

The Missionary Catechist



Volume IV

Victory-Noll, Huntington, Indiana, December, 1927

Number 1

El Santo Nino - The Holy Child

By Catechist Blanche Richardson

"I CANNOT find it anywhere!" Such was the doleful whisper of my sister-Catechist, as she stood in the sacristy doorway with a sorely-perplexed countenance.

We had come to the small Mission Chapel with a pan of warm suds and a small scrub-brush, bent on washing the small image of the Santo Nino, a few days prior to Christmas. It's little body, we thought, had become somewhat begrimed with the affectionate kisses of the small Mexican children, or perhaps our devotional eyes detected spots which did not exist. The image of the Divine Infant, in the churches of the Spanish-speaking peoples, is never removed but exposed for veneration throughout the year. At any rate, the Santo Nino, together with the gaily festooned crib, in which He had been accustomed to repose had mysteriously disappeared.

Hark! what sound was that? "Venid, pastorillos!" (Come little shepherds.) At first it sounded only as a faint echo, but the melody gradually waxed stronger. Peering through the small window of the sacristy, my sister-Catechist, and I witnessed a strange sight. Heading a small procession, was a lady, whose dark face was partially hidden in the folds of a long, black scarf. In her arms, she carried the precious Nino, for whom we had just instituted a futile search in the church. At her side trooped a dozen youngsters, who joined in the chorus, at the close of every



verse, which our devout friend carried, not in a hymn-book, but in her memory. Yes, there He was, carried in state, in a newly decorated crib of pink and white crepe paper. We blushed when we recalled our hasty opinion that the Santo Nino appeared to have been somewhat neglected of late. See, what hours of loving labor had fashioned for Him! How bright and smiling He appeared in His new crib.

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We kept ourselves quietly out of sight, but could not resist peeping through a crack in the door to see the closing of this strange little ceremony. All the youngsters knelt down beside the Senora, after she had placed the Infant and the crib on a small altar-table. There were whispered prayers in which only an occasional fervent "Jesucita" (Dear Little Jesus) reached our ears. Then each one left his small offering. The Senora first placed two five-cent pieces in the crib

grand-daughter walking wearily along a frozen country road. We opened the door of our car, and invited them to get in. Margarita's eyes glowed expectantly. Even the old lady hesitated. It was only for a second, however. "No gracias," she replied. "We have made a vow to make a pilgrimage on foot to El Nino Jesus, and burn a taper in His Honor for Margarida's recovery from the Scarlet Fever."

Then, there is old Senor Lucas. Have I not seen him more than once, making a pilgrimage on his knees from the rear of the church to the colossal image of El Santo Nino de Atocha? And who is there to explain the origin of devotion to the Nino of Atocha? It seems to have been brought to this country from Europe, although we have never been able to secure definite information with regard to it, from the natives.

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A HAPPY, HOLY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OUR READERS



A Christmas Surprise



By Dennis Griffin

THE Canavans numbered seven in all, the mother and the six children, ranging in age from seven to twenty. The father had died some few years before and the mother, never strong, had been rendered practically helpless by the shock of his death. So the support of the family devolved upon the oldest, Mary. It was she who kept things going; she was both father and mother to the Canavans. She it was who every Saturday night placed her salary, received for services as head stenographer in a neighboring office, at the disposal of the family.

Tonight was Christmas eve. And as she swung briskly on her way homeward, her heart was full of Christmas cheer and gladness. Her thoughts turned to the morrow. Her hand felt her pocket book. It was safe. Within it nestled the ten dollars she had saved by walking to and from her place of employment and by the foregoing of her limited pleasures—the ten dollars that represented to her the means by which she was to make gladsome the hearts of those at home. Mother was to have a set of combs, and the children were to partake of the delights of a Christmas tree. All this she had planned for months ahead and now the eve of realization was at hand.

Only once did a cloud cross the horizon of her joy. This was when she passed the great stone mansion lighted up by only a single light, the home of her uncle, her mother's brother, who, during all these years despite his untold wealth had been unbending towards the Canavans. Years back, when his sister had married Mary's father, he, through jealous resentment, had cut aside the bonds of love and blood. But only for the moment did she cease to be happy. And then her lips addressed a prayer to the Babe of Bethlehem, in the interest of her uncle.

The children met her at the door, clambering all over her, laughing and shouting their premature Christmas greeting. She responded to all their heartiness and going over to her mother, patted softly the sunken cheek and wiped a stray hair back from the snow-white forehead. The mother smiled sweetly, her heart filled with all a mother's pride. For this was her girl.

Supper over and the housework done she donned her hat and coat. The members of the family asked no questions. For they took it for granted that she was about to pay her accustomed evening visit to the church. Mary should have been a nun, the neighbors thought. And Mary also often thought so, but when she saw the helplessness of those at home she clearly realized wherein her duty lay.

She paid her visit to the church and departing thence, crossed to the gift shop opposite. The ten dollars snuggling closely within her hand could not buy such an awful lot (so she pondered) but then it could produce so much happiness especially for the youngsters.

The clerk was very gracious to her, gladly showing her whatever he thought might please her fancy. With thorough feminine scrutiny did she examine everything, rejecting this, accepting that, until finally all her purchases were made. A glow of contentment ran through her being—contentment sprung from the act of gladly giving. Her thoughts again ran to



the morrow. In her mind's eye she saw the children shouting for joy and her mother smiling in her happiness. The sound of loud voices, however, called her back to earth.

"Fine night for Christmas eve, doctor." It was the proprietor speaking to the village doctor who had come, no doubt, to make his selection of Christmas gifts.

"For some people," was the doctor's gruff response.

