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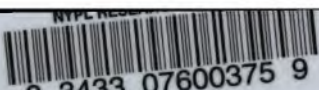
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A RETROSPECT

THREE SCORE YEARS AND TEN



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## A RETROSPECT









SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE

134

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# A RETROSPECT

## Three Score Years and Ten

Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate  
Heart of Mary

By a Member of the Congregation

*St. Mary's College and Academy  
Monroe, Michigan  
November, 1915*

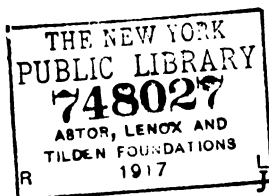
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TO THE VIRGIN MARY,  
THE BLESSED MOTHER OF GOD,  
UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF WHOSE  
IMMACULATE HEART  
OUR COMMUNITY FOR SEVENTY YEARS  
HAS ACCOMPLISHED THE WORK OF HER  
DIVINE SON,  
DO WE DEDICATE THIS RETROSPECT.  
O MARY, WHO ART OUR LIFE,  
OUR LIGHT, OUR SWEETNESS,  
AND OUR HOPE, CONTINUE TO  
BLESS AND SAFEGUARD US AND  
MAKE US THINE OWN IN TIME AND  
ETERNITY.



"SEVENTY YEARS!

WHAT MEMORIES ARE THE PEERS  
OF SUCH SERVICE! WHO SHALL SEND  
AWED MESSENGERS INTO THE VAST OF MIND  
TO SUMMON THEM? OR WHO SHALL FIND  
AND HERALD THEIR GRAND RETICENCE? IF HOURS  
ARE SOMETIMES EPOCHS, IF THERE ARE  
MINUTES THAT RISE LIKE BABYLONIAN TOWERS  
ABOVE TIME'S SORDID PLAIN, WHO SHALL DECLARE  
THE GRANDEUR OF THIS LIFE? WHAT ANGEL COM-  
PASS IT?  
NOT WORDS,—BUT SMILES AND TEARS  
CAN HAIL, WITH HOMAGE FIT,  
THOSE SEVENTY YEARS!"



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## INTRODUCTION

BY THE RIGHT REVEREND EDWARD D. KELLY, D.D.



**N**O HISTORY of Educational work in Michigan could afford to leave out of account a generous contribution to, and acknowledgment of, the great work done by the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. For three-quarters of a century, a period most remarkable for educational endeavor and achievement, they have alternately buffeted the waves of adversity and calmly enjoyed the sunshine and quiet of success. In either case they were undisturbed. Adverse conditions had the effect of making them stronger, while success made them more vigilant and more eager. They have gladly welcomed every phase of the evolution of pedagogics and have been quick to detect the conventional sham and veneer which so often mesmerize an unthinking public and put taxpayers at the mercy of faddists and their ilk who are engaged in self-exploitation. Honest, or at least legitimate, education ought to become a public slogan. At any rate it is

equally as needful as the cry for the "full dinner-pail."

In a quiet, unassuming way, with the modesty and reserve characteristic of a typical Sisterhood, but with the unbounded faith characteristic of the early martyrs, these Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart, have gone on in their work of love and sacrifice until today they may justly be called the most potent individual force in Michigan educational work.

Why are they so potent? In the first place, they are a religious society which has specialized in the business of religious and intellectual training. The religious, moral, and intellectual development of the young mind constitutes the whole aim and purpose of their existence. Steadfastly and persistently do they cling to that one ideal. Under this ideal, possible only in the Catholic Church, life is sacrificed for life as in parenthood. That is to say, the teacher gives up everything for the ideal. The idea of such sacrifice is unintelligible to the worldly minded, the materialist, and the irreligious. But under such a scheme the young mind can not be exploited for mercenary purposes or for any vaulting ambition. The average teaching experience is measured by the near maximum of life, and not by opportunity. An actuary

could indicate this experience just as surely as he can mark the life-lines where insurance policies mature. The value of a life teacher with life experience ought to be considered of as high importance as a life worker in any profession.

Secondly, they are of potent force because their teachers in College and Academic work are largely university graduates with university degrees. Their equipment in buildings, laboratories, and gymnasia is of a very high order. Finally, they have the endorsement and approbation of the Holy See and are in touch with the most advanced and progressive thought in the Educational work of the Catholic Church.

One shall not be far out of the way to say that the teaching of the Master: "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God," is the mainspring of all their works. It would be characteristic of the work of God to ordain that there should be in the world agencies as varied as the needs of man, to enable man to obtain the object for which he was created. The school is called the workshop of the Church. These Sisters, Servants of Mary, have made every one of their schools another Nazareth workshop.

No one has ever been able to criticise, either from a theoretical or a practical viewpoint, the abundant supremacy of the moral message of Jesus Christ, but the world is a laggard, if not an outright rebel, in aligning itself with His teaching and example. Religious Education calls sweetly but sharply for the ordering of the whole span of life so that it may, in its wide outward sweep, fit up snugly with its duties to God and neighbor ; or, to change the figure, that the tonal products of life may harmonize with the pre-eminent leadership of the Lebensmeister who has always enthralled and fascinated the generations of men.

The maker of songs, the maker of laws, and the maker of morals all have a radical influence in every period of life's development ; and it can be easily seen that the religious teacher who traces life to its origin and points its destinies has an influence more far-reaching than that desired by Archimedes, who would shift the world from its foundation.

## CHAPTER I

REVEREND LOUIS GILET, C.SS.R., FOUNDER OF THE  
SISTERS, SERVANTS OF THE IMMACULATE  
HEART OF MARY



ALL history is but a record of what man has done, and the names of such men as we find connected with its principal events are inscribed upon its golden page as heroes who challenge us to noble deeds and exalted ideals. But the true value of a man's life is to be found in the permanent good he has done in the world, and not unfrequently do we find that a single person may change the destiny of countless individuals or even of nations. Judged by this criterion, Reverend Louis Gilet, C.SS.R., finds place among the really great men of his generation. A man of high descent and great intellectual attainments, his life was modeled upon that of our Most Holy Redeemer, and, following in His footsteps, he brought comfort, consolation, and the light of faith to innumerable souls. Whatever else may be in



doubt in this world, there can be no doubt of the value of such a life, for the inestimable good wrought by him still lives and will bear fruit through all future years.

Louis Florent Gilet was born in Antwerp on the twelfth of January, 1813. Placed by his parents on the day of his baptism under the special protection of the Queen of Heaven, through his whole life he cherished the most tender devotion to her and received numerous and signal graces and benefits from her hand. His family occupied a position of affluence, but had suffered the reverses of fortune during the shock of revolutions which ushered in the nineteenth century. Its members were distinguished for their piety. The pure, simple, strong belief which characterized the ages of faith prevailed, and the virtues which they practiced were in keeping with their lively faith. His grandmother was a Berchmans, of the family of St. John Berchmans; Louis and his elder sister Marie, who afterward became Sister Marie Celestine of the Trappistine Order, could, with honest pride, encourage each other to the practice of piety, in the words of the youthful Tobias, "We are the children of saints."

