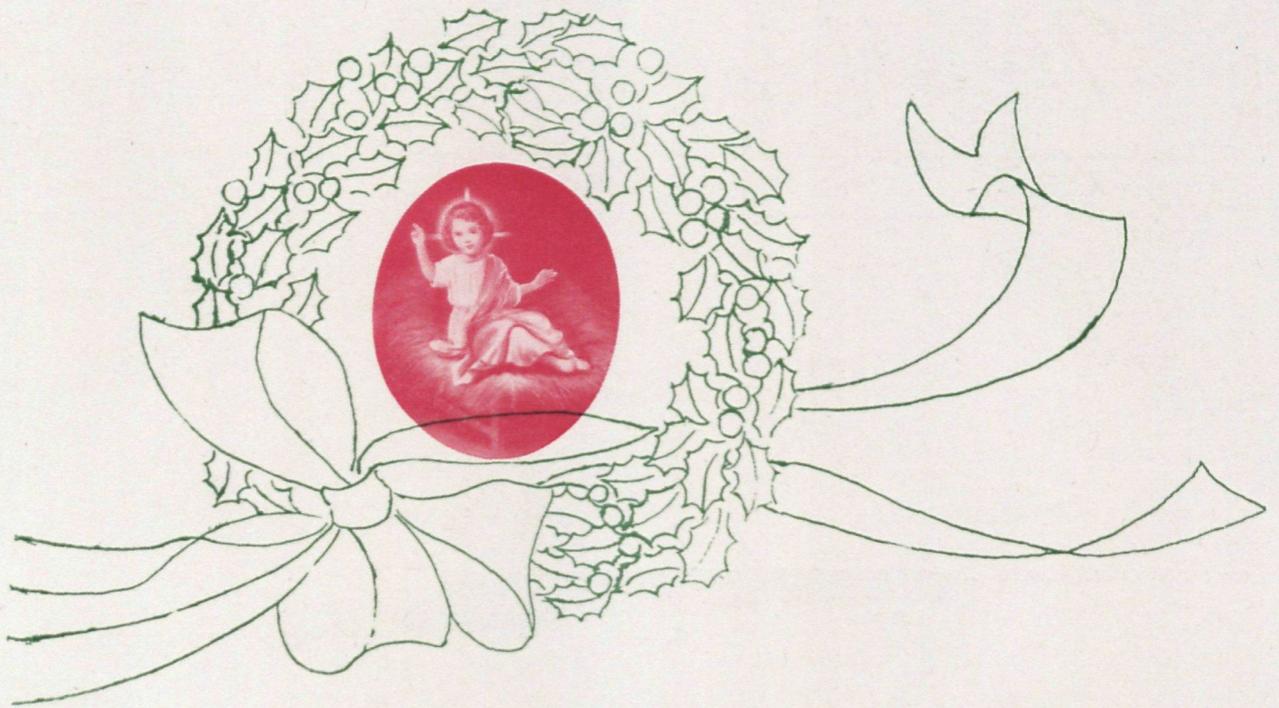


The
Missionary
Catechist



Paratrooper of Christmas Night

by Catechist Marie Clark

"While all things were in quiet silence, and the night was in the midst of her course, Thy Almighty Word, O Lord, leapt down from heaven, from Thy Royal Throne . . ." (Wisdom—XVIII, 14, 15.)

*'Twas woven in loom of Your luminous Will;
Nor spot, nor wrinkle, and folded still;
O Paratrooper from above . . .
The pure white silk of Mary's love!*

*The night of Your glad Nativity
It billowed out over earth and sea,
O Paratrooper from above,
Poised on silk of Mary's love!*

*Ours were the battles You came to win;
Ours the souls to save from sin;
Paratrooper from above . . .
Leaping on silk of Mary's love!*

*Frail were You, and weak, and small,
When struck the hour of Your midnight fall,
Paratrooper from above . . .
But safe was the silk of Mary's love!*

The Missionary Catechist

Volume XXII

December, 1945

Number 1

His Lady

by Catechist Muriel Balch

MARCOS, with a sigh that registered a mixture of relief and pride, stood up, backed away a few paces, and with critical eyes, that missed no detail, scrutinized his finished picture. Finally he smiled, for how could he help it when the Lady on his canvas smiled graciously up at him.

HE HAD never painted a picture that had caused him so much vacillation and uneasiness at its outset, or one that brought him so much consolation and joy as it grew and took form beneath his skillful touch. And now the lovely Lady of Guadalupe stood before him much as she appeared on the little holy card which served him as a model, but with this difference, that his Lady smiled at him as only a picture can which recognizes its artist's devoted effort. The cherubims rejoiced as they held the moon under her dainty feet, and the star-studded blue gown enchanted the delicate features of the *morena* face.

COMING home from high school one afternoon several weeks before, Marcos had been thrilled when one of the Catechists had asked him to paint the picture of the Virgin of Guadalupe. Although Marcos was not a Catholic, most of his pals were, and he had become acquainted with the *Madres* through them.

THE half-repressed frown reappeared on Marcos' face, as he thought of how angry his mother had been when he showed her the little



Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of Mexico. The original of this picture was miraculously painted on the cloak of Juan Diego as proof to the Bishop that She who appeared to the Indian was truly the Mother of God.

picture which the Catechist had given him as a model for his painting. He had never been able to understand why his mother had spoken so bitterly, denouncing all Catholics who venerated the picture of this lovely Lady.

"THEY want you to paint a picture of their Virgin, and then they will hang it in their

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Our Blessed Lady of Victory Press, Victory-Noll, Huntington, Indiana

church and adore it," his mother had said bitterly.

WHEN Marcos had tried to explain that the Catechists wanted the picture to use in a play about the Virgin of Guadalupe, he only added fuel to the fire.

"A PLAY, indeed!" his mother responded, and Marcos thought he had detected something like a sneer in her voice. "So they're putting their saints on the stage now."

MARCOS had been hurt, but more than that he had been puzzled. It was so unlike his mother. She was usually so kind, so encouraging, so proud of his ability, and so happy to see him with such a worth-while hobby. However, since he was not directly forbidden to paint the picture, and since he had promised the Catechist, he set to work, though his mother washed her hands of the disastrous results that might come upon him from such imprudence.

"MARCOS!"

MARCOS was aroused from his none-to-pleasant thoughts by his little brother, Felipe, who had just come in from school.

