

the **M**issionary **G**atechist



February 1954

OUR LADY OF VICTORY MISSIONARY SISTERS

MUCH will be written and much will be said about the Catholic Press in this month dedicated to it. There will be some criticism, but there will also be deserving praise.

During the past twenty-five years our Catholic Press has made tremendous strides. Nearly every diocese now has its official organ. Some of these newspapers are outstanding—among them the *Cleveland Universe-Bulletin*, *The Tidings of Los Angeles*, the *Brooklyn Tablet*, and the *Catholic Virginian*. Among the excellent reviews are *America*, the *Catholic World*, *Worship*, and several others. Mission magazines, too, have come a long way. They are attractive and entertaining, and are read for enjoyment and not subscribed to just to help a worthy cause.

We salute the Catholic Press of 1954 and beg God and His Holy Mother to continue to bless it.

COMMUNION FAST RULES IN SPANISH

BIBLE *Stories in the Language of Youth*, Sister Evelyn's Spanish-English text for the teaching of religion, is now available with a supplement explaining the new rules for the Eucharistic fast.

If you have not yet seen these four textbooks, by all means send for a set now. They are twenty-five cents each. The first book covers the material from Creation to the Incarnation. The second book treats of the incidents in the life of Our Lord from the Annunciation through His public life. Book III is concerned only with the sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist. The last of the series, Book IV, covers the Passion. All four books contain some of the best loved Spanish hymns.

The Spanish used is that spoken by the average Mexican in daily conversation. When a different word is used by the Spanish Americans or Puerto Ricans, attention is called to it.

These books are a great help to those who are teaching children of Spanish-speaking families. Even though the teacher does not have to give the instruction in Spanish, she will learn in these texts how these children think and speak English; for the English translation was made by a Spanish-speaking youth, Eloy Martinez of Las Vegas, New Mexico, now a sergeant in the United States Army.

You may obtain copies of the supplement on the Communion fast and insert them in the texts if you already have the books. In lots of one hundred or more, they are one cent each; for fewer than a hundred (orders under ten are not considered), two cents. Send all orders to Victory Noll, Huntington, Indiana.

the Missionary *Catechist*

FEBRUARY 1954

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Edited and published by
Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters
Victory Noll
Huntington, Indiana

ON THE COVER

Sister Ann Therese explains the externals of Holy Mass to an attentive group of children at Santa Paula, California.

PHOTO CREDITS

Fogata Studio, Santa Paula, Calif.; O.L.V.M. Sisters at Santa Fe, Middlesex, N. J., Richmond, Ky., and Flat River, Mo.; Somerset Studios, Raritan, N. J. Sketch on page 15 by Sister Martha Mary.

THE MISSIONARY CATECHIST is published with ecclesiastical approbation by OUR LADY OF VICTORY MISSIONARY SISTERS, VICTORY NOLL, HUNTINGTON, INDIANA. Issued monthly, September to June; bi-monthly, July-August. Subscription rates for United States and Canada. \$1 a year; \$2.50 for 3 years; \$4 for 5 years; \$25 for life, payable in monthly installments; foreign subscriptions: \$1.50 a year. Entered as second class matter December 30, 1924, at the post office at Huntington, Indiana, under the act of March, 3, 1879. O.B.L.V. Press.



Bishop Gorman

A Mission Magazine Has Its Place, Too

by the Most Rev. Thomas K. Gorman, D.D.
Coadjutor Bishop of Dallas-Fort Worth

WHAT a privilege to get a chance to write something for THE MISSIONARY CATECHIST! Few could know better the wonderful work this publication promotes than the writer. When he was a missionary bishop in a small, new, and needy diocese in Nevada, the Sisters of Our Lady of Victory heard his call and came to help him. Even now they labor for him in his new diocese in a vast missionary part of West Texas.

During Catholic Press Month most people probably think principally about the great diocesan newspapers and the big magazines. These deserve our attention, of course. But I am going to say a word here for the little publications like this one. They are little only in size. The work they describe, promote, and support is big, very big indeed. Let's not forget them and their needs.

One of the finest examples I know of a big, important, growing work helped by a little magazine we have right here under our eyes—the program of the Victory Noll Sisters and THE MISSIONARY CATECHIST. Let's see how it works.

To begin with, this magazine may be small, but it is crammed with good things, interesting things, edifying things. Words of spiritual wisdom, examples of virtue, inspiring articles combine to make it worth anybody's time to read it for news, information, instruction, and inspiration.

Without reading this little magazine very few would ever know about the marvelous apostolate of the Victory Noll Sisters. Unless you saw them at work near you somewhere, how would you ever learn about their being founded to teach catechism to neglected little ones in remote places? How would you ever find out

what they do for thousands of underprivileged children in parishes without Catholic schools? Read this little magazine and you will make the discovery and come to admire and help these sisters.

Sometimes cynics make fun of such magazines as this. They say they are just run by beggars to beg. I always reply that it is a good thing they are. What's wrong with putting attractive bait on a hook when you're fishing?

What is more, anybody who subscribes to this little magazine will get his money's worth in reading matter. I am sure it has many perfectly satisfied readers and deserves many more.

When those readers rise to take the attractive bait and are hooked for a donation, they get their money's worth too. It would be difficult to exaggerate the value of what the Victory Noll Sisters do. They will merit some of your charity dollars. We hope they get an ever increasing share of yours.

May Press Month help to keep the friends of THE MISSIONARY CATECHIST on the mailing list. God and Our Lady of Victory bring a lot of new and generous supporters.

Bishop Gorman, Episcopal Chairman of the Catholic Press, has honored us by writing for THE MISSIONARY CATECHIST. It has been our privilege to work under His Excellency in his former Diocese of Reno and in his present Diocese of Dallas-Fort Worth. At the risk of being accused of complacency, we publish what he writes about our community and our magazine; for what editor would have the temerity to change a bishop's article!



This is not Susan. It is Joan Stracquadiano of Bound Brook, N. J. But she is a symbol of the Joans and Susans everywhere who receive Jesus with so much love and devotion.

“**H**ERE she comes!” “Here she comes!” “Sister!” “Sister!” “Can I ring the bell?” “Can I carry your bag?” “No, let me. You carried it the last time.” “I’ll carry the books.”

Such was the usual, delightfully confusing welcome that met us as we drove up to the little church in Los Nietos. With a wave of my hand to my sister companions as they drove on to their own teaching center, I turned from the car, wondering what the morning would bring.

“Sister, may I ring the bell?” eagerly asked one of the bright-eyed lads.

“Yes, Jimmy, ring it a long time; wake up the sleepy-heads.” Then, after setting up my improvised classroom in the church, I went to the door to bring in the children.

“Sister, we have a new girl. Her name is Susan. She is in my room at school.”

Looking down the line of girls, I could easily pick out the newcomer, a pretty little child with blond hair and blue eyes.