"How's that?" queried the other.

The doctor paused a moment, then he apologetically answered: "Professional etiquette would usually prevent me from answering your question, but perhaps by dispensing with it, for the time being, I may be able to accomplish some good."

"Yes, yes—why, yes," the proprietor suavely agreed.

"Uh-ahem," continued the doctor, "you know the old couple up there on the hill? Well, the old gentleman has the grippe badly and his wife is all used up with the rheumatism. Both badly in want. Little food and that bad. I've done what I could myself, but I can't be there continually to give them my services. Know of anybody that could aid them?"

Mary could not help listening. And with this hearing came the pinpricks of a delicate conscience. Here were ten dollars spent on what was practically useless in comparison with what it could do for the old couple. And then again came the whisperings of blood. "Never mind them, look out for your own at home." The clerk had the bundle ready for her and was extending his hand for the money. Mary turned away. The conflict within grew and increased the more. Her hands clenched tightly, the finger nails cutting into the flesh. Finally into her eyes came a new light. Peace once more possessed her. Conscience had won over blood.



"I'm awfully sorry," she apologetically exclaimed to the clerk, "but circumstances have arisen that compel me to change my mind with regard to those articles. I don't know what to say to excuse myself for having taken up your time and labor."

"It's all right," the clerk gallantly responded. "No need of apologizing. It's a pleasure."

Gone were all those visions of the Christmas tree. Gone were the presents that were to radiate the joys of Christmas tree. Gone were the presents that were to radiate the joys of Christmas throughout a merry household. Gone were the dreams that only come with early youth. Gone—and yet she was entirely happy.

Mary walked rapidly towards home. In her hand was a basket, containing that which the ten dollars had bought to alleviate the needs of the old couple. The distance was not great and besides, the moon, seemingly radiant with Christmas joy, the merry laughter of passers-by, the joyful tinkle of sleighbells, the warm greetings apropos of the coming day, lent a fitting background to her task and rent apart her temerity.

She was now in sight of her rich uncle's home, beyond which to the right lay the home of the old couple. The way had now become more lonely. Few people moved hereabouts, she quickened her steps, and then just beyond her uncle's house, she suddenly came to a standstill. For a moment fear clutched her heart. For there in the snow appeared a black object. The first thought that entered her mind was that it was an animal. She did not know what to do. Alone and unarmed what could she do. She turned about quickly prepared to flee.

Then came a moan—apparently a human moan. She paused to listen. Again came a moan—now convincingly human. Charity dispelled her fears. And with alacrity she approached the object. It was a man and old at that. She bent low and peered at the face. Then uttering a cry she raised the head on her lap. It was her uncle, unconscious, with a small stream of blood flowing from a gash in the forehead.

Vainly she looked around for help. The house was not far to be sure. But her uncle was much too heavy for her to carry, even for that short distance. And she realized how much depended upon getting him within doors as soon as possible. There was only one way out of it. She would go to her uncle's house and bring aid.

Then out of the darkness came the whinny of a horse. Peering through the black of night she saw the faint outlines of a sleigh and horse. A new means of transfer was now at hand. And so laying her uncle's head down gently, she ran to the sleigh, gathered up the reins, wheeled the horse around and drove up beside the injured man. With difficulty she placed him aboard the sleigh, wrapping the heavy fur covering about him. And then the horse trotted up the long avenue to the home, that she, although the niece of the owner had never yet entered.

Consternation reigned among the servants. But Mary quieted their fears and soon the unconscious man was in bed. Before the doctor arrived, however, he regained consciousness. He caught sight of the

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MAKE YOUR CHRISTMAS HAPPY—SUPPORT A MISSIONARY CATECHIST



VICTORY NOLL NOTES



NEW MEXICO IN WINTER

AS the ever joyous feast of Christmas draws near the whole world seems to thrill with the Christmas greeting. Friend remembers friend, and the hearts of young and old are filled with charity toward the poor and afflicted. We extend, one to another, our heartfelt wishes for peace, for happiness, for everything that makes life worth while.

So, dear Friends and Benefactors, we, the Missionary Catechists of Our Blessed Lady of Victory, extend to you our Christmas greeting. We pray that the Infant Jesus, from His Lowly Throne, the manger, will deign to favor you with His choicest gifts.

The ceremonies of Profession and Investiture were held in our beautiful chapel on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Catechist Mary McConville of Philipsburg, Pa., made her profession and pronounced simple vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience for a period of one year.

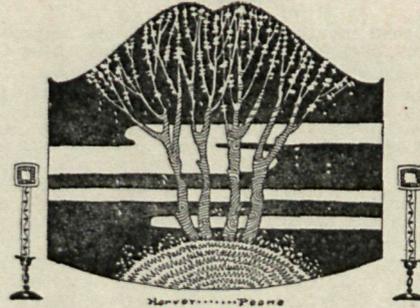
The following were received into the Juniorate: Catechist Ida Kuntz of Oldenburg, Ind.; Catechist Agnes Rauschenbach of La-Porte, Ind.; Catechist Julia Schmitt of Dubuque, Ia.; Catechist Loretta Smith of Des Moines, Ia.; Catechist Francis Alloway of Chicago, Ill.; Catechist Marguerite Tracy of Chicago, Ill., and Catechist Mary Dickebohm of LaFayette, Ind.

Those who became Probationers were: Catechists Margaret Aragon, Anna Gutierrez, and Monica Ulibarri—all of Dilia, New Mexico.; Catechist Bertina Espinosa of Ocate, New Mexico.; Catechist Eva Alberding of Decatur, Ind.; Catechist Casimir Darbutt of Terre Haute, Ind.; Catechist Loretta Bergerie of New Iberia, La., and Catechist Julia Wathen of Evansville, Ind.