Having finished his humanities in the Col-



REVEREND LOUIS FLORENT GILET, C.S.S.R.



lege of Liège, Louis was sent to Louvain to make his philosophical studies. He passed his final examinations in philosophy at the early age of twenty; and to make assurance doubly sure, he made a retreat that he might be guided aright in the choice of his vocation. It ended on the feast of the Immaculate Conception; and, confiding in Mary's powerful protection, he entered the Novitiate of the Redemptorists at St. Trond, where, at the close of one year, he was admitted to the religious profession of the perpetual vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. He made his theological studies with the future Cardinal Deschamps, who remained ever afterward his most faithful friend.

In 1838 he was ordained to the priesthood, and during the next four years he was engaged in giving Missions in his native country; but his ardent soul longed to carry the light of the Gospel to fields afar, and in 1842 he had the happiness of being appointed by his Superiors to America. After a long and perilous voyage, he landed in New York on the thirtieth of April, 1843. Two months later he was named the Superior of the Missions in Michigan, the Catholic population of which was greatly in need of French Missionaries, as many of them

had come across the border and were not familiar with the English language.

A letter written to the Community by the Rev. M. Symphorien, Prior of the Royal Abbey at Notre Dame, Hautecombe, Savoy, after the death of our saintly Founder, gives an epitome of his life and labors.

“DEAR REV. MOTHER.

“To the chant of the ‘In exitu Israel,’ on the fifteenth of last November, we bore to their final resting place the remains of a venerable monk, the Rev. Mary Celestine (Louis Florent Gilet), who, the day before, had gone to his eternal reward, in the eightieth year of his age, the sixtieth of his religious life and the thirty-third of his Cistercian Profession.”

Here the Prior gives a brief sketch of Father Gilet’s life as a Redemptorist and the details of the Foundation of the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as related in Chapter III. He then continues the biography:

“Father Gilet, meanwhile, had returned to Europe. As time passed, bringing him no tidings of the little Community he had left in Monroe, he thought it had been dissolved. His ardent zeal for souls brought him back to America after a time; and during several years

he did wonders for the glory of God, evangelizing the vast regions of the Mississippi. No sacrifice alarmed that noble priest, no difficulty was too great for him; but at length, in 1857, his health failed and he again returned to France in the hope of recruiting sufficient strength to resume his apostolic mission.

“The Bishop of Laon, Mgr. Gaesignic, gave him charge of the parishes of Bievre and Chorat; and there, as in America, the missionary revealed himself an orator entirely above the ordinary. His eloquence, inspired by a heart of gold and an entire abnegation of self, possessed the gift of captivating all hearts and gaining them to Jesus Christ.

“At the request of the Archpriest of Laon, Rev. Louis Gilet came several times during the Lent of 1858 to Notre Dame, where he preached with marvelous and brilliant success. But his humility took alarm, and his ardent love of souls made him long again for the hard field of apostolic labor. God wanted something else from that generous soul! No longer amid the tumult of the world was that voice to sound, but from the silent cloisters of Citeaux! As soon as the call of God had been made clear to the heart which had never known hesitation in the accomplishment of His Holy Will, he

went to Serangue to embrace the more perfect, the more austere life of the Cistercian Monk; and on the twenty-second of August, 1858, he received the Holy Habit with the name of Mary Celestine. In the Monastery, this fervent Religious filled successively all the charges: Secretary, Professor of Theology and Philosophy, Chaplain of the Trappistine Nuns of Notre Dame des Prés, Master of Novices, and Sub-Prior. In 1878, on the death of Don Athanese Matin, Father Celestine was elected his successor as Abbot, and filled that office with the greatest solicitude and religious regularity.

“In 1883, he was a second time chosen Master of Novices. His whole heart was in the work of forming good and virtuous religious priests.

“Besides the charge of Master of Novices, he directed the numerous retreats of the secular clergy who came to our solitude of Haute-combe each year, sometimes one alone, sometimes several together, to meditate more deeply on the end of man and the importance of their sacerdotal call. It can truly be said that the direction of these retreats was, during his last years, his work of predilection.

“Providence reserved for the close of this holy life a very sweet consolation. In 1889

one of our Fathers of Lerins received a letter from a relative of his, a Sister of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, asking if there was not in his Community a Father Gilet; she knew he was in France in the Order of Citeaux. The letter was immediately sent to Hautecombe; and soon—one can imagine with what emotion—the Father recognized his spiritual daughters.

“The little mustard-seed planted by the Redeptorist in 1845 had become a tree whose branches spread over vast dioceses, in which a Congregation of six hundred Religious now gives to thousands of children that Christian education for which the noble heart of our dear Father Celestine was solicitous in the first years of his ministry. The House of Monroe, Michigan, inaugurated by our beloved Father himself, alone numbers more than two hundred Sisters, besides a flourishing Novitiate.

“Happy to have at last recovered traces of their Father, the Sisters expressed an ardent desire to see him; but the infirmities of old age were an insurmountable obstacle to such a journey. He gave them, however, written by his own trembling hand, an historical sketch of the origin of their Institute. Amid details the most interesting, it contains advice of high spirituality and most touching exhortations, which the



Sisters will treasure as the last echo of the voice of their venerated Father.

“They sent him a richly bound copy of their Rules. With the exception of some few additions, made necessary by time and the increase of the Community, it is the same to-day as it was when he gave it to them nearly fifty years ago. Oh, with what delight did he read it over and over again!

“A most interesting correspondence was then kept up between the Father and his spiritual children, but the end was near. Infirmities growing with years, the life of the good Religious became very painful. He could no longer leave his cell, where he was always found in prayer. Gradually his weakness increased, until on All Saints’ Day, in 1892, he received the last Rites of the Church, in the presence of the entire Community.

“To the exhortation of the Father Prior, he answered fervently, and touchingly expressed his gratitude to the God of the Eucharist for the care so tenderly given him, and his regret for the faults of his lifetime. Pardon was reciprocally asked and granted. All were in tears. After having received the Holy Viaticum, he repeated many times, ‘Jesus, O my Jesus!’

“In the strength of the Sacrament, he appeared to rally for a time, and felt well enough to be lifted from his bed and placed before his writing-table. He desired to write his last adieu to his dear children of the Immaculate Heart. With that poor hand, which death had already begun to stiffen, he told them that soon he would be no more, and asked pleadingly for the suffrage of their prayers. In conformity with that holy Vow of Poverty which he observed with such scrupulous exactness, he had nothing to will his dear daughters but a relic of his kinsman, St. John Berchmans, his old crucifix, and his poor, worn-out rosary. When he had written those few precious words, the pen dropped from his trembling fingers, never to be resumed again. His sufferings became intense, but the thought of Heaven, that eternal reward, enabled him to bear them with the most edifying resignation. He had always loved the singing of pious canticles; and when the Monks intoned for him that beautiful anthem, ‘Beau ciel, éternelle patrie,’ he listened with enraptured delight.