Susan

by Sister Mary Barbara

“What is your last name, Susan?”

“I am Susan Brooks and I’m eight years old and I’m in the third grade,” came the answer all in one breath.

“Are you a Catholic, Susan?”

“No, that’s what I’m here for, to be one!” was the matter-of-fact answer.

I asked her the usual questions to make sure she was there with her parents’ permission. “Yes, my mother knows I’m here. She wants me to be a Catholic.”

Susan never missed a class after that. She bought a catechism and insisted that her name be placed on the progress chart. In a comparatively short time, Susan became the leader of the class. She took pride in learning her prayers carefully. She seemed to understand the Catholic religion so well that one day I kept her after class to ask her a few questions.

“Why do you want to be a Catholic?” I began.

“Because I do,” she countered. “I’ve tried all the other religions and this is what I want.”

“Then maybe next year you will find another church you will like better and you will want to join it too.”

“No, no,” she replied. “This is the one I want; my mother likes it too.”

I tried my best to tell her that perhaps she wouldn’t be baptized because it would be very hard for a little girl to do all the things the church wants her to do.

“I know,” she said, “but I really hope Father will baptize me.” Such were her parting words.

Time passed. No matter what question I asked, Susan was usually the one to have the correct answer. I marveled at her knowledge and at the way she put it into practice. Sundays found her always at Mass, and on Fridays she insisted on tuna fish.

First Communion day was drawing near. All the children who attended classes regularly were eagerly practicing for this solemn occasion—all, that is, except Susan. We had explained her case to the pastor, but as yet had received no definite answer from him. Therefore, Susan was not permitted to practice with the rest.

(Continued on page 8)

Little Rain Makers

by Sister Mary Eileen

It was the last day of our catechism classes in St. Joseph's Parish, Anton Chico, New Mexico. I had just dismissed my class when a group of children came into church and sat in the front pews as if waiting for something. One of the oldest of the group came to me and asked which saint they could carry in procession. The procession, she explained, was for rain.

Looking around the church, I could see only life-sized statues. I asked the children which one they wanted to take. They pointed to St. Joan of Arc. Knowing it to be a physical impossibility for children to carry her statue, I suggested we look in the sacristy for something smaller. There we found St. Catherine. One child went into the sacristy and took the rosary that Father keeps for public devotions. She came out with the prayer card with the Divine Praises and Benediction hymns on it. I asked Agnes, the leader, what they were going to do with that. She replied, "Oh, we're going to sing *O Salutaris*."

By this time Corine (holding the statue and rosary in the front of the line) had all the children lined up. Each had to have a holy picture or small statue to carry. Since it was the last day of class and many of them had received religious articles as prizes for perfect attendance, they were well supplied.

As they started off they were singing *O Salutaris*. The procession made its way all around the town and down through the fields. After an hour and a half and five rosaries, they returned to church. The little ones especially looked very tired as they started for their homes, but they were happy to see some very dark clouds in the sky. Their leader Agnes announced that all were to be at the church the following afternoon for another procession. "It will be for rain, too, unless it rains tonight," she said. "And if it does, then we will have the procession in thanksgiving for rain."

The following afternoon found the children again assembled for the procession. This time they wanted a banner to carry. They asked the pastor if they might take one of the large banners, but he, knowing they could not carry one far, refused the permission. They finally found a small one of Our Lord blessing the children. (Agnes is carrying the banner in the picture.)

Unknown to some of the smaller children, it had been decided that the procession would be to Sangre de Cristo Church in Plaza Arriba—four miles away. It was just as they were nearing Plaza Arriba that the threatening black clouds became angry and let forth their deluge of rain. It must have been a picture to see the older children trying to quiet the younger ones, thoroughly frightened now when they realized how far away from home they were.



Little Rain Makers line up for their procession

The picture we saw was one that must have made Our Lord smile down on these children. They were returning to the church in Anton Chico, the smaller ones with tell-tale traces of tears on their cheeks and everyone with clothes soaking wet. Little Patricia's mother had put a sweater on her before the procession started. Then it fit her, but now it had stretched so much that it reached her ankles and the sleeves were hanging several inches below her little hands. When I asked her if she had been afraid during the rain, she sweetly smiled and answered, "Yes, Sister, but we got the rain and now I am not afraid."

It always edifies us to see these children keeping up the customs of their people. Too many of the beautiful customs of our Spanish Americans and Mexicans are being lost. The pastor at Anton Chico, when he saw these little ones in procession, said that it reminded him of an incident that happened when he was first appointed to this parish three years ago. One night several young girls asked him if they might have a procession for rain that very night. Laughingly he told them to go ahead, but the laugh, he admitted, had been on him, for on the following day they had what he described as a minor deluge.

In the San Joaquin Valley

by Sister Aquino

IT is twenty-five years now since Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters came to California's San Joaquin Valley. Let me give you a sketch of our life there today—in Los Banos to be exact.

Monday, besides being exercise day for the washing machine, sees us teaching at three different centers—here, and at Volta and Romero schools north of town. We get the children on a released time basis, that is, we meet them at their schools and conduct them to our places of instruction at different periods according to grades during the school day.

On Tuesdays we are fortunate to have the use of a funeral parlor in Firebaugh, located thirty-one miles to the south. This building, plus the church and the local theater, provides roomy space for our classes and also gives us a private place in which to eat our lunch.

Tuesday afternoon we divide again. Sister Mary Theresa stays in Firebaugh for the afternoon class; Sister Bernarda and Sister Mary Denis go to Las Deltas School, three miles to the south; and Sister Alice Marie and I drive up Highway 33 from Firebaugh and pick up the Mexican children as the school bus lets them off in front of their camp dwellings. Then we bring them back to a woman's house near town for instruction.

These are the children of Mexican nationals who follow the crops as pickers from district to

district. It was this bunch I questioned one day on creation.

"Who can name some of the things God made?" I began confidently.

"Apples," responded second grade Ernie.

I was a bit disappointed, for I expected them to say the moon, the sun, etc.

"Yes, that's right, but can't you think of something much bigger than apples?" I pursued, still hoping to lead them into the stratosphere.

The fervent little mite, his whole soul in his eyes, promptly replied, "Watermelons."

At Gustine, the "Dairy City" twenty-two miles to our north, we return to our released time program throughout the day. There we teach in the church, the parish hall, and the garage.

It is on these trips between missions that I have come to appreciate this country. It's the California the tourists do not see because it is between the two main arteries of travel, U.S. Highway 99 which belts the San Joaquin Valley, and Highway 101 which follows our coastline. It is the rural California of great rice and cotton fields, of dairy herds, and of blood-red sunsets which crouch spectacularly behind the Diablo Mountains dividing us from the Salinas Valley and the Coast.

Each Thursday we teach the children of Los Banos Grammar School during the morning period, and the high school pupils in the afternoon.