"HOW pretty, oh, how pretty the Lady is! Who is she, Marcos?" There was awe and admiration in Felipe's voice, and his eyes were big and bright, as he looked from his brother to the picture and back again to his brother.

"HER name is *La Virgen de Guadalupe*," Marcos replied, patting his little brother's head. "The Catholics call her the Mother of God, and they believe that she came down from Heaven and appeared to a poor Indian on the hill of Tepeyac in Mexico. They say she loves the Mexican people very much and has promised to be a mother to them."

FOR a moment, Felipe was lost in admiration. Then he said, "I like her, Marcos. It's O. K. for her to be my mother. She's pretty!"

NOT for anything in the world would Marcos have spoiled his little brother's enthusiasm for the Lovely Lady. Yet he was afraid that only Catholics shared in that Mother's love.

"WOULD you like to have this little picture, Felipe?" Marcos asked.

FELIPE'S eyes danced. "Oh, Marcos!" was all he said, as he pressed the little image of the Virgin of Guadalupe to his lips.

WHEN Marcos gave Felipe the little picture which had served as a model for his painting, he had parted with his dearest treasure, except the painting itself. But Felipe's joy had made up, at least in part, for his sacrifice.

AS SOON as the canvas was dry, Marcos took his painting to the Catechists. He was thrilled when he saw how delighted the Catechists were with his painting. And when Catechist gave him another small picture of the Virgin, just like the one he had given Felipe, and a medal of the same sweet Lady, his joy was boundless, and he was almost as speechless as Felipe had been. And, then, Catechist had told him that the Virgin would be pleased with him for all the work he had put on her picture . . . Could it be possible that the Lady liked Mexicans even if they weren't Catholics?



The Guadalupe play, enacted by boys and girls whom Marcos knew, unfolded the story of the appearance of our Blessed Mother at Tepeyac over 400 years ago.

MARCOS attended the play. He was enraptured with the story as it unfolded on the stage. The fact that the characters were the boys and girls from around town, many of them his close friends, did not spoil it for him. As Frank, the Juan Diego of the play, opened his tilma to show the roses to the Bishop, Marcos smiled into the lovely face of his Virgin, as she

looked at him from the canvas skillfully sewn on to the rough tilma. There was no regret in his heart; he was glad he had painted the Virgin.

A FEW years later the world was at war. Marcos was in the Pacific. Attached to his dog tag was the medal, and in his wallet the picture, which Catechist had given him when he had painted the picture of his lovely Lady. Marcos had never forgotten her. And now his letters told of his friendship with Catholic buddies, his contact with the Chaplain, and finally his entrance into the Church. His Lady had obtained for Marcos the precious gift of Faith.

BUT the love and generosity of the Virgin of Guadalupe did not end with Marcos' reception into the Church. Soon afterwards, his mother and sisters stopped going to the Pentecostal church—Marcos had not attended since the days when he painted the picture of the Virgin; and Felipe, always an ardent admirer and close imitator of his brother, had followed his example in this as in all other things.

THEN one day, as the Catechists were passing Marcos' home, they saw his mother working in her flower garden and stopped to inquire about her sailor son. The Catechists were surprised to find the mother so happy about Marcos' recent conversion, and soon the conversation turned to the days when Marcos had painted the picture of the Virgin of Guadalupe.

AT THIS point, Marcos' mother broke into tears. "Madres," she said, "the Virgin has an unfaithful daughter. For years, I have hated the Guadalupana and her Divine Son. But for the sake of the Virgin, won't you please instruct my children and help them to become good Catholics?"

NEEDLESS to say, the Catechists were delighted with the opportunity of teaching the truths of faith to Felipe and his three sisters. It was not long until they were ready for baptism. Now all are fervent Catholics, and their one petition is that their mother may soon share their happiness in their new found faith.

FELIPE continues an ardent devotee of Marcos' Lovely Lady. The little picture which his older brother gave him years ago has been framed and now stands on the little table near his bed. Every day since Marcos enlisted in the Navy, Felipe has asked his Heavenly Mother to take care of him and bring him safely home. And that gracious Queen has heard the prayer of her faithful client, for Marcos will soon be with his loved ones again.

A GIFT FOR MOTHER



The children were assembled in the garage for their Christmas party. Before them was a table filled with presents. As a reward for perfect attendance, Philip was called first to make his selection. He looked over the array of gifts designed to appeal to boys and girls of his age, until he discovered a ladies' handkerchief. Without hesitation he made his choice. "I want a Christmas present for my mother," he explained.

Catechist M. Loretta Hall.



Mr. Santa Claus, you comin' to our house tomorrow night? We got three more kids at home.



The King's Palace

"And the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us."

THE Son of God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, equal to the Father in all things, deigns to take upon Himself our human nature, and to be born into the world a helpless Infant. What a marvelous manifestation of Divine love! Surely, the whole world will be astir; all peoples, all nations will vie with each other in rendering Him adoration, praise, honor and glory.

NOTHING can be too much for Him who has been the expected of nations for four thousand years. Long have the patriarchs and prophets sighed for His coming. It is He who is to redeem mankind; it is He who is to reopen the gates of heaven closed by the sin of Adam and Eve. The great God has not abandoned His people because of their infidelity; they have not been cast into hell, as the angels were, because of their disobedience. Ah, no! God in His great goodness and mercy has promised mankind a Redeemer. And that Redeemer—God's only begotten Son—is even now upon the earth; the Virgin Mary has pronounced her fiat, and the Eternal God has become incarnate.

MANKIND is yearning, expectant, eager, for His coming. All eyes are turned towards Bethlehem, for it is there, according to the prophets, that the Son of God will be born. All must be in readiness. From all parts of the earth have come gold, silver, precious stones, and the rare woods and fine marble, that are to go into the building of the palace which is to house the King of Kings. A cradle, lined with softest down and whitest linens, has been provided. Rich, soft materials, with exquisite handiwork—each stitch a stitch of love—have been sent by women from town and countryside, all anxious to have some share in the preparations for the coming of the God-Man.

AND, now, all things are in readiness. Mankind awaits with loving heart the coming of the Redeemer. Though man has done all that it is possible for him to do, still he knows that he is unworthy that the God of all beauty and all holiness should take upon Himself human

nature and live with him upon this earth. This is a marvel which only the mind of God could conceive.



