

The Missionary Catechist



Volume III

Victory-Noll, Huntington, Indiana, December, 1926

Number 1

The Holy Night in New Mexico

AMONG the quaint religious customs of our Mexican people, there is none which makes a greater impression upon the average American, who participates in it for the first time, than the "Adoracion" or veneration of the image of Our Divine Savior on "la Nochebuena" (Christmas Eve). It is not purely a Spanish custom but one observed, with some variations, in other Latin countries as well.

Long ere the sun has slipped quietly behind yon grayish slope spotted with rosettes of juniper and pinon, tinting with brilliant crimson the cumulus of clouds, but a few minutes before as white as cotton balls, the plaza has been the scene of unusual activity and excitement. Here is a hoary-headed anciana (old lady) who has easily seen seventy summers, removing the stones which securely seal the entrance to the bee-hive oven from whence a savory odor ensues as she lifts from its cavernous jaws many loaves of well-browned bread. Or it is Senora Sanchez, whom we see, with flushed face standing over a small cook-stove indoors, turning out on a large platter little balloon-shaped bunuelos (buns), which are made only for special feasts like "Nochebuena."

Yonder in the light of the first stars we see the bent form of an aged "Pastor"—Shepherd—before whom moves a sea of dirty gray fleeces, upborne by a maze of slender, scurrying legs. Two big, shaggy dogs are running and barking vigorously on either flank of the flock, keeping it compact and on the gallop. Long before the first bell of the "Misa del Gallo" (Midnight Mass) has sounded, the flocks



will have come down the mesas in the neighborhood of the herder's home.

One is transported bodily as it were to the hills of Judea where nineteen hundred years ago country shepherds were keeping the night-watches over their flock, "when lo an Angel of the Lord stood by them and the brightness of God shown round about them, and they feared with a great fear." And the Angel said to them, "Fear not: for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people: For this day is Christ the Lord in the city of David."

These are a shepherd people, and there is a great likeness of the country round about to the land of the Nacimiento—Nativity—There are great many here, like Horeb and Carmel, divided by dry gashes, and a river burrowing its way south through a rift deep and rugged as the rift of the Jordan.

But where are the children and what are they doing? Ah, here comes a troop of them now laden with boughs of pine and spruce from the neighboring mountains, with which to decorate the crib of the Divine Infant. Yonder is another group singing "Venid Pastorcillos" and other familiar hymns of the Christmas season. Some of the older Children of Mary who are members of the choir are leaving the small Mission church where they have had a final rehearsal for the singing of the Midnight Mass. Another group of old women, with faces expressive of fatigue mixed with peaceful joy, have completed a full day's work in cleaning and scouring everything in the Mis-

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Rosalie's Happy Christmas

Lida L. Coghlan



"TRY to get home early, daddy, it is Christmas Eve, you know. Rosalie tucked in her father's muffler and turned up the collar of his fur coat.

"Why, so it is! I had forgotten it. Here," pressing a roll of bills into her hand, "buy yourself a Christmas gift. Your old dad hasn't even got time to do that."

"But you'll come home early, won't you daddy?" she pleaded.

"Why no, dearie. In fact I can't get home at all tonight. I am going to Northcote to perform an operation and I must stay with my patient all night. I am sorry, pussy, but a doctor does not belong to himself."

Drawing her to him, he kissed her fondly. "Now buy something you want and look your prettiest tomorrow night; I hope to eat my Christmas dinner at home. What a gloomy little face! Where is my brave girl? That's better," as a smile lighted Rosalie's eyes. "I'll be here in time for dinner, sure. Now, I'll have to run."

Rosalie stood at the window waving her hand until the car turned the corner. Tall and slender, with soft golden-brown hair forming a halo around the shapely head, she made a lovely picture against the dark velvet hangings of the big window. But as the car vanished from sight the wistful smile left her face and a lonely look came into her eyes. She had everything that one could wish for—save the very thing an eighteen-year-old girl needs most—a mother—and it was perhaps at such times as this that she felt her need more keenly than ever.

"What shall I do with this?" dropping the roll of bills on her dressing table. "I can't think of a single thing I want to buy. I'll have to go down-town and look around."

Rosalie edged her way into a big department store and mingled with the swaying, jostling crowd of Christmas shoppers. Everybody was good-natured, even the over-worked salespeople smiled as they tried to wait upon half a dozen customers at one time.

Crossing from the art needlework department to the books, Rosalie felt a timid touch upon her arm. "Please, ma'am, you dropped this." A black robed, white aproned little cash girl held out her purse. "I seen it drop out of your muff."

"How stupid of me. Thank you so much. What is your name, little girl?"

"Ruth Curtis, ma'am. Was there much money in your purse?" gazing at Rosalie in childish admiration.

"Yes. Quite a bit of money."

"And you never cried? I cried until my head ached when I lost mine and it only had nineteen cents in it. You see I was trying to save a quarter to buy Bobby and the baby a Christmas gift. They believe in Santa Claus and I hated to think of them being disappointed."

"And did you find your purse?"

She shook her head sadly. "No ma'am."

Insistent calls of "Cash! Cash! Cash!" warned Ruth that she was loitering. She

darted away before Rosalie had a chance to question her further. Going to the manager's office she secured a two-hours leave of absence for Ruth.

At a quiet little restaurant, which seemed like a palace to the child, they dined. "Now tell me, Ruth, what do you want for Christmas?"

"Me! I don't expect anything."