Dos Palos, another mission, is fourteen miles south, on the way to Firebaugh. After giving us a released time program for many years, the school board there voted against it this year. That means we take the junior and senior high students during their noon hour and the grammar school children after school. Also on this day—Friday—two of the sisters go to Ora Loma and Charleston schools, while the children from Bryant are brought to us in Dos Palos.

Then there is, of course, the problem of getting them to their homes. One Friday after my class, I found the Bryant first graders making a forlorn little knot in front of the church. The people who were to take them home had not come for them. I told them to wait for me while I went to investigate. I started across the street, stopping in the middle to await the passing of a speeding truck. Then to my horror I turned to see the entire brood, oblivious of my admonition, streaming behind me. Amid the complaint of brakes I ushered them back to safety and the curb, and told them all over again to wait there. Mother hens, thought I, have nothing on me.

During the entire week I teach almost three hundred children from grades one through twelve with the single exception of the sixth grade. Some days' schedules call for a senior high group one hour and a first grade class the next. Our entire enrollment is well over the one thousand mark.

Each Sunday morning two sisters take turns attending the Masses in Los Banos while Sister Mary Theresa and I go to Firebaugh, leaving Sister Mary Denis at the Dos Palos Church on our way down. I am church organist and between Masses hold choir practice with a group of teen-age girls.

The people of Portuguese descent who comprise the majority of parishioners at St. Joseph's Church in Los Banos, have banded themselves into Our Lady of Fatima Society. On the Sunday closest to the thirteenth of October, the date of the final apparition of Our Lady to the children at Fatima, this group sponsors a beautiful celebration. For weeks beforehand they work to embellish the church, and it emerges transformed, white and gold streamers and flower baskets suspended between its pillars.



The Band, one of the most important units of the colorful parade.

The life-size statue of Our Lady of Fatima is taken from its altar and given a place on a table bower in the sanctuary close to the communion rail. During the nine days preceding the feast a novena is preached by a Portuguese-speaking priest. Opening the services each evening is the children's choir whose members, dressed in smart black skirts and white blouses, pass from the sacristy through the church and up to the choir loft singing the meaningful and beloved hymns of old Portugal. During the sermon a floodlight with revolving color disc attached, throws on the ceiling directly over the altar, a large silhouette of the head and shoulders of the statue, giving the impression of Our Lady looking down lovingly from heaven.

The fervor is not confined to the thronged evenings, for as the novena progresses, the crowds at daily Mass and Communion increase. Last October I could not help but notice from the corner of my eye the feet wending their way to the Eucharistic table; the chic, slim-heeled pumps of the younger women, the deliberately scuffy loafers of the teeners, the prim, dark step-ins of the older women; nor were male oxfords missing from the throng. And the owners of the shoes knelt at the Communion rail shoulder to shoulder, gray hair next to dark, as in honor of their Lady they received her Son.

The climax comes on the festival Sunday. After Solemn High Mass the procession assembles before the church. More than fifty different units take part, representing churches and organizations from many different towns.

Spaced through the parade are queens sent by the different parishes. As it is deemed a great honor to be chosen, the parents of the young girls spare no expense in outfitting them. The queen from Holy Ghost Church in Gustine wore

lengths of deep red velvet, climaxed by a five-yard train of like material. The other queens were appalled in white brocade or fur-edged robes. Each was escorted by younger girls as ladies-in-waiting and followed by small pages as train-bearers.



Queens and maids of honor preceded the statue of Our Lady of Fatima.

Toward the end of the immense line of march are fourth degree Knights of Columbus, sabers erect, and the men of Our Lady of Fatima Society. They immediately precede the statue of Our Lady which is borne on a flowered litter by soldiers from the parish. This group is followed by the pastor and his accompanying priests walking beneath a canopy. Concluding the procession is the Los Banos Band, solemnly playing the stirring *Alva Pomba*, the Portuguese national anthem.

Last October as I watched the parade, bands playing, gorgeously dressed participants passing in stately line, I could not help but recall the armed forces and civic parades I had seen back home. But this one was all in honor of the Woman whose life-like statue, borne on willing shoulders, dominated the entire scene. It was both an exhilarating and a deeply moving spectacle.

The procession goes through the town to the Deos Espiritu Santo Hall where a free roast beef dinner awaits an approximate 7,000 persons. On the main floor of the hall an imposing bower holds the Virgin, the statues of the three children, and a huge star made entirely of seven-day votive lights on the floor before her.

The entire afternoon and evening pass with one rosary after another being recited by the throng in the hall. About eight o'clock the procession forms again, the participants now bearing lighted candles. The only sound is that of several thousand voices reciting the rosary in

unison. It winds its way back to St. Joseph's where Benediction is given on the church steps. Slowly the statue re-enters the church amid utter silence and the fluttering white handkerchiefs of the women. The Fatima celebration is over until another year.

The decorations come down then—the huge lighted rosary hung over the entire front of the church, the arch by the sidewalk which represents the first bower built on the site of the apparitions at Fatima, the baskets of flowers, and the gold and white streamers. But those who have witnessed the ceremonies agree it is an experience they will not forget.

Susan

(Continued from page 4)

The children were hardly in their places when loud sobs were heard. Poor little Susan! Her heart was broken. She desired the waters of baptism so ardently, but she could not receive the sacrament. And now the privilege of receiving Our Lord was denied her. After trying to comfort her as best I could, I told her to bring her mother to see Father.

The next class I was greeted by a radiant Susan. "Father is going to baptize me, and I am going to receive Jesus, and I'm going to the Catholic school next year."

How breath-taking was her joy! Apparently Father had been satisfied with Susan's knowledge. He explained fully the responsibilities of Catholics to her parents. The godparents also made the parents understand that they would be sponsors only on the condition that Susan would be allowed to practice her faith freely. The parents were so impressed that they immediately registered their children—Susan and her brother—in the Catholic school.

First Communion day came with all its excitement. All the children were present with their sponsors as is the custom in many places. Susan's sponsor was there too, only she brought her godfather instead of her godmother. The poor man didn't seem to mind standing among all the women, so we let it pass.

Susan received Our Lord so fervently that our hope is that this little apostle will someday lead the rest of her family into the true fold of Christ.

Our Sisters

by Lawrence Trembly

Father Trembly, pastor of St. Teresa's Church, Union City, Pa., first published this article in his own parish bulletin. It is reproduced with his permission.



AT the beginning of September, 1952, three Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Victory arrived in Union City to take up permanent residence in the convent at 25 Third Avenue. This marked the return of the Sisters to St. Teresa's parish, after an absence of over fifty years. In our humble opinion, it was the greatest thing that has happened to St. Teresa's for many a year.

