From Gym to Africa

Sister Starts New Apostolate

By PAT PETRASKE

The two week voyage to Africa suggests the atmosphere of the film classic, The African Queen. In something like Katharine Hepburn's role will be Sister Richard Mary Foley SSND, physical education and religion teacher at Bishop Kearney High School.

In September, she will board a freighter for Monrovia, Liberia, to start a five year assignment as a missionary

The slow-boat trip, she pointed out, will permit shipment at the same time of the school supplies she will need.

"It also provides a period of time to adjust from one culture to another. It would be quite a shock to your system to leave the United States and then 10 hours later find yourself in Monrovia, Sister Richard Mary said. Her eyes bright with excitement, she admitted that the long-trip on a boat will be difficult. "I'm going to keep wondering what's ahead," she said.

Just what does lie in store for Sister Richard Mary and three other Notre Dame sisters remains somewhat of a mystery. They know that their mission is to establish a school for children in pre-primary to sixth grade in a town called Barreke that is springing up around a prospering sugar plantation. The town, which is expected to contain 3.000 families, has no school or church.

The order's saga in Africa began three years ago when the Sisters of Notre Dame in Brooklyn offered to help the African Missionary Fathers. They are working in Tchine, Liberia, and Sister Richard Mary is anxious to

Lobbying Suit Against USCC Thrown Out

Washington, D.C. [RNS] federal judge here dismissed a suit challenging alleged lobbying activities of the U.S. Catholic Conference and the director of the USCC's family life agency, particularly on anti-abortion

The suit was brought in November 1973 by Women's Lobby, Inc., a pro-abortion organization which contended that the U.S. Catholic bishops ad-ministrative arm had violated federal law in not registering as a

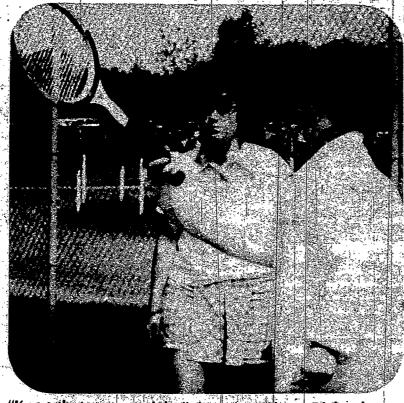
Judge Aubrey E. Robinson Jr. of the U.S. District Court did not rule on the lobbying question but based his decision on the fact that Women's Lobby failed to show that efforts to enforce a criminal statute on lobbying would not have achieved the

The women's group had sought an injunction prohibiting the USCC and Migri James McHugh, director of the USCC Family Life Division, from further antiabortion activities until the Catholic organization became a registered lobbying group.

According to federal law, any person or organization whose "principal purpose" is lobbying for or against legislation must register. The USCC and Msgr. McHugh have contended throughout that only a small part of their funds and energies go into the anti-abortion movement.

OPEN HOUSE

The Human Development Committee of St Mary's held an Interfaith Community Coalition Open House May 11 with a film strip presentation by the Regional Youth Council in support of farm



"Keep that arm straight," instructs Sister Richard Mary [left] as her tennis student, Peg Mason, serves.

get hold of the letters written by the sisters when they first arrived, to get insight into Africa.

"I wish I knew what to bring. I hear that the sisters (in Tchine) only have electricity four hours a day; I wonder if we'll have it that long. It'll be interesting to see how we cook," Sister Richard Mary said.

Her duties will include teaching children, conducting adult education and religious instruction classes and training Fortunately teachers. language of Liberia is English. The country was settled by freed American slaves in 1822.

The young nun has achieved several "firsts." She was a member of Kearney's first graduating class, was the first nun to student teach in a public school in Mamaroneck and was the first nun to live in co-ed dorm at the State University College at Brockport.

Her latest accomplishment is to be the first Rochester-born nun from the school Sisters of Notre Dame to become a missionary in Africa.

Clad in flowered culottes and a knit-sports shirt, Sister Richard Mary presents a picture of the

modern nun. When her order began to expand into var-ious fields, she was allowed to study to become its first physical education teacher. Student teaching in a public school was a real eye opener for both the students and their teacher "In the morning I'd wear my veil and skirt and in the afternoon I'd be in my gym clothes," she said.

As a student at Brockport, Sister Richard Mary shared a room with a dance major in a dorm for male and female students. "Everyone was surprised that I was there With a student body of 5,000, I was the only nun living on campus."

The other three nuns who are going to liberia have been studying missionary theology at St. Paul University in Ottawa. Since she wanted to take her final vows in her home parish, St. Thomas the Apostle, and to finish her master's degree at Brockport, Sister Richard Mary was allowed to remain one more year at Bishop Kearney.

In June, she will have a cultural orientation in Honduras. After five weeks she will study missionary—theology at the Maryknoll Mission Institute. Then her five-year service tour of Africa begins.

The Whole Family Goes To Camp Stella Maris

where the kids write tearful or cheerful letters home describing cases of poison ivy and homesickness, swimming feats and moonlit campfires. Because there's nobody at home; the whole family is sharing the joys and frustrations of camp.

Family retreat weeks at Camp Stella Maris on Conesus Lake are devoted to Christian living. Now in its sixth year, the family retreat unites 20 families at each session and leads to a formation of community within the family and within the entire camp.

Father Robert Hammond serves as spiritual director for the retreats that are coordinated by four lead couples. Each couple directs a week at camp, assisted by a staff of 15 high school and college students. Camp sessions this year are scheduled for June 23-29, June 30 July 6, August 18-24 and August 25-31.,

Tom Cass, one of the married leaders, describes the family etreat as a combination of spiritual and recreational vacation. Each day begins with a speaker, followed by dialogue among the campers. Free time is open to any type of outdoor activities from boating to tennis. There are games for kids and for adults who feel like kids," Cass laughed.

Mass is held late in the afternoon and the evening program stresses family participation.

Each day of the week is devoted to a particular theme, including the individual Christian, Monday; the married couple, Tuesday; the family, Wednesday, a visit by one of the bishops, Thursday and the community as a whole, Friday.

The family retreat has the greatest effect on the teenagers, Cass thinks, "The week opens up. new lines of communications. Inone family a father and son hardly talked to each other but by Wednesday they had broken through," he said.

No openings for the retreats are available for this season but families can be placed on a waiting list by contacting June. Fox, 872-2798. Cost for the week, is \$235, regardless of the size of the family Partial funding is available.



Leaders of the Family Retreat: Mary Stofer, [seated] June Fox and Retreat: Thomas Cass.





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