Eight Candidates pronounced the Act of Consecration uniting themselves forever in the bond of love with Jesus and Mary, receiving at the same time the white veil and Mary-blue uniform of Consecrates in the Society. These new Consecrates were: Catechist Elizabeth Hann of Lilbourn, Mo.; Catechist Cecilia Schmitt of St. Louis, Mo.; Catechist Dorothy Oehler of Mt. Healthy, Ohio; Catechist Margaret Javaux of St. Louis, Mo.; Catechist Helen Weber of Ozone Park, New York; Catechist Laura Franklin of Carrollton, Mo.; Catechist De Vota Christ of Hamilton, Ohio, and Catechist Charlotte Sheper of Indianapolis, Ind.

The Investiture Ceremonies were preceded by a four day Retreat conducted by the Rev. Fulgence Meyers, O. F. M., of Cincinnati, Ohio. We certainly congratulated ourselves for having such a splendid Retreat Master.

Father Meyers was also the celebrant of the Investiture Mass. In his sermon Father Meyers emphasized woman's place in the missionary life when he said: "You are to be congratulated not only for giving yourself to the Lord but for giving yourself to the Lord in this Society, that is interested in the poorest of the poor. Our Lord said: 'I am come to preach the Gospel to the poor.' You are going to be the co-operators in this work that was so dear to Our Lord. 'How can you preach the Gospel? You preached it to us all very powerfully this morning when you consecrated your lives to the service of Jesus and Mary and when your time comes to go to the poor missions you will preach it to the poor by your personality and your uniform. You will preach



Wishing You A Merry
Christmas and A
Happy New Year

by your modest demeanor and by your consecration to God. That is the way you are going to preach not only to the poor, but also to the Catholics who have a knowledge of your consecration. God will have you save many souls who would otherwise be lost. You have great reasons to be thankful to the Lord for all He has done to you.

"Women have been known to be powerful missionaries. The first missionary to tell of the Lord's coming after the Angel was Our Blessed Mother, when she told Elizabeth 'of the great things the Lord had done to her.' The first missionaries to tell of the resurrection of Our Lord were women. The Samaritan woman was also a missionary. She told the people of her city about Our Lord and they were converted. Women have maintained this wonderful missionary spirit all through the centuries and you are called to further propagate it among the poor in the Missions."

While kneeling before the Crib of the Infant Jesus on Christmas Morn, our Catechists will pray most fervently for the intentions recommended to them by their friends.

New Mexico, especially the mountainous part of the north, appears as if it might be the home of Santa Claus, so numerous are the perfect little Christmas trees— spruce, fir and pine. The mountains are covered with their deep green, blending with the indescribable shades of tan and brown in winter, set off by the pale tints of the atmosphere, lavender, blue, silver, gold and a million others, make one feel that the laticos are nestled in a veritable fairyland.

But who can describe the grandeur of it! When the sun sends its rays through the colorful, rarified atmosphere down upon this snowy world, it is immediately transformed into oceans, oceans of diamonds. The sparkle, the glitter, the gleam, the glamour, the grandeur of such a scene! Indescribable!

The giant peaks overhead, the steep cavalcades of trees and boulders below; the ever-changing mesa and the meadow fading into purple and gold mountains in the distance; the wonderful arrangement of canyons and gorges between the foothills, and the ineffable color overspreading the the whole panorama.

—Earl Allison.

Buffalo, New York,
St. Rose of Lime Rectory,
November 15, 1927.

Dear Father Sigstein:

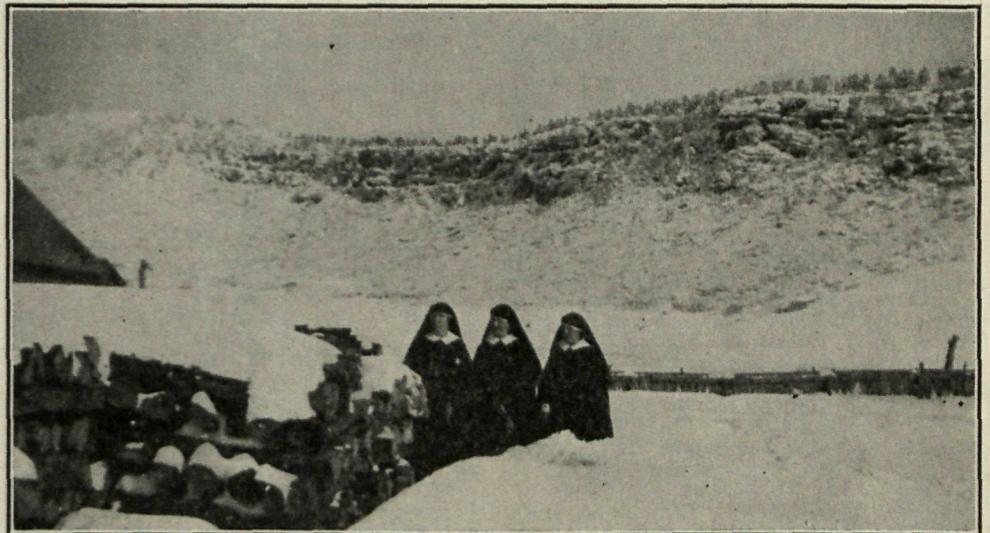
Your kind letter received today. The literature concerning the work of the Missionary Catechists greatly impressed me. I am saying my Divine Office today for the success of this wonderful work.

Regarding the young woman in whom I am interested, I can recommend her to your consideration. As she seems to want to do social service work I am certain of her success with your noble Society.

