Real Persons

Stories Told to Help Charities Help People

By GEORGE W. MONTGOMERY, Jr.
Rochester Catholic Charities

In the past few weeks, a number of persons have talked with the writer about this series of articles. Most felt that the stories of real cases were the most interesting and gave the best picture of what Catholic Charities is, and what the agency tries to do. Several people urged that more stories be written about actual cases. Several others raised the question of whether cases should be used at all, lest embarrassment to the people concerned result. At least one remarked that, of course, the stories given were "made up" to illustrate a point.

G. Montgomery

The cases which have been used are those of real people—Jimmy, the boy who didn't want charity, is a real person. Known to the writer. Of course, his name isn't Jimmy. Mr. Brown who wanted help, and didn't want to be "embarrassed" is a resident of Rochester. Johnny, who needed hair in school, and Joe who was in trouble in his community are real. Lively boys. Mike, who needed help and understanding, and Peter, the Ukrainian refugee boy, are real. The stories told about them are true.

IF YOU READ over their stories, you will note that there is no information given which would enable you to identify the person. Jimmy might be the boy next door. But unless you know the story already, you could not pick him out. Even if you knew the story, you could not tell be sure, since all identifying data have been removed or disguised. This is in accordance with recognized procedure for presentation of actual cases. There are many stories we would like to tell. There are many stories that should be told. People sometimes wonder if we run out of material for stories. The volumes could be written about the thousands who have come to Catholic Charities.

Since 1918, many thousands have come to the Agency to tell their story. And each one came to an individual with his experience, his real problems, with part of that interest in themselves and of interest to others. Each is an individual story, for each individual is different.

MANY STORIES should be told. For those who [illegible] love. There are stories of happy family life, and stories of family life which are tragic. In short, the stories which could be told are real cross sections of life in this country in our time.

But people come to an agency for help. The agency exists to help people to help themselves. In seeking help the individual gives information about himself. The agency and the caseworker are bound in conscience to use this information only to help the person, and to respect the confidential nature of the relationship.

That is why many of the most interesting stories cannot be told. The stories are given in confidence. If there is the slightest possibility that this confidence would be violated, the story cannot be told. Some stories told to workers would make what the newspapers call "human interest stories" of unusual drama and interest, but if they were told the persons might be identified.

WE HAVE ALL heard people discuss their relationship with an agency. We have heard stories of what an agency did or did not do in particular situations. In most of these stories, the agency is not presented in a particularly favorable light. When you hear such stories, please bear in mind that you hear only one side of the case. The agency is not free to release confidential material to present the whole story, even if the agency knew the story was being circulated.

The important point in this discussion is simply this—A social agency like Catholic Charities exists to help people. Such stories as we use are intended to give a better understanding of the work of the agency, so that still more people may be helped. In telling these stories, care is taken to prevent the person from being identified and subjected to embarrassment. That may mean that the stories may lack the "punch" of straight news stories, in which "who, where, what, when" are clearly outlined. We will use real stories of real people (but not real names or identifying material) in an attempt to give the readers of the Courier-Journal a better understanding of Catholic Charity, and of Catholic Charities.

Papal Legate Hails Interracial Groups

Washington — (NC) — Interracial Councils "are a source of immense good" in a field where there is "real need for Catholic action," His Excellency, Archbishop Amleto Giovanni, Cicognani, Apostolic Delegate to the United States, told members of the Catholic University Interracial Council here after celebrating Mass for them in the students' chapel.

"It is abundantly manifest that these groups of white and Colored Catholics are a source of immense good—groups which gather periodically to hold discussions, in all charity and order, under a spiritual director," the Apostolic Delegate declared.

CHRISTMAS ART ON LEAVES

This Christmas scene worked on a leaf from the campus of Manhattan College, New York, by Brother Adrian Lewis, F.S.C., shows the Star of David shining on Christ the Light of the World, the trip to Bethlehem, angels in adoration after announcing the birth to the shepherds, and a scene from Palestine. In his leaf-etching, which he does with only the aid of a pin, Brother Adrian has a countour effect of the world and a map of the United States under the crib between the two woolly lambs. (NCWC)

Bethlehem, Pa. Open Christmas Festival

Bethlehem, Pa.— (RNS) —This city, named for Christ's birthplace in the Holy Land, is the mecca of thousands who come to view the elaborate decorations which have made it known as the "Christmas City of America."

The bells of more than 70 churches in the city pealed and thousands of persons bowed their heads in prayer as the lights were lighted officially. This is the 11th year for such decorations, which become more elaborate each year.

The lights stretch for seven miles, with a 100-foot electric star on top of South Mountain visible for a radius of 20 miles. In all, there are 28,000 6colored lights and 240 fluorescent star and bell lights.

A 52-FOOT Christmas tree made up of more than 150 small trees and illuminated by 1,200 lights, has been erected in the center of the city.

When the lights were turned on Protestant and Catholic choral groups toured the city, singing carols.

Bethlehem was founded by persons who fled religious persecution abroad. Just 200 years ago, a band of Moravians came here from Germany and established the community. They sang "Not Jerusalem, lowly Bethlehem," and that song inspired Count Nicholas Zinzendorf and his followers to name the community "Bethlehem," in honor of the birthplace of Christ. Now there are approximately 80 churches of all creeds in the city.

THERE IS a charm to the city at present not found elsewhere. Pure beeswax candles are seen everywhere. Housewives are busy making Christmas cookies from centuries-old family recipes—especially ginger cookies fashioned into quaint little animals and while cookies formed to represent angels, stars and trees.