IT IS not difficult for us to imagine that some such description might have been made of the days when all mankind looked for the coming of the Messiah. As the time foretold by the prophets drew closer, we might further imagine that all men with one accord donned sackcloth and ashes, and continued in prayer and penance, as they waited with awe and wonder the announcement of the birth of the Son of God.

THERE would have been nothing strange or paradoxical in such an account. It is what might have been expected of a people whose God chose to become one of them and to live among them.

BUT how far it is from the truth! Instead, we find a world which seems neither to know nor to care that the long expected Messiah is about to come. We see Mary and Joseph making the slow, weary journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, because of the decree of an earthly monarch. We accompany the humble Joseph as he goes from door to door seeking shelter for her who bears within her womb the Desired of all Nations. But Bethlehem closes its doors and its heart to the holy ones. They turn their steps, not to a palace of silver and gold and precious stones, but to a cave—a shelter for animals—outside the city of Bethlehem. There the Virgin Mother brings forth her Divine Son and wraps Him in swaddling clothes, those few clothes which she has been able to bring from Nazareth, and lays him—the God of heaven and earth—in a manger.

AS WE think of the Son of God lying in a manger in the cold stable at Bethlehem, we are liable to condemn these people who refused to admit Him into their homes. We think, perhaps, if their hearts had not been so cold and hard and if they had not been so completely absorbed in the cares and pleasures of the world,

they would have known the great privilege that was theirs when the gentle Joseph sought a shelter in their town for Mary who was—that very night—to bring forth the Incarnate Son of the Most High God.

BUT if we turn our thoughts to the present day world, we shall find that it is much like the Bethlehem of old. Yes, even in this twentieth century, whole nations refuse to give shelter to the Son of God. In so-called Christian countries, we see Him banished from school and home, from office and factory, from society and government. After two thousand years, man continues so absorbed in the pleasures and cares of the world, that he does not know where to find his God, nor even if there be a God. Each morning the Eucharistic Christ descends upon thousands of altars in Catholic churches throughout the world, and only the faithful few, like the shepherds and kings at Bethlehem, come to adore their Hidden God. Christ longs to give Himself to man in

the Sacrament of His love, and man, incredulous and indifferent, refuses to receive Him.



AH, let us, who through the grace of God are numbered among the faithful few, examine our own hearts as we prepare once to celebrate the birth of the Son of God. Let us make sure that when the Infant Jesus comes into our hearts on Christmas, He will find there a little palace all aglow with the light of faith, warmed by the fire of Divine love, furnished with the merits of the patient suffering of the trials of daily life, and adorned with every virtue. Let us try by the ardor of our desires, the fidelity of our sacrifices, and the fervor of our lives, to make up to Him for the lack of hospitality of those among whom He sought shelter that first Christmas night, for the coldness and poverty of the stable, and for the far greater coldness and hardness of the hearts of men who in our own day refuse to have anything to do with Him, who for love of them, assumed human nature and was born a helpless Infant in a cold stable at Bethlehem.



Catechist kneeling before the Crib in the Chapel at Victory Noll.



THE CHRISTMAS ROSE



by Catechist Blanche Richardson

The Christmas Rose smiled from its stem—
It budded forth near Bethlehem.
A butterfly, charmed with its grace,
Devoutly kissed its upturned face;
A bee sipped honey from the flower
And laden with it left the bower;
A sparkling dewdrop lay at rest
Like gem upon its velvet breast.

The rose is Christ—flower of rod
Foretold by prophets, Son of God;
The butterfly the world has fled
And finds true joy with Christ instead;
The bee is representative
Of him who is contemplative;
The dewdrop is repentant tear
Of sinner who to Christ draws near.

The Bishop Said "Yes"

by Catechist M. Alice James



"And a Christmas tree, Catechist?"

"And presents for all of us?"

"And refreshments?"

My heart sank a trifle at the joyous anticipation expressed in the enthusiastic questions and the long, drawn out *Ohs* and *Ahs*, as the girls all talked at once. After all, I had simply suggested a Scout Christmas party . . . yet I might have known that the Scouts would receive my announcement in such fashion.

Many of these girls had left Protestant clubs and other activities to join our Catholic Scout group. The usual Protestant program of proselytizing had attracted them to their clubs. We knew the approach. An attractive invitation to a "Get-Acquainted" party meant an afternoon of fun for a girl in whose life fun was second only to the necessities of life.

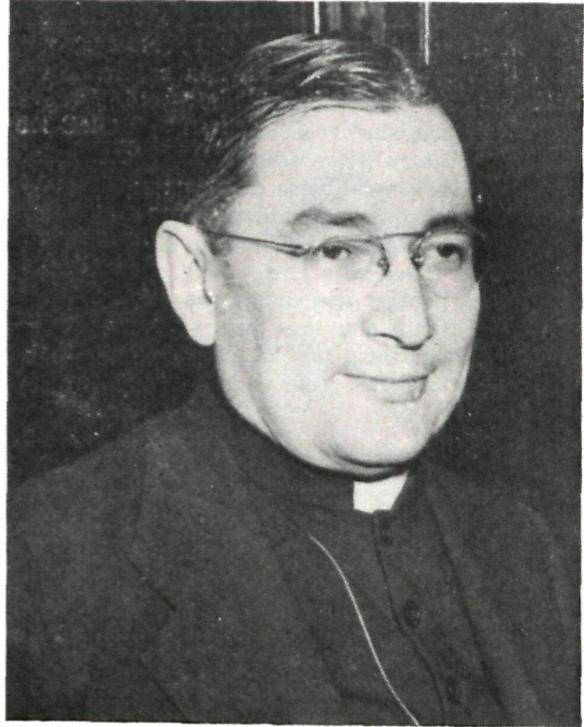
On another afternoon, a fully-equipped cooking class sent the girl home with a dainty dish prepared especially for her mother or some member of the family who was ill. Then there would be free transportation to near-by historical places, which gave the girl an opportunity that her own people might never have been able to provide. Gradually the girl became an active member in the Club, and eventually she paid for every favor received; she paid financially, but what was more pitiful, she paid spiritually. The precious heritage of her Faith was the price.

When the girls came to our troops, we commenced a remedial program. One of the most difficult things to put across was the idea of letting the child earn whatever she received. We know this is most necessary to help our poor people keep their self-respect. Invariably when planning a project or outing, the old objection thrust itself into the discussion.



"But we didn't bring our carfare to the Settlement House. The teachers took us, free, in their cars!"