Asking your prayers, I remain,

Faternally yours in Christ,

REV. GEORGE A. CRIMMEN.



"Real" Winter

A HAPPY, HOLY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OUR READERS

The Editor and Associate Editor of the Missionary Catechist pray the Infant Jesus and His Holy Mother to bless you and all those dear to you with Their choicest blessings.

THE MESSAGE OF BETHLEHEM'S STAR.

The star which appeared in the Heavens on that first Christmas Eve, nineteen hundred years ago, reminds us of the True Light of men—Jesus Christ. The mission of every star is to guide, or to point out the way. Our Divine Lord, Who is the Light of the World, says of Himself: "I am the Way." The Mission of Bethlehem's Star was to point out the way to Christ to those souls who earnestly sought Him. In so far as we become other Christs, i. e., animated with the same dispositions of Our Dear Lord,—and filled with the love of God and man, especially His beloved poor, we become other lights, or guiding stars, for those who have lost their way in the darkness of unbelief, or for those who have left the paths of justice for the ways of sin.

Now just as the Star of Bethlehem shed brilliant rays, so our shining deeds of charity shed brilliant rays in the shape of powerful influence for good. They not only shed rays of hope in the darksome lives of those less favored with this world's goods than we, but others who witness our zeal and love for God's poor, are inspired with greater love for God and His Holy Religion. It causes them to go out of themselves, to reach out to others less fortunate, thereby enabling them to become less selfish and more Christlike.

From Las Cruces, New Mexico, we learn that the several powerfully financed Protestant Missionary Societies have planned building a big training college and other institutions, at Mesilla Park, for Social Service Work among the Spanish-speaking Catholics in New Mexico.

A number of Protestant church have already pledged themselves to furnish scholarships for needy native young men and women for Missionary Work among the Catholics in New Mexico.

Mesilla Park is the home of the College of Agriculture. This institution is financed partly by the United States Government, partly by the State of New Mexico. It is supposed to be non-sectarian. Nevertheless considerable proselytizing is openly carried on by American and Mexican Ministers and Social Service Workers.

If the Society of Missionary Catechists could but get sufficient funds for supporting a number of its Catechists, they could be sent to Mesilla Park, New Mexico, to counteract Protestant Propaganda and save the Faith of the Catholics there.

It is estimated that the sale of Christmas Cards this year will reach the enormous total of \$50,000,000.00.

These cards for the most part, will be sent as "exchange Christmas gifts," to friends.

We have been thinking how highly such Christmas cards would be appreciated by our destitute, "friendless" Catholics in the Southwest.

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

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Reading Something Worth While

"THE PARISH PRIEST-MISSIONARY."

Edited and published by the Parish Visitors of Mary Immaculate, 328 West 71st St., New York City. Price \$3.00, postpaid. This is a very attractive book of human interest narratives exemplifying parochial zeal. Therein we see the zealous Priest at work and his first aids, the Parish Visitors of Mary Immaculate, co-operating with him.

It is a book for everyone. The Priest will enjoy it because it comes closest to his special sphere of action: the parish; the Brothers and Sisters will want it because they work for the parish; the people will love it because they now see what the Priest is doing for their souls every day of their lives; Social Workers will appreciate it because the stories are founded on the best principles of social science, with the soul of Faith and Charity animating the work.

Rev. J. J. Sigstein:

Find enclosed a check for \$5.00 for the Missionary Catechist Medicine Fund for the Southwest. I make this offering in honor of Our Blessed Lady of Victory for favors received.

Wishing you success in your work, I am,
Sincerely yours,

H. M. O.

Pittsburgh, Pa.

Rev. dear Father:

Enclosed find a check which is to be used toward the support of the Missionary Home.

I wish you would kindly publish my thanks to the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph, St. Rita, and the Sacred Heart for a favor partially granted through their intercession.

Respectfully yours,

L. J. O.

Chicago, Ill.,

To the Missionary Catechist:

I am enclosing a dollar for the Burse in honor of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. I hope to send this amount each month since I believe that the training of the Missionary Catechists is a very necessary and noble work.

Hoping that every success may crown your efforts, I remain,

Sincerely yours in Mary,

M. A. R.

Chicago, Ill.

Dear Father Sigstein:

I have just learned of the wonderful work the Missionary Catechists are doing among God's poor. I am enclosing a small donation for this work.

May I ask you, dear Father, to remember my poor daughter, who is very ill, in their Novena to O. B. L. V.?

Respectfully yours,

MRS. F.

Victory-Noll, Huntington, Ind.

Dear Rev. Father:

Please send my sister and me a "Mite Box." We have both decided to save our pennies for the Missions.

Thanking you, Father, I am,

Sincerely yours,

E. L.

PRAYER TO THE INFANT JESUS

Behold the dear Infant Jesus, and adore Him fervently. Contemplate His poverty, and humility, in imitation of His most holy Mother and of St. Joseph. Repose near Him as sweetly as you can, He will not fail to love your heart, void as you find it of tenderness and feeling. Nothing will be wanting to you, since you will be in the presence of that holy Infant. Abide there, and learn of Him how meek and humble He is, how simple and amiable. See how lovingly He has written your name in the depth of His Divine Heart, which beats on that couch of straw from the impassioned zeal it has for our advancement, and heaves not one single sigh unto His Father in which you have not a part, nor a single movement of the spirit except for your happiness.

—St. Francis de Sales.

"REMEMBERS"

Lida L. Coghlan

Remember that Christmas comes but once a year and for that one day you can forget yourself and live for others.

Remember that Christmas is a holy day. Give your first thought to God; make your first visit to your Infant Savior.