The Christmas Eve celebration conducted by the Moravians has been unchanged in centuries. The Moravian churches are decked with evergreen and each of the thousands of participants in the Christmas Eve vigil holds a lighted candle during the soft singing of carols.

Gift Suggestions

No. 2728, the apron, is cut in one size and requires only ¾ yd. 33-in. fabric. Applique included.

No 202, the "comical cat," stands 15 inches tall and requires ⅜ yd. 35-in. fabric.

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New Carmelite Convent Opens in Osaka, Japan

Tokyo (NC) A new Carmelite convent is being founded in Osaka, one of Japan's largest cities. This Carmel, second in Japan, is an offshoot from the first, founded in Tokyo only 14 years ago.

In 1933 four Carmelite nuns came from their monastery in Cholet, Samur, France, to initiate their contemplative life in Japan.

At Our House

Mother Shops Early Only To Find It Doesn't Pay

By MARY TINLEY DALY

Last year's Christmas shopping taught me a lesson. There was nothing left in the stores by the middle of December. November 25 instead of December 25 would be my deadline next time, I resolved. This year I would be ahead of the rush.

So, in early fall, I shopped leisurely, thoroughly satisfied with every Christmas purchase. By the end of September all the "bought" gifts were acquired: a ballerina dress for Pat; a gold bracelet for Mother, a doll that Mary would love, roller skates for Markie, a de luxe model pushtoy for Baby Virginia. Magazine subscriptions were standard gifts for my sisters and brother.

Mary Daly

In October I made flannel robes for the Head of the House and Johnny, and a taffeta party dress for Eileen. Everything was wrapped pretty-pretty with fancy paper and stars and stowed away on my closet shelf. I felt too efficient to be natural.

THE FIRST OF November I called my sister always an early bird.

"I've finished my Christmas shopping, Virginia," I said smugly.

"You?" she asked unflatteringly. "Are you planning an operation or something? And what did you get for Mom for her birthday, day after tomorrow?"

"Why . . . a gold bracelet," I said.

The swap from "Merry Christmas" to "Happy Birthday" card was easy, and I could get earrings for Christmas to match the "birthday" bracelet.

Next day, Markie's Jolly Nine had a roller skating party.

"Too bad your skates are broken," I said sternly. "Maybe this will teach you to take care of your things."

"Yeah," she said sadly, "maybe it will."

Markie's gang was burning up the pavements, doing dare-devil turns and other antics symbolic of The Jolly Nine.

All but Markie. She sat disconsolate on the front steps chewing the ends of her red pigtails. Nothing jolly about this member of the club. Of course I weakened . . .

When Markie put on her new skates she really did stunts!

THE OTHER gifts, I vowed, WILL STAY PUT!

But when Mary was sick with a bad cold, she was dreadfully bored. The fever made her head ache so radio listening was out. She was too listless to draw or color, and it hurt her eyes to read.

"If I just had Elsie to take to bed with me!" she sighed.

"Where is Elsie?"

"She's down by the furnace," said Mary. "Virginia left her out in the rain and I'm trying to dry her out."

Elsie in her convalescent home in the basement was past all hope of recovery. Small comfort Elsie would be to a sick little girl! The new Christmas doll was worth twice her purchase price.

While Mary was sick, there was the ever-present problem of trying to keep two-year-old Virginia amused and out of the sick room. The Santa Claus pushtoy did the trick, though it meant still another present gone . . .

WHEN JOHNNY was invited to visit a friend in Philadelphia we discovered that the bathrobe his grandmother had sent him, when he was 16, was well, slightly inadequate. Sixteen to eighteen is a rapid period of growth, we found. Luckily, the new robe fit perfectly.

Then Pat was invited to an informal Thanksgiving dance.

"Oh, for one of those ballerina dresses!" she said.

Isn't there something about "the time, the place and the girl?" And wasn't this exactly that combination? She got the dress from the nearly empty closet shelf.

And then Eileen's best friend gave a party—and there was no sense keeping her home when a taffeta party dress was on a closet shelf—was there?

NOW THE Christmas shelf is pretty empty looking, with just one present remaining, all done up in fancy paper and stars, the robe for the Head of the House.

But the Head of the House came home in a drenching rain tonight, took a hot bath, put on pajamas and a seersucker beach robe. He's sitting in the living room now, sniffling, reading his paper—trying to, that is, between sneezes.

"Why don't you put on a sweater?" I asked him.

"Too bulky and too short," he sniffed. "Boy, I wish I had a warm bathrobe. Ker-choo!"

I can't let the man catch cold, can I?

DON'T BLAME Your Glasses

Glasses can help you read, but they can't nourish your eyes with the vitamins they need. Nutritional scientists say that your eyes require not just one but TWO principal vitamins—Vitamins A and B-2. A deficiency of Vitamin A can be responsible for "night blindness"—poor vision in dim light, and dry swollen lids. And if you don't get enough Vitamin B-2 your eyes may become bloodshot, watery, itchy, and sensitive to sunglare. Be sure your diet includes plenty of these Vitamins. AREX Tablets contain both Vitamins A and B-2 also Vitamin C and calcium and Phosphorus. Don't blame your glasses, take AREX Tablets for vitamin deficient eyes.

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Breast-O'-Chicken will "go" for this meal!
[illegible] cup hot milk
¼ tsp. salt
dash of cayenne
1 tbs. lemon juice
6 ½ slices toast
Blend butter and flour. Add chicken soup, milk, salt, pepper and cayenne. Cook, stirring constantly, until smooth and thick. Place toast on platter with Breast-O'-Chicken. Add Tuna, broken into [illegible] and heat[illegible] pour on toast.

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