

Girl Graduate Recalls Happy Life At St. Joseph's Villa

For many, graduations are happy occasions. However, when I graduated from grammar school it was somewhat of a sad occasion for me. I was sad because I was leaving a place that for four years had been my home. The name of this home was St. Joseph's Villa.

When I graduated in 1949, it meant not only the receiving of a diploma, but it also meant that the time had come for me to go out into the world and put into practice all the wonderful teachings that I had received while I was there.

If I had never been given the opportunity to be in this home, I might never have been given the chance to change from a tomboy into a lady, or from a hostile-minded girl into a girl that now has no hate in her heart but only love for her fellowman.

When I came to St. Joseph's Villa in 1945, I was only nine, going on ten, and an only child of a broken home that had elbowed when I was six. I had lived with my Mother until I was almost nine, and then had been a few months in a foster home. By the time I entered the Villa, I was as I mentioned before, a tomboy, and I had a pretty cold outlook on life.

I felt that because my Mother and Father were separated it was up to me to look out for myself and forget about my neighbor. I felt that I had it tougher than anybody else because of that separation, but I soon found out that I was very wrong, and that being a tomboy wasn't the best thing to be.

St. James Cottage
I lived in a cottage called St. James', one of the five cottages at the Villa. There were twenty-three girls and two Sisters in our house, one Sister who was known as the Mother of the cottage and another who was a teacher at the school. There was also a cook and housekeeper.

I soon learned that many of the children had come from broken homes, and that some had even found the going tougher than I had. Some were from large families that couldn't keep them because of the housing problem. There were others that had only one living parent, or none at all. My life soon became regulated, and I began to become even friendly toward the other girls. It wasn't easy at first because I was strange, but with the wonderful understanding of the Sisters I soon became a

part of the family of St. James cottage.

I soon learned that there was an allotted time for work, school, and play. Before going to school, everyone had a household chore to do, and these would vary from week to week. This gave me a feeling of responsibility that I had never known before, and as I grew older the responsibility grew.

It was part of the responsibility of the older girls in the cottage to take care of the younger girls. It wasn't long before I began helping the Sisters to give the younger chil-

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dren their showers and hair-washings and curi-sets. I never felt this to be a burden, by doing it I was acquiring the habits of cleanliness and good grooming that are important to all of us.

The Villa School
The school was right on the Villa grounds, only a few minutes' walk from the cottage. There were five Sisters teaching school then, and that meant somewhat of a burden on them because it was necessary to teach two different grades in the same room. However, in spite of this handicap the Sisters conducted a *l. a. s. e. s.* systematically. In school as well as at home I learned courtesy and respect for others.

Night assignments were given just as in other schools and I had attended before I came to the Villa, but at night we had a study period from seven to eight and one of the Sisters would preside. By doing my



ST. JOSEPH VILLA GIRLS — The piano provides fun and music for the girls in their cottage home at St. Joseph's Villa.

homework every night and by paying attention in school, I began to improve my marks; I became interested in school and I actually think that it was here that I got my desire to receive all the education that I could.

After school the recreation period began. With our playground director we would head for our playground, or if it was exceptionally nice we would go on walks through the woods. Whichever the case might be, we always had a lot of fun. By playing different games, we developed good sportsmanship as well as our muscles. It was through this that I learned that if you're a poor loser, you're a poor sportsman, and in sports as well as in everything else in the world, there is no room for a poor sport.

Perhaps the greatest thing I learned while I was at the Villa was that you should have faith in God. It was there that I developed a strong faith. Through the teaching of our Chaplain and the Sisters I became closer to God than I had ever been before. Perhaps without their constant guidance I would have lost my faith, which from the time I was a little girl had been the source of my comfort when I was faced with a problem.

A Genius for Bumps
In my four years at the Villa my outstanding accomplishment was bumps. I had a genius for them. I know I had more injuries than I had actual sicknesses. When I fractured my knee, through my own unusual methods, it was necessary for me to be taken to the hospital at eight o'clock in the evening. Never once in all the time that my knee was bound up did I receive anything but the best of care. It was necessary for me to remain at the hospital over night, and then in the morning I was allowed to go back home, but I had to stay at the Infirmary for a week. The nurse, who was a Sister, was at my side whenever I needed her, even in the middle of the night when I was in pain. And the Sister who was the Mother of my cottage came up to bring me mail from my father or to see how I was getting along. The reason I mention this is that our house Mother was elderly, and in spite of this she climbed the hill leading to the Infirmary, when she could have sent one of the girls.

This same Sister, even

though she is today no longer in charge of the cottage she so long had watched over, but instead is in ill health at the Motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Joseph, never stops praying for and asking about her girls, whom she misses so much.

This same Sister often got up in the middle of the night to take care of a girl who would be sick or frightened by a thunderstorm, a thing I know every Sister in every cottage willingly does even to this day.

I and others like me have left St. Joseph's Villa having only the highest praise for the

Sisters of St. Joseph, whose guidance and protection have made it possible for us to go forth and take our rightful place in society as good Christian Americans.

You who give to the Community Chest can continue helping those who cannot help themselves, by giving every dime, nickel, and dollar you can spare. Please give! You helped me to get a start, which has led me to my successful first year in College. Won't you please help others to get this same wonderful start in the right direction?

Red Cross Volunteers

Red Cross is primarily a voluntary organization directed by volunteers at both the national and community levels. There are 100 Red Cross volunteers to every paid worker. In the Rochester Chapter last year 8,563 volunteers gave 383,277 hours.

Volunteers bring recreation, entertainment, and personal service to military and Veterans Administration hospitals and serve in military installations. They lighten the hours for children, the aged, the sick and the mentally ill in civilian hospitals and institutions. They help in local chapter programs—blood, disaster, Home Service, and other community activities.

Nine groups are organized into Service Groups. They are Arts and Skills, Canteen, Entertainment and Supply, Gray Lady and Gray Man, Motor, Production, Social Welfare Aide, Nurse's Aide and Staff Aide.

The following are highlights

in the activities of this group in Rochester.

Nurse's Aides worked untiringly in a local hospital caring for post-polio patients during the height of the season. Gray Ladies and Gray Men have performed an outstanding service at Rochester State Hospital. To quote from their director: "The very philosophy of the reason for utilizing the Gray Ladies and Gray Men has changed from simple entertainment to the point where they have a very definite therapeutic value. Entertainment serves as a medium to return patients to reality."

Motor Service cooperates with the eye bank to assure prompt transportation of donated eyes to the shipping point.

Weekly trips are made to Veterans Hospitals at Bath, Batavia, and Canandaigua, and to Sampson Air Force Base by entertainers giving their services through Red Cross Entertainment Service.

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