From the very start, the good sisters won the hearts and the esteem not only of the parishioners, but of all the community. They soon became a familiar sight, riding around in their little station wagon, or walking to and from church, or doing their shopping at the stores. Everywhere they have been met with respect and friendliness by Catholic and non-Catholic alike.

It would be literally impossible to measure the amount of good they have done during their first year in our midst, and this good is destined to increase with the years ahead.

Immediately they arranged for catechism classes, which were held every Saturday afternoon, and began a systematic census of all Catholics both in Union City proper and in the country districts. In taking the census they visited every home, and in that way became acquainted with all the people, non-Catholic as well as Catholic. That they were welcome is evidenced by the request made to the pastor by many non-Catholics, "Please tell the sisters to come and see us again. We enjoyed their visit very much." As a result of this visitation many returned to church—children were baptized, marriages were validated, and good will toward the church was strengthened.

Besides teaching catechism to the grade school children, the sisters conducted study club sessions and discussion groups for the high school students, and gave private instructions to prospective women converts.

One of their labors, for which they have been particularly blessed by many, is their regular visiting of the sick in our hospital. All the patients are always pleased to see them, because they come with a smile on their faces, visit everyone, and bring them a word of comfort and cheer. Yet, as one patient remarked slyly, "They don't preach to you."

Under their expert care the altar and sanctuary of the church have been kept immaculately clean, as befits the House of God. So well have they trained our new group of altar boys in their Latin and in their ceremonies, that they seem like "old-timers."

Under their supervision the largest summer school ever conducted in our parish was held this year, with one hundred and fifty children attending; while thirty-three of them received special instructions to make their first Holy Communion.

These are but a few of the tasks the sisters have taken upon themselves. But there are many other things they do when the public don't see them at work. Shall we mention a few? They wash and iron the altar linens, decorate the altars, build shrines (to St. Teresa, the Blessed Mother and the Sacred Heart); help in Scouting, take care of the library, clean the class rooms, tabulate the Sunday envelopes, type the weekly bulletin, make charts and religious exhibits for the children, print signs, wash the statues, take care of the vigil lights, etc., etc., etc.!!

While what they do seems like a man-sized job for anyone, they are continually asking, "Is there anything else we can do?"

But that's the way Sisters are, and God love them—who'd want to change them?

MARY'S SCAPULAR

One day while we were visiting the patients at the hospital we heard someone call, "Sister!" Turning, we met a woman from our parish who said, "I want you sisters to meet this lady. She belongs to our parish, but doesn't get to church very often."

We spoke with both women for a few minutes and took the address of our new acquaintance. Shortly afterward we visited her home. She had been sick, so we spoke to her about confession and Communion.

"Oh, I'll be all right," she said, "Dad and I think we still have a few years left to live even though I am seventy-nine and he eighty-one years old."

We couldn't agree with her so we returned in a few days, but again her answer was no. We prayed and had the children pray for her, for we learned that she was suffering from cancer and had only a short time to live. We visited and re-visited the home, but with no success. On our next visit we took along with us a green scapular. We said the required prayers and she agreed to wear the scapular. Soon after that she asked for the priest. A few weeks after she had received the sacraments for the first time in *fifty-five years*, she died in God's grace, wearing the green scapular, through which, we feel, she obtained the grace of repentance.

SISTER JULIANA
MONTROSE, COLORADO

THE PIG WAY

On one of our mission trips we pick up several little children and take them with us to our teaching center. Children always provide many happy moments when you are with them and these children are no exception.

We pass a ranch where there is a great big pig. Sometimes he is outside the pen, sometimes inside, but no matter where he is, the ride is not the same for the children if they don't see the pig. We always have to slow down when we drive by or there is no peace the rest of the way.

We were very much amused one day when the smallest of the children suggested, "Sister, I don't suppose we could go the Pig Way twice, could we?" Since it would involve more time and some difficult turning around we answered, "No, I don't suppose we could do that."

It takes the innocent minds and carefree hearts of children to appreciate and enjoy one of God's lowliest creatures.

SISTER DENNIS
ELY, NEVADA



KNIGHTS OF THE ALTAR

Thirteen altar boys have now been officially invested as Knights of the Altar. In the ceremonies each received cassock, surplice, and the insignia he earned.

The boys combine mission activities with their study of serving. They realized over twenty-five dollars on the sale of Christmas cards. They spent it making leather cases for Sacred Heart badges which were sent to a Naval Hospital. They purchased a tree for the parish hall—complete with lights and decorations. The lights did double duty for the crib in church. The purchase of a pagan baby will deplete their treasury. Boys can't let money accumulate.

SISTER MARY EVA
RICHMOND, KENTUCKY



The Rt. Rev. Msgr. O. L. Poole, pastor of St. Mark's Church, Richmond, Ky., invests his altar boys as Knights of the Altar



Choir girls enjoy a party in the Sisters' Convent at Flat River, Mo. Mary Louise Maurice entertains the group with her guitar.

GOD'S SHARE AND TOMMY'S

Grandma had sent the three little boys a dollar each for Valentine's Day. Two of the boys sauntered to town to spend their dollar on toys. The third, who is five, held on to his money for some time. Finally, when grandma wrote to inquire whether little Tommy had spent his dollar or was still holding on to it, this is the response she received:

"Tommy has finally decided to spend his dollar. He came in one day and said, 'You know, Mother, I am going to buy a toy with fifty cents. The other fifty cents I will give to the missions. Don't you think God ought to be satisfied with half?'"

SISTER VIOLA
KENDALLVILLE, INDIANA

SO HE THOUGHT

We were just stepping into the car, ready to leave for our afternoon work. A polite young boy hurried up and said, "Sister, your vestment is caught in the door."

SISTER HELEN MARIE
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

ANSWERED

It was on one of our weekly visits to the county hospital that we met Mrs. Johnson, age eighty-six, and her roommate, Mrs. Jones, age eighty-five. We always stay a little longer with them than with some of the other patients because they have few visitors and they so eagerly look forward to our little chats with them.

One day Mrs. Jones said, "I'd like to become a Catholic, but I guess it's too late now."

Before we could even open our mouth, Mrs. Johnson replied, "No, it's never too late. Even if you have only one more day to live, it's still not too late."

Then Mrs. Jones said, "I want to ask you just one question."

Mrs. Johnson said, "I'll shut the door."

By this time we were both slightly in a daze and didn't know just what might happen next. They both looked at us and said together, "Don't be afraid. Really it's nothing bad."

We both assured them we would be happy to try to answer any question they wanted to ask. Then Mrs. Jones asked the big question, "Why can't you read the Bible?"

Needless to say, we gave them a little instruction on how we are urged to read the Bible and told them that there is an indulgence for reading the Bible every day. At the end Mrs. Jones, much relieved, said, "I always thought you talked like you had read the Bible!"

SISTER MARY LAWRENCE
BRAWLEY, CALIFORNIA

WORLD TRAVELER

It was six-year-old Timothy's first day in class at Del Monte. "Sister," he said, "my father is a navy man. We've traveled pretty near all over this big world."