“It was with happiness, faith, and confidence that he followed the recommendation of the departing soul, often kissing the old missionary crucifix he had used at Monroe, and which had

never since left him day or night. After the touching prayers had been concluded, the dear Father, no longer able to speak, pressed the hand of his Superior to signify that he was still conscious. Then the last absolution was given him, with the Apostolic Benediction; and in a few moments the gentle soul was speeding on the wings of the adorable Name of Jesus to that eternal Home for which he had so devoutly longed. It was one o'clock on the morning of the fourteenth of November.

“The next day, all his friends and penitents, with many priests, came to render with us the last sad offices to the venerable Religious, esteemed by all for his virtue and his upright nature, and loved for the generosity and goodness of his heart.

“*Surgam ergo in adjutorium illi!*” (St. Bernard).

“REV. MARIE SYMPHORIEN, *Prior.*

“December 8, 1892.”

## CHAPTER II

### THE FOUNDATION



VERY retrospect, no matter how fair may be the scene which it presents, has always some cloud that casts a shadow upon it; yet since every picture is made up of light and shade, this very shadow but serves to enhance its beauty. So too with the scene that St. Mary's presents to us to-day.

Standing upon the vantage ground of three score years and ten, and looking down the long vista of years, reaching back to the lowly vale near the shore of Lake Erie, where, in the little picturesque city of Monroe, the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, had its beginning, we see through the gleaming mists of time the shadow and the sunshine that mark the checkered years.

On the twentieth of April, 1843, Rev. Louis Gilet, C.S.S.R., in company with the other Redemptorists, Reverend Father Alexander and

Reverend Father Cronenberg, arrived in New York from Belgium. In Baltimore, a few weeks later, Father Gilet met Right Reverend Bishop Lefevre, Coadjutor and Administrator of Detroit, who earnestly requested him to found a Mission-House of their Order in Detroit Diocese for the benefit of the French Canadians, telling him that he might select any city he preferred for its establishment. The Provincial, consenting to this proposal, appointed Father Gilet Superior of the new foundation and assigned to him Father Poilvache and two Brothers.

Fathers Gilet and Poilvache went immediately to Detroit Diocese and gave a course of Missions at St. Paul's, Grosse Pointe, Hamtramck, L'Anse Creuse, Huron River (Mount Clemens), Vienna (Erie), and Monroe.

Father Gilet selected Monroe as the best place to establish the central house, and so well pleased was Bishop Lefevre with the work accomplished by the Redemptorists that he signed a contract with them on June 4, 1844, by which he transferred to the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer the new St. Anthony's Church, now St. Mary's, then the only one in the city. The Redemptorists were to remain in Monroe and have charge of the French

congregation and preach a sermon in French every Sunday.

The Fathers, faithful in the fulfillment of their part of this agreement, had every reason to hope that the foundation would prove a permanent one, and this was a great incentive to Father Gilet in establishing a Congregation of religious teachers. The Redemptorist Fathers would be there to take a deep interest in the spiritual and temporal welfare of the Community and exercise a tender solicitude and fatherly protection over it.

In the unmistakable terms of this contract and with the forcefulness and directness of absolute conviction in its faithful fulfillment, he saw an immense field opened here to the Sons of St. Alphonsus. Writing to his Provincial, the Very Reverend Father di Held, C.S.S.R., he says: "It is always with the greatest joy that I receive news from Belgium and above all from your Reverence. Concerning our French foundation, I am glad that you approve of my enterprise, and I count on your Reverence to support it; for it must contribute greatly to the glory of God in a country where are found so many souls deprived of all aids of religion. In selecting the little city of Monroe for our establishment, I had in view to make it the cen-

tral house, from which our Fathers could go to different parts of the State of Michigan and even beyond it, to give regular Missions and to renew those already given. We have been more than a year at Monroe. My companions are Father Poilvache and two candidates. We sometimes carry the Holy Viaticum sixty miles from Monroe. As to Missions which are called for from all parts, I have been obliged to refuse them until the arrival of other Fathers. The good that has already been performed by the grace of God is incalculable. But who can measure all that is yet to be done! How many Missions demanded! How many Catholics deprived of priests! I desire to be everywhere when I think of so many needs.

“Often in casting my eyes on Europe and particularly on Belgium, I can not but be astonished to see among so many noble priests so few who dream of the vast field that lies open here to their zeal. God has visibly blessed us and has made use of weak instruments like ourselves to recall many abandoned souls to the practice of their religion. Many non-Catholics have made their abjuration and I have now about twelve more who are under instruction. Though I complain in seeing fall upon me the cares and responsibilities of this new founda-

tion, yet I am always sustained by the hope that you will not abandon me, and that you will lighten the burden that has been laid upon my shoulders in placing me here as Superior. Send me, if you please, a good Father to take charge, and above all some zealous Missionaries.

“My regards to all my confrères at Liège.

“LOUIS GILET, C.S.S.R.”

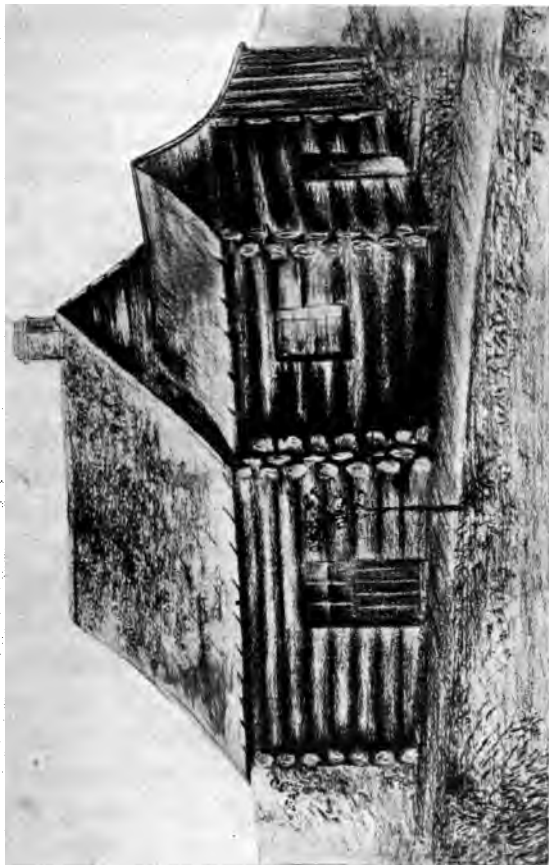
During the Mission which Father Gilet gave in St. Paul's parish, Grosse Pointe, in 1843, he made the acquaintance of Mr. Joseph Renauld and his family. Mr. Renauld had given the land on which the church was built and also had contributed largely to its support. His youngest daughter, Teresa, expressed to Father Gilet a long-cherished desire to give herself entirely to the service of God; he advised her to continue to pray, and in the meantime he would inquire where she could be received, as there was at that time no Community of religious women in the State of Michigan. Returning the following year to renew the Mission, he told her that he intended to establish a Congregation of religious teachers in Monroe as soon as he could get the means to provide for them, and then he would send for her,



