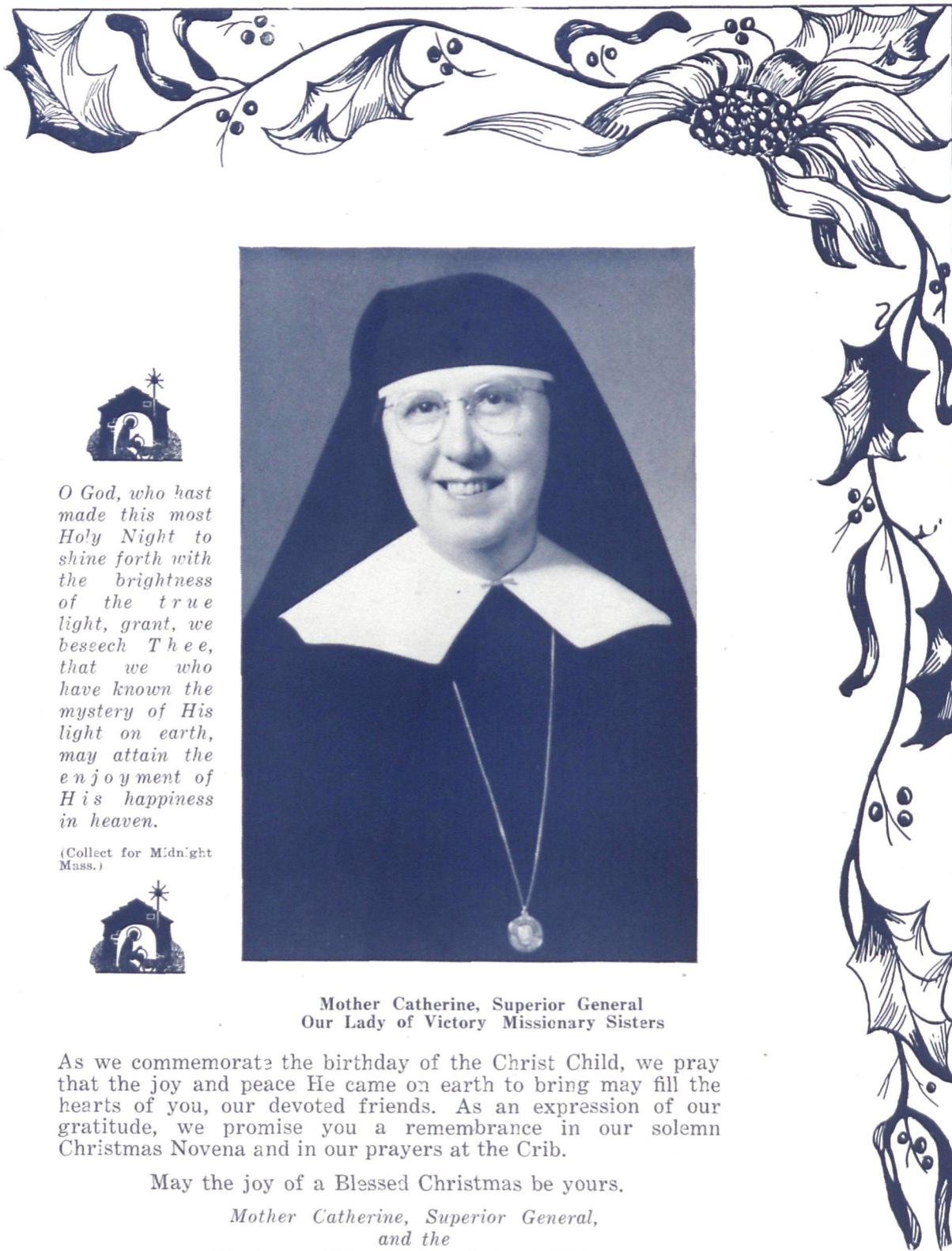


The Missionary Catechist



A Child is born to us and a Son is given to us



O God, who hast made this most Holy Night to shine forth with the brightness of the true light, grant, we beseech Thee, that we who have known the mystery of His light on earth, may attain the enjoyment of His happiness in heaven.

(Collect for Midnight Mass.)



**Mother Catherine, Superior General
Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters**

As we commemorate the birthday of the Christ Child, we pray that the joy and peace He came on earth to bring may fill the hearts of you, our devoted friends. As an expression of our gratitude, we promise you a remembrance in our solemn Christmas Novena and in our prayers at the Crib.

May the joy of a Blessed Christmas be yours.

*Mother Catherine, Superior General,
and the
Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Victory*

The Missionary Catechist

Volume XXVI

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Number 1

Mission Intention For December

by the Most Rev. Thomas J. McDonnell, D.D.

FOR THE REGIONS SUBJECT TO MOSLEMISM

THE Moslem religion is almost completely dominant from Morocco to the borders of India. In India it numbers ninety million followers, in Malasia and Java there are almost sixty million. Its influence extends to the Philippine Islands and into the provinces of China. This religion does not consider it enough to impose the same religious belief upon 290 million Mohammedans of the world today, but wants to further impose upon these people a definite form of nationality. It seeks to form a certain society in which the individual members, although greatly distant one from the other, as are Africans from Chinese, feel that they are united by a peculiar bond with the Moslems of the old world.

AT the present time, although there are so many political divisions in the work, and although naturalism, indifference to religion, and atheistic communism are being propagated, the Moslems, instead of growing cold in the exercise of their religion, proclaim strongly, day after day, they wish to adhere to old Islam. In fact, certain leaders among them, by their public writings, have not hesitated to declare that the salvation of civilized man is not to be expected from the Christian Occident, divided as it is with discord and war, nor even from atheistic communism, but from the Islamic peoples. The Moslems think and act in order to obtain a greater union among themselves, even if the plan of forming a single nation from all the Moslems (Panislamism) is far, as yet, from being effected.

MOREOVER, there is a real attempt being made today by the people of the Arab race to unite among themselves (Panarabism), as can be seen from the Moslem federation for the re-

gions of the Near East. In the struggle between the Jews and the Palestinian Arabs, military assistance in the form of voluntary Arab soldiers came to the aid of the latter from the north, south, and east. This vehement adhesion of the Mohammedans to their religion and their determination to unite among themselves, will, perhaps, be able to bring about this good effect, namely, the preventing of the penetration of communism among them. But it is known today, especially among the more cultured Moslems and those engaged in promoting political movements, that the Moslem religion is almost the same as nationalism.

In regions, however, which are under the government of foreign republics, the Moslems by the title and name of religion are trying to obtain civil independence. Thus, not long ago a certain new republic, Pakistan, arose in India which in the name of the Coran itself decided to break from the rest of India to form an independent State. But as elsewhere, this Moslem nationalism is strongly opposed to any union which is not Moslem. Besides, according to the well known Moslem tradition, Hindus are regarded as enemies of God and the Moslem religion. Frequently in Moslem regions one meets those who think that the time has perhaps come when Moslems should avenge the wrongs which they have received for a long time from Christian nations.