"How interesting," replied Sister. "Timothy, do you know how to pray?"

"Of course, Sister," answered Timothy as he made a big Sign of the Cross. "I know the Our Father and the Hail Mary and my mother is teaching me another prayer now. I think it is the Africantrition."

SISTER AGNES
MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

Are you going to change your address? If so, please notify us in plenty of time so that you will not lose an issue of THE MISSIONARY CATECHIST. Send both your old address and your new one and be sure to include zone number if your city has them.



our **A**ssociates

ST. MARGARET MARY BAND BAZAAR

(Omaha, Neb.)

Dear Associates:

LAST month we quoted a letter from a Sister at one of our mission centers, offering some suggestions as to how you could help her and her co-workers in their work for souls.

This month we quote below from the letter of a Sister who has received help from the Band which sponsors her. She expresses her deep gratitude for same.

SISTER SUPERVISOR, ACM.

ST. ROSE ASSOCIATES, MARSHFIELD, WIS.
ARE SUPER HELPERS!

Dear Sister:

EVER since I returned from my vacation I have wanted to write to you about the Band that sponsors my mission work.

The ladies while I was at home arranged a joint meeting of St. Margaret and St. Lucy Bands at the home of Mrs. Nat Koller, one of the members. All thirty-two ladies were present at the meeting and I spoke about our mission work. The ladies handed me a donation, and Mrs. Weber invited me on another day to her home, where mission articles are stored. She told me to help myself, and I packed a large box of new clothing, new yard goods, feed sacks, quilt tops, pictures, religious articles and numerous things we could use in the missions. These ladies are also going to send some vestments to our new convent at Eagle Pass, Texas. They have some veiling and they are going to make First Communion veils for us, also some linen which one of the ladies will make into small altar linens. *May God bless them!*

Sister Adelle, Coachella, California

Although these ladies had to take a date two months earlier than they expected, their annual bazaar went over in a big way. We quote from *Secretary Marie Egermier's* letter. "All of the girls pitched in and helped, and with the aid of our relatives



and friends we got together a wonderful supply of articles, discounts on foods, etc. . . . Our baked goods was one of the biggest items. All of it went so fast we could have used much more. We made hot coffee and served the best sandwiches, potato salad and baked beans. Most of the employees from the Court House bought their lunch from us and ate it right in the lobby, as did many outsiders who came in and out of the building that day. We also had baby kimonos, booties, sweaters and cap sets, earrings, belts, aprons, leather purses, little novelties of all kinds—just about everything! We cleared about \$180.00 which we think was very good."

ST. JOHN MISSION GUILD

(Chicago, Ill.)

EVERY letter that Mrs. A. Bechtold, Promoter, writes to us contains two things — a goodly sized check and an urgent plea for prayers. Our Associate knows very well that God hears the prayers of those who have consecrated their lives to Him, and when these consecrated souls are indebted to charitable persons He hears their prayers for *them*. It is indeed a propitious time to *ask* when one is in the act of *giving*. May your confidence in our prayers be rewarded most abundantly!



Club **M**ention

ST. JUDE BAND (W. Allis, Wis.)

THIS Band, organized in 1935, will soon be entering its twentieth year of existence. The Band's Promoter is Mrs. John Huebl, and its secretary is Mrs. Norbert Roth. The ladies have always sponsored and kept up with Sister Mary Catherine in her different mission assignments and locations, contributing toward her Burse.

Our good Associates admit they are not gifted with the ability to write so we do not hear from them very often, but when they do get in touch with us they prove their hearts are with us in our work through their donations and the assurance of their prayers for us on meeting days when they recite the Rosary together.

What! No refreshments?

Everyone knows that the refreshments served at the end of a card game or a mission club meeting constitutes the high light of the evening. During the Holy Season of Lent these social get-togethers will be called off, and your Missionaries could experience a decline in mission offerings unless you tactfully hand each member a Lenten mite-box at the last meeting before Lent, with instructions that everyone deposit his or her dues and sacrificial offerings in it. Announce, too, that all mite-boxes with their contents (bulging we hope) are to be turned in at the first meeting after Lent. Get your mite-boxes from us at Victory Noll.



ACM BAND CONTRIBUTIONS

November 16 to December 23, 1953

Adrian Club, Chicago, Florence Dietz	25.00
Charitina Club, Chicago, Helen Ford	\$ 5.00
Charitina Club II, Paris, Ill., Mary Gibbons	86.00
Dolores Mission Guild, Chicago, Mrs. Anna Klingel	61.00
Good Will Mission Circle, Carrollton, Ky., Mrs. Casper Hill	24.00
Holy Souls Band, Chicago, Mrs. McGovern	53.00
Les Petites Fleurs, Chicago, Betty Accomando	50.00
Little Flower Miss. Circle, Chicago, Veronica Foertsch	35.00
"Martinettes", Cincinnati, Carole Niklas	1.00

Mothers & Daughters, Chicago, Mrs. Earl Keegan	10.00
Our Lady of Fatima Group, Huntington, Mrs. Dan Herzog	15.00
Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Band, Appleton, Wis., Helen Arens	88.00
Our Lady of Sorrows Band, Chicago, Florence Kuenster	10.00
Sacred Heart Mission Soc., Newark, N. Y., Mrs. Sue Albanese	500.00
St. Ann Band, Ft. Wayne, Mrs. Deininger	10.60
St. Augustine Band, Norwood, Mass., Mrs. James A. O'Brien	2.00
St. Bridget Band, Covington, Ky., Mary L. Schmeing	11.00
St. Catherine Band, Los Angeles, Mrs. M. McMannamy	10.00
St. Clare Band, Omaha, Mrs. M. Preiner	30.00
St. Helen Band, Dayton, Helen Melke	60.00
St. Irene Band, Chicago, May Walsh	4.50
St. John Miss. Guild, Chicago, Mrs. A. Bechtold	50.00
St. Joseph Band II, Chicago, Mrs. Naumes	17.00
St. Justin Band, Chicago, Mrs. F. Kiefer	22.00
St. Katherine Band, Chicago, Mrs. K. Hammer	19.00
St. Luke Band, Chicago, Mrs. Potter	27.50
St. Margaret Mary Band, Omaha, Mrs. Shields	105.00
St. Martin of Tours Band, Omaha, Neb., Mrs. F. Schuette	81.10
St. Mary Miss. Soc., Ft. Wayne, Mrs. A. Hake	15.00
St. Mary Magdalen Band, Madison, Minn., Regina Emmerich	5.00
St. Mary Magdalen Band, Logansport, Ind., Mrs. R. T. Brink	10.00
St. Patrick Sod. Band, Ft. Wayne, Catherine E. McGill	19.00
St. Raymond Band, Chicago, Mrs. Quinlan	5.00
St. Rose Band, Marshfield, Wis., Mrs. J. Huebl	104.00
St. Stephen Band, Detroit, Mrs. Jos. Koroly	5.00
St. Theresa Band, Los Angeles, Mrs. Burch	20.00
Seven Dolores Band, Bellwood, Ill., Mrs. J. J. Murphy	26.50
Tip Top Twelve Club, Cincinnati, Catherine Dumont	5.00
Via Matris Band, Chicago, Mrs. R. Belz	75.00

