

How to 'Act' Like a Nun? Go to a Convent to Find Out

"Sister, how long does it take you to get all of those things on in the morning?" "How can so many women live in one house, Sister, and still get along?" "If you change your mind, Sister can you leave the convent?"

These and similar questions were thrown at a group of nuns recently by the "Sisters' Chorus" of Rochester Music Theatre's forthcoming production of "Sound of Music." Under the sponsorship of Rochester's Firemen's Benevolent Association, the Rogers and Hammerstein hit musical will be presented at the Eastman Theatre on two successive weekends, Sept. 25 thru 27, Oct. 2 thru 4, with a matinee on Sunday, Oct. 4.

Directors Noreen Carey Bride and Suzanne Wigg arranged to have their twenty-six voice choir visit Our Lady of Lourdes Convent recently where they were guests of Sister Mary Ellen, superior, for luncheon and a visit with the Sisters.

Half of the young ladies of the chorus are not Catholic nor had many ever met a nun. The questions poured forth as they toured the various rooms of the convent with the Sisters acting as guides. And the bombardment continued over the luncheon table and the second cup of coffee.

And then the Sound of Music "nuns" sang for their supper. In the informal atmosphere of the convent recreation room, the chorus treated the Sisters to a preview of their work in the forthcoming show.

Then the second stage of the

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"afternoon with the Sisters" began as the cast members formed a caravan of cars and drove to Our Lady of Mercy Motherhouse. There they were greeted by Mother Mary Bride, superior general of the Rochester Mercy Sisters, and given a tour of the convent, Catherine McAuley College and the Novitiate.

White-velled novices mixed with pony-tailed actresses and the questions, answers and general chatter were revived. The Chorus repeated its musical performance and a standing ovation proved to them why an audience of Sisters is considered the best there is.

Lemonade and cookies were next on the agenda and more about life in a convent as Sisters and chorus members talked down to circles of big questions and small talk.

Highlight of the afternoon was saved for last. The Sound of Music cast was escorted to

framed seats in the beautifully appointed Motherhouse chapel where they heard three hundred Sisters intone the age-old chant of the Divine Office. There were a few damp eyes as chorus members left the chapel and made their adieus to Mother Bride and the Sisters.

Mrs. Bride and Miss Wigg

called the experiment a great success. "I am so tired," Mrs. Bride said, "of seeing 'stage' nuns with stiff backs and frowning brows. Now our cast knows that Sisters do not cease to be women when they accept the veil. They are lighthearted and serious, gay and reverent. . . they are not cut from a pattern,

but remain charming individuals.

"We feel," she added, "that our afternoon with the Sisters is worth ten rehearsals of how to 'act' like a nun. The cast has had this wonderful opportunity to see what it is to be a nun."



Pope Visits Historic Cathedral

Orvieto, Italy — (RNS) — This is a view of the historic cathedral which Pope Paul VI visited Aug. 11 for ceremonies marking the 700th anniversary of the institution of the universal Feast of Corpus Christi by Pope Urban IV.

The Gothic-style shrine, one of the most beautiful in Italy, houses a chapel in which is preserved the corporal of the miracle of Bolsena.

According to a centuries-old belief, Pope Urban finally decided to establish the Eucharistic feast in 1264 after being informed that during a Mass in the town of Bolsena a few drops from the chalice fell on the corporal and formed a profile of the face of Christ.

Pope Paul will set another papal precedent by flying in a

helicopter to Orvieto, about 75 miles north of Rome. It will be his first major journey since flying to Jerusalem last January for his Holy Land pilgrimage.

The Orvieto diocese is directly attached to the Holy See and has played a major role in Church history, having been used by Popes as a place of refuge during the middle ages.



Orator Wins Award From War Veterans

Cleveland — (RNS) — Maureen O'Connor, 17, a junior at Dominican Commercial High School, Jamaica, N.Y., was the winning girl orator at the Catholic War Veterans convention, winning a \$25 savings bond and this trophy from Walter D. Hyle Jr., national commander. Seven finalists were flown from their home cities to compete in the finals at Cleveland. Winning boy was Richard Cramblitt, a June graduate of Towson Catholic High School, Towson, Md. Some 1,000 students had participated in run-offs throughout the U.S.