THERE is no doubt that these movements towards a greater union of Moslem peoples among themselves render more and more difficult the work of Evangelization and conversion among them—things which are so difficult in any case.

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O. B. L. V. Press, Victory Noll, Huntington, Indiana.

Joe of L.A. Reporting

by Sister Eugenia

WE are sitting on our benches under the trees having Catechism class, when all of a sudden my friend Tony says, kinda excited-like, "Sister, look!"

Sister stops talking about Advent, which is a time that comes four weeks before Christmas, and looks in the direction where Tony is pointing. Of course, we all crane our necks to see what is happening, also. When I see what it is, I just sit there and hold my breath. On account of it is an airplane which has gone into a tail spin. We do not know just what is the cause of it. All we can see is this plane falling down over there by the mountains and leaving a trail of black smoke behind it. Half a second later we hear it crash.

Quick as a flash Sister kneels down on the grass and says, real calm-like, "Let us pray for the pilot's soul." She pulls her rosary out of her pocket, while all the kids are kneeling down so quiet-like, I am wondering if they are all still there. I look at Tony and he has turned so white he looks almost green. He is the kid who always gets the highest marks in mathematics on account of he wants to be an airplane pilot some day. He is the same one who has to stay after school sometimes for doodling airplanes on his history and English papers.

NEXT day when he looks normal again, I ask him, "Do you still want to be an airplane pilot?"

"Pues si, como no?" he says, which means, "Yes, indeed, why not?" Then he tells me, "What's the dif? We all gotta die sometime, anyhow."

Like Sister was just telling us last week, "Keep your soul always ready, and rich in the grace of God, then it will not matter how or when you die."

I am thinking that this pilot musta been a pretty good guy with a lotta sanctifying grace in his soul, on account of God lets him have a Sister and about thirty kids praying a rosary for him the minute he dies. And besides all this, he even has a priest to pray for him and anoint him (this is the Sacrament of Extreme Unction), as Father arrives at the scene of the crash only two minutes after the ambulance gets there.

NOW anybody knows that only a martyr or a saint can go straight to heaven without stopping for a while in purgatory. In fact, some souls have to spend many years there in order to make up for their sins. Sister even told us that some souls would suffer in purgatory till the Day of Judgment if they were not helped by the prayers of the Church.

Do you remember when we had our contest in Catechism class and we had to tell about our patron saints? Well, as you already know, my pal Gus told all about St. Augustine. When this saint's mother was dying (she was a saint also, her name was St. Monica), she said to her son, "Lay my body anywhere, don't let the care of it worry you in any way. The one thing I ask of you is that you will remember me at the altar of the Lord."

So for thirty years after his mother died, St. Augustine offered Masses for her soul and also had other priests offer Masses for his mother. Besides all this, he asked many people to remember her in their prayers, and he himself often prayed to God this prayer for her, "Lord, have mercy on my mother. She was good, she pardoned easily, pardon her also her sins."

ONE thing I am glad of—that I am living *now* instead of back in the year 300 or 400 when St. Augustine and his mother lived. On account of they did not have the chance to wear a scapular like I have. The reason for this being that the Mother of God did not give the scapular to St. Simon Stock until the year 1251. As you probably know, anyone who wears the Blessed Virgin Mary's scapular with devotion can be sure that she will pray for him so he will not end up in the flames of hell. This is what she promised to St. Simon Stock.

And besides all this, Our Lady appeared later on, in the year 1322, to Pope John XXII, and gave him an even greater promise. This is called the Sabbatine Privilege. The reason how I happen to know about all this is on account of the Sisters told us about it in Catechism class. In fact, we even had to write down a few things in our notebooks, otherwise maybe I would not be able to remember all of it to tell you.

The promise is this (now I am copying from my notebook): "Those who wear the Brown Scapular of the Blessed Virgin, after having been

properly enrolled, and who observe chastity according to their state, and recite the office, shall be liberated from purgatory *on the first Saturday after death.*"

Ever since I read these notes to my father, he has himself enrolled in the scapular. Practically everybody around here now is wearing a scapular. Even my teacher, Miss Carter, was enrolled in Mary's scapular a coupla months ago.

BET you never knew that Miss Carter is a Catholic, did you? I didn't know it either, until Tino (that's my pal Gus) informs me that these convert classes which she is always in such a hurry to go to means she is studying her catechism so she can be baptized and belong to the Catholic Church.

Mr. Callahan, it seems, is very happy that she is a Catholic, too, as before this time he did not know about these convert classes, and he did not seem to care very much about Miss Carter, either.

Like that day they both went to see Father about taking a bus load of us boys and girls to Carmel Mission. Father, as you know, is a very old man, and when he is not reading out of that little black book that he has, he is reading out of a big brown book.

ON this particular day when we are knocking at his door (you remember, my pal Gus and I went along), Father is sitting at his desk reading, and he says, "Come in."

Being that Father has on his reading glasses, and also that the sun is shining in his eyes from the door that is opened, he does not recognize Jim Callahan right away. All he can see is a young man and a young lady and he thinks they are coming to make arrangements to be married. They are just standing there, not saying anything, as I guess Mr. Callahan is politely waiting for Miss Carter to do the talking, so Father says to them, "When would you like to have the banns announced?"

By this time Father has taken off his reading glasses and he sees us two boys standing in the background. Then Father recognizes Jim Callahan and when he realizes his mistake, he starts to apologize in between laughs.

Mr. Callahan tries to laugh, too, but I think he is kinda mad, as the back of his neck is as red as a beet. Miss Carter, however, is as cool as a cucumber, and she explains to Father her idea about taking the whole seventh and eighth grades on a bus trip to Carmel Mission, along with the boys in our club who do not go to school.

Father says it is all right with him, but he will not vouch for any of the school children who are not Catholic. So she tells him that since it is an educational tour, she is sure the parents of those few children will give their consent.

IN fact, I betcha there are just as many non-Catholic people who visit the California Missions as there are Catholics. For instance, when we are visiting Carmel, there happens to be an old man and an old lady right in back of us. We are standing there looking at the room where Father Serra used to sleep and also where he died. Needless to say, he does not have a very comfortable bed there, or much of anything else, but all the same, I almost fall over when I hear what the lady in back of us is saying to her husband. "This must have been the jail," she says.

I am about to explain to her what it really is, but on second thought I go over to where my pal Gus is standing, as he can explain things better than I can. He is examining a large painting which shows Father Serra saying Mass under an oak tree on June 3, 1770. This is the date when he landed in Monterey and when Mission San Carlos was started. Under this same oak tree the very first Mass in California was celebrated by the Carmelite Fathers in 1602.

BY the time that Gus has finished looking at all the soldiers and the Indians in this picture, the old couple have disappeared into another room, but I tell my pal anyway what the lady remarked about Father Serra's room.