—THEN—

Remember that it is Christmas for the poor, the sick and the friendless. Give them a little of your Christmas cheer.

San Antonio, Texas, Nov. 23, 1927
Dear Father Sigstein:

I am so delighted to hear that your Missionary Catechists are ready to help good Bishop Gerken with his missionary problems.

I am leaving now for a week's visit to some of my poorest Missions.

I will be glad to have you visit us in San Antonio.

Wishing you every blessing in your work, I remain

Yours in Xto,

✠ ARTHUR J. DROSSARTS
Archbishop San Antonio.



The First Fruits of a New Work



By Father Oliver, O. F. M.

MAY 24th, 1927, will always be a memorable day for the Franciscan Missions of the Southwest, for on that day, three members of the Society of Missionary Catechists joined forces with the Friars to help impart religious instruction to the many hundreds of the Spanish-American children of this mining district who have absolutely no opportunity of attending a Catholic school. The new Missionaries were Senior Catechist Edna Like, Catechist Madeline Lorang, and Catechist Josephine Penning. The opening of this mission center was quite providential. Suitable quarters for the Catechists were next to impossible to obtain. Every house in Cerrillos was occupied and the mining company at Madrid was rushing the construction of houses sufficient to accommodate their laborers. At the last minute, the very day before the opening a kind Protestant lady offered the use of her small furnished hotel until such time as the Catechists would have their own home. Immediately after their arrival they began organizing catechism classes for the children, visiting the poor and destitute and administering to the sick. Their shining example of personal holiness and solid piety has perhaps more than any other factor contributed to the success of the work at Cerrillos and Madrid. They have truly endeared themselves to the hearts of the people.

Recently upon their return from the semi-annual retreat at Las Vegas they were met at the station by a little boy aged seven. "Catechist," he yelled, "we thought you'd never come back. Don't ever leave us, Catechist, for who will care for us poor kids when you go away?" This little lad spoke better than he knew, because the success of the work here depends entirely upon gaining the good will of the children. The parents are almost entirely indifferent to the spiritual welfare of their offspring.

The spiritual complexion of this coal mining camp has changed completely during the last six months. We have now something approaching a real Catholic life. The Angelus is rung every day. Holy Mass is celebrated every Sunday both at Cerrillos and Madrid. Where formerly seventy-five communions was the average for the year, we now have at least thirty communions every Sunday and on Poor Souls day we had seventy communions at Madrid and eighty-six at Cerrillos. The little chapel at Madrid cannot hold the number of the faithful. So far we have succeeded in arousing from their spiritual lethargy about one-



Most Rev. Archbishop Daeger, O. F. M. and Franciscan Fathers at Dedication.

fifth of the Catholic population, and at that have overflowing crowds every Sunday. The children, alone, if we could succeed in attracting all of them, would fill the chapel to its utmost capacity. A few months after the arrival of the first Catechists their number was augmented by the presence of Catechist M. Martinez of Holman, and quite recently by that of Catechist Monnot. From Cerrillos, the center, the Catechists will, in time, attend to the missions of Ortiz, Cache Entry, Turquoise mines, Waldo, San Pedro, Golden, Carnahan, La Madera and Cienega. They have already started at Waldo.

On Sunday, October 2nd, His Grace Most Rev. Archbishop Daeger of Santa Fe, assisted by ten Friars, solemnly blessed the Catechists' new home. The ceremonies were beautiful and the most orderly ever seen in the sunshine State. After His Grace had vested, the vast procession consisting of His Grace, ten priests, altar boys, a delegation

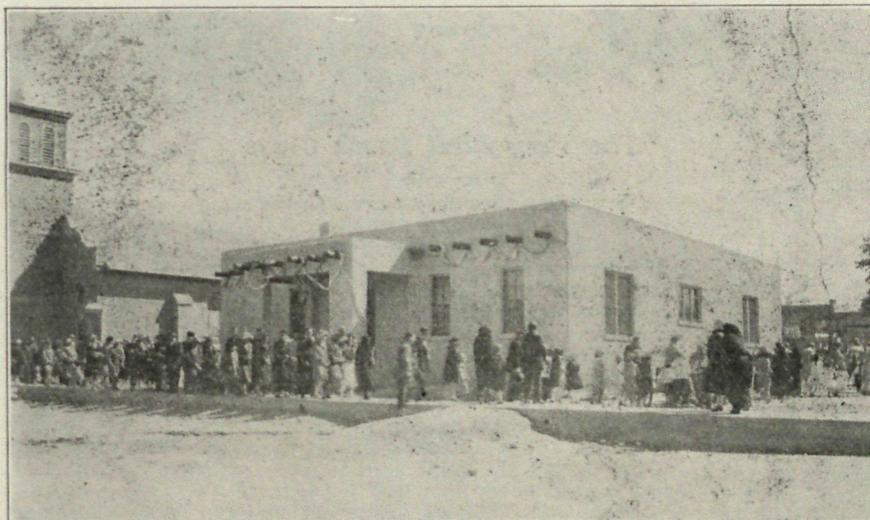
of Knights of Columbus from Santa Fe, and all the faithful of Cerrillos, marched to the new mission center. There, singing the "Miserere" and "Magnificat," the clergy blessed the house, whilst the people marched in procession around it. After the blessing, His Grace celebrated a solemn Pontifical High Mass. Rev. Father Barnabas Meyer, rector of the cathedral at Santa Fe, preached the sermon and paid a glowing tribute to the Catechists and their sublime apostolate. We had the honor to have with us for the occasion Rev. Father J. J. Sigstein, founder and spiritual director of the Society of Missionary Catechists.

