

'After She Comes'

'Serve the Lord in gladness'
first lesson of Convent Life

WHEN A WHOLESOME normal American young woman wishes to be a Sister of Saint Joseph, she comes to their Motherhouse on East Avenue to enter the postulate. There she spends the first period of probation prescribed by the Holy Mother Church for those desiring to dedicate themselves to the service of God. This initial step continues from six to eight months, giving the aspirant the opportunity to become acquainted with the life of a Sister of Saint Joseph and to learn more specifically the meaning of the call to religion. It also enables her superiors to judge her adaptability to the new life. At this period of formation the postulant follows a well-balanced schedule of prayer, study, work and recreation.

This early religious training consists in daily instruction in the duties and obligations of a religious in this community, the performance of spiritual exercises and the observance of the Holy Rule. Special time is set aside each day for private devotions and spiritual reading.

The scholastic life of the first year at Nazareth Novitiate is very carefully planned and finds its fulfillment in the Elementary Teacher Training Department of Nazareth College located at the Motherhouse. Ideal surroundings, ample equipment and a teaching staff of professional superiority contribute to the development of the future teacher. Classes in art, music, voice and speech provide every opportunity to develop every talent.

A minimum of household tasks challenges the capacity of every young woman for the ordinary duties of home life.

Periods of recreation are set apart each day to refresh the mind and body. "To serve the Lord in gladness" is the key which enables the postulant to catch the secret of real happiness. A special room set aside for recreational activities is provided with movie projector, radio, recorder, musical instruments and games. The spacious grounds make outdoor sports available in every form—tennis, badminton, skating and tobogganing.

After these months of training and preparation in the postulate the aspirant, if she is accepted, is admitted to Reception. Before she re-

ceives the Holy Habit, she must make a preparatory retreat of eight days. Now begins the year of novitiate which extends through one complete year. The purpose of this period is the formation of the mind of the novice by means of the study of the Rules and Constitutions, by the exercise of prayer, especially meditation and by instruction in the vows and virtues of religious life.

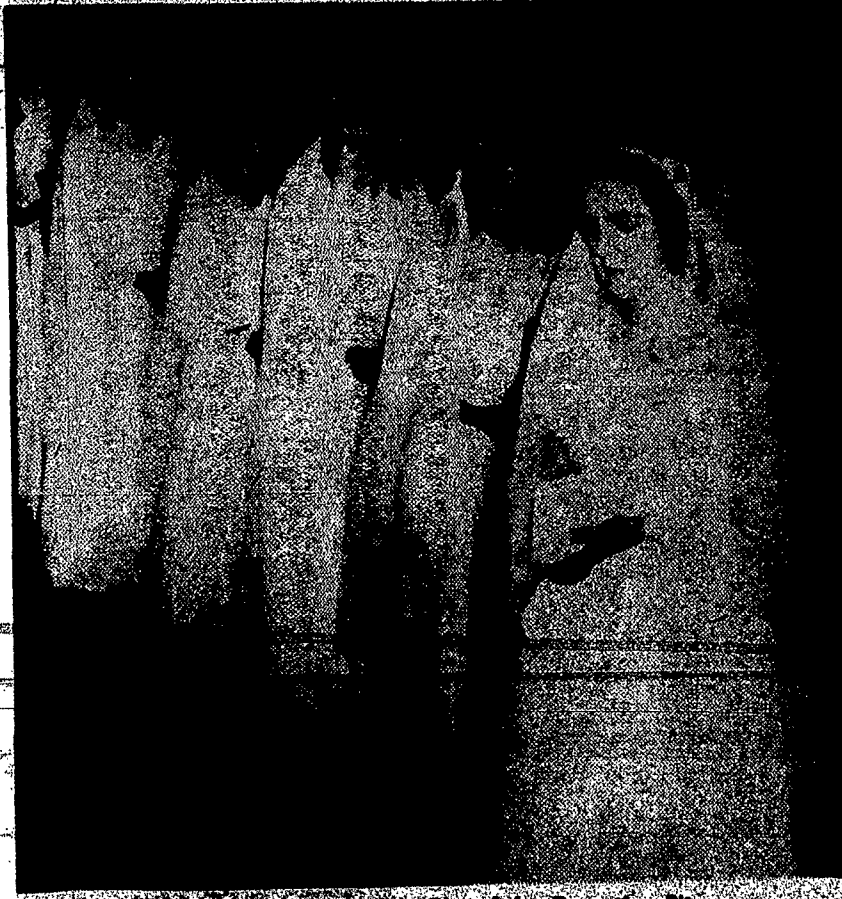
During this year of novitiate the novices are not allowed to continue their formal studies or to be engaged in the external work of the Congregation. However, classes in ascetical theology, sacred chant, cooking and sewing make for a pleasing variety during this time of interior formation which is a reservoir of strength and courage for later life.

Now the novice looks forward to her religious profession. If she is judged a suitable candidate for the Congregation, she is admitted to temporary vows. These vows are renewed annually for three years upon the request of the Sister to the Mistress of Novices and the Mother Superior.

Following the profession, the junior religious, as she is now called, may be engaged in the external works of the Congregation. Her professional training is again resumed and may continue for another complete year in preparation for her future assignment. All junior novices are returned to the Motherhouse during the summer months to make their annual retreat and to attend courses provided for their spiritual, intellectual and physical improvement.

Having renewed her simple temporary vows annually for three years and having completed her twenty-first year, the junior religious now takes the final step in becoming a Sister of Saint Joseph; she may now be admitted to perpetual vows. In preparation for final profession, the Sister spends many weeks. Special courses, conferences and retreat days provide an interior renewal of the spiritual life for this solemn engagement.

These are briefly the steps by which a young woman desirous of becoming a Sister of Saint Joseph may, by the grace of God, fulfill her vocation faithfully, living and dying in the love of the Cross with Jesus, that she may "also triumph with Him in glory."



Sisters of Saint Joseph in Chapel for Reception Novitiate



Novitiate wears Holy Habit for first year

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