He cannot figure out where she got an idea like that until he sees the sign over the door which says, as near as I can remember, "This is Father Serra's cell, where he died August 28, 1784, at the age of 71."

Then Gus tells me, "That lady probably does not know that the Franciscan Padres call the place where they sleep a cell. Like a lot of other people, when she sees the word *cell*, right away all she can think of is a jail."

AFTER we pass through a couple more rooms, we go out a side door into the yard where more than three thousand Indians are buried. There are also many graves inside the church, both Spanish and Indians. Father Serra is buried in the sanctuary, along with three other Padres.

Miss Carter and the girls are in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel and they are staying there a long time, while we are standing outside with Jim Callahan waiting for them to come out. I figure they must be saying some special prayers

to Our Lord while they have a chance, as the Blessed Sacrament is not kept in the main church on account of all the tourists.

You can imagine how surprised I am when I see Miss Carter genuflect to Our Lord in the tabernacle like some of the girls are doing, but I am even more surprised when I see that she knows how to make the Sign of the Cross!

THIS is when Jim Callahan looks kinda puzzled and says to me, "I thought you said your teacher wasn't a Catholic!"

"She isn't," I tell him. "All she knows about anything Catholic is what I told her, and that isn't very much. On account of she has no time to stay after school anymore, as she has to go to some kind of convert classes."

At this he wants to know how long she has been taking those convert instructions. Right here is when Augustino speaks up and says, "She is probably a Catholic by now, as she started going to these classes quite a while ago, long before you even started our boys' club."

From there on, there is a slight change in our arrangements. Before this, Mr. Callahan does not care to explain anything to the girls at all, as he tells Miss Carter she can take them through the Mission, and he will take charge of the boys. But now he has to do all the explaining for both the boys and the girls. One of the things he told us is that more than four thousand Indians were baptized at Carmel Mission from 1770 to 1836.

AFTER he tells us a few more things about the Mission and the Franciscan Fathers, we get into the bus and leave, as we have already visited the Presidio Chapel at Monterey, and other places of interest. We are now on our way to Mission San Juan Bautista, about forty miles away. This is where I meet my friend Nicky. He is descended from the Indians that were around there when Father Serra landed at Monterey Bay. His great-grandmother told him this story about Father Serra, and I guess she heard it from her great-grandmother.

"One time," he says, "the hills are running all over with bears. The women and children cannot go out to pick the berries for fear of the bears. So they call for the Padre Serra to come and give them help. He climbs up the hill and says to the bears, 'Vayanese, vayanese,' which means go away. From that time the women and children are free to pick the berries, with no more fear of the bears."

A coupla minutes later one of the girls is



all excited as she claims she can see the marks of a bear's foot on the floor of the church near the confessional. But Nicky tells her, "No, those are mountain lion claws. They were made while the bricks were drying in the sun, before they were baked."

I GUESS maybe I ate one hot dog too many on our picnic that day, on account of that same night I have a dream that I am in the church at San Juan Bautista. It is crowded with a lotta people, when in walks a big bear with his mouth open to bite someone. In order to protect the women and children, I grab his open jaws with my bare hands and hold them open, so he can't snap them shut on anyone.

Maybe some time I will tell you more about Nicky and Father Serra and Mission San Juan. There is only one more thing I would like to say right now—when you visit any of the California Missions, be sure you do not eat one or two hot dogs too many.

From the Housetops

by Sister Elizabeth Ann

OUR convent at Redlands, California, has its spacious patios; some of our convents can boast of a front or side porch; others have yards, even though they might be small; but to our knowledge Immaculate Conception mission in El Paso is the only one that has a roof garden. Well, maybe not a garden, but a roof; a spacious flat roof, three flights up, where our laundry dries in a jiffy and where, in the strictest privacy, we can enjoy our evening recreation during many months of the year.



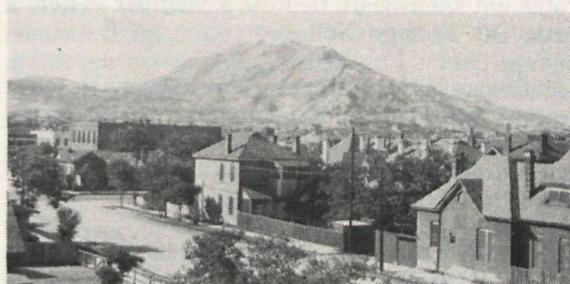
Immaculate Conception Convent, El Paso.

IMMACULATE Conception convent is different in many ways. It is located at the apex of two streets just a few blocks from downtown El Paso. On the ground floor is a full time clinic for mothers and babies. It is unusually well equipped and has a large staff of doctors and nurses. The clinic is operated by the diocese and supervised by a Sister of Charity from Hotel Dieu in the city. The offices of the diocesan Catholic charities are also located here, occupying several rooms off the clinic. Over all these rooms, on the second floor, is our convent, from which ten Sisters go out every day to teach and visit in the parishes of El Paso and in several out-missions.



Our roof "garden": an ideal recreation room during many months of the year.

ON the third floor of our convent we have a small laundry. From it we step out onto our much appreciated roof. El Paso's weather is extremely warm from spring to late fall, but in the evenings we can always find a welcome breeze on our convent roof. The breeze is there during the day, but the sun is so intense that only those who want to benefit from its rays for a few minutes venture onto the roof.



View of Mt. Franklin from roof garden.

NOT the least advantage of the roof is its interesting view. To the north is Mount Franklin. To the southwest is Cristo Rey Mountain where a huge statue of Christ the King, with arms outstretched, looks out over Texas, New Mexico, and Old Mexico. In every other direction there is a church steeple. A few blocks away are the twin towers of the large church of San Ignacio.



View of downtown El Paso from convent roof.

A SHORT distance in still another direction is a chapel of Perpetual Adoration where the Blessed Sacrament is exposed every day and where a community of cloistered Sisters, originally from Old Mexico, keep watch before the altar. To the south is the city of Juarez in Old Mexico. As we look in that direction we see, at the foot of the mountains, the beautiful basilica recently erected to the honor and glory of God and Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Mexican people.

AND in the shadow of the churches and beyond are the rows and rows of houses teeming with souls: the souls of men and women and especially children, those precious souls whom we have come to El Paso to help to save.

A Place Near the Son

by Beatrice Thornton

"SPEND Christmas at a convent? Hardly!" Such was my reaction when Rosalia Martin asked me to accompany her and her husband, Peter, on their visit to Rosa's younger sister, a novice at Victory Noll.

But as holiday preparations at home reached hectic proportions, I decided Christmas at a convent might be preferable to the forced, overdone, and artificial gaiety of the holiday with the so-called smart set at my home.

So it was that, with a note to Mother explaining where I was going, I slipped out the back door into the crisp welcome chill of Christmas eve. The stars were out and a pale moon shed soft, reluctant light on the snow which crunched delightfully beneath my feet.