The Weather in Black and White

by Sister Mary Karl

WE could call this "Texas Weather in Black and White." Poor old Texas comes in for its share of jokes, not the least being about the weather. Texans, it is said, count it a five-inch rain when the drops are five inches apart. During a Texas sand storm, the story goes, prairie dogs have been seen digging their holes fifty feet up in the air. Or you might have heard of the Easterner inspecting a ranch he planned to buy for a winter home. He wanted to be sure there would be no bad weather, so he accosted the rancher's trusted handy man.

"Juan," he said, "they tell me you've worked on this ranch for twenty years. Have you ever seen it snow here?"

"No, Senor," replied Juan, with a flash of white teeth. "But I've seen it rain . . . twice!"

All of which merely indicates that while most of the time Texas might have just plain weather, when it changes now and then it's really fun, it's news, it's exciting!

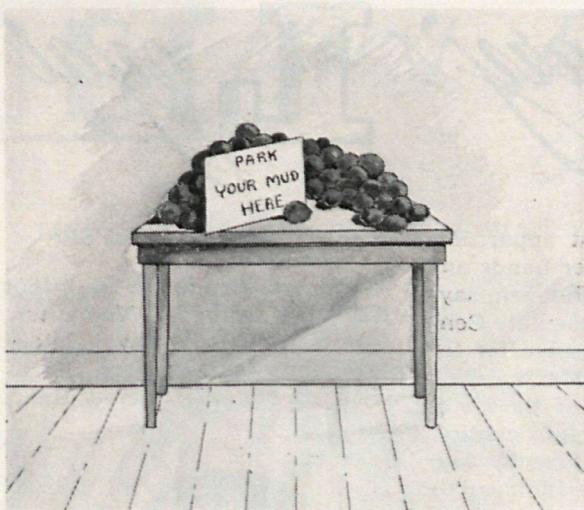
For instance, several years ago in El Paso we claimed a "city-wide" celebration of our patronal feast. Our convent there is named in honor of the Immaculate Conception of Our Blessed Mother. To the amazement of everybody, cold weather came the week of December 2. Friday there was rain and some snow, and Saturday morning, the eighth, what a sight greeted our eyes! Under the pure blue sky of Texas and a brightly shining morning sun, there sparkled what seemed to be about four inches of snow—snow that covered everything: houses, streets, walks, and yards. Snow that had first turned to ice on tree branches, and then covered the branches again with softly tufted cotton bolls. Trees across the street were bending under their load of ice and snow in the best Victory Noll post-holiday style. On our way to class that morning we even saw branches that had been broken down under the weight of the ice. Mount Franklin was covered clear to its crest with the same unbroken white blanket. Down by the tracks we saw a telephone pole freak. The pole leaned slightly, and snow had drifted all the way to the top on *one side* only, so that one saw *two* poles—one pure white, one black!

We had our regular Saturday class in the morning and first confessions in the afternoon. It was the perfect day to point out to the children how beautiful the soul is after a good confession, lovelier than the snow with the sun sparkling on it. Our Feast of the Immaculate Conception could not have been more aptly decorated by the weather man.

That morning, too, we were given an idea of what it must have meant to live in the Ages of Faith, when whole towns celebrated the feast. About five o'clock, fifteen minutes before our rising time, the bells of San Ignacio pealed out to announce the early Mass. At the same time there came through the air the strains of an *Ave Maria*, evidently being broadcast over a loud speaker. We had heard this before at various times, but it seemed particularly appropriate to greet this beautiful feast. We never quite identified the source, but we understood that it was broadcast from the Rosario Chapel in Juarez, Mexico. It was sweet to hear it thus in the early morning, even before we knew of the quasi-miracle of the snow.

And didn't I tell you that with Texans, weather is NEWS? Next morning the papers carried pictures of children enjoying their snowballs. Yes, the snow was a real treat for everybody, even though it lasted barely one day.





That's the Weather in White. Maybe I am stretching a point in referring to the next part as Black, but mud is pretty dark, isn't it?

This is Sister Susanna's story, and I think it helps prove my point that Texans *use* weather. They don't let it just glide idly by.

It seems that about a year ago, probably around January or February, there was a lot of rain one week-end. It wasn't one of the five-inch rains mentioned in the first paragraph, but a real downpour that soaked pleasantly into the earth and was welcomed by all. In that "all" we include the small fry.

Sister Susanna went to class Monday without suspecting that a new and decidedly different experience awaited her. She looked forward to seeing her class of some ninety to a hundred little boys. In the parish hall she arranged their places, and on a table in front she placed her own class paraphernalia—catechisms, pictures, class book, charts. Everything was ready and she was prepared for as peaceful a class as one can expect to have with ninety to a hundred little boys.

The first pupil arrived. "Sister, will you keep this for me?" And down on the neatly arranged teacher's desk was carefully placed a ball of—*mud!* Sister Susanna, who is not unused to the ways of her little boys, said nothing. The next pupil said and did the same thing. The next. And the next. Finally they began coming in groups, and always the same very serious question, "Sister, will you keep my mud for me?"

St. Philip Neri said he would willingly let his boys chop wood on his back if it would help to keep them good. It isn't recorded that he ever had to do it. But I think we Missionary Sisters meet kindred experiences sometimes in our efforts to help *our* children to be good. And here was one. There was that neatly arranged teacher's table being rapidly snowed under (that doesn't sound right, but you can't say "mudded under," can you?) with mounting balls of mud. Yes, our small Texans were ingeniously making the most of the weather.

Finally, in desperation, Sister Susanna corralled her books and charts and all, and rearranged them to make room for *more* mudballs. Then she supervised the parking of the rest of it, until finally, with all the valuable mud tenderly deposited on the table, and all the small boys deposited on their benches, class could begin. It was perhaps just as well that mud and boys were separated during class.

All continued peaceful (comparatively) until the end of class. Then began the fun of unravelling those mudballs. Which was whose?

"That's mine!" "It's mine!"

Picture it for yourself. Your imagination is as good as mine, and Sister Susanna says it defies description anyway. Suffice it to say that eventually every boy departed with a mudball—his own or someone else's; who can say? Sister Susanna was finally left alone to clean up the debris that remained and pack up her books and charts.

Only that *wasn't* the end. One thing was wanting, and it came. A small form coming back through the door, and a small voice wailing, "S-i-i-s—ter! HE TOOK MY MUD!"