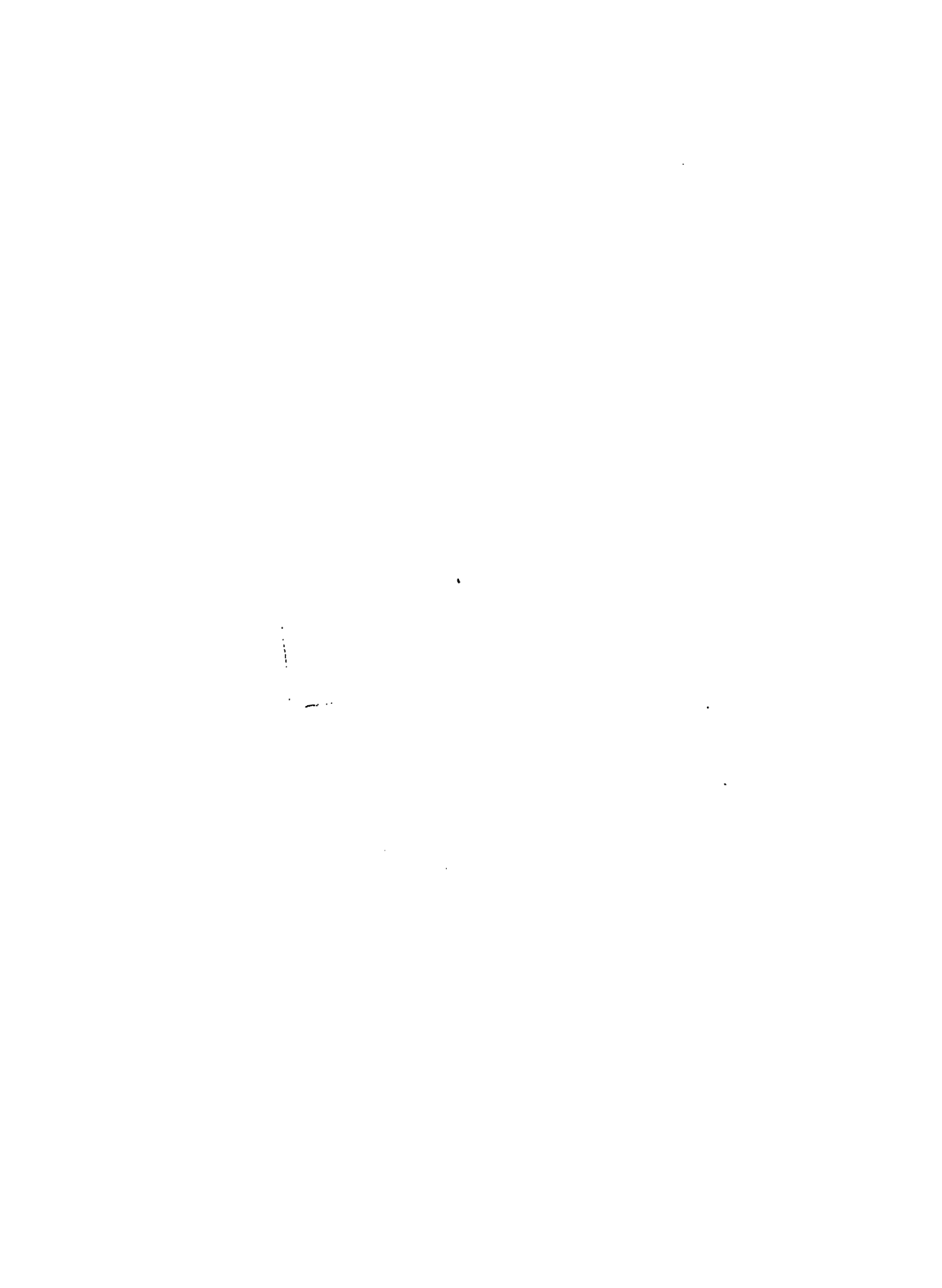
adding these words, "Teresa, you are the first one to whom I have spoken of entering this new Sisterhood."

Teresa never forgot those memorable words, and long after she had passed the golden milestone of her religious profession, she would joyfully say, "I was the first one whom God called to be a Sister, Servant of the Immaculate Heart of Mary." As she was the first called, so was she the first candidate to enter the old log convent.

It was the ninth of November, 1845, when she reached the humble habitation which was destined to grow into an Institute that would send forth laborers to many States of the Union. The other two candidates had not yet arrived and it was impossible for her to meet them until the following day. The log house was old and dilapidated, the home of some early pioneer. To remain alone in this dismal shelter for a whole night, a night too which the very elements, snow and sleet and wild, fierce winds, combined to render more desolate and drear, required no small amount of courage on the part of a young and defenseless girl, especially when one considers the countless deeds of revenge and the horrible atrocities which were perpetrated at that time by wandering bands of In-



THE FIRST CONVENT—1845



dians in southern and western Michigan. The utter loneliness of that night, with its impending fears, was insufficient to shake the constancy of her resolute soul. The ordeal was a trying one, just at the outset of her career, and would have caused many a more rugged nature to shudder and recoil; but if during the long watches of that ever-to-be-remembered night, she experienced any fear or even the slightest regret for her sunny Grosse Pointe home and the loved ones whom she had left, no one ever heard her express it. As Sister Celestine was the first to respond to the call, so was she the only one of the four original members of the Congregation who lived to see the semi-centennial of the founding of the Institution, and the Golden Jubilee of her own consecration to the work.

Early in the previous September the Reverend E. Smulders, C.S.S.R., knowing that Father Gilet was about to found a new Community, had, at his request, sent two candidates from Baltimore, Miss Teresa Maxis and Miss Ann Schaaf. As the house was not yet ready for them, Mr. and Mrs. O'Connor kindly offered them the hospitality of their home. On the morning of the tenth of November they joined Teresa Renauld in the smaller of the

two log structures which were to serve as convent and school. They made the acquaintance of Mme. Godfroy-Smith, who was compelled to defer her entrance for a few weeks.

From the diary of Sister Celestine we take the following account of that memorable day when the foundation was laid upon which the whole superstructure has been raised.

“We met after Mass on the tenth of November and joyfully walked together to our long desired and humble home. We made up some kind of breakfast with the frugal fare provided us, and our dearth of the necessary cooking utensils. But we rejoiced in our poverty, knowing that God would provide for us who had no other desire than to love and serve Him.

“We gathered up a few broken dishes, knives and forks, but the law of compensation was carried out to the letter, for she that had a cup had no saucer and she that had a spoon had no fork. Our furniture was in keeping with our surroundings, a small table, two chairs, a three-legged stool, and a bench,

“But the sacred memory of those early days has never faded away. That home was filled with life and light and love which no darkness overshadowed, no desolation made drear.”

In this record we find that Father Gilet gave

them the same order of the day and the same morning and evening prayers as the Redemptorists use.