"Make my own costume? They loaned the costumes to us at the Settlement!"



His Excellency, the Most Reverend S. M. Metzger, D.D., Bishop of El Paso.

Perseveringly we worked to achieve a change of attitude, and gradually we were getting the results we wanted.

Now Christmas was near. We felt that this was the opportunity needed to climax our work. We would let the girls do something on rather a large scale for someone else. They would learn by experience that it is "more blessed to give than to receive." What better feast could we choose for our experience than Christmas, the lovely commemoration of Heaven's most precious Gift.

So I answered their questions with, "There will be a Christmas tree, and presents, and refreshments, and . . ."

The upturned faces smiled so happily into mine that I hesitated; then plunged, "And all the Catholic troops will share the expenses, using part of the money in their troop treasury."

The joy of anticipation made the objections somewhat less forcible, but as usual they came:

"You mean we have to pay for our own party?" asked one skeptically.

"We need our troop fund for other things!" exclaimed another.

Then they stopped, a little shamefacedly. I was looking at our Bulletin Board and from the attractive poster, I began to read in a low voice,

On my honor, I will try
To do my duty to God and my country,
To help other people at all times...



I read the last line very deliberately. The Scouts were enlightened.

"You mean a Scout Christmas party to help someone else, Catechist?"

"O.K., Catechist. We can use the troop fund and earn some extra money besides."

The innate generosity of the Mexican to the fore!

"Will the party be for the orphans?"

"Or the sick people?"

They waited impatiently for my answer.

"Excellent suggestions, Scouts," I said. "But there is someone else who is always helping the orphans and the sick and the poor. Most of all, he has helped our Scout troops, . . . and I don't think anyone has ever given him a Christmas party."

Now there were puzzled expressions. Several names were suggested, including the Pastor, the school principal, a charitable grocery store owner. I shook my head.

"Tell us, Catechist. Who is it?" all were asking at once.

I hesitated a moment, then replied, "Our Bishop!"

After the first surprised silence, tongues began to fly. The children were charmed with the idea. Many had seen Bishop Metzger at the various confirmation ceremonies. Some had been greeted by him as they stood near the church awaiting his arrival. His kindly manner and ever ready smile had won the hearts of these lovable little Mexicans.

Now I could drop into the background. The Scouts had more than taken over. Nothing was too good for the Bishop's Christmas party. Plans were suggested, dropped, and picked up again for a more searching survey. All had to be just right for the Bishop.

There came another question. They asked it very earnestly and a little fearfully,

"Catechist, do you think the Bishop will come?"

"Yes, I do, Scouts. Would you like to plan an invitation? Perhaps someone could send it to Bishop Metzger and report at our next meeting."



The following week, we had just formed our horseshoe, when Inez and Maria flew into the room. Their eyes were like stars and their voices echoed joyfully through the big room, as they exclaimed,

"The Bishop said, 'YES!'"

The Catholic USO club was very attractive in its Christmas dress of holly greens and scarlet bows. But lovelier still were the happy faces of 120 Scouts in horseshoe formation, awaiting the arrival of their honored guest.

Parents of the Scouts sat in comfortable lounging chairs around the edge of the room. Servicemen and Wacs, who had dropped into the USO, decided to make an evening of it.

(Continued on page 18)



Santa Claus distributes candy and popcorn to each Girl Scout.

DONA TERESA RESPONDS

by Catechist Christine Wirtz

"IT IS no use, Dona Teresa," I exclaimed with a sense of futility, "if Tacho and Esperanza do not come regularly, I shall not return."

PLEASE do not think me hard and heartless. For two years I had traversed the same street, ascended the same flight of stairs, knocked on the same unpainted door to summon Dona Teresa. I had begged and pleaded with her to send the children regularly to religious instruction. The result was always the same. The children would attend class and Sunday Mass, a time or two—skip three; I would visit again and the self-same process would repeat itself. Transparent excuses, or none at all, were given. "Si, si," was nodded in agreement to my attempts to arouse responsibility. But effort, real effort, was never manifested.

IN THE quick tears which now started to her eyes, I discerned an earnestness hitherto unnoticed.

"MADRE, Madre," she cried, "if we do not have you to remind us, how shall we ever get to heaven? It is true we are very careless, but if you leave us alone, shall we ever think about our duty to God and His Holy Mother?"

AS IT happened, I did not return. First Communion classes and other activities connected with the close of the school year, kept me from doing any more visiting. The following year, I was in another mission.

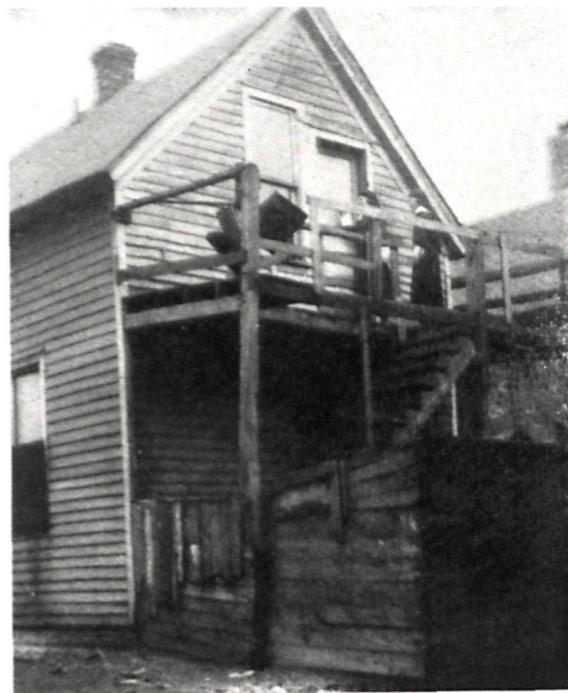
YEARS later, I stopped in Dona Teresa's town on my way to a near by mission. Before novena services that evening, I stopped in the vestibule of the Church to scan the bulletin board and the honor roll. Perhaps some of the names would be familiar.

SOMEONE touched my elbow. A voice exclaimed, "Madre, Madre! You are back!"

MADE a quick effort to recall the name that went with that familiar face. "Dona Teresa!" I exclaimed, suddenly remembering my last visit to her home. "Dona Teresa, how are you? and Tacho? and Esperanza?"

IT WAS already time for services to begin, so our brief conversation, conducted rapidly, was not entirely satisfactory. I wondered if her attendance that evening was an occasional event

In The Home Field



Home visiting is an important part of the work of the Missionary Catechists.

or if she were accustomed to attend these services.