As I passed unnoticed beneath our living room windows, I said to myself, "Poor, foolish ones! You think you are enjoying yourselves! Well, I'm not quite sure what I'm getting into tomorrow, but at least I'm getting away from this." Then jumping into my car, I drove through the icy streets, crowded with late Christmas shoppers, to my friends' home, where I was to spend the night. I would accompany them to Midnight Mass and the following morning we would drive to Victory Noll.



THE holly wreathed front door at Victory Noll was opened by a tall, pleasant looking Sister, who smiled her cordial greeting, telling us that Sister Mary Rosine was expecting us and she would call her immediately.

I stood with Rosa and Pete as a slender young woman of medium height, wearing a neat habit of dark blue and a waist length white veil entered the room. Could this be Babs? This charming, self-possessed nun—Rosalia's tomboy sister? True, I hadn't seen her since her high school days, but I was totally unprepared for such a change. Fortunately, while the two sisters greeted each other, I had a chance to recover from my surprise.

Greetings over and all the home news relayed to Sister Mary Rosine, conversation turned to the events of the previous night. "It was fun to be awakened at eleven-thirty by the second

year Novices," Sister was saying, "as they went through the corridors singing the Christmas carols. But, of course, the high point in the Christmas celebration is the Midnight Mass when Christ is born sacramentally on our altars as truly as He was born in Bethlehem two thousand years ago. Bethlehem was the beginning, and the Mass is the continuation of Christ's total giving of Self to us, His creatures."

"DID you have three Masses, as you did last year?" Rosa asked.

"Yes," Sister replied. "Father said his other two Masses immediately after Midnight Mass. Then we had breakfast in the auditorium, which is our dining room during Christmas vacation. After dinner, I'll show you the beautifully decorated tables and the big tree and the stage turned into a replica of the stable at Bethlehem. It's just gorgeous."

"When did you open your gifts?" asked Pete.

"After breakfast we went to the Novitiate and our gifts were all beneath the tree there."

"Did you say you had another Christmas tree in the Novitiate?" I asked.

"Yes, and one in the Postulancy and one in the professed recreation room. And you know what, Mother Catherine gave us a sled. Isn't that wonderful? We had one last year, but we broke it. Now we're hoping for a decent snowfall."

"Do you mean you do things like sled riding?" I asked.

"I should say we do," Sister replied, smilingly. "And we play soft ball and volley ball, too, when the weather permits. And do you know what I got in my stocking?" she continued, a mischievous twinkle in her eye at the sight of my incredulity.

"A toy drum, a big candy cane, and a little mechanical man that runs around in all directions when he is wound up."

That was too much. I had heard a great deal about nuns, all of which had sounded like anything but this.



SISTER was anxious to show us the chapel, so we followed her down a long corridor, festooned with immense white paper bells and red cellophane bows, to the entrance. There I stopped, momentarily dazed by the sight before me. Never had I seen anything so beautiful. A soft, golden haze seemed to envelope the altar and the entire chapel. As I stepped through the doorway, I heard soft strains of "O Holy Night" coming from the organ in the choir loft. I thought I had been transported suddenly into another world, where the sublime became reality.

As I walked slowly up the aisle the first single object to attract my attention was the large statue of Christ standing at the top of the main altar, arms outstretched. Directly below this was an alcove lined with gold mosaic and containing a large crucifix. Standing at either side of this were two angels in blue robes, and below was the tabernacle. Between the altar table and the floor was a bas-relief of the Last Supper. On the steps above the altar table were tall ivory and gold candlesticks, and placed between them were potted poinsettias, standing like flaming sentinels of the New-Born King.

TO the right of the main altar, protected by a number of evergreen trees, from whose branches gleamed small blue lights, was a miniature cave of Bethlehem. There, lying on real straw, was a tiny statue of the Infant Jesus, and beside Him were the kneeling figures of Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds. Lighted from within by rose colored bulbs, the whole scene was one of beauty and reverent simplicity.

On the left side of the chapel was an altar, smaller than the main altar, on which stood a large statue of the Virgin Mother, wearing blue

and white robes and an elaborate golden crown. At her side, and as it were gently supported by her, was the figure of the Christ Child, Who also wore a golden crown and Whose tiny arms were outstretched in a gesture of loving eagerness.

I knelt at the communion rail with Sister Mary Rosine as she explained to me, in hushed tones, the Catholic belief regarding the Real Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. I continued kneeling there, basking in the peace which caressed and soothed and which seemed to come from another world. I found myself thinking over and over, "If I could only believe."



AS we returned to the reception room, Rosa and Pete met a Sister whom they had known before her entrance at Victory Noll, and while they stopped to visit with her, I had—to my great joy—a few minutes to speak to Sister Mary Rosine alone.

Sister was the first to speak, and she did so with a directness that had always been characteristic of her. "Beth, have you ever thought of joining the Church?"

"Well, if I hadn't thought of it before, I certainly would after this visit, Babs. But, seriously, my friendship with Rosa and the many happy days I've spent with your family, have always made your Faith attractive to me. And because of this, I've read something of Catholic doctrine and I listen to Catholic radio programs pretty regularly. But, since you ask, there is something I would like very much to know."

(Continued on Page 18)

East view of Victory Noll, Mother House and Novitiate of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters.





OUTDOOR MISSION CRIBS
TOP (at left): Outdoor crib at Grove Hill, Alabama. Cardboard figures for this crib were designed, cut, and colored by Sister Mary Gabrielle. **2nd picture:** Newsboys stop to visit outdoor crib in Sisters' yard at Azusa, California. **3rd picture:** Sally and Jane visit crib on porch of Sisters' convent at Paulding, Ohio. **4th picture:** Pre-school youngsters gather round crib used by their older sisters and brothers in Christmas play at Lubbock, Texas.



In the Home Field

Gifts for the Little Ones

by Sister Kathleen

IT was late afternoon on Christmas eve, when a kind benefactor brought us a number of neatly renovated dolls and stuffed animals. Our Christmas parties were over, but we knew instinctively that these latest gifts would bring happiness to some children before the holiday season was over. So we placed them under our Christmas tree to wait whatever particular need they were to fill.



Infant of Prague—a favorite statue with the little ones.

NOW, during the Christmas Novena, it was customary to have a treat for the children after the services. There was to be one on Christmas eve, and it was to be in the form of a *pinata*, which Mexican children dearly love. A *pinata* is some kind of container, usually a very

beautifully decorated one, which is filled with candies or other goodies, and hung from the ceiling. Each child in turn is blindfolded and then given a stick to try and break the *pinata*. There is a prize for the lucky child, but once the *pinata* is broken and the contents spilled over the floor, there is a grand rush for the candies.