Having obtained a pattern of the habit from the French Sisters of Notre Dame, who were at that time contemplating a new foundation in Toledo under the direction of the Reverend Amadeus Rappe, the candidates made their habits and put their house in order. In the meantime Father Gilet finished compiling the Constitutions; and Sister Celestine writes: "On the twenty-eighth of November he had the pleasure of presenting them to Right Reverend Bishop Lefevre, who with great satisfaction gave them his full approval. Teresa Maxis and Ann Schaaf privately received the habit on Sunday, November thirtieth, in the Chapel adjoining the Church, each retaining her baptismal name; and by a special dispensation of the Right Reverend Bishop, they were permitted to make their holy vows. On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception Teresa Renauld received the habit publicly in the Church and was given the name Sister M. Celestine. The reception of Mme. Godfroy-Smith took place on the twenty-sixth of May, the Very Reverend P. Kindekins, V.G., presiding in place of Bishop Lefevre, who was prevented from being pres-

ent, as he had previously intended, as her family were his personal friends.

Father Gilet placed the Holy Rule in Sister Teresa's hands, and named her the Superior; but he himself took complete charge of the spiritual affairs of the newly-organized Community and personally conducted the spiritual exercises—prayers in common, meditation, examen of conscience, and the Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He also imparted to them a thorough knowledge of the importance of the vows, the Rules, and Constitutions, as well as their duties and responsibilities as religious teachers. In his absence, his Assistant, Father Poilvache, widely known as the saintly "Father Francis," directed the little Community.

## CHAPTER III

### THE INITIATIVE



HE preceding history is confirmed by the following sketch written by Father Gilet, the founder himself, who was best qualified to present an incontrovertible statement of the facts.

“ROYAL ABBEY OF NOTRE DAME,

“HAUTECOMBE, SAVOY, May 4, 1891.

“VERY REVEREND MOTHER SUPERIOR,

“AND DEAR SISTERS IN THE LORD:

“In response to your legitimate demand, I take pleasure in sending you this notice concerning the origin of your Congregation. However painful it may be for one at my advanced age to write, I make the effort more willingly, since in doing so old memories are recalled which bring me back to the happy years of my youthful priesthood, years of zeal and fervor. These lines will tell you better than aught else could the share which God had in the establishment of your Congregation, so small in its beginning, and all that God will ex-



pect in return from a work which is His, and which is destined to exercise so glorious an apostolate among the young, as experience has shown until the present.

“After having attentively read the History of your Congregation, its foundation and development, inserted in a long article in the *Michigan Catholic*, twenty-fifth of December, 1890, I have found the account so accurate in what concerns me as to have no correction to make. I shall supply but a few facts that were forgotten.

“The writer describes exactly the origin of your Institute, its condition during the first years of its existence, its prodigious development and the actual position which it occupies at this moment in the United States. Thanks, above all, to the zeal of Reverend Father Joos and of the Right Reverend Bishop of Detroit, the Most Reverend Archbishop of Philadelphia, also the Right Reverend Bishop of Scranton, who made it their work of predilection. I had planted the almost imperceptible seed; they were destined to water it, to cultivate it, in order that, with the Divine help, it might become a great tree.

“Recalling to mind the history of the foundation, and learning of its wonderful growth after



THE ROYAL ABBEY OF NOTRE DAME, HAUTECOMBE, SAVOY

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almost fifty years, I do not hesitate to acknowledge, with the journal above mentioned, that it is more than marvelous, and it is evident and manifest that man's part in this work was but small; it follows that my rôle is limited to a few things—simply to have taken the *initiative*.

“To comply with your request to know in an exact and certain manner how and by what means the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, was established, I can tell you only the particulars which gave rise to my enterprise; how, forced by the urgent necessity of Christian education for Monroe, I commenced, without thinking of the future of that work, leaving it to God alone to bless and to guide its prosperity, if it were pleasing to Him and useful for the salvation of souls.

“I do not forget, Reverend Mother and dear Sisters, that the usual way of Divine Providence is to make use of the weakest instruments to perform the greatest works, in order that His power may be more easily recognized, and that man may not attribute its success to his own skill or efforts. I know well that God's great works, such as the foundation of Religious Orders, which for centuries have been the ornaments of the Church, have all begun in

obscurity, and have had but weak beginnings; but, on the other hand, these founders were men filled with the spirit of God, saints, although still on earth. I may say the same of the Communities of your sex, founded, very often, by pious persons, devoid of all advantages, humanly speaking; but, again, these were chosen souls, remarkable for their humility, and by the odor of their virtues, alluring numberless souls to place themselves under their guidance.

“In all this, Reverend Mother and dear Sisters, let me assure you—and may my words remain inscribed in the annals of your Institute—in all this, you are an exception, understand it well; your foundation was not illustrious, your titles of nobility are poverty and obscurity; it is from these elements that God was pleased to form the Congregation of Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

“In truth, your Founder—for the work was commenced by me—what was he? A young priest, full of zeal for the truth, but without experience in God’s ways, without resources. However, notwithstanding such a feeble instrument, what constitutes your glory is the fact that by a continual correspondence with grace and your perseverance in the midst of difficulties, I might say hourly sacrifices, you are ele-

vated to the eminence which you to-day hold, and which has made of your Community one of the brightest ornaments of the Church in the United States. Glory to God! Glory to Mary! Honor to you all, privileged children, chosen ones of the Queen of Heaven!

“Passing over lesser matters, I shall endeavor to trace for you, as briefly and exactly as possible, what gave rise to that foundation, and above all, how I came to realize my idea.

“Having settled at Monroe, a few years after the close of a very successful Mission, which had revived the faith among the Canadians, I conceived the design of making our first house in the diocese French, all the others being German. With the approbation of the Superior, as well as that of his Lordship, Right Reverend Bishop Lefevre, I received three Fathers more and two Lay Brothers. We were established in two small houses.

“At this time we attended ten parishes; two in the city, three between Monroe and Detroit, two beyond Detroit, and three in the vicinity of Adrian. Being the only one familiar with the three languages, I was continually engaged by duty, oftener on horseback than on foot. The income from my Missions, as well as that of the Church at Monroe, enabled me, by lead-

ing a life extremely poor, to commence, little by little, the erection of a house for the Fathers, adjoining the Church, which had also been enlarged.

“One difficulty surmounted, another of a different stamp presented itself; numberless children were forced to attend the public schools and were growing up in ignorance of their faith. I saw that all our works would be fruitless unless I could begin with the young and instill into their hearts the principles of our holy religion; yes, I must have a school in which the children would be taught to know God, to love Him and to keep His Commandments.

“But how could I procure religious teachers from another State, since I had nothing but privations to offer them? In a visit to my neighbor, Father Rappe, Pastor of Toledo, and later Bishop of Cleveland, who formerly had been Chaplain of the Ursulines at Boulogne, France, I learned that he was anticipating the arrival of three Ursulines for his parish of Toledo. His project delighted me, but not being for my own parish, it awakened a feeling of regret. On one occasion, when my friend was congratulating himself on his good fortune, I said to him: ‘Since I can not find the means of obtaining Religious, I shall establish some.’