AT THE convent, later on, I had an opportunity of finding the answer.

"DONA Teresa?" the Catechist asked. "Why, yes, she's always at the Novena. She belongs to all the Societies, too. Did you know her when you were here?"

"DID I know her?"



The Missionary Catechist



WE GO A-CAROLING

by Catechist S. Renkey

"Ooooo, girls! Look at the pretty windows!" Ruth's eyes were shining as she caught sight of the display windows with their beautiful Christmas decorations.

The merry group of girls, who had just hopped off a crowded bus on to a more crowded street corner, stood on tiptoe to catch a better glimpse of the gaily decorated store windows. Cheerfully they dodged hurrying Americans, strolling Mexican women with dark, bright-eyed youngsters, and vari-uniformed servicemen who made up the crowd of Christmas shoppers.

"Let's stay in town and look at all the windows," continued Ruth.

"Ruth, you know we can't do that," said Vera, the first one to recall the real purpose of their trip to town. "Catechist is waiting for us at the hospital. And think of all the people there who are expecting us."

"Yes," agreed Maria, though perhaps a bit wistfully, "Catechist told them we'd be there today with Christmas gifts and Christmas carols. They'd be terribly disappointed if we didn't come."

"That's right," put in Sally. "Come on, girls, to the bus we go. The windows will be here another day."

Quickly the bus carried the girls away from the tempting windows. And just as quickly was the tempting sight forgotten when the buildings of the County Hospital came into sight. Some of the Sodalists had never seen the place before. Excitedly they left the bus and walked up the path, on the lookout for Catechist.



"There are the Catechists!" exclaimed Ruth, when she spied the gray-blue car that always brought the Catechists to the girls' town on catechism days.

"Good afternoon, girls, I'm so glad you're here," said Catechist, her eyes alight with the joy and happiness one feels on the day before Christmas eve. "I was beginning to think I'd

be a lone caroler this afternoon."

In the back of the car were boxes piled high with gifts, which the girls had helped make, for everyone in the hospital, the adjacent T. B. sanitarium, and the old peoples' home.

Caroling was a new experience for the girls and they were a bit self-conscious as they began their tour of the wards. But when they saw the delight and enthusiasm with which each song was greeted, they forgot themselves, and soon it would have been hard to tell whether the girls or the patients were enjoying the singing the most. They sang all the familiar, touching, age-old carols, and the jolly modern ones—even "Santa is Coming" and "White Christmas" had a turn.

The girls were not permitted to enter the sanitarium because they were too young, being still in their teens. So they sang the carols, standing on the lawn outside, while the Catechists went in to distribute the gifts. It was a beautiful, sunny California afternoon, and though green lawns and bright sunshine do not seem quite the proper setting for Christmas carols, the patients were delighted with the entertainment.



"And just think, Catechist, we almost didn't come!" Vera exclaimed, when the afternoon was over and they were waiting for the bus that would take them home.

"Yes, Catechist, I tried to coax the girls to stay in town and look at the windows," Ruth confessed.

Looking at their happy faces, eyes sparkling with the joy of having brought Christmas cheer and gladness to others, Catechist did not need to ask, "Aren't you glad you didn't?"



Associate Catechists

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION BAND (Detroit, Mich.)

Dear Associates:

PAX! We are a bit nearer to the Peace of Christ this Christmas. Cannons have ceased to roar and the ammunition factories are closed. Nevertheless let us not forget that true peace, which is based upon love of God and neighbor, has little to do with exterior accidents. It must originate from *within*.



Just as the mutual overflowing love of the Eternal Father and His Divine Son expresses itself in a Third Person—the Holy Spirit, who is at once the living Spirit of Peace and Love—so men who are in love with God will manifest this love in and for a third person, their neighbor, who is a living creature and a beloved child of God. In just what will these manifestations consist? In a host of little virtues which will embrace our neighbor, and numerous good works undertaken in his behalf. Let us particularize. Out of the host, let us select one or two of the more homely, commonplace virtues, we may exercise in our neighbor's behalf. First there should be *patient forbearance* with the foibles and weaknesses of those of our own household. (We thus cover up their nakedness—want of virtue—with the mantle of our charity); also there ought to be *kindly consideration* toward those who serve our daily needs (the grocer, the dry goods clerk, the lunchroom waiter, etc.) which we may practice by suppressing our impatient complaints about the “kind of service we have a right to expect” from them, which is an outcropping of our pride.

When love for our neighbor, proceeding from God's love for us and our love for God, begins to dominate our lives, then the Peace of Christ promised to men of good will shall be our portion and that of the world at large. Let us pray for it and aspire to it.



THIS Band, headed by *Miss Lillian Dunn*, is only 7 years old, yet has aided us substantially during that period of time. They have, in addition to active members, a group known as “contributing members.” These want to help the work of our Catechists but find it impossible, for one reason or another, to attend meetings. They realize, of course, that they are losing out on the good times enjoyed at the monthly “get-togethers” of active Associates. Moreover, they pay higher dues. It demonstrates their eagerness—first, to help a charitable cause, and secondly, to share in the spiritual benefits held out to benefactors of our Society.

A “MARY” CHRISTMAS!



IF WE keep close to Mary, then assuredly we shall live and die close to Jesus. Let us faithfully recite our Rosary each day with the members of our family.

OUR OMAHA (Neb.) BANDS

THESE two Bands were organized within a year of each other. St. Margaret Mary Band, at present headed by *Elizabeth Welchart*, was organized in 1938, and Our Lady of Victory Band, with *Mrs. Christopher Kenny* as Promoter, in 1939. Both Promoters have been faithful in sending in contributions during the trying years just ended.

St. Margaret Mary Band was established by members of the family of our Catechist M. Marguerite Shields, a native of Omaha, who is now laboring in one of our California Missions. During the span of years since its origin, this Band has given generous aid to our Missions.

A FORTY-FIVE DOLLAR ERROR

WE ARE very sorry that we failed to catch, in the October issue, an error occurring in the proof. St. Luke's Band, of Chicago—*Mrs. Katherine Vaughn*, Promoter—was listed as having given \$5.00. Actually, they sent us a check for \$50.00 on that occasion.

of Mary

ANNOUNCING A BRAND NEW BAND!