IMAGINE the disappointment of the children when the family who were to furnish the *pinata* were unable to get to the Novena on Christmas eve because of a heavy rain. We thought of our latest gifts, spread out under the Christmas tree in our convent, and we knew the children would not be disappointed for long.

WE invited them over to the convent, and suggested that they stop a minute in the reception room to say a prayer to the Infant Jesus before the statue of the Infant of Prague. They all knelt down and the oldest girl in the group led the prayers. And she did not stop until the children had recited most fervently every prayer they had learned in their religion classes and all the ejaculations they had learned from their zealous pastor.

AS we watched these little ones we wished that all the world might share their love for the Divine Infant that night. They were poorly dressed, two of the smallest boys were barefoot, perhaps because they had no shoes, or perhaps because they did not want to ruin their only pair by wearing them in the rain. These shivering little ones were another reminder of the Little One that must have shivered in the Crib on that first Christmas night.

THE prayers finished, we brought the children in to see our Christmas tree and the lovely gifts beneath it, which the Infant Jesus had sent them by a kind benefactor that very afternoon. The delight of the children knew no bounds as we handed each one a doll or stuffed animal.

ONE little girl, after admiring her doll, said, "You know, Sister, my brother Billy has been coming each evening, but this evening Mother wouldn't let him come out in the rain because he had a cold." So we found a stuffed dog for Billy, and his sister went happily on her way.

AFTER the children, their gifts protected from the rain by their worn coats or old newspapers, had gone merrily to their homes, we knelt and asked our Little King to bless with special peace and joy those who had made it possible for us to bring so much happiness to little hearts this Christmas eve.

MISS PRUNE

HER real name is Patsy, but since the Christmas program given by the boys and girls of Holy Ghost Youth Center, Denver, everyone at the Center calls her *Miss Prune*. She is only four-and-a-half, and a tiny youngster for her age. Besides coming to our religion classes twice a week, Patsy goes to dancing and elocution classes.

In the entertainment, the tiny tots presented "Bye-lo Land." Each youngster was dressed in sleepers or pajamas and had a little pillow. They are sent off to bed; say their prayers, and when "Mother" thinks they are sound asleep, they jump up and have a dandy pillow fight. When "Mother," thinking she hears a commotion, looks in, she finds them all asleep . . . or nearly all. We discovered some little people just can't close their eyes and pretend.

When they wake up, they have to tell what they dreamed about. Here is Miss Prune's dream:

I had a dream about a prune.
 No matter how young a prune may be,
 It's always full of wrinkles.
 You may get them here or there;
 Prunes get them everywhere.
 Babies fret and cry,
 Till they hear Mother's lullaby,
 No matter how young a prune may be,
 You'll never hear it cry."

Patsy must be a delight to her elocution teacher. She could be heard all over the auditorium. During the practices, whenever it was her turn to speak, all the other youngsters would quiet down, and she would look all around without saying a word. Then when she thought she had everyone's attention, she would begin in a startlingly loud voice, "I had a dream about a prune . . ."

Sister Mary Rose
 Denver, Colorado

Associate Catechists



A Holy and Happy Christmas and a New Year filled with God's choicest blessings is our prayer for you, dear Associates.

CHARITINA CLUB 1 (Chicago, Ill.)

MISS KATHERINE HENNIGAN and her group have tried something new for the past year—and like it. Instead of making the rounds of each member's home on meeting nights through the year, they chose to meet monthly at the Illinois Club for Catholic Women in Lewis Tower, North Michigan Avenue. Each one selects her own dinner from the menu and pays for it. Then they play cards. The lady whose turn it is to entertain that month receives the dues and furnishes the prizes.



ST. PHILOMENA BAND

(Chicago, Ill.)

Busy Mary Schaefer heads this band and always has. Somehow she finds time to write us rather frequently.

The letter contains a check for a goodly amount. Most of her members live in Lombard, which was also the Promoter's home for a good many years. They sponsor Sister Mary Elizabeth.



MOTHER CABRINI BAND (Wauconda, Ill.)

A NEWSY letter was received about two months ago from Florence Frey, secretary of the Band. With the letter came a check for \$100.00.

"A lawn card party was held in Wauconda the latter part of August, and this money was realized from that party," wrote Florence. "We have also started our Christmas stockings for the children of Sister Mary Genrose's mission. Mrs. Oman, a non-Catholic, has signed up as a member and paid her dues. She is proud to be a member and thinks the work we do for the children and Sisters is worthy of much credit. The mother of our promoter, Mrs. Clara Swiatly, has been making crocheted slippers for us. She is an invalid and yet keeps so busy. It is wonderful."



FT. WAYNE MEMBERS AND SISTER MARY PAUL



Pictured above are Miss Ann Brink, Promoter of St. Anne's Band for twenty-five years, Miss Gertrude Kocks, Sister Mary Paul and Miss Anna Kocks. Sister entered our community twenty-five years ago in July. The three ladies have nearly completed paying for Sister's Burse.

of Mary

ST. ROSE BAND (Marshfield, Wis.)

The zeal of these mission workers, under the direction of Mrs. J. Huebl, never flags. This is the best attested by the frequent and large checks received and the interesting accounts given on how the money was raised. A Bake Sale in the early fall brought



fifty dollars. An annual event with the group is a Bazaar held just before Christmas. The articles made by the ladies, with price tags attached, are set up in the corner of a local store, where they attract the attention of many. Among articles sold are sachet dress hangers, hand bags, pin cushions, thread holders, sequin hat pins, and dresser dolls.

BESIDES these activities, mission boxes weighing 21 pounds or more are sent to Sister Adrianna and Sister Adelle, containing toys, clothing, and religious goods for their poor children.

OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP BAND

(Evanston, Ill.)

DURING the Christmas holidays we are sure to hear from Miss Celia Henrich, in charge of this band, with a nice donation. According to our records, this small Evanston group has aided us for twenty-five years or more. Our silver-tongued praises for their faithful help!

ST. JUSTIN MARTYR BAND (Chicago, Ill.)

Each member of Mrs. Fred Kiefer's Band takes her turn at playing hostess to the rest, on the occasion of their fortnightly pinochle games. Then a big party is staged once a year in the parish hall, when between 150 and 200 persons are present.



The Band sponsors Mrs. Kiefer's daughter, Sister Justine, Superior of our East Gary, Indiana, convent.