My intention was to lay the foundation of a little religious Community, which, with the help of God, would develop itself later.

“A year passed; in the meantime I was looking about for willing souls. I found four who answered the requirements, a sufficient number, considering the size of the house and the lack of means. Two of them were from Baltimore, one from Grosse Pointe, and one from Monroe. I prepared a rule, founded on the Rule of the Redemptorists: Bishop Lefevre approved it; the Order was placed under his immediate jurisdiction.

“A difficult point yet remained for me to decide; namely, the habit of my future Religious. I repaired to Toledo to examine the habit of the French Sisters of Notre Dame, but I kept my plan secret. I tried to remember the style of the veil, and the guimpe, but added the scapular, which I deemed a great improvement; and later I sent the oldest of the candidates to Toledo to secure a pattern, with which I set my postulants to work; everything was being arranged for my future Religious. We, the Fathers, took possession of our new house, although it had yet neither doors nor windows; then three of my candidates entered the two small houses we had just left. The fourth, a



widow, Madame Godfroy Smith, a sister of the Mayor of Monroe, I considered would, after a year's novitiate, make a good Superior for our little Community, as she was of a character firm and active and enjoyed the esteem and respect of the whole population of Monroe. Her entrance was, however, deferred a short time on account of the settlement of her estate.

“On Sunday, November thirtieth, 1845, the oldest candidates having put on the habit, I permitted them to make their vows privately in the Sacristy, after High Mass; but I deferred the reception of Teresa Renauld until the eighth of December, Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, under whose patronage the newly-organized Community was placed.

“Never had such a ceremony been witnessed before in the city. It was a real revelation to the people; the Church could not contain the crowd anxious to see the being who to them seemed to belong to another world; and when after the ordinary questions and the blessing of the habit and veil, the postulant, wearing the bridal robes of white, was led to the small adjoining chapel from which she soon reappeared in the habit of a Novice, the audience were electrified, so eager were they to see the one

who of her own free will renounced all things to follow our most Holy Redeemer and have a part with Him in saving souls. All this I explained to them in my sermon; and a few weeks later these same impressive ceremonies were held again publicly in the Church, when Sister Alphonsine received the habit from the hands of the Very Reverend Peter Kindekins, the Vicar-General of the Diocese, who represented the Right Reverend Bishop on that occasion.

“The names which the four Sisters received were: Teresa Maxis, Sister M. Teresa; Ann Charlotte Schaaf, Sister M. Ann; Teresa Renault, Sister M. Celestine; Madame Godfroy-Smith, Sister M. Alphonsine.

“Invited soon after to preach the Lent at New Orleans, I undertook the long journey, hoping to find there, perhaps, some help for my poor Sisters. Instead of simply a retreat, it was a Mission which produced the most extraordinary results; so much so, that I was obliged to remain for two months to hear confessions. I was well repaid for my labor. I received five hundred twenty-five dollars from the Congregation and three hundred from the trustees; I returned to Monroe with thirteen large boxes filled with furniture of every description. I was rich, and from that time the

condition of the Sisters began to improve. Our house furnished, it seemed that I might rest in the enjoyment of my realized hopes, but this consolation was denied me; other trials were reserved for me.

“After having been Superior at Monroe for four years and having founded the Sisterhood of the Immaculate Heart, I was recalled to Baltimore. My companion, Father Francis Poilvache, died soon after my departure; when I was leaving, he predicted the exact date of his death, although at that time he enjoyed good health. The third priest became a Trappist, and a young Redemptorist, Father Smulders, replaced me. I returned to Europe, where I stayed for a short time, and then left for South America by way of Africa, where I remained several months as a missionary. After four months spent on the ocean, I returned to France impelled by the desire of embracing a contemplative life. On my arrival, I directed my steps toward the center of France, and arrived at Avignon, where I learned that a new branch of the Order of Citeaux was established, and in which I had been received upon my application even before my arrival. The Archbishop of Laon wished me to go where God so visibly called me; and here, in fine, since my entrance, I

have found peace, and tasted the happiness of belonging entirely to God, away from the noise of the world and its cares and the dangers of a missionary life. This happiness is still mine, after thirty-three years of solitude and silence. At present I am seventy-eight years of age; and I wait with confidence the end, which can not be far distant. I consider it a great blessing to have found my spiritual children of Monroe, confident that I shall be helped by their prayers.

“If until now I have not tried to learn something about them, it was because I heard some years ago at the American Seminary of Louvain, that there were Sisters of another Order at Monroe; I did not know that they were Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. I was convinced that my work had died out, and that among these new Religious I should be as unknown as a stranger. In truth, I profited by an occasion of a friend of mine visiting Michigan, to send a letter to an old acquaintance at Monroe, Mr. Dansard. He replied to my letter that there were Sisters at Monroe, but of an Order with which I was not acquainted; he sent me a prospectus and a picture of their Convent. I heard no more until the arrival of your letter, which gave me to understand that I

had yet a place in the memory of some souls across the sea.

“Great was my joy, as well as surprise, to renew ties which I thought broken forever, but which, in future, will I trust, be more closely united. Separated as we are, we shall be one in heart and affection, in mutual prayer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary; henceforth, at the daily Sacrifice of the Mass, I shall make a special remembrance of your Community and each of its members.

“In closing this lengthy account, Very Reverend Mother and all my dear Sisters—I may say children in Jesus Christ—allow me to offer you my sincere wishes for you and your Community. Until now God has singularly blessed you; your existence in the Church is His work. The wonderful increase of your members is an evident miracle, and your life a permanent apostolate. How many souls you have saved! Everything regarding your Institute proclaims the work of God. And you all, my beloved and dear Sisters, you, who are the most precious portion of the fold of Jesus Christ, may He shower His most abundant blessings upon you, and make saints of you, which is no doubt your wish and desire. For was it not for this pur-

pose that you left the world and your loved ones to embrace a life of immolation, self-denial, and sacrifice? Nature suffers, but life is short and eternity long; and furthermore, the reward will be proportioned to the sacrifice; in fact, understand well, the share allotted to you is magnificent. Be saints then; for St. Alphonsus says: 'Heaven is yours at this price.' Yes, be apostles by your labors; virgins by your purity of body and soul; martyrs by the daily sacrifices which religious life entails, and one day you will be numbered among the virgins who follow the Lamb.

"In the midst of your success, remember old Father Celestine during his life, and above all when you hear of his death.