"I am not asking what you expect," smiled Rosalie, "but what you would like; just for yourself. You see I owe you a present for finding my purse."

"A long coat with a red collar, a red hat and some button shoes with patent tips."

"That isn't much. Are you sure there is nothing else?" Rosalie opened her bag.

"But miss," eagerly, "I'd a heap rather have a pair of specks for mother. Her eyes are getting so bad she can't make button-holes no more and there's so little money in overalls. And a sled for Bobby—they've got pretty red sleds for fifty cents in the toy department. And for twenty-five cents I can get Bessie a doll that opens and shuts its eyes. That wouldn't cost more than a coat and hat and shoes for me, would it?"

"Not nearly as much."

"Then maybe we could get two dollars worth of coal and," the words tripping each other in her eagerness, "pay two dollars on the rent and buy a chicken for dinner. We used to have chicken before father died. I can remember it right well, but Bobby and Bess ain't never tasted chicken. Do you think," wistfully, "we'd have enough left for a chicken?"

"Yes, I think so. And some cranberry jelly and perhaps a few oranges and a bit of candy."

"Oh! Oh! Oh!" cried the delighted child.

Rosalie weighed the matter seriously, her eyes on the flushed, eager little face. "I will have to see your mother, we couldn't buy glasses for her: she would have to fit them. Give me your address and I will go out to see her while you are on duty this afternoon. I think," consulting her watch, "that we will have time to buy the sled and the doll before your time is up."

Ruth's feet hardly touched the ground on her way back to the store. Afternoon shoppers wondered at the little cash girl's radiant face.

Rosalie had received a lesson which she will never forget. She knew there were poor people in the world, but they had seemed a class apart, quite different from herself. Ruth's unselfish heart was a revelation.

The dignified chauffeur was disgusted when he saw his young mistress enter the tenement which little Ruth called home. Rosalie climbed the rickety steps to the third floor and knocked lightly at the first door to the right. A small boy opened the door and in answer to her inquiry called, "Mother, a lady wants to see you."

Rosalie explained her errand to Mrs. Curtis, asking that she might have the privilege of playing Santa Claus for the children. When Mrs. Curtis understood the girl's loneliness her pride vanished and she readily consented to Rosalie's plans.

The children sat in wide-eyed wonder, holding tightly to each other's hands as they sped down town in the big machine. Rosalie left Mrs. Curtis to have her glasses fitted while she took the children to look at the store windows and to see Santa Claus. Then they went to market and stopped by for Ruth when the store closed.

"We're goin' out ridin' tomorrow, Ruthie," Bobby whispered, "the pretty lady is comin' for us."

"If your father will not be home till evening, Miss Rosalie, why not have dinner with us at noon, before we go out?"

"Thank you, Mrs. Curtis, I will be delighted."

Bobby and Bess were waiting for Rosalie and escorted her up the two flights of stairs, clinging to her hands and talking excitedly about their wonderful Christmas tree, the sled and doll, the skates and dishes and the stockings that were filled with candy and nuts.

"Tom Fisher said there wasn't no Santa Claus." Bobby was contemptuous. "He said I was a gilly. Huh! I reckon he knows better now."

"Was it the thame Thanta Clauth we thaked hands with?" questioned Bess.

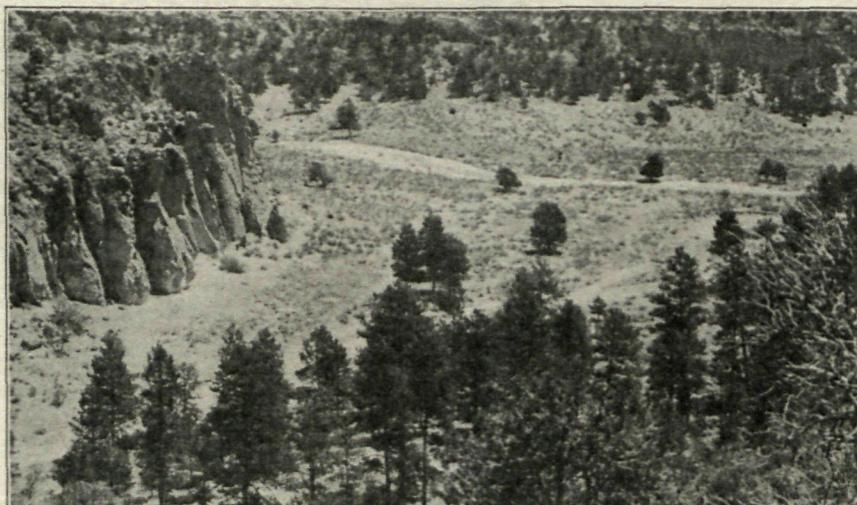
"I wouldn't be surprised if it was. Didn't he bring anything to Ruth or mother?"

"Well I guess. Mother got some specks and shoes and gloves. And Ruthie got a coat and hat and shoes."

"And a bue dess," supplemented Bessie.

"We wouldn't like our things if Ruthie and mother got left, would we,

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Playing



Dear Friends:

Have you ever played Santa Claus? Of course you have, many times, and each time you got a peck of fun out of it! Yes, and something more than fun. Although you have had to stay up late at night until the children were all fast asleep to do the stealthy work of stuffing stockings with oranges, nuts, pop corn, candy and toys, still when Christmas morning dawned bright and beautiful, you forgot your weariness and the sleepy yawns which your night's vigil had cost you in the delight and happiness you occasioned the children. Those of you who hunted up poor children in the neighborhood, experienced a greater joy still for here were some who might have been forgotten entirely, had it not been for you.