ACM BAND CONTRIBUTIONS

September 22, 1949 to October 18, 1949

Christ the King Band, Detroit, Elizabeth Bien	29.00
Holy Family Band, Chicago, Joseph Walz, Sec.	15.00
Immaculate Conception Band, Chicago, Mary Perkins	20.00
Little Flower Mission Circle, Chicago, Veronica Foertsch	50.00
Our Lady of Fatima Group, Huntington, Mrs. Dan Herzog, Sec.	2.00
Our Lady of Sorrows Band, Chicago, Marion Dempsey	100.00
Poor Souls Band, Berwyn, Ill., Mrs. J. V. McGovern	7.00
St. Anne Mission Circle, Ft. Wayne, Anna Brink	8.75
St. Anthony Band, Chicago, Mrs. Agnes Beck	125.00
St. Catherine Band, Los Angeles, Mrs. M. McMannamy	10.00
St. Joseph Band, No. 1, Chicago, Anna Knusman	25.00
St. Joseph Band No. 2, Chicago, Mrs. Wm. Schultz	9.00
St. Justin Martyr Band, Chicago, Mrs. Fred Kiefer	41.00
St. Katherine Band, Chicago, Mrs. Katherine Hammer	25.00
St. Margaret Mary Band, Omaha, Mrs. Fred Shields	5.00
St. Mary Mission Club, Oak Park, Mrs. F. Lehman	40.00
St. Philomena Band, Chicago, Mary Schaefer	14.50
St. Raymond Band, Chicago, Mrs. Kathyne Quinlan	7.25
Seven Dolours Band, Chicago, Mrs. John J. Murphy	10.00

A Really Happy Christmas

by Sister Barbara

AS Mrs. Cortez carefully ironed the last trace of a wrinkle from the snow-white surplice, she called her son—blond, curly headed, twelve-year-old Jimmy.

"Yes, Mom," came the slightly reluctant answer.

"Are you very busy, Jimmy?" she asked.

"Well, no, not *very*."

"Then won't you please take your cassock and surplice right over to church? I would like you to be one of the neatest altar boys at Midnight Mass, and if these are put away safely now, there is a chance that you will be," she said convincingly.

Hastily pushing several packages wrapped in thoroughly masculine style, a number of bulging paper bags, and a roll of Christmas wrapping paper into his closet, Jimmy emerged from his room with a cheery, "O.K., Mom." Wriggling into his heavy sweater, and pulling his red woolen cap over his ears, Jimmy took the box from his mother, saying as he did so, "If you don't mind, I'll stop at Dad's station on the way back and walk home with him. It won't be long until closing time."

"All right, Jimmy," his mother replied. "Supper will be ready when you and Dad arrive."

The door slammed, cutting Jimmy's "O.K., Mom," in two.

Mrs. Cortez smiled contentedly, as she put away her iron and peeked into the oven. Jimmy was a good child, and she liked the comradeship between him and his dad.

The carols which had been coming over the radio in the next room came to an end, and Mrs. Cortez heard the announcer saying, "Only two shopping days until Christmas, and before we sign off, we want to wish each and every one of our listeners a *really* Happy Christmas." She turned off the radio and picked up the sweater she was knitting for her husband for Christmas. As the needles clicked swiftly between her nimble fingers, the last words she had heard seemed to reverberate through the quiet stillness of the house, "... a *really* Happy Christmas."

She let her thoughts run back through the years to the many Christmases she could remember. As a little girl, there had been the delights of toys and trees and Christmas goodies. Those holidays had been happy ones in a pagan sort of way, without her even knowing the real meaning of Christmas.

The years had slipped by quickly and she had become a popular, pretty young lady, who estimated the pleasure of the Christmas season by the number of dates she had had and the parties and dances she had enjoyed. Pleasure, yes; but not real happiness. Always something had been missing.

Then had come the eventful year when Tony proposed to her. "Perhaps," she had thought, "real happiness is in sight. Perhaps this is it." Friends had tried to induce her to break up with Tony. They put the objection that the swarthy, dark complexion, and blue-black hair of her fiance would never be a suitable match for her blond, blue-eyed beauty. "Besides," they would add disparagingly, "Tony is a Catholic."

She knew nothing of Catholicity, and she had no prejudices, and although there had been many to choose from, it was to Tony that she had said, "Yes."

"Let me see," she said to herself, while the needles continued to flash. "It was just thirteen years ago today that Tony and I dashed off to Yuma and said our 'I do's.' Tony was dear. She had never regretted her choice. Yet something had been wanting. She had always felt as though she were unknowingly doing him a wrong. Even the happiness that was theirs that first Christmas had been marred by that feeling. Maybe the way his mother talked to him so quietly, so earnestly each time they saw her had something to do with it. It was something about "not being married in the Church," but she didn't quite understand and Tony never talked of it afterwards.

She had heard, too, that every Sunday Tony's mother was the first one in church, praying for her wayward son's return to God. Well, she couldn't help it if Tony had stopped going to church. She wouldn't have minded a bit, but he seemed to think it was useless.

Very close to the next Christmas, little Jimmy had arrived, the sweetest gift she had ever received. Her cup of happiness had been closer to being full than ever before. But there was still that vague, uncertain feeling that all was not entirely right in their little world, and she thought Tony had been relieved when his mother and dad arrived—they had moved to another city now—and carried little Jimmy off to church to be baptized.

As Jimmy grew up, his mother's chief happiness at Christmas had been in planning a happy day for him. Then just a little more than two years ago, things began to happen that brought real happiness to her home.

First, there had been the visit of the two blue-mantled Missionary Sisters, who had called to urge her to see that Jimmy, who had been attending release time religion classes for some months, would also attend Mass regularly on Sundays so that he could make his First Communion.

Mrs. Cortez promised the Sisters that she would get Jimmy up on time for Mass on Sunday, and mentioned the fact that she would like to know a little about Mass, Communion, and other Catholic practices, so that she could help Jimmy. The Sisters promised to teach her the fundamentals of the Catholic Faith, and had come to her home again and again during the ensuing months. They had kept her supplied with books, too, and Mrs. Cortez was thrilled with what she was learning. Nevertheless, she

hesitated to take the final step.

She kept her promise to get Jimmy up in time for Mass and often accompanied him. She had been happy in his happiness on his First Communion day. She had been proud when he had been chosen to be an altar boy. Yet she never had courage to approach a priest.

Then a year ago last fall, Father Long had stopped in as he was taking the parish census. During his brief but, friendly call, she kept thinking, "Why, how silly of me ever to have had any fear of priests. This one is as kind and considerate as anyone could be." And that very week she had started going in to town every Tuesday and Thursday for further instructions at the rectory.

She had not said anything to Tony until her course was almost finished. How proud he had been when she told him she was soon to be baptized. It had happened just a year ago today. She had been baptized and their marriage had been blessed that evening. Then at Midnight Mass, she, Tony, and Jimmy, had knelt side by side at the Communion rail to welcome into their grateful hearts the Babe of Bethlehem. Then only had she experienced that deep peace and happiness she had sought so long.

"Yes, last year was a *really* Happy Christmas, and this one will be equally so," she smiled to herself as she heard her husband and son coming bounding up the steps, "for we have learned to seek happiness in the Heart of Jesus, delight of all the saints."



Give Him Shelter

by Sister Jean Marie

Oh, give the Infant Jesus
A shelter filled with love,
When at the bidding of the Priest
He leaves His home above.

He wants a shelter in your heart,
A lovely home of prayer,
Where He can lavish blessings
And graces, choice and rare.