"With these sentiments of affection and fatherly care,

"I remain respectfully,

"Your very humble and affectionate

"Brother in Jesus Christ,

"FATHER MARY CELESTINE,

*"Order of Citeaux."*



## CHAPTER IV

### THE SPIRIT OF THE INSTITUTE



MAN is not the absolute master of his environment, neither is he able to read the future and discern the obstacles by which the enemy will endeavor to oppose his progress and frustrate his work. Father Gilet knew it was by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost that he had formed the determination to establish a permanent organization of religious women whose ultimate aim should be the glory of God, their own sanctification, and the education of youth. It was solely the word of God, and he must carry on that work with prudence and diligence, zeal and energy, and with an implicit confidence in the aid of Divine Providence to complete it. He placed the members under the patronage of the Immaculate Conception, naming them "Sisters of Providence," a title which they bore until the eighth of December, 1847, when at the suggestion of his successor, the Reverend E. Smulders, C.S.S.R., the Right Reverend Bishop gave permission for this title to be



changed to that by which they are known to-day, the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

In the wide field in which he had been called to labor, the zealous missionary realized that to accomplish any lasting good among his people, he must begin with the young. He must have a school in which the child would be taught that to know, love, and serve God is of infinitely greater importance than all other knowledge. He laid this project before Right Reverend Peter Paul Lefevre, D.D., Bishop Coadjutor of Detroit, who heartily approved of it and gave the zealous Redemptorist every encouragement and co-operation in carrying out a work which was so visibly that of Divine Providence.

We learn from St. Alphonsus that there is no family bound together by closer ties than a religious Community. Those who have taken the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience have a moral unity surpassing altogether any possible unity in the natural order. They have one end in life, the honor and glory of God and the salvation of souls. From the very nature of their vows, they are dead to the world in order that they may live to God. Excluded as they are from distracting cares and intercourse with the outside world, the members of their

Community are their constant companions, and as all are striving for the same end, and using the same means to attain it, the family spirit is emphasized. Upon this bond of unity and perfect religious harmony Father Gilet placed the greatest importance; and that it might become the distinctive characteristic of his newly-organized Community, he made it imperative that the members should have "but one heart and one soul, loving one another with an affection founded more on spiritual than on natural motives."

He compiled the Rule, which he had taken from that of St. Alphonsus, and which was approved by the Bishop of Detroit November twenty-eighth, 1845; he designed the habit, and laid the foundation upon which the whole superstructure has been raised. This foundation was, as he himself says, "the solid stone of poverty," a poverty which each individual member should embrace with cheerfulness and love, knowing that the hardships and privations she must endure will but serve to render her more conformable to our Blessed Redeemer, who had not whereon to lay His head.

The primary object of the members of the Congregation is to advance their own sanctification by seclusion from the world and the

practice of religious observances. To attain this end, they must labor constantly to imitate the virtues of Jesus Christ, their Model and Spouse, in such a manner that they may be truly called the Spouses of Jesus Christ.

The secondary object of the Congregation is the education of youth, and the care of orphans and destitute children.

True sanctity is derived from the imitation of the Divine Redeemer of mankind. "Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" is a mandate given to all; but Religious, by their renunciation of the world, are required to advance their own sanctification by keeping before their minds the Supreme Ideal toward which they must aspire to compass this end; and while that Ideal is impossible of attainment, as perfection must ever be but a tending toward that which is sought, yet in the effort lies the virtue to ascend from high to higher.

That the Sisters may more readily attain this purpose and more closely resemble their Divine Model, a particular virtue is assigned each month which all must strive to put into practice and toward which the daily meditations and examinations converge.

Every Religious Order in the Church has its own peculiar spirit by which it is distinguished

from every other Order as well as by name. It is the distinctive mark of its Divine origin. By it the members are formed to adapt themselves to the changed condition of things in carrying out the designs of God upon the Institute. This Spirit breathes in the Rules and Constitutions, religious observances and cloistral environments. It dominates the spiritual exercises, labors, and sacrifices; it gives color to the daily events and directs all the activities of the Order. In the religious atmosphere created by solitude and prayer, this spirit expands with its increased resources and wider range and takes deeper root in the fervid and genial soil of the Church.

In compiling the Constitution for the new Institute, Father Gilet determined its spirit to be identical with that which St. Alphonsus bequeathed to the Redemptorists, namely, charity, humility, and simplicity—a charity which reaches out to all mankind, humility upon which is based self-abnegation and renunciation of one's own will, and a simplicity by which, with singleness of aim, the members seek but God alone in all things.

Realizing that as Religious who have responded to the call of God, left the plain and set their face to the mountain to ascend the path

of perfection, they have need of many graces to aid them in reaching the heights, the members of the Congregation cherish a most tender and childlike devotion to the Blessed Virgin. Consecrated to her Immaculate Heart, whose title they bear, robed in her livery of blue, their piety would indeed be absurd, if not anomalous, were they not devoted to the Mother of God. Thus it is that next after the devotion to the Three Divine Persons of the Blessed Trinity, the Blessed Sacrament, and the Sacred Heart of Jesus comes the devotion to Mary, through whom they seek every grace and blessing from Almighty God. Immediately after the morning offering to God that each Sister must make before leaving her room for meditation, she recites three Hail Marys in honor of the Immaculate Virgin, asking her blessing, and repeats the same before retiring. After meditation the whole Community salute Mary in the words of the Angel Gabriel and unite in the following prayer: "I offer thee, O most holy Mother, all my thoughts, all my affections, all the prayers, alms, acts of piety, charity and mortification that I shall perform during the course of this day. Obtain for me the grace to do them all with a great purity of intention and a desire of pleasing God, which alone can draw

upon me His benediction. I consecrate them to thy most holy and Immaculate Heart, beseeching thee to enrich them with its merits, to permit me to adore with thee the most Holy Trinity, the Divine Heart of Jesus, and to implore through thee the grace of my conversion and that of all sinners. O Mary, my good Mother, keep me from all sin during this day." Thus—

From the dawn of the day  
Till evening's amber lost in gray,

intercessory prayer is offered to God through Mary; and in loving tribute to her, on every Saturday and the vigils of her feasts, a strict abstinence is observed.

"Mary is the brilliant mirror," as St. Ambrose says, "reflecting every virtue, grace and beauty with which Divine Splendor enriched her soul to grace His Throne." In this Mirror of Justice the Sisters see the virtues they must acquire to be worthy of the love and patronage of God's holy Mother and be numbered forever among her children.



## CHAPTER V

### PIONEER DAYS



THESE were memorable days to the Sisters, in which joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain were commingled; days that remained indelibly imprinted on the memory of the saintly Founder. "How often," he writes in after years, "did I not say to the Sisters, 'You cost me more trouble and anxiety than my ten parishes put together.'" It might have been the screech of an owl, the baying of a wolf in the distance, a knock upon the door which, when opened, revealed no one there, or it might have been the stern and angry looks of straggling Indian bands as they passed by, for which they had appealed to him; yet it was sufficient to cause them the greatest fear and consternation. But if these pioneer Sisters were weak and timid in the face of physical danger, they proved themselves courageous women in bearing all the hardships and trials, the sufferings and privations of their condition of life. The winter of 1846 was unusually severe; its rude



blasts were their constant companions, the snow drifting through the crevices of the logs and broken panes of glass in the windows spread a carpet over the floor.