The Missionary Catechists are going to play Santa Claus this year. The number of little Mexican kiddies they will be able to reach will depend upon their friends. We are so confident, however, that you will help us out, that we are publishing "Santa Claus" letters from the children in the Mission Centers. These poor New Mexican children know very little about Santa Claus. Before Americans penetrated this State and took up residence here, they had not even heard of him! But somehow knowledge of him leaked out. Their fair-haired little American comrades, while displaying some fine toy for their admiration, would whisper "Santa Claus" when asked whence it came. Consequently these dark-faced, dreamy-eyed children of the rocky mesas and wind-swept plains, have come to believe that Santa Claus is indeed a great man. They chuckled with glee at the thought of writing a letter to him, and straightway set themselves to the laborious task of writing to Santa Claus in English. Of course, it must be written in English, for Santa Claus was an American and might not understand Spanish. It was safest, therefore, to write their letters in English. After they had held a lively consultation in Spanish, they sat down and wrote these letters, which we believe you will enjoy as much as we did when we read them. We should like to produce them all, but there are too many, so we have picked out a few which are a fair sample of the rest.

You may send your Christmas boxes of toys, candy, new clothes, or other useful articles to Victory-Mount, P.O. Box 30, Montezuma Route, East Las Vegas, N. Mexico. From here they will be distributed among the various Mission Centers of our Society in New Mexico.

On Christmas morning may the Infant Jesus smile on you for having brought happiness to these, the least of His little ones.

THE MISSIONARY CATECHISTS.

* * *



Dear Mr. Santa Claus:

I am proud of asking Santa Claus to bring me a pair of warm gloves to protect my hands from the cold.

Yours always,

JOSE DURAN.

* * *



Dear old Santa Claus

I just came to think that Christmas time was near. So I thought to ask Santa Claus to bring a warm sweater for a Christmas present for me. Please do so, Mr. Old Man. I have been so pleased with you always when I ask you to bring something, so I am going to remain

Yours always,

MANUELITA MARTINEZ.

* * *



Dear Santa Claus:

I am going to tell you to bring me some present. I want one pair of shoes No. 3½ and stockings and one box of marbles and a good hat, size 5.

FELIPE ROMERO.

* * *



My dear Sant Clous:

I wish you to send me a pair of gloves, a drum and candies and a cap.

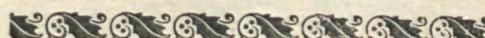
Your friend,

HENRY MARTINEZ.



The Missionary Catechists and their Spiritual Director pray most fervently that the dear Infant Jesus, in His Blessed Mother's Arms, may bless and love all their friends and benefactors and grant them all a blessed and happy Christmas.

With St. Peter our devoted Catechists can truly say: Silver and gold we have not, but what we have we freely give."—the Christmas gift of our fervent prayers and our Holy Communion to all our loyal friends and subscribers.



A HOLY HAPPY CHRISTMAS

Santa Claus



Dear Santa Claus:

I am very happy for Christmas time is near. So I would like you to bring me a dress. So I will thank you. Yours truly,

LUZ LUCERO.

* * *



Dear Santa:

I surely believe in you so I thought to write you a short letter telling you to send me a very short pocket knife if you please. I would thank you very much.

Surely yours,

DAMIEN SANCHEZ.

* * *



Dear Old Santa Claus:

I am going to write you so you may bring me a good Christmas present such as a pair of overshoes. Will not go any further.

Your old friend,

FILIMON GARCIA.

* * *



Dear Santa Claus:

I think you know me and so I believe in you sure. I want a big pocket knife for Christmas present, please, and no more.

Yours always,

FILADELFIO PADIA.

* * *



Dear Santa:

Please bring me a doll, a ball, a ring, a ribbon, a pair of shoes size 3, necklace and a pin.

MINNIE SANCHEZ.

* * *



Dear Santa Claus:

Now I will write you a few lines telling you to send me a good pocket knife for a Christmas present, please. I'll be very glad to have a gift from old man Santa Claus. I hope to see you at Christmas time to get my good knife because my knife was broke last week. I would thank you very, very much and no more for this time.

Surely yours,

JUBENCIO MARTINEZ.

* * *



Dear Santa Clouse:

I am going to ask you for something. I wanta pair of gloves. I wanta pair of stockings and I wanta cap. I hope you will bring them.

Thank you Santa,

JUAN GARCIA.

* * *



Dear Catechist Doyle,

Dear Santa Claus:

Please bring me a pair of shoes, size five.

ABRAN CHEVEZ.

(This poor little lad has evidently decided that Santa Claus and the Catechists work together.)

The Babe of Bethlehem



Elsewhere in this issue you will read some very touching letters from the poor children under the care of our Catechists in New Mexico. We are certain that our readers will note the difference between these Christmas letters written by these poor children of the Missions to Santa Claus and those written by the children of our prosperous Catholic

parents here at home.

We know what our children here clamor for most at Christmas. They want high power motor cars, speedy airships, six tube radio sets, talking dolls and silk dresses. But what do these impoverished children of the missions ask for? Their ambitions do not soar quite so high. The boys ask only for warm sweaters, shoes and overshoes to protect them from the biting cold winds that sweep their adobe homes hidden away in the mountain fastnesses of New Mexico. The little girls, who so often come to our Catechism classes without warm clothes and even without shoes and stockings in the dead of winter, ask the "good old man, Santy" to bring them gifts of warm clothes and shoes and stockings.