Don't close your heart unto Him,
But throw it open wide!
Be good to the little Jesus,
With you He would abide.

Alias CASPAR MELCHIOR and BALTHAZAR



(Explanatory Note. Sunshine Secretary writes for Loyal Helpers about two Sisters and herself who played the role of the three gift-laden kings to poor Mexican children living in Northern Indiana last year.)

LITTLE Mexican children do not believe in Santa Claus! Most of them have never even heard of him. Instead, they devoutly believe that the Three Holy Kings—Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar—bring them gifts each year on January 6, the Feast of the Epiphany.

DURING the nine days preceding Christmas, children in large numbers accompany their parents or other grown-ups to those places, where "Las Posadas" (literally, *The Inns*) are held every evening. "Las Posadas" is a sacred cantata in which there is re-enacted that pathetic scene of Joseph and Mary vainly seeking for room at the Inn or neighboring houses. On Christmas Day, the miracle play "Los Pastores" is given. The actors present the chief events of the night when Christ was born.

THE culmination of the Christmas festivities is the Midnight Mass, or the *Misa del Gallo*, as it is called, when the Christ Child, newly born upon the altar, finds welcome and repose in the hearts of the faithful.

AS the Feast of the Epiphany draws near, little children in Mexico await the visit of the Holy Kings as eagerly as you await the visit of Santa Claus. They know when they get up in the morning they will find candy and toys and all sorts of delightful surprises.

LAST January 6th, we were thinking of the little Mexican children who spend the greater part of the year in Indiana. True, they had gone with their parents in October to Southern Missouri or Texas to pick cotton. We had heard, though, they would return the first of the year. And had not Alfonso confided to us that his mother had told him the Three Kings might

bring him a baby brother?

WE decided to go in quest of the baby, and of the children of other migrant families who might have returned by this time.

THUS it was that three of us, aptly representing the Three Holy Kings, set forth on our journey on January 6th. Unlike the Kings who rode camels, we climbed onto our gasoline horse of the twentieth century—a modern Plymouth car. Hidden in the rear of the car were bags of sweets to give to the poor children. Instead of the star to guide us, there were state road signs in yellow and black. Instead of the noiseless tread of the camel's hooves in the sand, there was the hum of the motor as the car sped over the ribbons of paved roads.

WE were not disappointed in our search. We found the new-born babe nestled in his mother's arms. He had arrived on the 21st day of December, somewhat in advance of the scheduled visit of the Three Kings, but very nearly on Christmas day. His parents wanted the name of Christ to figure in his name, so they called him Christopher (*Cristobal* in Spanish).

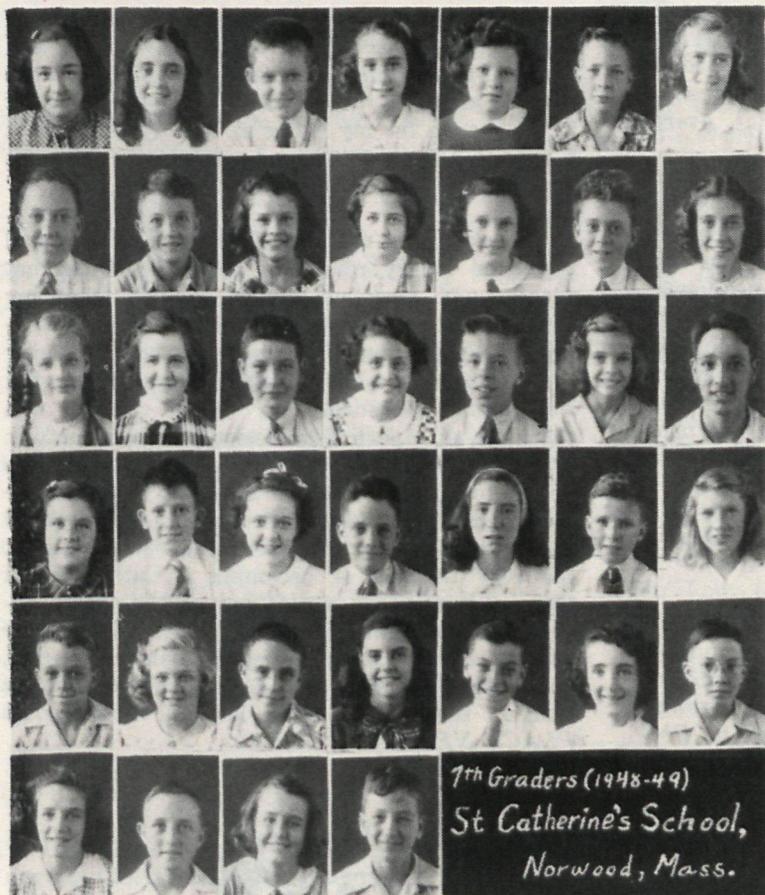
WE were surprised to find four other Mexican families had also returned. The bags of candy disappeared rapidly. Arrangements were completed, too, for regular Catechism classes to be given to the children in their homes on Saturday mornings during the coming months.

THE visits to the poor homes over, we returned to Victory Noll, happy in having played the part of the three gift-laden Kings.



Loyal Helpers

A MOSAIC OF MISSION HELPERS



NEWS O' THE MONTH

PICTURED above are some fine mission helpers who live in the Bay State. Last year these seventh graders made cornucopias of red and green construction paper with yarn hangers. These cornucopias were so sturdily constructed that not a piece of Christmas candy, with which they were plentifully filled, fell out of them. With the aid of their teachers, the good Sisters of St. Joseph, a huge box, containing their gifts of candy, Junior Catholic Messengers, and other classroom material, was addressed to our Sister James, in San Antonio, Texas. Sister attended St. Catherine's herself, before she grew up and joined our Missionary Sisters.

ALTHOUGH the candy project was confined to the seventh graders, all the school children made little offerings for the poor children so that a check for \$25.00 accompanied the mission box.

"If only the Norwood children could have seen the joy on the faces of the poor little rancheros of Poteet (a neighboring out-mission), they would have felt repaid a hundredfold plus," Sister James wrote us afterward.

December, 1949



CHRISTMAS CAROLS PUZZLE

Are you to be one of a group of carolers during the holiday season? Perhaps the following sacred songs are the ones most used by carolers.

1. Angels We Have Heard On High.
2. O Little Town of Bethlehem!
3. It Came Upon A Midnight Clear.
4. Silent Night, Holy Night.
5. O Come, All Ye Faithful!

We have taken the longest word in each of the above titles and scrambled the letters. To work the puzzle, first underscore the word with the most letters in each of the five titles. Next unscramble letters in the mixed-up words below and show to which title it belongs by writing the number of title after each word.

SLEGAN
ENLIST
LAFFHITU
TIDGMHIN
METHEBLEH



A PLACE NEAR THE SON

(Continued from page 9)

"And that is? . . ." she asked.

