



SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH ARE HOUSEMOTHERS IN VILLA COTTAGES

St. Joseph Villa Real 'Home' For Children

St. Joseph's Villa's Red Feather Agency of the Rochester Community Center tries to offer to the child committed to its care a certain period of experience in group living with a view to subsequent return to parent or transfer to foster home care.

Consistent effort is made to supply the elements of home life in as great a measure as is possible outside of a normal family group. That St. Joseph's Villa is able to approach its goal is due in no small way to its privilege in being a Red Feather Agency in which everybody gives and everybody shares.

To better appreciate what this giving and sharing really means, let us see a few fruits through the eyes of one of our little citizens of tomorrow from the day he came to the Villa, a rejected and dejected boy of nine to this day five years later with his departure but a few months distant.

Quoting Billy: "St. Joseph's Villa was mother and father to me when I lost both in ways far harder to accept than their deaths. I often look back to that day when my Rochester Catholic Charities Social Worker brought me to my new home. I know I'll never forget the smiling welcome I received from the Sisters. As I stood there, not quite sure that I wanted to be welcomed by them I had been a boy of the streets and discipline and routine were I thought the very best thing I wanted. I remember trying to act brave as I defiantly held up a dime in

Cottage-Type Home
St. Joseph's Villa of Rochester is a modern, cottage-type institution, which opened June 19, 1942, to provide group care for dependent children of the Roman Catholic faith throughout the diocese of Rochester. The institution represents the consolidation of St. Mary's Boys' Home of Rochester, St. Patrick's Girl's Home of Rochester and St. Joseph's Orphan Asylum of Rochester and Monroe County which were closed prior to and during 1942. The Sisters of St. Joseph of the Diocese of Rochester are responsible for the operation of St. Joseph's Villa under the direction of the Board of Trustees.

front of Sister and said, 'I'm going to the movie with the Sister, just smiled and said, 'Oh, you like the movies. We do too. We have them every Thursday and they're free. But I still clenched my dime.

Red Brick Houses
"From the Administration Building (though I didn't know its name then) my Social Worker and Sister took me to one of the red brick buildings I had counted as five when we drove in. There I met the Sister who was to be my 'Mother' for a long time to come. I remember the 'nice' feeling I had when I was told that Sister was my 'Cottage-Mother' and that feeling has grown deeper. In my new home were some twenty boys and one other Nun who was to be my first teacher. In St. Joseph's Villa's own little white school house last summer it was painted light tan with brown trim.

"The boys were all very kind to me and did everything to make me feel right at home.

"I was right. They at once made me feel at home. It was as if I had found the kind of home I had always been looking for. I didn't know it, but I had. I was taken upstairs and shown my room—a large bright room with four beds in it. By supper time I was quite well acquainted and much more at home than I was going to at my

School Days
The next day and the day after were to be a very different kind of living for me. No more skipping school, and sitting through all the performance pieces of our small town movie house—and finally having to go to what I called 'home.' My first day at the Villa began at 7:15. No bells, no report is on. Just Sister coming into our room, over to my bed and saying, 'Come on, Billy, or you'll be late for breakfast.' Then morning prayers, 'breakfast' and our little duties which I came to call proudly, 'MY charge.'

"From then on the day wasn't too different than I had expected except that I really went to school and gradually got over disliking it. Home at 11:30 to a good dinner. I still remember the 'dessert' we had that first day—home-made chocolate ice cream! Back home again at 3:30, lunch and then play till 5:30 in charge of a young man who was called the Recreation Leader. We had fun playing the games that went with the season.

"Summer vacation is a happy time with many outings and picnics given by different guilds and organizations who are all so good to us. Sometimes we are their guests at outside activities and sometimes the picnics are held here in our own picnic groves. But the best time of all is when we pack up to go to Camp Stella Maris for a week—a whole week filled with camp fun and different experiences—meeting friends we made the year before and always finding some new friend each year.

There has been just one big change since I came to the Villa. In the beginning all the children and the Sisters in each house went to Sunday Mass at St. Thomas' Roman Catholic Church, just up the Avenue. The graduations were held there each June and we were confirmed there the last year our work shop was organized and we set out on a beautiful chapter cruise last year. The Assumption will be held in the memory of Archbishop Timon as a thank offering to the Bishop of the Diocese.

Bishop Keane blessed our new chapel in June 1946 and celebrated the First Mass. Now we have Mass in our St. Thomas Chapel each Sunday and Holy Day at eight o'clock.

Well, I've done a lot of remembering but I haven't told half the things that have made St. Joseph's Villa my happy home these past five years. I think you can easily guess why my Graduation Day will be a day of rejoicing and gratitude that I have made the grade—but not so happy to be saying 'good-bye' to all that is so dear to me at St. Joseph's Villa. But I'll be back as often as I can.

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