Surely our friends would be stirred to pity if they could but see these emaciated, wretchedly clad little figures and their hearts would quickly and generously go out to them. We feel quite certain that they would not let such appeals, coming from the hearts of these destitute little ones, go unheeded, but would—in honor of the Infant Jesus—bring happiness to these the least of His little ones so dear to His Sacred Heart.

During this holy, happy Christmas season nothing could be more appropriate than a gift made in honor of the Birthday of the Babe of Bethlehem. Last year OUR SUNDAY VISITOR started the "Babe of Bethlehem" Burse. No doubt, our readers will be glad to contribute during the Holy Christmas Season towards this burse in honor of Him who sanctified poverty by His lowly birth in Bethlehem's cave on that first Christmas morning twenty centuries ago.

"LAYING UP TREASURES IN HEAVEN"

Upon the honor role of the benefactors of our Society are the names of those that our Catechists can never forget. They are the names of those dear departed souls who looked after the interest of the poor in the days when they were still here upon earth. It is only because of the self-sacrificing charity of these dear departed that we are able to carry on our work today. Faithful and active workers during life for the cause of God's poor under the care of our Catechists, these benefactors did not forget them at the hour of death.

Last month we received a bequest from one of these benefactors who prudently made disposition of his earthly goods by a bequest while he was still living, instead of running the risk of having his money diverted to other purposes by making a will at the time of his death.

By means of our new investment plan our friends may help the poor under our

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Rev. J. J. Sigstein, Spiritual Director of
The Society of Missionary Catechists
Editor

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care by investing an amount of money they have with our Society. They will receive interest regularly on this amount during their life and at their death the principal will be used by our Society according to the intention of the donor, thus avoiding any complications and perhaps costly procedure. For particulars as to this plan, address:

REVEREND SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

Society of Missionary Catechists,
Victory-Noll Huntington, Indiana

Brooklyn, N. J., October 2, 1926
Reverend Father:

I am enclosing money order for \$1.00, renewal of my subscription. The Missionary Catechist is a wonderful little paper and I enjoyed reading it so much I am sending it to a friend of mine.

Respectfully,

MRS. M. G. B.

BISHOP'S HOUSE

College Hill,
Wichita, Kansas

October 6th, 1926

Rev. J. J. Sigstein,
Huntington, Ind.

Dear Father Sigstein:

There are about 2000 Mexicans in the city of Wichita, living in two colonies which are about three miles apart. In one of these colonies we have built them a neat little chapel, where they have Mass every Sunday. In the other colony we hope to have a chapel within a year or two. Thus far we have had a paid lay-woman of American birth working among them and she has been quite successful. However, she intends to leave the city soon and we must look around for some one to take her place. My first thought of your Missionary Catechists, who are especially trained to do such work and therefore could labor to greater advantage and with better results. Would it be possible to send us two or more Catechists to begin the work? The Federated Protestants are making great efforts and spending large sums of money to win over the Mexican people and especially the children. We not only need the Catechists to do Social and Religious work among the adults, but also to teach the children. In the one colony there is a community hall attached to the Chapel, which could also be used for class rooms. Satisfactory arrangements can be made to house and support the Catechists.

Trusting to hear from you favorably at your earliest convenience, I beg to remain,

Faternally yours in Xto,

Aug. J. Schwertner.

The Holy Night

(Continued from page One)

sion church from the whitened floor to the rafters above.

The men who assisted in the morning with the heavier work of dragging huge blocks of wood for the fire, erecting the "Crib," and "planting" small pinons and sabinos about the entrance of the small Church, are now congregated in front of the village store where the sound of their soft, drawling voices floated outward even as the smoke wreaths from their cigarros float upward.

With darkness, there falls upon the small village a few hours of silence in which a tired people are seeking a few moments repose. Nearly every light has been extinguished and every voice hushed. Suddenly the joyful, clamorous bells in the belfry are heard far over the peaceful valley, echoing and re-echoing in the far distant canons. Hark, there are more noises. The paisanos (country-people) are answering the summons. The clattering of hoofs are now to be heard, and the grinding, scraping sound of wheels as they turn slowly over the frozen ground. Teresita, aged three, is weeping on her mother's shoulder. What can be the purpose of this nightly sojourning? "Hush thee, Hijita" (little daughter), comforts the mother, tenderly wrapping her about in the long ends of her mantilla. "Art thou not going to visit the Nino Jesus (Child Jesus)?"

The gleaming lights of a battered Ford shine full upon a merry group of mounted men, only to leave them a moment later enveloped in the deep shadows behind, while the faint echoes of a fine tenor voice singing snatches of "Vamos todos a Belen" or "El Nino Dios" is heard.

By the time the last wagon has been hitched outside the church, the second bell has sounded and the interior of the church is ablaze with the light of many candles and a dozen kerosene wall lamps. The church is fairly well filled, and the padre in alb and stole is seen going to the Confessional around which are gathered a group of people who have come from far distant ranches, to be able to take part in the annual Christmas festival. Occasionally a stalwart man is seen adding more quartered logs of resinous pine to the brightly-burning fire or another turning down the wick of a smoky lamp.