Where? *In San Antonio, Texas.*

Name of Band? *Our Lady of Fatima.*

Promoter? *Mrs. E. G. Walsh* (Mrs. Walsh is the aunt of Catechist Renier).

This Band—the first ever to be formed in the Lone Star State—has already sent in its first contribution which is listed in another column on this page.



We are especially pleased with the name selected because it was Our Blessed Mother, during an apparition at Fatima (Portugal), who stated that she alone could bring about the end of wars. It would seem that Our Blessed Lord has willed to leave this to her maternal intervention and intercession. Since some of the women composing the Band are mothers of servicemen, we feel that its formation must be an act of gratitude on their part for the safe return of their sons.



A.C.M. BAND CONTRIBUTIONS

October 1 to October 18, inclusive

Archbishop Stritch Band, Chicago, Miss Helen Gaethke	\$26.05
Charitina Band, Chicago, Miss Katherine Hennigan	6.00
Child Jesus Band, St. Louis, Mo., Miss Adelaide FitzPatrick	18.00
Dolores Band No. 1, Chicago, Mrs. Anna Klingel	25.00
Dolores Band No. 2, Chicago, Mrs. A. Bechtold	22.00
Good Shepherd Band, Chicago, Mrs. H. F. Staley	50.00
Immaculate Conception Band, Chicago, Miss Mary A. Perkins	15.00
Les Petites Fleurs, Chicago, Miss Elsie Jachmann	19.15
Little Flower Band, Chicago, Mrs. Helen Garity	26.00
Little Flower Mission Circle, Chicago, Miss Veronica Foertsch	75.00
Our Lady of Fatima Band, San Antonio, Tex., Mrs. E. G. Walsh	45.00
Sacred Heart Mission Club, Newark, N. J., Miss Ann J. Cassano	15.00
St. Anne Band, Fort Wayne, Ind., Miss Anne Brink	3.50
St. Helen Band, Dayton, Ohio, Miss Florence Bucher	3.00
St. Jude Mission Society, Fort Wayne, Ind., Mrs. Fred Potthoff	50.25
St. Justin, Martyr, Band, Chicago, Mrs. Helen Kiefer	14.00
St. Katherine Band, Chicago, Mrs. Katherine Hammer	20.00
St. Philomena Band, Chicago, Miss Mary Schaefer	24.00

ANNUAL LUNCHEON AND RAFFLE

CHICAGO CENTRAL COMMITTEE

AS OUR December issue went to press before the luncheon and raffle were held, we cannot report on it before the January number. At that time, we shall be happy to write up this important event in the ACM columns.

The Unpredictable

by Catechist Mary Karl

V-E DAY came and went, and the boys wrote back from Germany what a wonderful feeling it was that no shells came to meet them any more, that barracks could have all lights on at night. V-J Day came and went and brought thoughts of the hungry-hearted lads like the one who wrote he "had every hope and intention" of getting back to Upper New York soon, and another whose "half-way to Heaven" mark will be reached when he first glimpses Mary Monica, the little daughter born when he was just ten days out on the Pacific.

NEITHER these lads, nor the thousands like them, know anything about Miguel. But he did his bit toward V-E and V-J day, and in his own small way he's representative of a part of America that won the war, too.

MIGUEL belongs to the *Unpredictables*. Every teacher knows them. The *Unpredictables* are just that. You never know what is coming next, and it may be either good or bad. Just when you think you have made matters so simple that there is only *one* answer to a question the *Unpredictable* will give you another one . . . that fits or halfway fits! Or again, with uncanny accuracy, the *Unpredictable* will insert into a perfect statement of dogma just exactly the one little two-or-three-letter word that makes it a perfect statement of heresy! When you decide he needs some special help, he suddenly comes out with a plain statement that shows he's quite well aware, 'way back in that mind of his, of what you thought you were going to teach him. There's no explaining it, apparently. The *Unpredictables* are unpredictable, and that's that.

MIGUEL won his right to membership in the clan about two or three weeks before the First Communion examination. He was merely one of the "dubious" yet, not quite an "unpredictable." His little sister, a year younger, was well prepared for her First Holy Communion. I was not so sure of Miguel, and kept him for some individual attention after class. Now his black eyes were looking hard at me, his hair, that somehow gave one a feeling of shagginess even when well-combed, was falling down his forehead; his intent expression showed he was thinking hard.

WE REVIEWED the Last Supper. Bit by bit I checked, and his answers tallied. Then I came to the first BIG question. If Miguel answered *this* properly, I could rest at heart. He would be well on his way. If he knew the words of Jesus, "This is My Body," and understood their relation to his own First Communion, there would be no doubt of his eventual readiness.

AFTER a little questioning, Miguel admitted that at the Last Supper Our Lord took bread into His Hands. Now came my big moment.

"THEN, what did Jesus say?" I waited, hoping.

MIGUEL thought for a moment. Then came the answer, quick, sure, triumphant,

"LORD, have mercy on us . . . !"

"LORD have mercy on YOU!" I silently apostrophized my *Unpredictable* pupil; and as I struggled successfully against the temptation to laugh at his outlandish answer, the lesson went on. Miguel *did* know. He had merely gotten himself tangled into the Kyrie, because recently the children had been saying the Mass prayers aloud in English. And when First Communion Day came Miguel was with the class.



WHEN our country entered the war, I cast about for a suitable wartime class prayer. I wanted to add the voices of our innocent little ones to the anguished pleading ascending to God from so many grief stricken hearts. Finally, a suitable formula evolved and became permanent with my classes, after our usual prayers and aspirations: "Dear Jesus please give us peace very soon, and make our country free and good. Mary, help us. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen." It had to be short, you see. It had to be simple enough for the babies and meaningful enough for the Junior Highs. It had to ask for peace, soon, to implore Mary, to remember the lads who had given all. And so, for better or worse, I chose this formula.

The children liked it; we said it fervently together.

IT WAS nearly two years later that I was transferred from Miguel's group to another out-mission, and a year after that another transfer brought me back to them. The little people, whom I had seen grow from "baby class" to "post-communicants," were very dear to me. It was a joy to be with them again. There was Miguel. I had forgotten he was an *Unpredictable*. But not for long! If before he had touched my "funny bone," now he reached my heart.

CLASSES were once a week, and the first few were necessarily much occupied with organization, revision, seating, and establishment of other routine details. A review of our "Peace Prayer" was often necessary after vacation and I did not want to take time for this until we were well settled and could focus our full attention on it and on how much it meant. But I reckoned without Miguel.