That's the end of the "Weather in Black." Isn't it interesting? From a distance, that is. You've heard of children playing with mud, of course. But have you ever heard of children valuing it so highly that their teacher almost had to put up a sign: "Park Your Mud Here"?

That's what I mean. In Texas, Weather isn't Just Another Day. It's an Important Event, and, Black or White, Texans make the most of it.



Mary's Loyal

Dear Loyal Helpers:

ALL during this *Marian Year* we should take special delight in paying honor to our Blessed Mother on her feast days as they occur one after another. Every month at least one and often more of these feast days occur. (Consult your Catholic calendar.) The greater feasts are known as major feasts and the lesser ones as minor feasts. Perhaps you could resolve to make a short visit to our Lady's altar in your parish church on your way home from school on these feast days.

In this month of February there are two feast days of our Blessed Mother, one on February 2, known as the Feast of the Purification or Candlemas Day, and the other on February 11, known as the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes.

Every Catholic household should have at least two blessed candles for use in their home. A blessed candle should be lighted during storms and in times of sickness. If the family has a little home altar, the blessed candles could be lighted on this feast day, during the recitation of the Family Rosary, and on other principal feast days in the year.

All are familiar with the beautiful story of how our Heavenly Mother appeared to little Bernadette at Lourdes and taught her how to make the Sign of the Cross correctly and devoutly, and encouraged her, by example, to say the holy

Rosary. At the last apparition, Our Lady joined her hands and raised her eyes to Heaven, saying, "I am the Immaculate Conception." Let us resolve for the love of Jesus and Mary always to make the Sign of the Cross slowly and with great devotion. Often during the present year dedicated to Mary's Immaculate Conception say the prayer: "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee."

May God and Mary bless you.

Mary-ly yours,

SUNSHINE SECRETARY,
MLH.

A NEBRASKA HELPER

We are pleased to introduce *Nyla Beauseigneur* of Lincoln, Nebraska. Nyla is 12½ years old and in the seventh grade at school. She joined Mary's Loyal Helpers nine months ago, and enjoys working our puzzles.



Nyla Beauseigneur

A KANSAS HELPER

We are happy to say that *Kathleen Irvine* of Manhattan, Kansas has been a Loyal Helper for nearly three years. Kathleen attends the Sacred Heart



Kathleen Irvine

Academy in her home town, taught by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia. In her last letter she wrote: "I am sending my dollar which I received for my birthday. I wish you much success in your work." (It sounded as though Kathleen received only one dollar on her birthday and yet she gave that to the Missions. What great generosity!)

HEAR YE! HEAR YE!

Does anyone wish a new Sunshine Bag, Dime Card, Mite Box or MLH pin? The first three are free! The last costs seventy-five cents. Write to *Sunshine Secretary, MLH, Victory Noll, Huntington, Indiana*, for these supplies.

Helpers pages

LORINA MICK, BRIDGEPORT, W. VA.



(See picture at left.)

Our little Helper is not yet three years old but she can recite the Hail Mary and is learning the Our Father. She blesses herself with her rosary every night before she goes to bed, calling it her "Rosie".

FEBRUARY PUZZLE. Work the quizzie dot puzzle below and send it to SUNSHINE SECRETARY for a holy card.

LETTERS O' THE MONTH

I am in the sixth grade now and eleven years old. Enclosed is one dollar for the Missions. I pray for the missions every day. My big sister Ruth is going to high school at Prairie Du Chien. She is an aspirant and wants to become a Notre Dame Sister. God bless you.

Joanne Karnitz, Milwaukee, Wis.

You asked about the name of the benefit play we gave, and the costumes . . . The name of the play was, "The Unsuccessful Elf". I heard the story and wrote all I could remember into a play. Our costumes were very simple for we made them from paper bags. We did the best we could in making them but I'm afraid they weren't very good but they were funny.

We have quite a lot of stamps but we will wait until after Christmas and then there will be more.

Joan Mader, Chicago, Illinois

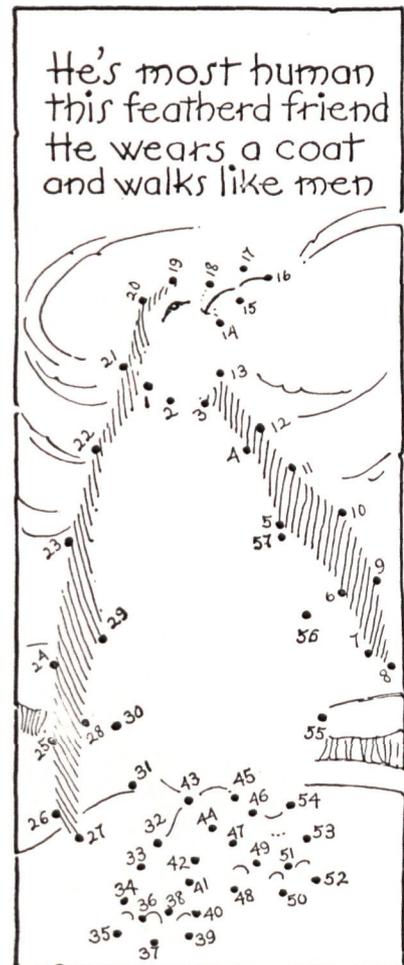
I am sending you my offering of one dollar for the missions. Would it be all right for me to send one dollar every other month? I surely enjoy reading THE MISSIONARY CATECHIST. It has lots of interesting things.

Margaret Willham, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Today we had election of officers and Dorothy Maday was elected president, Lois Maday the treasurer, and I, the secretary. We have decided to make green scapulars as our club's mission project. We will buy green felt and secure the rest of the material from Chicago stores—not far from us are several religious goods stores.

I will be sending you some cancelled stamps and holy pictures soon.

Mary Attermeyer, Evergreen Park, Illinois



Books



THE TRINITY IN OUR SPIRITUAL LIFE by Dom Columba Marmion, O.S.B. Edited by Dom Raymund Thibaut, O.S.B. Newman Press, Westminster, Md. \$3.50.

This is truly a magnificent book and we are indebted to Dom Raymund Thibaut for giving it to us. *The Trinity in Our Spiritual Life* is an anthology of the writings of Abbot Marmion. Most of the extracts are taken from the well known works: *Christ, the Life of the Soul*; *Christ in His Mysteries*; and *Christ, the Ideal of the Monk*. A few are from his own spiritual notes.

The dogma of the Trinity is the fundamental dogma of our religion. Interior souls should contemplate first and foremost this sublime mystery, for it contains everything. Our happiness in heaven will consist in contemplation of the Blessed Trinity. With Abbot Marmion as our guide we can begin now in time what will be our occupation in eternity.