The last bell sounds, the priest emerges hastily from the Confessional, and a moment later enters the sanctuary preceded by a dozen altar boys, the smallest of whom simply sit inside the sanctuary, while the four oldest act as Mass Servers. What a festive appearance the little church has,—the green boughs of pine and spruce brightened here and there with bright red roses fashioned of crepe paper; the priest in his white vestments; the altar boys in their snowy and freshly starched surplices. But what is that which attracts our attention to the left of the church and well toward the front, with its gay trappings of dazzling tinsel, its garlands of bright colored paper flowers, and its gold and silver ornaments? See, there is a large silver star. Is it a casita (little house)? No, it is a miniature representation of the stable of Bethlehem. There are the small images of the Child Jesus lying in His crib of straw, of Mary and Joseph kneeling in adoration.

The Mass has begun and the voices of the choir sound sweetly on the ear as in

(Continued on Page Six)

A Christmas Gift Worth While—\$10 Life Subscription to THE MISSIONARY CATECHIST.

Victory-Noll Notes

May the Infant King of Bethlehem take up His reign of Love in your hearts, showing upon you His choicest blessings not only during this Holy Christmas Season but throughout the coming year!

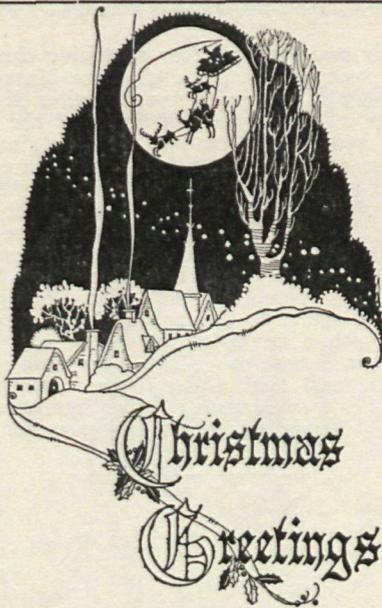
To all our generous friends and benefactors the Catechists at Victory-Noll wish a happy and blessed Christmas. Because of our poverty, we are unable to make material gifts but we do offer to each and every one of you a "Spiritual Bouquet" of love and heartfelt prayers, and a remembrance in our Solemn Christmas Novena to the Babe of Bethlehem, which begins December the 15th.

* * *

A short time ago we had the happiness of entertaining our beloved Bishop Noll, and several of his friends who spent a weekend at Victory-Noll. The Fathers, Very Reverend Father Benno Aichinger, Provincial of the Capuchin Fathers of Detroit, Mich., Father Benedict Mueller, O. M. Cap., of Mount Calvary, Wis., Father Pacificus Raith, O. M. Cap., of Appleton, Wisc., and Father F. J. Jansen, of Elkhart, Ind., had long been desirous of seeing Victory-Noll and becoming acquainted with the work of the Society which was sponsored by the Bishop. Immediately after breakfast the next morning, the Bishop and Father Sigstein took the Reverend Fathers about the buildings and grounds. They were struck with the beauty of the Training Institute with its quaint Spanish-Mission architecture, graceful tower, and picturesque patio, seen through cloistered arches, which crowns a lofty hill overlooking the lovely Wabash valley. But it was perhaps, the Society and its work among God's poorest in the Southwest, that interested the Capuchin Fathers more intensely, for as members of the Franciscan Order they feel that the Missionary Catechists are doing a noble work among the Spanish-speaking poor and are, as it were, following "in the footsteps of the old Franciscan Padres," who were the first to bring the glad tidings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to this people.

Among other visitors were the Rev. J. Feldman, of Belleville, Ill., who celebrated Mass at Victory-Noll during the absence of our Spiritual Director, and the Rev. F. L. Geis, a Missionary to the Indians of Chiloquin, Oregon, who was visiting his cousin, Miss Stella O'Brien of Our Sunday Visitor.

An old friend of Father Sigstein, the Very Rev. T. J. Weldon, C. M., Vicar General of Religious Orders of New Orleans, La., spent a day with us recently. After supper Father Weldon gave a rather informal talk in the classroom. He told us that he had been interested in the Society of Missionary Catechists for quite a while, even before he knew that its Founder was the same "Father John" he had known as a boy in Chicago, and whom he had not seen or a number of years; and that naturally after he had discovered it was the work and accomplishment of a young priest he had known as a youth he was doubly interested and very anxious to see Victory-Noll and the Catechists.



TELLING THE STORY.

December 9, 1923.

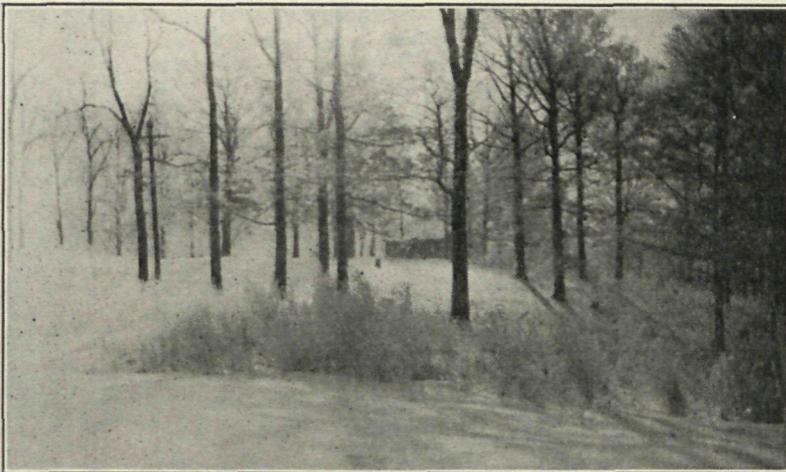
We are having a great snowstorm. All roads to the Missions are impassable. We have made some visits on foot, going knee deep through great snow drifts. All traffic is tied up. We have received no mail.

