

## Nun's Leprosy, God's Approval

Steubenville — (NC) — When Sister Mary Paulita left the United States nine years ago to work among leprosy victims in the Fiji Islands, she was ready for anything God might send her.

Today she realizes what that spirit of dedication really means. She has contracted leprosy herself.

The Marin man from Ohio told her story in a long-distance interview, conducted via an exchange of letters with the Steubenville Register, newspaper of the Steubenville diocese.

"I must confess I really am surprised at all the interest," she wrote. "I suppose, however, that to anyone not conversant with the field of leprosy to say the disease would hold a fascination."

"It is an old disease. It is still in many ways invisible and mysterious, and heroes like Father Damien and others like 'Madame' and 'Leprosy' are now associated with the disease, and to my mind it seems to me that there is some enchantment. We who possibility of contracting leprosy in the field, however, do not consider leprosy as the when you went to Edengate, and God has sent you as expression of His approval in the form of this cross."

Sister Mary Paulita, the former Julie Schmeller, is stationed at the leper colony on the tiny island of Maloaga, only two-and-a-half miles long. Native patients there total around 300.

Since the discovery of sulfa drugs, she said, many of the traditional terrors associated with leprosy have disappeared. It discovered and treated in its early stages, it does not involve any disfiguring factors.

Sister Mary Paulita said, "There are not many leprosy cases in evidence around this hospital any more. And an untrained eye would never suspect our congregation of clean, well-dressed men, women, and children at Sunday Mass to be leprosy patients. In other parts of the world, perhaps, there are many, many folk in this leprosy world, others than lepers, who are in the same condition, physically and mentally. And that is why I feel a bit shocked and fascinated when I hear from time to time the interest and concern my illness has aroused."

## Pope Asks More Lay Missionaries

Vatican City — (RNS) — Plans are being made by the Pontifical Commission for Latin America to form a corps of lay "volunteers" in that area, Observatory Reporters, Vatican City newspaper announced.

It and this project will enable qualified layfolk to lead new strength to "pastoral activities in the Ibero-American countries," where, among other things, a serious shortage of priests exists.

ACCORDING to Observatory, the lay workers will be known as "the Pope's Volunteers" and will constitute "an auxiliary corps of experts which, under the orders of the bishops, will cooperate with directors of Catholic organizations."

The paper said the new initiative, which has already started in the United States, will have an international character and will be the fruit of appeals by Pope Pius XII and Pope John XXIII.

"These two Popes," Observatory said, "have shown an understanding of the importance of the evolution visible in Latin America, and the seriousness of the dangers threatening the patrimony of the Earth there as well as of the religious culture which is the pride of the Iberian-American populations."

The Pontifical Commission for Latin America was set up

## Family Group To Promote Lay Missions

Benton — (NC) — The national coordinating committee of the Christian Family Movement has endorsed a proposal to establish a foundation to promote lay mission work.

The CFM committee, meeting July 30 on the Regis College campus here, announced that the foundation will serve as a center for "the collection and dissemination of information for all phases of lay mission work and for hospitality for overseas students and visitors."

The CFM itself will not provide direct financial aid or personnel, but will support the independent body through the actions of its 50,000 member groups.

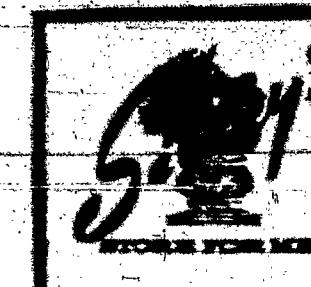
The CFM's foundation proposed followed a talk by Father John J. Consalvo, S.J., director of the Latin American Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, Washington, D.C.

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# SPECIAL AUGUST EVENT



## Prayerbook For Eskimos

Chandlerfield Inlet, Canada — (RNS) — The Rev. Eugene Tofford, O.M.I., chaplain and translator of a new Roman Catholic prayer book for the Eskimos, presents a copy of the book to the Rev. Roland Courtemanche, O.M.I., director of the Mission of Notre Dame de la Délivrance here. The 35-year-old chaplain, who has been a missionary to the Eskimos since 1925, now is working on an English-Eskimo dictionary. In the background is the door of the Mission church lettered in Eskimo characters.

"Nowadays, though, there are many, many folk in this hairy world, other than lepers, who are in the same condition, physically and mentally. And that is why I feel a bit shocked and fascinated when I hear from time to time the interest and concern my illness has aroused."

**Thailand In Need  
Of Missioners**

Minneapolis — (RNS) — A plea for more religious and lay missionaries to Thailand was made here by Bishop Michael Kiern, Vicar Apostolic of Thonburi.

The prelate's lecture, for 17 priests, is over 30,000 square miles and 30,000 Catholics. There are no Sisters, Brothers or lay missionaries in the area.

Catholics in Thailand number over 100,000 — only one half of one per cent of the total population, which is overwhelmingly Buddhist.

Bishop Kiern's 20,000 Catholics comprise ten per cent of the population which is mostly non-Catholic. That's the largest proportion of Catholics in all Asia, he said. Now the church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the cathedral, has taken root and won most of the territory.

The 55-year-old bishop, whose grandparents were among Thailand's first converts, was a monk way down by a team sparrow, only 22 years before entering a church robbery.

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