Those who are acquainted with Dom Marmion's works will need no urging to read this volume. They know a spiritual treat is in store for them. His writings are steeped in Sacred Scripture, especially in the theology of St. Paul. Abbot Marmion's works are solid. He shows himself in every line a master of the spiritual life. Moreover, he not only wrote for the spiritual advancement of others, but he himself lived a deep interior life. His whole life was a consecration to the Most Holy Trinity, a consecration expressed outwardly in a beautiful act that he composed in 1908. In a Foreword to this work Dom Raymund tells us that the saintly abbot confided to one of his followers that from the time of this act dated a new blossoming of graces in his soul.

The Trinity in Our Spiritual Life is a choice of the Spiritual Book Associates.

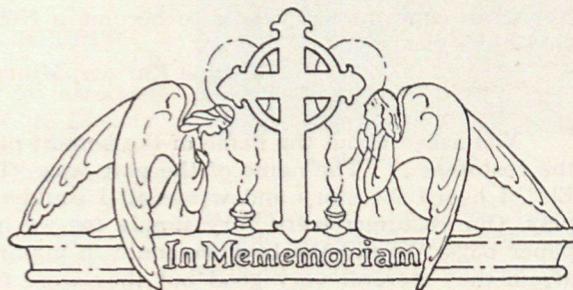
The following booklets are published by the Catechetical Guild Educational Society, 147 East Fifth St., St. Paul 1, Minn. 15c each.

In *Mary Talks to Us* Mr. Sharkey tells us the stories of the apparitions of Our Blessed Mother to St. Catherine Laboure in Paris in 1830, and also of her appearances at LaSalette, Lourdes, Pontmain, Pellevoisin, Fatima, Beauraing, and Banneaux. Everywhere her message of prayer and penance was the same. How to carry out the wishes of Our Lady by reciting the rosary is the theme of Mr. Breig's booklet, *The Family Rosary*. Besides meditations on the fifteen decades, the author gives some practical suggestions on the recitation of the rosary within the family circle. Both booklets are a must for those who truly love Our Blessed Mother and wish to heed her requests.



OUR LADY OF LOURDES

O God, who by the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, didst, for Thy Son, make ready a fitting dwelling place; very humbly do we who celebrate the feast of the apparition of the same holy Virgin, put up to Thee our prayers for health, both of body and soul. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.



Victoria Campbell, Stevens Point, Wis., mother of Sister Margaret, O.L.V.M.

Rev. Sylvester Schmitz, O.S.B., Atchison, Kans., uncle of Sister Melita, O.L.V.M.

Ada Smith, San Francisco

Edna Wickens, Greensburg, Ind.

Jeremiah O'Sullivan, County Cork, Ireland

James Carney, Cascade, Iowa

Martha Paluch, ACM, Chicago

Elizabeth Lauer, ACM, Fort Wayne

Olivia Thale, ACM, Cincinnati

Martha McNulty, Chicago

Mary Agnes White, Chicago

William Tabor, Crown Point, N. Y.

John Small, Antigo, Wisc.

Mrs. Leo McCarty, Philadelphia

Mr. Klohr, Saint Louis

Rufus Ernest Doegen, Baltimore, Md.

Hannah Huber, Peoria, Ill.

Veronica Ypma, Selden, Kans.

Henry Tamme, Winchester, Ohio

The Acceptable Time

by Sister Bernardine

THE sun poured itself through the open door in a golden flood. Little swirls of dust played in the yard outside. Inside the dirt-floor garage, catechism charts hung ready for use. A neat pile of pictures to explain the day's lesson lay on a rungless chair. The scurry of a couple of roosters caused Sister to look up from her catechism book to see the first of her after-school class of third graders arriving.

"The end of peace, dear Lord," Sister whispered. "Help me to put love of You in their hearts while I make a valiant attempt to put the knowledge of You in their heads!"

"Hi, Sister! Am I first? I ran all the way! Can I say the new prayer before the other kids come?"

"Fine! Start now!"

A deep breath—then, "O my God, I firmly believe that Thou art one God in three Divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost . . ." right to the very end.

"Do I get to move my hot-rod car ahead in the race?"

"You surely do, Ernesto." Sister unclipped Ernesto's home-made cardboard "hot-rod" from the chart and moved it ahead one hundred miles in the race. Ernesto beamed proudly and waited for the rest of the class to arrive to admire his progress.

As each child came running to the door he

was assigned a place to sit. When the last had scurried in and all were quieted, prayers began.

Sister took a deep breath and plunged immediately into the lesson for the day. The two roosters decided to make a bid for attention in the midst of the story-explanation. Their antics were soon aided and abetted by a mischievous dog who began to chase and tease the roosters, pulling out their tail feathers. Soon a two-year-old toddler, barefooted, dirty-faced, but charmingly friendly, thought this an acceptable time to come to greet her older brother in class.

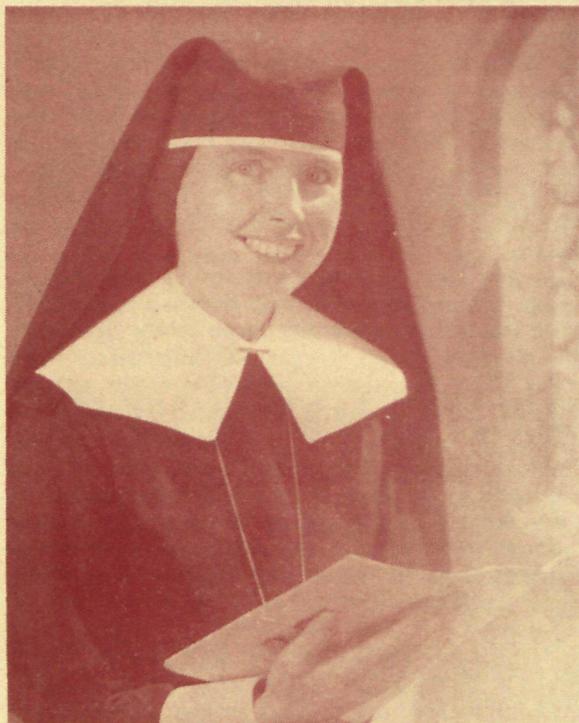
After the roosters and dog were deposited in a less distracting place, and the baby returned safely to her spot on the porch, class resumed. The threads of the story took their place once more. The knowledge of God's truth gently knocked at young minds and was admitted generously into pure hearts. A closing prayer of thanks and love, then Sister breathed a sigh of gratitude to the Holy Spirit of Truth and Love, rearranged a new stack of pictures and charts, and settled down with the catechism once more, to await the next class and whatever else God would send to vary its order and its plan of action.

The same calm sunshine still poured itself through the doorway. The dust swirled again in graceful little circles. God smiled and poured His grace into souls the world over.



The knowledge of God's truth gently knocked at young minds and was admitted generously into pure hearts.

Let me ask you



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