The snowstorms which raged for three days are over and now the snow is beginning to thaw and the roads are quite muddy. We were called out to visit the sick at Los Manuelos. When we arrived we found that our wagon had only three wheels. December 23rd.

Another great snowstorm raging. The high winds have blown off the roofs of many houses in the village. Thanks be to God, the Catechists still have a roof over their head.

Today we nursed a very sick woman who was on her way to the hospital at Las Vegas. She was caught in the snowstorm. We gave up one of our beds and provided for her needs.

Christmas is approaching and we are preparing, as best we can, to give "Christmas cheer" to our poor little children. We are rehearsing for a Christmas play. We have received a number of boxes of Christmas candy from Chicago and also from Cincinnati. The children are coming in wagons and are practicing simple but beautiful Christmas carols. The Spanish language is rich in these beautiful, devotional hymns in honor of "El Santo Nino,"—the Holy Child.



VICTORY-NOLL WOODS IN WINTER

Victory Mount Echoes

On the Feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King, we formally opened our Victory Preparatory Training School for four native Mexican girls who have been enrolled as Aspirants in our Society. Prayers and invocations were offered up for the success of the Training School, and graces and blessings upon these noble little girls who have left home and dear ones in order to become saviours of their own people.

* * *

The first snowfall of the season visited Victory-Mount the night of October 29th. The next morning a six-inch blanket of snow lay on the ground. Enthusiasm ran high among the younger and recently arrived Catechists from Victory-Noll. Snow-covered mountains, flanked with thousands of evergreens, were indeed a sight to evoke admiration, wonderment and silent praise for the wonderful works of God.

During the past month the Catechists here had the pleasure of entertaining Reverend Mother Clarissa, venerable Sister Adele and Miss Mary Snider of the Immaculate Academy, Oldenburg, Indiana. One of our Catechists attended this Academy in her girlhood and it was a great happiness for her to entertain her former teachers. All of her sister-Catechists shared her happiness. Among other visitors were Mrs. Clara B. Kamp and her mother, and Mr. Aloysius Ryan of Hays, Kansas, who paid us a brief visit while returning from a tour to California. They are old time friends of Catechist Cordelia Bahl, our Catechist-Supervisor of Studies.

* * *

The other day a poor old man, seventy-eight years of age, came to Mass at one of the distant Missions in charge of Father Bickhaus of Chaperito. This devout old man had ridden twenty-eight miles on horse back in order to see the Padre, make his Confession and receive his dear God in Holy Communion. While this is no unusual occurrence here in this poor mission country, it makes our hearts glad to see the piety and faith of these people who are so appreciative of their Religion.

* * *

We have discovered that "Bossy," our spotted cow, whom we purchased from the Christian Brothers, has race-horse tendencies. After skillfully eluding two of our young aspirants who volunteered to milk her, she risked off to the alfalfa field. When headed off from this place she galloped merrily down the road, and neither entreaties nor threats could induce her to return home until noon. In their sweet and simple way, our little Mexican girls concluded that because they did not "wear a veil," Bossy would have none of them.

* * *

We were so pleased to receive an incense boat after the other month's humorous narration of the disastrous fate which befell our gravy tureen. Our little Chapel lacks so many things still, even the most necessary things as Mass Book, Mass charts, Sanctuary Lamp, that we feel very grateful, more than we can say, for each and everything that we receive to make Our dear Lord's Home more beautiful.

A HOLY HAPPY CHRISTMAS

The Holy Night

(Continued from Page Six)

clear, even tones they sing the Children's Festival Mass.

At the Gospel, that beautiful narrative of which we never tire and which fills our hearts with great rejoicing is heard again, but this time we hear it in Spanish. Afterwards follows a sermon. There is no need of rhetoric or oratory, therefore only the simplest truths are expounded in the simplest way for a poor and humble people.

The Communion Rail at the close of Mass is well-filled, for these poor people, so hospitable to strangers in their country, are no less hospitable to their God when He seeks entrance into their hearts.

The last blessing is given, the last Gospel is read, and you are thinking of taking up your hat and bolting for the door, but wait a minute, or you shall miss as beautiful a custom as ever an American was privileged to witness and take part in. It is the time for the "Adoracion." Already the choir has intoned their favorite Christmas carol:

Come one and all to Bethlehem,
With great love and joy,
There we shall adore Our Lord,
Our Dear Redeemer.

In the light of a star
Of divine sweetness
We perceive a beautiful maiden
Who gives us the Savior.

Verse after verse is repeated, but now not only the choir but everyone is singing. The priest comes down to the small "portal," takes the image of the Divine Infant in his arms, re-enters the sanctuary, as masses of the congregation surge forward like waves of the ocean breaking on the sandy beach. They kneel at the Communion Rail, while he lifts the tiny figure of the Infant Jesus to each one's lips so that each may place a kiss on the heart of the tiny King, testifying by this exterior act the warm love glowing for Him in their hearts. Stalwart men wearing large kerchiefs, but overalls and khaki-colored coats, some lined with sheep-skin, are to be seen, as are also heavy bearded ancianos and sturdy youths. Old women tottering with age, young married women, both enveloped in the indispensable "mantilla," whose long-fringed edges by a miracle do not catch on to anything. Occasionally the left side of the mantilla bulges unnaturally, and we see the dark face of a child with large black eyes peering out wonderingly, between the folded ends, at the dense throng of people.

