligible had not collected mustering-out pay previously, vets who received honorable discharges after review of previous discharges since that date may apply. You should write to the Army Central Adjustment Office, 4000 Goodfellow Blvd., St. Louis 23, Mo.

**Q.** A veteran advises that he has completed a six-month course in business management under the G. I. Bill. He still is eligible for another two years of free education. He asks if he can now take a 16 week course in radio, acting and announcing?

**A.** The regulation provides that veterans may take only one course of training. When a course is completed a vet is not entitled to any other course unless it be for additional training in the same field. Then it must be approved by the Veterans' Administration.

**6 Women Walk 550 Miles On Lourdes Pilgrimage**

Paris — (NC) — Six women took part in the pilgrimage to Lourdes by former German prisoners and deportees made the entire journey of about 550 miles from Paris to Lourdes on foot. One of the women was 63 years old.

When the six pilgrims arrived at Montauban, Bishop Peter Theas of that city invited them to breakfast and served them himself. Bishop Theas had also been deported by the Germans.

Other prisoner pilgrims who traveled to Lourdes on foot included a group of Bretons, who walked more than 800 miles from Guingamp.

Some 150 pilgrims from the coal regions of Lorraine made a pilgrimage on foot to Paris, a distance of about 120 miles, to the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, Montmarie, to offer thanks for the liberation of their town and France. They had made a vow to undertake the pilgrimage the day after France's fall in 1940. At one point of their journey they were met by Robert Prigent, Minister of Population and former secretary of the Christian

an Syndicates of the North, who spent the evening with the pilgrims and took part in their prayers.

**Two Irish Bishops**  
Dublin — (NC) — The consecration of Msgr. Patrick Dempsey as Titular Bishop of Narni and Auxiliary to Archbishop John McQuaid of Dublin, will take place on October 21 at St. Mary's Pro-Cathedral, here.

The consecration of Msgr. Joseph G. Holland, African Missionary Society, who has been appointed Titular Bishop of Ambracia and Vicar Apostolic of Lower Volta, Gold Coast, West Africa, will be held October 23 in the Cathedral at Cork.

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Christian Charity demands that we do our utmost to alleviate the want and misery of these unfortunate people, and it demands that we do it now. Even a small contribution, given today, may be the means of saving a life.

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