EL SANTO NINO

(Continued from Page 1)

Certainly, the Nino of Atocha is none other than Oud Divine Lord in the likeness of a child about nine years old, dressed like a little prince with large plumed hat, court dress with lace collar, and seated on a handsomely carved high-back chair. In His left hand, He holds a shepherd's crook, with a gourd fastened to the end of it. In the right hand, is a basket filled with fruit and a loaf of bread. The Santo Nino, as we know, is also the Good Shepherd, so it is natural to represent Him as a little Shepherd. Now, we still have shepherds, although the shepherds of these days do not dress like the Santo Nino of Atocha. Here in the West, each owner of a small piece of land raises a few sheep. Those small flocks are attended by the children, and old folks, who, being unable to stand any hard work, take care of the sheep. In this way, they make their lives useful from the beginning to the last. As it happens quite often that the fields in which those shepherds have to pasture their sheep are far away from their homes, it becomes necessary for the shepherds to take their lunches along with them, and some water. Nowadays the shepherd's lunch is carried in a metal lunch pail, and the water in a modern canteen, but we must remember that this was not the custom some hundred years ago in Europe. Not so long ago, they used to carry their lunch either in a basket or in a bag and the water in a gourd.

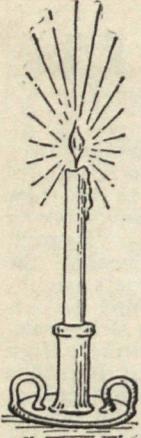
It is only natural to suppose that this quaint devotion originated among a pastoral people in Europe and was brought to America and cherished by a pastoral people within her boundaries. Moreover, it is interesting to note that Our Lord favored the shepherd people of old by inviting them first to come and adore Him as an Infant.



The Catechists New Mission Center, Cerrillos, New Mexico.

A HAPPY, HOLY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OUR READERS

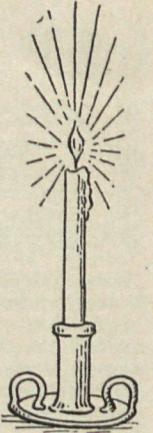
The Associate Catechists of Mary



A
Holy
Christmas



A
Happy
New Year



My dear Associate Catechists of Mary:
Because you have loved His poor and neglected in the missions, may the Infant Jesus bless your Christmas; may He keep you near Him through the year and bless each moment of it.

For the last two months, perhaps even longer, most of you have been gathering things together for your Christmas mission boxes so that when Christmas did come, the Catechists might spread its happiness and cheer among the poor under their care. Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without gifts, and gifts for the poor are blessed of God. Your Christmas, therefore, will be a happy and holy one, of that I am confident.

It has been a pleasure to receive your reports during the past year, and to feel your enthusiastic missionary spirit pulsing through them. We have accomplished a great deal, and I wish to thank each one of you personally for the splendid interest you have manifested.

Through the New Year I shall remember you in my prayers that Jesus and Mary may continue to bless your missionary efforts.

Sincerely in O. B. L. V.,
The Catechist Supervisor
Associate Catechists of Mary.

Dear Friends of the Children:

I desire to thank you for enrolling me in Victory-Noll Mission Circle. I will endeavor to send two dollars every month to help you in your great work.

May God bless each one of you!

Dear Catechist Supervisor:

I herewith apply for membership in "Victory-Noll Mission Circle." Please enroll me in the "Dollar Squadron." I will send at least one dollar every month, and sometimes a bit extra.

I am enclosing one dollar to cover my membership dues for one year, and fifty

cents for which send me an A. C. M. pin. I hope wearing the pin will help me to live better and interest others in your work.

God bless you, and all the Catechists!

HEAVEN'S GIFT TO US—OUR FAITH.

"It is a great thing to be a Catholic. There is no greater thing in this world than the gift of the Catholic Faith. Our life is short, even at its longest. Working for the Church and endeavoring to live for the Church is the only thing worth doing in life."

The following paragraphs from the report of one of our Chief-Promoters are full of missionary zeal and true love for Jesus and Mary in the person of Their poor. May it prove an inspiration to other bands!

(Continued on Page 7)



The Junior Associate Catechists of Mary

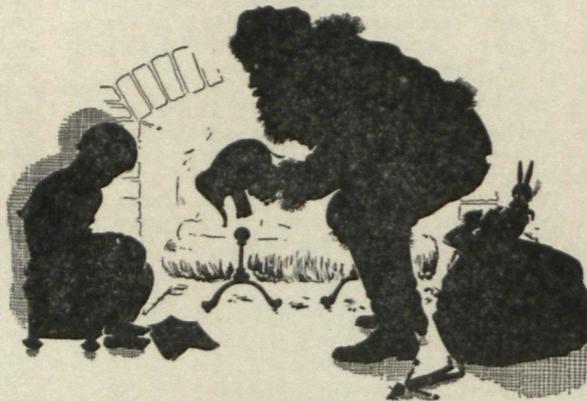


Dear Juniors:

I hope you will be very happy on Jesus' birthday, and that you will make Him very happy, too. There are many ways in which you can make Him happy. I think your mothers and fathers must have told you some, but there is one way to tell you. It is to kneel before His crib and pray for the little children in the missions who cannot go to Mass and receive Our Lord in Holy Communion as often as you do. Will you make Him happy by doing this?

May the Infant Jesus bless you all!

The Catechist Supervisor,
Junior A. C. M.



"The happiness that comes of joyous giving," replied St. Nicholas.

The happiness of joyous giving! Therein lies the charm that endeared St. Nicholas in the hearts of all men. His spirit lives on and will live on forever, in Santa Claus. For he, you see, was the very first Santa Claus.