There is little five-year-old Santiago who walks clumsily alongside of his Tia (Aunt), who grasps his little fist firmly lest he fall before the crowds who are now returning from the Communion Rail, ever and anon, singing. But the melody has changed. What are they singing now? It is "La Nochebuena." Some old lady, with a wonderfully clear voice is taking the lead and others are singing the refrain at the end of the verse. Although verse after verse is sung, she needs no book, she knows the entire hymn by memory. The choir has ceased to sing for they, too, are on their way to the front of the church to "adore" El Nino Jesus.

With the last kiss of love bestowed on the Tiny King, the padre replaces the wee image in the small tinsel-trimmed crib and then preceded by the altar boys goes to the sacristy where he unvests. The services have been long and the padre has yet

to say two Masses after snatching three or four hours sleep. One of these Masses he will say at a Mission twenty miles distant. While a few people still linger at the Crib, most are already outside busy untying the horses or trying to coax a flivver whose engine is cold, to start. The crowds are somewhat silent compared with what they were coming. It may be that they are only tired for it is past two o'clock, or it may be that their thoughts are busy with the beautiful ceremony which has just taken place. But we prefer to think that they are recalling, with a surge of happiness, that they have welcomed el Nino Dios into their hearts, and that a deep peace which delights not in external things but of silent inner communings has taken possession of them.

Christmas Wishes

The Christmas stars at Bethlehem
Shone very clear and bright;
Oh, may they shine with light divine
For you this Christmas night!

The Christmas winds at Bethlehem
Folded their wings away;
May every wind blow gently kind
For you on Christmas Day.

The angel hosts at Bethlehem
Sang "Peace on earth to men;"
And may their song ring loud and long
Within your heart again.

The shepherds came to Bethlehem
Knelt in rapt wondering;
To Bethlehem, oh, haste with them
To see the little King!

The holy pair at Bethlehem
Looked upon them and smiled;
Would it might be your lot to see
These blest ones and the Child.

The little Babe at Bethlehem
Gave them His hand to kiss;
And oh, I pray your heart today
May know such joy as this!
—Sister M. Madeleva.

Salt Lake City, Utah.

My dear Catechist Supervisor:

I have just received the November issue of The Missionary Catechist and of course read the page set apart for the Associate Catechists of Mary "News." I am very anxious to join. Although I do not think I can become a promoter at present, I will endeavor to induce my friends to be interested in the Association.

I am supporting the family, and give all my money to Mother. I will promise, however, to save at least ten cents each week for the support of the Catechists, and will put more to it when it is not urgently needed in other ways. I am enclosing a money order to cover the membership dues for my enrollment.

Wishing your Society much success, and praying Our Blessed Lady of Victory to and all her Catechists, I am

shower innumerable blessings upon you
Very sincerely yours

R. K.

Rosalie's Happy Xmas

(Continued from Page Two)

Bess?"

Bess shook her head. "Thanta Clauth wouldn't be the mean as that."

Such a merry dinner! The children bubbled with excitement. Ruth walked about in a happy dream. Mrs. Curtis looked years younger, her eyes were bright and her pale face was flushed with happiness. Rosalie poured the tea and insisted on helping wash the dishes, chatting gayly all the while.

"Now, for our ride! Everybody get their things on."

"I see the ca'widge," Bess had her nose flattened against the front window.

"Tain't a carriage," corrected Bobby, "it's a motor car."

"How do they fit, Ruth?" Rosalie tilted the red hat a little to one side and straightened the red collar.

"Just fine! I wore them to church this morning and the coat felt so good and warm. You know mother and I went to Mass before the children were up. Ruth gave her a hug as they went down the stairs. "O, Miss Rosalie, I am so happy!"

"So am I, dear," whispered Rosalie.

It was a very radiant Rosalie that presided at her father's table that night.

"Well, pussy, you didn't tell me what you bought. I would like to see my Christmas gift." The doctor, in comfortable lounging robe and slippers was enjoying his after dinner cigar.

"I can't show it to you, daddy, but I'm going to tell you all about it." Seating herself on the arm of his chair.

The doctor listened gravely.

"Are you going to let things stop there?"

"Why no. I thought I would give Mrs. Curtis my sewing and our mending and I would recommend her to some of our friends."

The doctor knit his brows thoughtfully. "A tenement is a mighty poor place to raise children."

"You've got something on your mind, daddy, out with it!"

"That little cottage at Elmbank is vacant and—there, there, child, don't strangle me. I expect Mrs. Curtis could get plenty of good sewing out there, the youngsters would have good, fresh air and learn something about this beautiful world of ours."

"Oh, daddy! and it's close to the church and school. Ruthie needn't go back to the store; she could finish her studies and help her mother after school."

"There is a pretty nice flower garden and some fruit on the place," the doctor mused. "I could put up a chicken house and—"

Rosalie's arms were tight about his neck. "Let me buy some white chickens for them. I've got some money left. May I, daddy, may I?"

"You may do anything you want if you'll just quit choking me."

Rosalie nestled close within his encircling arm. "Daddy, dear, this is the happiest Christmas of my life."

The doctor stroked her cheek fondly. "Because you have made others happy, dearie. That is the true happiness."

On account of the fact that there are no means of transportation to the Mission Centers of our Catechists, we would ask our generous benefactors to send their Christmas packages and parcels of clothes to our Victory Preliminary Training Institute at Las Vegas, from which they will be sent to the various Mission Centers. The address is:

SOCIETY OF MISSIONARY CATECHISTS
Victory-Mount, P. O. Box 30
Montezuma Route
East Las Vegas, New Mexico

A Christmas Gift Worth While—\$10 Life Subscription to THE MISSIONARY CATECHIST.

