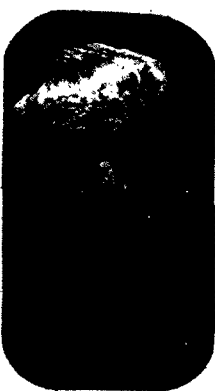


American Devotion to Mary

PART I

Devotion to the Mother of God is deeply rooted in the history of our country beginning with the early explorations and continuing to this date which is but four years removed from the bicentenary celebration of our nation.



The flagship of Christopher Columbus was named in her honor and assigned to her protection. His successors planted the Cross of Christ along with the flag of Spain across the territories that are now the southeast, the southwest and the West Coast of our native land. They called the Chesapeake St. Mary's Bay and gave Los Angeles the full Marian title, St. Mary of the Angels of the Portiuncula.

In 1565 Spain founded St. Augustine, Florida, the oldest city in North America, and Our Lady of La Leche is still venerated there. In Santa Fe, New Mexico, conquistadores paid tribute to the greater and fairer "La Conquistadora" brought to Santa Fe in 1625.

The French missionaries came from the north, down the St. Lawrence, and our maps still bear traces of their devotion to

our Lady. Pere Marquette explored with Louis Joliet the Mississippi and called it River of the Immaculate Conception in 1673. Before him St. Isaac Jogues and his companions had brought the Christian faith and devotion to Mary to Mohawk territory of upper New York State. Our Lady of the Martyrs Shrine at Auriesville commemorates their witness.

England of the penal times was an unlikely point of origin for an American colony where religious toleration would prevail and where Catholics would publicly profess their faith, even to practice their devotion to Mary. Yet George Calvert, convert to Catholicism and first Lord Baltimore, was given a charter to found the colony of Maryland. He died in 1632 before achieving it, but his sons carried the project through. Their two ships, The Ark and The Dove, landed in Maryland in March, 1634. Andrew White, S.J., their chaplain, recorded how the Catholics of the group consecrated the future colony to Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. They called their first settlement and capital St. Mary's City.

A son of Maryland, John Carroll, was to be the first bishop of the new United States. Consecrated in 1790 on the feast of the Assumption, August 15, he placed his diocese of Baltimore, itself just founded in 1789, under the patronage of Mary, noting in his first pastoral letter in 1792: "Having

chosen Her the special patroness of this Diocese, you are placed, of course, under Her powerful protection and it becomes your duty to be careful to deserve its continuance by a zealous imitation of Her virtues, and reliance on Her motherly superintendence". The Cathedral of Baltimore which Bishop Carroll started was dedicated at its completion to the Assumption of Our Lady.

The growing interest in the definition of the Immaculate Conception, achieved under Pius IX in 1854, had its influence on the American Church. The 6th Council of Baltimore was held in 1846 under the presidency of Archbishop Samuel Eccleston, S.S., of Baltimore, with 23 of the country's 26 bishops in attendance. The first decision agreed upon (May 13, 1846) was to ask the Holy See that Mary under title of the Immaculate Conception be named patroness of the U.S., a request granted by Pius IX the following year. In the pastoral of 1846 to their people, the bishops wrote:

"We take this occasion, brethren, to communicate to you the determination, unanimously adopted by us, to place ourselves, and all entrusted to our charge throughout the United States, under the special patronage of the holy Mother of God, whose Immaculate Conception is venerated by the piety of the faithful throughout the Catholic Church."

(to be continued)

The Slot Man

By Carmen Viglucci

Of Floods and Conscientiousness

The Associated Press ran a detailed account of the efforts of Auburn residents to aid flood victims in the Southern Tier.



It described the three phases of the drive to clean up, rebuild and do the little things that make a house a home.

The story ran Aug. 3 in the New York Daily News and quoted Father Lewis Brown of St. Alphonsus as saying, "I think

what the people are doing now is in part out of gratitude that their homes were spared."

Auburn itself was threatened June 26 when a portion of the retaining wall of a

dam holding back the Owasco Lake outlet gave way.

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An interested Sister wonders aloud how many of the circuit judges who decide cases involving governmental aid to private schools have ever been in a Catholic school ("really the buildings aren't Catholic").

She says that such a visiting judge would find that much is taught besides religion, nothing subversive is taught, prayers are said and the flag is saluted.

Come on, magistrates, judge for yourselves!

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Think Courier-Journal staffers aren't conscientious? Here's note our news desk received recently from Mary Ann Ginnerty in Auburn Memorial Hospital.

"Delay in mailing caused by disruption of my schedule. My daughter Rachel arrived three weeks early. But rest assured I had an emergency story in reserve to submit in view of such unforeseen circumstances as this."

Mary Ann and husband Robert became the parents of Rachel on July 29. Their two other children are Michele and Michael.

Mary Ann added that she's in the market for a back-pack baby carrier so "my hands will be free to take those infamous Polaroid shots."

Editorial

Many Groups Favor School Aid, Oppose Abortion

Those who attempt to mislead their followers by implying that opposition to liberalized abortion legislation and support for aid to nonpublic school education are strictly Catholic views received a blow last week from the National Association for Christian Political Action (NACPA).

The NACPA strongly urged equal government aid to all parents, irrespective of whether their children attend public or private schools. It also advocated governmental protection of "the rights of the unborn."

The NACPA has about 2,000 members nationwide, according to the Religious News Service, and is made up largely of members of the Christian Reformed Church though it has no official ties with that denomination and receives no financial assistance from it.

The organization bases the necessity for

its type of Christian political action on a Dutch Reformed political movement in the Netherlands at the turn of the century.

At its annual congress, the organization asserted that "the monopoly of public tax funds for only one type of school system has resulted in a 'tyranny of the majority.'" It urged a tax credit system "whereby Christian, Jew, Humanist or other people may request and obtain from the state a pro rata portion of tax funds to apply to the tuition costs of sending their children to schools of their own choice which provide instruction based upon their own philosophy of life."

This basically is the same position taken by another nondenominational organization, Citizens for Educational Freedom, which believes that parents should have governmental guarantees to insure the

right of choice of schools for their children.

The NACPA also called on federal and state governments to enact legislation "which fulfills their responsibility to God and their citizens and protects the birth-right of the unborn."

It also urged "just provisions for the needs of those parents — and especially the mothers — whose hardships as a result of pregnancy would otherwise make abortion a convenient — but unjust — solution."

It would be well for all to realize that such positions are not pre-conceived or self-serving devices of the Catholic Church. They are the just conclusions reached by many bodies, Christian, nondenominational, and Jewish who believe in the basic rights of all American citizens.