Somehow the very mention of Santa Claus brings a sparkle of delight into our eyes. It is because we have caught the spirit of joyous giving that St. Nicholas knew. If we could only keep more of that spirit through the year, how happy we should be, and how happy we should make others!

VICTORY-BAND

Any boy or girl who wishes to become a Junior Associate Catechist of Mary may join Victory-Band.

Those who join promise to help the Missionary Catechists feed, clothe, and nurse the poor children in the Missions. This they may do by their prayers and by their offerings. No child is so poor but that he cannot save at least one penny every week to help some one who is poorer than he is.

There aren't any dues to pay for belonging to Victory-Band. All that you need to do is to write me a letter telling me that you want to join, and I will enroll you.

The promise is printed on the Membership Card which will then be mailed to you. Every Junior should make the promise just as soon as he receives his membership card.

The Very First Santa Claus

A long time ago, oh, an even longer time ago than that, there lived a holy Bishop called Nicholas. Every one loved him because he was very holy and very generous. He was the friend of every child, the more needy and neglected, the more St. Nicholas loved him. He was a real shepherd to the people God had placed in his care.

But not even his great charity could defend him from the anger and hatred of those who did not believe in Jesus. They persecuted him and finally put him to death.

Once during the troubled days before his death a man asked him how he found contentment, and Nicholas answered: "I have the supreme happiness."

"And what is that?" inquired another who stood near.

WHY?



Why do bells for Christmas ring?

Why do little children sing?

Once a lovely, shining star

Seen by shepherds from afar

Gently moved until its light

Made a manger cradle bright.

There a darling baby lay

Pillowed soft upon the hay;

And its Mother sang and smiled,

"This is Christ, the Holy Child."

Therefore little children sing.

Therefore little children sing.



Juniors who would like to have mite boxes in which to save up their pennies for the missions, may get them by writing to Catechist Supervisor, Victory-Noll, Huntington, Indiana.



MAKE YOUR CHRISTMAS HAPPY—SUPPORT A MISSIONARY CATECHIST

A CHRISTMAS SURPRISE

(Continued from Page 2)

"What's all this hullabaloo about?" he weakly demanded. Then he remembered. "The old horse shied at a bank of snow and tipped the sleigh. Threw me out on my head—What in God's name are you staring at? Get out or I'll—" He stopped short. His glance had fallen on Mary.

"What are you doing here? Suppose your mother sent you here to see me die. Well, I'm not going to favor you thus, not yet for a time."

"Sir," interposed the butler, "the young lady has er-saved your life. You would have er-frozen to death very soon, sir, out there, sir, unless she had brought you in, sir."

The old man for the moment looked dazed. Then slowly dawned on him the realization of what he owed this girl. His better nature asserted itself.

"Forgive me, niece," he apologized. "I am getting old and cranky. I don't know how to thank you, how to repay my debt of gratitude."

Then he lapsed into silence, gazing at her intently and finally resumed: "Great heavens, girl, how you resemble your mother!" and his eyes filled with tears reminiscent of the past. "How is she?"

And then when Mary had told him, the tears coursed down his cheeks in rivulets.

"Yes," said he brokenly, "I have done her a great wrong, casting her off from me, allowing her to be in want, when I had so much—she my own flesh and blood. If I could only do something for her, even at this late date. But I know that she would not accept my friendship now."

"She is still your sister," responded Mary, "and the only sorrows of her life were the death of my father and her separation from you."

"Yes, yes—my own sister. But go, Mary—go to your mother at once, and ask her to forgive me and take me back again, as her brother."

The idea of returning home brought back to Mary the object of her mission. She looked around for her basket. Then she remembered. It was out where her uncle had lain unconscious.

"Excuse me, uncle—but I must first go and see the old couple."

"What's the idea?" interrogated her uncle.

"They're in want and need help. And I wished to aid them as much as I could, especially to make them feel that Christmas cannot be sorrowful."

"But how, my child?" continued the uncle. "Where could you get the money? You have little enough for yourself, God knows."

Mary was silent. But persistent questionings brought to light the whole story.

A new light shone in her uncle's eyes. He pressed the girl's hand warmly. Then he called for the telephone. First it was a doctor—then a nurse—and finally a grocer—and all were given explicit instructions to do their part to alleviate fully the needs of the old couple. In the midst of all this, his own doctor entered. For a moment the doctor seemed dazed at the sight that greeted his eyes. But he soon gained possession of himself.

"You don't look much like a sick man," he greeted the uncle.

"Well, I came pretty near being a dead one," responded the one addressed, telling him the whole story.

"A nasty cut," diagnosed the doctor. "No



THE CHRIST CHILD CALLS.

Led by a Star the three wise men came
Over mountain and desert wild,
Seeking the King of whom prophets told.
The Messiah promised the Jews of old,
And coming—they found a Child.

A tiny babe in His mother's arms;
For whom Bethlehem found no place;
Wrapped in the simple swaddling bands,
With tender eyes and outstretched hands
And heaven's light upon His face.

—Lida L. Coghlan.



breaks—rest quiet,—and you can get up tomorrow and eat your Christmas dinner. Lucky for you though that your niece passed by in time." Then he took his departure.

And soon after Mary followed his example and went on her mission of charity, thanking the Divine Providence that had sent her to be the means of saving her uncle's life and of reuniting her mother to her uncle in filial love.

When both had gone the uncle called the butler to him.

"James," said he, "prepare the rooms on the east and west wings for my sister and her children. They will live with me from tomorrow on. And look," he whispered, "telephone for a Christmas tree to be set up in the reception room loaded with tinsel and plenty of presents. And get the best set of combs that the town can provide for my sister. Just a minute," he ordered, as the butler prepared to leave the room, "have the double sleigh ready tomorrow morning at 9:30. I will accompany my sister and her children to Mass."