IT WAS perhaps our third class. We had just finished the Our Father, Hail Mary, and two aspirations. We made the Sign of the Cross . . . all but Miguel. He moved his arm somewhat clumsily, as though his thoughts were elsewhere; then, as the other children prepared to seat themselves, but awaited the signal, Miguel looked up at me with an expression that was not quite puzzled, nor bashful, nor challenging, but a sort of combination of all three; and wriggling a little, as though slightly uncomfortable but feeling it his duty to protest, he said,

"WE . . . forgot something."

"DID we, Miguel? What was that?"

"THAT . . . you know . . ." The dark eyes pleaded for me to remember. "Dear Jesus . . ."

STARTLED, I asked, "Do you mean our little prayer for peace?"

HE NODDED, eyes bright. "Say it for us," I said. (And in my mind there was a challenge: *Can* he remember it after more than a year without a reminder?)

"DEAR Jesus, please give us peace very soon, and make our country free and good. Mary help us. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace!"

"WHY that was very good, Miguel. You remember it very well!"



American children were praying, while American youth were fighting the greatest of all wars.

AND his answer? Simply, with a bright smile, "I say it every night."

MIGUEL, the *Unpredictable*! My heart warms yet at the thought. I shall think of him at the beginning of our Christmas Novena this year. Bright with light and love, it will coincide with the first anniversary of the battle of the Bulge, that turning-point fought by our American youth while American children were praying, while Miguel did his bit every night toward V-E and V-J Day. Curious how his prayer melts into their fight: "All through the cold and bloody days of the Bulge," one soldier wrote, "when men had little to do except fight and pray and die (Please give us peace very soon!) I had driven home to me how miserable this world is . . . Had I not in those hours so cruel, so bloody, so ruthless, had a battered Ro-

(Continued on page 18)



Mary's Loyal

Dear Loyal Helpers:

A Merry, merry Christmas to each and all! Of course this is bound to be an extra specially happy Christmas. How can it be otherwise with that brother, or father, who was overseas now home to celebrate this great Christian festival in the family circle!



But let us (you and I, your Sunshine Secretary) steal away from the noisy rejoicings for a moment and, in spirit, with joined hands and hearts, visit our beloved Baby Jesus in His altar crib. In your gift-giving you haven't left Him out, have you? You know what He wants. Your heart to cradle Him in a fervent Christmas Communion. Oh! there are many wicked persons in the world today who hate Him. They would give Him a bed of thorns. We must make up for them by our tender love. Our love for Him is best proved by always doing His Holy Will. Let us, like little Guy de Fontgalland (who went back to God when he was only 11) always say "Yes" to the things Jesus asks of us—even hard things.

SUNSHINE SECRETARY.

Mother Mary, keep my soul
Pure from every sin,
So my little soul will smile
When He enters in.

Adelaide Proctor.

COME AND DIG ME OUT!

I'll never do it again. I'll never say that our Junior Helpers aren't loyal! I'll never even suggest that they can get careless and forget our poor Missions. They have about buried me under a pile of snowy letters. I'll introduce you to a few of them. Next month, some more.

NEW JUNIOR HELPERS

Edna Jane Allemeier, Delphos, O., Sophomore
Michael Baltes, Springfield, Ill., Sophomore
Margaret Boberg, Ft. Jennings, O., Junior
Georgia Bricker, Norwalk, O.
LaVerne Dahlke, Beecher, Ill., Freshman
Margaret Ellis, New York City, Sophomore
Joseph R. Engle, Lowell, O., Freshman
Mary E. Finan, Hamilton, O., Sophomore
Mary Ellen Fuhrman, Springfield, Ill., Senior
Patricia Louise Gault, Superior, Wis., Freshman
Vera Mae Goedde, Ottawa, O., Graduate, 1945
Mary Catherine Hahn, Fort Wayne, Ind., Sophomore
Agnes Hausfeld, Maria Stein, O., Junior
Eleanor Henkel, Hamilton, O., Junior
Lucille Jansen, St. Henry, O., Junior
Geraldine Jenne, Louisville, Ky., Sophomore
Mary Kibling, Burlington, Iowa, Junior
Mary Lu Kline, Monroeville, Ind., Junior
Edna Luthman, Celina, O., Sophomore
Pauline Marchal, Houston, O., Sophomore

NEW LITTLE HELPERS

Delores Azzaline, Centerville, Iowa, 8th grade
Anna Maria Baker, Maria Stein, O., 8th grade
Dorothy Fettig, Chicago, 6th grade
Kathryn Froelich, Defiance, O., age 12
Carol Nusbaum, Toledo, O., age 12
Janet Nusbaum, Toledo, O., age 10

This day is born to you a Savior

Helpers



NEWS ABOUT OUR "ALUMNI"

Sister Mary Corice, S.N.D., of Cleveland, Ohio, informs us that the first letter she ever received was an invitation to join our Mary's Loyal Helpers. Of course, she accepted. Since that time she and three of her sisters have entered the same convent. There are two sisters left at home. One will enter the Carmelite Order and the other has been an ensign in the Navy during the War.



Karen Engbersen, of Cincinnati, formerly a Loyal Helper, has also entered the Sisters of Notre Dame.

Barbara Offerle, Fort Wayne, returned to the Juniorate school of the Sisters of the Precious Blood for her second year.

*Lasting
Christmas Joys
be Yours
Loyal Helpers!*

You must meet Mary Anna Huber and her little sister. They live in Dayton, Ohio. Mary Anna has been a Loyal Helper for only a year and a half and yet she has filled a Sunshine bag three times!



OUR CHRISTMAS PUZZLE

WHO can get the names of the Three Holy Kings and their gifts out of this jumble?

PAGRAS
HELMRICO
HALSABRAT
LODG
SEERFINKCANN
RHYMR

Come ye people and adore the Lord

THE BISHOP SAID "YES"

(Continued from page 9)

While the Scouts sang "God Bless America," Bishop Metzger smilingly took his place on the beautifully decorated stage. Overhead lights dimmed to a soft, friendly glow, and the Scouts program was on.

As the girls moved gracefully through their folk dances and the ever popular square dances, the applause was spontaneous and sustained. Drills and troop songs followed. The Scouts paid tribute to their Patroness, Kateri Tekakwitha, the Lily of the Mohawks, in a short, but colorful sketch of her life. The authentic *Matachines'* costumes worn by the young actresses gave a realistic touch to their little drama. The entire group dancing to "Jingle Bells," brought the program to a rollicking finish.