The Associate Catechists of Mary



A
Holy
Christmas

Dear Associate Catechists:

"A Happy, Blessed Christmas,
And a Peaceful, Joyous New Year

Though it is many and many a year since the Holy-Child was born in the midnight silence of the first Christmas in Bethlehem's manger, every Associate Catechist remembers, I know, that there is a deeper, a holier meaning in Christmas than the mere happiness of giving and receiving gifts.

To the people at Bethlehem, to all the world, the first Christmas passed as any other day: to them it had no significance. Yet for thousands of years the people of Israel had been praying for the Saviour, had been anxiously looking forward to the time that He should come to live in their midst and reign as their King. But when all the prophecies were fulfilled and Christ was born, they closed their hearts to His pleading love, and refused to acknowledge Him as their long-promised Redeemer. He came in poverty, you see, and they wanted all the pomp and glory of earthly wealth. He came in the peace and quietude of night, in humility: they expected Him to come in proud triumph amidst the blaring of trumpets and the splendor of royal birth.

And so they shut the doors of their homes against Him, and tighter still the doors of their hearts.

But we, oh, we know well that it was He Who came from Heaven to dwell on earth for a time to teach us how to live for Heaven; We know well all the sacredness of Christmas, and we can, and we will, please God, welcome Him into our hearts on Christmas morning with such fervent tenderness that the remembrance of the coldness of His first hours here below will melt away in the glowing ardor of our love.

Nineteen hundred and twenty-six is almost over. I hope it has been a successful year for you; I hope that you are going to begin Nineteen hundred and twenty-seven with a determination to make it even more successful.

Every experienced organizer realizes that there are four essentials for the conducting of a successful organization.

The first is to plan definite work. "Success is like a nugget. You have to dig for it." If you would have a successful program, you must plan, plan, plan, and work, work, work.

The second essential is organization. Definite responsibility for each feature of the band is important. The best results are accomplished when there is but one person in charge of each function or committee.

The third essential is the research habit, coupled with resourcefulness. To be successful, to make each meeting an occasion to which you look forward, it is necessary



to collect ideas from every source available. However, no matter how good the ideas you gather may be, you have to adapt them to your particular group and conditions. Try to make each meeting more interesting than the last by introducing something new and novel.

The fourth essential is "pep." Pep is synonymous with enthusiasm or zeal, whatever you choose to call it. It indicates that everybody enters into the whole program with zest; no one is bored; no one is stiff; no one is neglected.

Work, organization, research, pep—all spell SUCCESS, and the extension of the work of the Catechists among the poor in the missions of the Southwest.

May these few suggestions assist you in your mission activities!

Sincerely yours in the love of the Christ-Child,

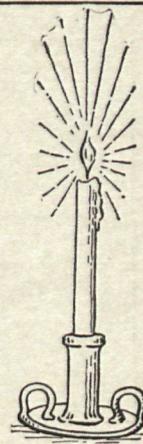
Catechist D. M. Schneider,
Catechist-Supervisor.

PROMOTERS: Will you please send in the following information relative to your band?

Name of Band
Name and Address of Promoter
Names and Addresses of all Members
Dates when meetings are held
Catechist-Supervisor,
Associate Catechists of Mary
P. O. Box 109 Huntington, Ind.

Our Home band, VICTORY-NOLL MISSION CIRCLE, is growing. Are you going to join?

A HOLY HAPPY CHRISTMAS



A
Happy
New Year

VICTORY MISSION CIRCLE GIVES COMFORT KNOTTING

The Victory Mission Circle of Huntington, Ind., under the direction of Mrs. John Kline and Miss Stella O'Brien, opened its winter activities with an old-fashioned knotting party. The ladies made six warm comfortables which will be forwarded to Victory-Mount, Las Vegas.

After the quilts were finished, a short business session was held. Then the members were asked to guess the number of knots in a lavender comfortable. Mrs. R. W. Garvin, figuring 384 knots, won the prize, a sewing-stool.

O. B. L. V. CIRCLE OF NEW ORLEANS SENDS FIRELESS COOKER TO THE MISSIONS

Dear Catechist:

Our Mission Circle is doing very well. We are now trying to collect articles to send to Victory-Mount to help furnish it.

I had a fireless cooker given to me to send to the Missions and our Circle bought new aluminum pots for it. I thought this would be a fine thing for the Catechists as they have to be away from their mission centres for many hours at a time.

Sincerely yours,
Mrs. S. S. Ogden.

NEW PORTABLE ORGAN FOR HOLMAN MISSION CENTER

Miss Josephine O'Brien, of Chicago, assisted by her zealous band of mission workers, raised enough money by means of a series of card parties to purchase a portable organ for Catechist Doyle. Through the kindness of Miss Katherine Maginn, of the Missionary Helpers Band, a very fine instrument was purchased wholesale.

"All To Jesus Through Mary"

Cincinnati, Ohio,
November 1, 1926.

Dear Catechist Supervisor:

I am sending you a money order for fifty dollars. It seems to me that the best present we can give is to Our Lord through Mary, and so I am sending this to help the Catechists in their work for Jesus through Mary.

Please enroll me in the home band of the Associate Catechists of Mary. Thanking you, and hoping for a bigger association, I am,

Sincerely yours,
H. L.

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