The butler gasped with astonishment—the master going to church—he who had not been for so many years.

And as he acquiesced all the clocks and bells of the town let loose and announced the dawn of Christmas.

"Merry Christmas," the old man greeted the butler.

And the butler stifling his astonishment, responded: "Same to you, sir, and many of them."

—From "Christmas Stories" (No. 9)

Published by

The International Catholic Truth Society,
407 Bergen St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

ASSOCIATE CATECHISTS OF MARY

(Continued from Page 6)

"Since last January the bands under my jurisdiction have sent to you about twelve hundred dollars to be applied on Burses. We have sent sixty-two First Communion outfits to the missions, besides all the other useful things sent at various times during the year. God is very good to permit us to do this for His love and the honor of His Holy and Blessed Name.

"We are planning to do a great deal in honor of the birth of Our Blessed Lord. We shall send Christmas stockings for the little ones, and also many other useful things for the Catechists to give to the poor. We hope to be able to do even more than last year.

"Please ask God to give me the grace and strength to keep well enough to see that all our plans are carried to a successful end as our gift to Our Blessed Lady of Victory on the birthday of Her Son."

Address all A. C. M. communications to: Catechist Supervisor, Associate Catechists of Mary, Victory-Noll, Huntington, Ind.

It is generally known that the popular English translation of the "Adeste Fideles" was written by a convert to the Faith. Canon Frederick Oakley, who, after being a Prebendary of Lichfield Cathedral, was received into the Catholic Church. He translated the "Adeste" in his Anglican days. It was at the Portuguese Chapel in London in 1797 that the "Adeste Fideles" was first introduced into the Christmas service in England.

The custom of erecting a crib in our churches to represent the Infant Jesus in His manger was introduced by St. Francis of Assisi in the thirteenth century.

In the Franciscan hermitage at Greccio, a little town in the hill country of Italy, St. Francis had a stable built, with a manger, and, near the manger, an altar. When time for Midnight Mass drew near, the townspeople of Greccio all flocked to the stable, carrying lighted torches. St. Francis was deacon at the Mass, and, after the Gospel, he preached a beautiful sermon on the love of the Infant Jesus. As he bent over the Crib, the townspeople seemed to behold there a Babe of infinite sweetness. All his hearers believed that that night Greccio had become another Bethlehem.

WHY THE LITTLE JESUS CAME.

A little boy listened to his mother telling the story of the little Infant Jesus. He could not understand, however, why our Savior left Heaven, where everything is so beautiful, and came down to the poor little manger.

"Was the little Jesus in Heaven before He came down to the crib?" he asked.

"Yes, darling," answered his mother.

"Up there where God is?"

"Yes."

"And where the angels are?"

"Yes."

"And where the Blessed Virgin is?"

"No, my child, she was still on earth."

"Oh!" exclaimed the little fellow, "now I know, mama. The little Jesus came down to look for His Mother!"

A HAPPY, HOLY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OUR READERS

CHRISTMAS GREETING CARDS AND GIFTS

Does it not occur to us that most of our greeting cards, especially for Christmas, contain nothing which in any way remind one of the sublime mystery we celebrate on this occasion—the humble birth of the Saviour at Bethlehem. Most of the cards used express no Christian sentiments whatever, convey no Catholic thought from sender to recipient; in fact, are they often not just what one pagan might send to another?

We all know from our own experience how such cards are received, merely glanced at and cast aside, without raising even one thought to the newly-born Holy Infant in the Crib. How far different when a religious card, with Bethlehem's stable, the singing Angels, the devout Shepherds, or the adoring Magi reaches our home? The whole family takes turn in seeing it; children vie with one another to get and preserve it.

Our stores are overloaded with these pagan cards, and they hesitate to carry the religious kind till we create a demand for those with Christian sentiments. Our religious publishing houses carry them, but cannot sell them quite as cheaply as the rest because the demand is too limited.

One of our good Bishops, referring to these greeting cards, writes: "Christian ideals and thoughts are passing away from our Christian cards. It is up to us Catholics to uphold these ideals by using cards that are Catholic in spirit and by influencing our friends to purchase them." If we are going to send cards at all, might we not just as well send the right kind for the same postage?

Ghost stories and fairy tales in book form, even in Catholic homes, seem to have become ordinary Christmas gifts for children, while a Child's Life of Christ in large print, with beautiful colored pictures and substantial cover, would go far to give Catholic children a better understanding of the real object of the Christmas feast, and would help to imprint indelibly on their minds lessons that will never sink as deeply as in childhood.

Even for grown-ups, Christmas presents might be more frequently of a religious nature, such as a suitable crucifix for the home, a beautiful holy water font, or a good Catholic piece for the victrola or piano.

How often extravagant Christmas presents go to those who need them least; while those who need them most—the very necessary things and ordinary comforts of life—get least or are forgotten altogether. The orphans, the widows, the missions, the church, get little or nothing from most of us for Christmas.

Could we not make the Christ Child a member of our household and give Him or His poor at least an equal share, if no more, in our distribution of Christmas gifts, mindful of His own words that whatsoever we do to the least of His brethren, we do to Him?

Think it over!

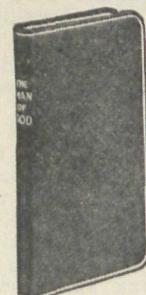
Minister (to flapper): "Would you care to join me in the new missionary movement?"

Flapper: "I am crazy to try it. Is it anything like the fox trot?"

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