A group of Matachines as they appeared for the patronal feast at the Church of San Juan.



The overhead lights flashed on, and Bishop Metzger stepped forward. One could see by the expression in his eyes that our Bishop was touched by the children's tribute. His talk was short and very sincere. Part of it—in Spanish—was directed to the parents, for to some of them English was still a foreign tongue. But the last part of the talk was in English for the eager Scouts sitting in informal groups on the large dance floor.

The Bishop bent forward; he lowered his voice almost to a whisper; there was a twinkle in his eyes. "And I'll tell you a secret," he said. "Tonight I was invited to a banquet at the Hotel Hilton. But I sent someone else to take my place, because I really wanted to come to this Christmas party which you have given me."

Under cover of the applause, three Scouts stepped nervously on the stage. Kneeling grace-

fully, each kissed the Bishop's ring as she presented her gift; the first, a Spiritual Bouquet; the second, a white basket of scarlet poinsettias; the third, a war bond from the Scouts to help him in his work for the poor.

The party went on to its happy climax . . . the arrival of Santa and the distribution of a bag of candy and popcorn to each Scout. All too soon, the night air was ringing with their happy "Good-night!" "See you at the Misa del Gallo!" "Be sure to have a nice Christmas, Catechist."

Some of the older Scouts waited for us near the beautiful tree.

"Catechists," said Iselia, "we want to thank all of you for helping us with the Bishop's party."

"It was much better, Catechist, than if we'd had one just for ourselves," chimed in another.

So the Scouts learned their lesson; our Bishop had a happy evening, and we hope our Recording Angels wrote,

"Score one for Catechist-Leaders."



THE UNPREDICTABLE

(continued from page 15)

sary (Mary, help us!) to cling to, I couldn't have stood it. As I gazed with horror-stricken eyes on the battered, lifeless bodies of friends lying so lonely, so forgotten, on an unknown hill in a foreign land (May their souls . . . rest in peace!) I promised that if I survived I should never cease to work and fight for the principles for which they died . . . (Dear Jesus, make our country GOOD, that we may be FREE!)"



MAY MIGUEL'S prayer be fully heard . . . by our little Prince of Peace!

Addresses of Our Mission Centers

Please send your mission boxes directly to the Catechists in the mission centers. Address THE MISSIONARY CATECHISTS and add one of the addresses listed below:

St. Coletta's Mission, Box 679, Flagstaff, Arizona.

Refuge of Sinners Mission, 512 Soldano Avenue, Azusa, California.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Mission, Box 1356, Brawley, California.

Good Shepherd Mission, Box 336, Coachella, California.

Infant of Prague Mission, 2321 Opal Street, Los Angeles, 23, California.

Little Flower Mission, 1143 Fifth Street, Los Banos, California.

Mary Star of the Sea Mission, 598 Laine Street, Monterey, California.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Mission, 537 East G Street, Ontario, California.

Queen of the Missions, Box 46, Redlands, California.

Our Lady of Sorrows Mission, 13958 Fox St., San Fernando, California.

St. Peter the Apostle Mission, 563 O'Farrell St., San Pedro, California.

Precious Blood Mission, 222 South Eighth St., Santa Paula, California.

St. Joseph Mission, 120 South F Street, Tulare, California.

Sacred Heart Mission, 178 S. 6th Ave., Brighton, Colorado.

Regina Angelorum Mission, 306-14th Ave., Greeley, Colorado.

Mount Carmel Mission, Box 77, East Gary, Indiana.

St. John the Baptist Mission, 1401 W. Washington Blvd., Fort Wayne, 2, Indiana.

Holy Ghost Mission, 416 S. Third St., Goshen, Indiana.

All Saints Mission, San Pierre, Indiana.

St. Anne Mission, 1009 E. Dayton Street, South Bend, 14, Indiana.

Holy Trinity Mission, Ida, Michigan.

St. John Bosco Mission, 290 Arden Park, Detroit, 2, Michigan.

Blessed de Montfort Mission, 514 Valencia Street, Las Vegas, New Mexico.

Our Lady of the Snows Mission, Box 26, Winnemucca, Nevada.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Mission, 704 Court Street, Elko, Nevada.

Ave Maria Mission, 551 Murray Street, Ely, Nevada.

Visitation Mission, 403 North Williams Street, Paulding, Ohio.

St. Joan of Arc Mission, 405 N. Scurry St., Big Springs, Texas.

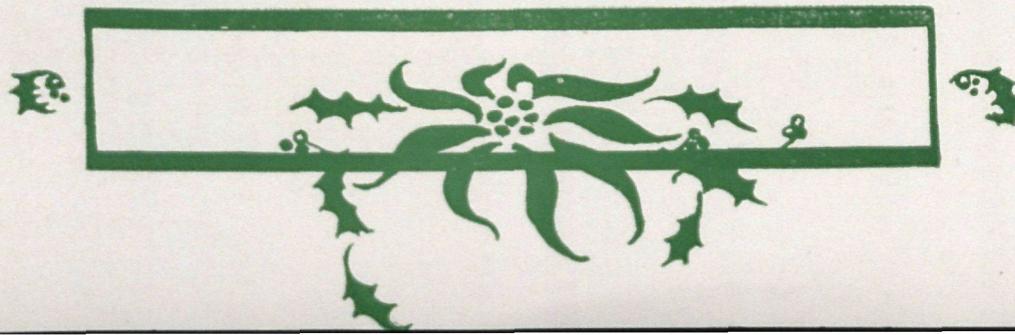
Immaculate Conception Mission, 1001 East San Antonio Street, El Paso, Texas.

St. Anthony Mission, 1223 S. Trinity St., San Antonio 7, Texas.

Holy Family Mission, Box 1317, Lubbock, Texas.

Queen of Angels Mission, 27 West Avenue N, P. O. Box 1125, San Angelo, Texas.

Mary Queen of Peace Mission, 1206 West 2nd South, Salt Lake City, 4, Utah.



A Merry Christmas



Entrance to Victory Noll Chapel

We pray that the peace and joy which the
Christ Child came on earth to bring may be
yours at Christmas and throughout
the New Year

*Catechist Catherine Olberding, Superior General,
and
The Missionary Catechists*