"What is it," I said slowly, looking straight into her calm blue eyes, "that keeps a girl like you here, day after day, year after year, pledged to serve the poorest of the poor for the rest of your life, when you could have had . . . everything?"

A SMILE suggested itself about her lips, but her color heightened, and her look became grave, as she said evenly, "Beth, have you ever been in love? I mean really, tremendously, daringly in love? Well, I am. I am in love with the most wonderful Man Who ever lived—the Man on the Cross. In Him are all my hopes, my happiness, everything I am and have. My one ambition in life is to bring myself into conformity with His counsels and to imitate Him in His complete sacrifice of self for everyone of His creatures. To become a spouse worthy of Him is the prime motivation of my every word and action."

My eyes widened at her use of the term "spouse," and hitting intuitively on the cause of my difficulty, she continued, "You're wondering about the word *spouse*. The soul of every religious consecrated to Jesus by the vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience, is wedded to Him in a spiritual union surpassing even the marriage bond in tenderness and fidelity. This truth is substantiated by the Church and has been vindicated by Christ Himself in His appearances to the saints in every age."

"THAT all sounds very poetic," I responded, suddenly becoming hard-headed. "But I fail to see how any woman could bind herself in a sort of ethereal matrimony with Someone Who lived twenty centuries ago, even if He be the Son of God."

"You're leaving out an all-important element in your attempt to analyze a religious vocation," she continued, her tone remaining gentle, though I could see she was hurt by my lack of comprehension. "You see, it is Christ who chooses us, not we who choose Him. Whenever a girl decides to become a Sister, it means a whole cavalcade of prompting and sustaining graces have preceded and accompanied her decision. With every day in religion we realize more and more how dependent we are on God."

"But surely," I broke in with a last objection, "you can't claim to get all out of life that

a woman in the world could hope to achieve."

"PERHAPS not," she replied. "But there is another and a better life, to merit which everyone of us was created. That is an eternity in Heaven, in unending possession of the God we have served here below. It is for His glory and to gain a place near Him, that we work and love and labor. That is the end for which we were created and the whole reason for our being. It is the reason for my being at Victory Noll—that I, myself, and those whom I serve in the missions may find *A PLACE NEAR THE SON*."

A place near the Son? The words echoed and re-echoed in my mind, as we drove home that evening. If Rosa noted the change from my usual talkativeness, she said nothing, conjecturing, perhaps, that I was merely pondering over the events of the day. Little did she guess what was going on beneath my glossy curls. I was thinking at a pace I had never thought before. I was thinking that the very next day I was going to call the cathedral rectory and make arrangements to take instructions. Although all that was of nature in me cried out in protest at the very thought of becoming a Catholic, still there shone in my consciousness the vision revealed to me that afternoon, and as the winter sun set in a majestic sweep of crimson, purple, and gold, I resolved that I, too, should one day find, in that bright home beyond the skies, *A PLACE NEAR THE SON*.



OUR COVER: Chapel at Victory Noll during the Christmas season.

July Memoriam

John Leven, Danville, Ill., father of Sister Kathleen.

Mrs. Nicolasa Montoya, El Paso, Texas, mother of Sister Carmen.

Mrs. Catherine O'Brien, San Francisco, Calif., mother of Sister Lucille.

Miss Ann Byrne, St. Louis, Mo.

May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.

Addresses of Our Mission Centers

Our Lady of the Rosary Mission, Grove Hill, Alabama.

St. Coletta's Mission, 224 S. Kenricks Street, Flagstaff, Arizona.

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

Our Lady of Guadalupe Mission, 1166 K Street, Brawley, California.

Good Shepherd Mission, Box 336, Coachella, California.

San Basilio Convent, 126 S. Fetterly Avenue, Los Angeles 22, 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.

The Guadalupe Clinic, 1747 Kearney Avenue, San Diego 2, 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.

Our Lady of Grace Mission, 2161 Tremont Place, Denver, 5, Colorado.

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

Mount Carmel Mission, 3223 Grove St., East Gary, Ind.

Nazareth Mission, 420 Melcher Ave., Elkhart, Ind.

Our Lady of Fatima Mission, 1385 Van Buren St., Gary, Indiana.

Holy Ghost Mission, 427 S. Oak, Kendallville, Ind.

All Saints Mission, San Pierre, Indiana.

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

Divine Saviour Convent, 264 Sunset Avenue, Richmond, Kentucky.

Holy Trinity Mission, Box 157, Ida, Mich.

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

St. Louis de Montfort Mission, 1904 N. Gonzales Street, Las Vegas, New Mexico.

Our Lady of Victory Mission, Route 2, Box 108, Santa Fe, 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 St., Ely, Nev.

Our Lady of Mt. Virgin Mission, Harris Avenue, Middlesex, New Jersey.

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, 108 N. Avenue P, Lubbock, Texas.

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

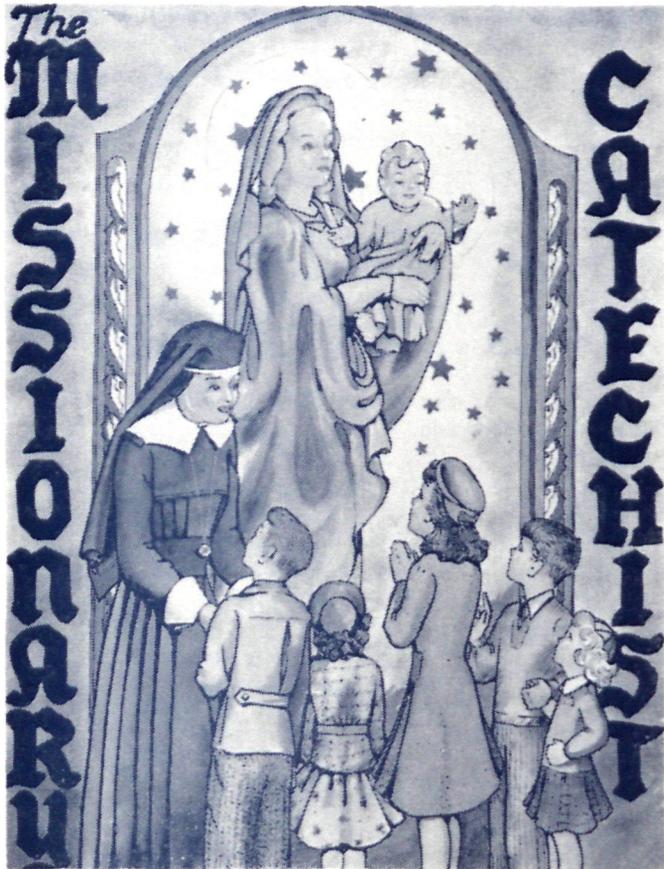
Christ the King Mission, 635—25th Street, Ogden, Utah.

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

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Huntington, Indiana

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