The water for drinking and cooking had to be brought from a well near the Church, but that of the river was used for other purposes. One of the Brothers would cut a hole in the ice with an axe, from which the Sisters could draw water as needed. Their table was meagre indeed—bread and water were often their only repast; but of these things no one ever heard them utter a complaint, nor did they make mention of them even to their Founder, though he often sent them food from the Fathers' table, confident that they were in need. Sister Alphonsine was under the very shadow of her own beautiful home, where a bountiful table was always spread. Yet she never faltered and no one ever knew that she suffered the least inconvenience. They were strong, valiant women, imbued with the spirit of poverty and self-denial; earthly trials served but to detach, elevate, and cause them to walk steadfastly in the footsteps of our dear Redeemer. "Not by bread alone does man live," was the impressive lesson engraven upon their hearts. They cheerfully accepted all things, good and evil, as



THE FRAME BUILDINGS, 1848-1851



coming from the hand of an over-ruling Providence.

At last, Father Gilet's long cherished ideal was worked out in practical form; and on Monday, January fifteenth, 1846, the first parochial school in the diocese, outside of the city of Detroit, was opened in the larger of the two log houses that had been vacated by the Fathers. He sang the Mass of the Holy Ghost the preceding day, and preached an eloquent sermon on Catholic Education. During his discourse he addressed the Sisters, exhorting them to undertake courageously the arduous duties imposed upon them; God had called them to do this work for Him and He would bless it and give them the necessary means to accomplish it. How great was his joy and satisfaction the next morning to find the two school-rooms filled to overflowing with eager, happy children, while mothers and fathers thronged around the door, earnestly soliciting him to receive their children who were beyond the age limit he had named for admittance.

He could not refuse them, and the smaller pupils were entered at the home of the Sisters, a rude habitation dignified by the name of Convent.

The zealous priest saw the necessity of build-

ing; but he had already exhausted every available resource to meet the expense of enlarging the Church and preparing the school, but God's providence came to him; just at that time Sister Alphonsine's estate was finally settled and she generously placed the proceeds at his disposal, which made it possible for him to begin in 1847 a large two-story frame structure with tower and bell, the same bell which for more than fifty years had called the devout worshippers to services in the old St. Anthony's Church.

This Church, built in 1788, was on the north bank of the Raisin River, two miles west of the present St. Mary's; and the cross that crowned its belfry was the last, save those at Vincennes and Kaskaskia, to receive the rays of the setting sun until they rested upon that of St. Francis' Church on the far shore of the Pacific.

The first year of school closed on the second of August, with a distribution of premiums, at which the Bishop presided. He expressed his deep pleasure and gratification at the work which had been accomplished. On this occasion his Lordship presented the Community with a statue of the Blessed Virgin.

The re-opening of the school in September took place under the happiest auspices; there

was a large increase in the number of pupils, four or five of whom, living at a great distance, were received into the Convent as resident pupils. The second year closed on the third of July.

The Fourth was celebrated with every demonstration of patriotism that could render it memorable alike to parents and children. Music and games, speeches and songs, picnic and bonfires, all combined to render it a "Glorious Fourth." In those troublous times, when the air was rife with the spirit of Know-Nothingism, which not only aroused anti-Catholic prejudice through the country, but also applied the torch of the incendiary to Convents, Father Gilet wisely deemed it well to have the children trained to a love of country and taught how to give a manifestation of it. But independent of this motive, he was deeply attached to America, the country of his adoption; and even when he was on the farthest verge of life, he wrote to a personal friend, the late Mr. Crampton, editor of the *Monroe Democrat*: "O happy soil of America! O lovely abode of true freedom! Before my grave closes over me, receive once more the assurance of my sincere affection. And as I no longer hope to see you on account of my advanced age, and

being detained in this country by my present duties, remain forever assured, O beloved city of Monroe, that your remembrance is engraved on my heart!"

The third year of the school re-opened on the first of September, 1847. Three weeks later Father Louis Gilet was recalled to Baltimore. God's ways are not the ways of men; for who is there that can carry on to completion, if not to perfection, the work which a religious organization demands in its early years, so well as the Founder himself? Yet the fiat had been spoken, and with a heart obedient to the Will of God and a soul ever ready to fulfill its mandates, the saintly Founder did not question why.

Father Gilet was called to greater labors in the Master's vineyard, but "he had builded up unto Eternity; he had builded up unto the mountain vastnesses where God is found," his work still lives and will continue to live to bring blessings innumerable to generations yet unborn. His successor, Rev. E. Smulders, C.S.S.R., was imbued with his spirit and his zeal; and he and Father Poilvache continued to watch over and tenderly care for the little Community as, like a frail plant, it slowly struggled into life and beauty.

On the Feast of the Epiphany, 1848, the new school was blessed after Vespers with all possible solemnity and dedicated to the holy Mother of God, under the title Immaculate. A few days later a contagious epidemic known as the Black Tongue prevailed in Monroe and its vicinity. Night and day the two priests were in constant attendance upon the plague-stricken victims, many of whom were forsaken even by their own relatives, so great was the dread of this malady. Father Smulders was obliged to go to Stony Creek; reluctantly he departed, for he knew how overwhelming would be the work that his zealous Assistant would be called upon to do.

Father Poilvache said Mass Wednesday morning, January twenty-sixth. He gave catechetical instruction in the school and followed it by a conference to the Sisters, which they never forgot. He seemed inspired as he showed them the beauties of religious life and its glorious rewards; obedience to God is the highest liberty, sacrifice of self leads to the highest freedom. He placed great emphasis upon detachment from the world and close union with God, striving to realize the words of Christ, "I have chosen you, and I have appointed you that you should go and bring forth



fruit, and your fruit should remain." Then he blessed them for the last time, saying, "Honored by the title of Mary Immaculate, honored as servants of her Immaculate Heart, devoted children of St. Alphonsus, may God bless you and may you proceed prosperously and rule." At ten o'clock that morning, he was stricken with the fever and soon became unconscious; he rallied just before death and said in a clear voice, "My God, how good Thou art!" With these words, the soul of the saintly Father Francis winged its flight to that dear Redeemer whom he had loved and served so well! He died before Father Smulders could reach him, on January twenty-seventh, 1848. His biographer says of him: "He died a martyr of charity, the first Redemptorist to go to his reward from the fruitful vineyard of the American Missions!"

The following tribute published in the *Monroe Journal* has an especial significance now that the cause of Father Francis Poilvache's beatification is being favorably advanced in Rome.

"February 12, 1848.

"MY DEAR FRIEND:

"I have just received the letter in which you inform me of the sad and afflicting news of the

death, as sudden as it was premature, of Reverend Father Polivache, a priest of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, who died at Monroe, Michigan, on the night of the twenty-sixth of January last, after an illness of from ten to twelve hours.

“For twenty years a faithful witness of the virtues of the deceased, a companion of his early youth and of his studies, as well as of his apostolic career, I have been able to appreciate the purity of his soul, the goodness of his heart, and the heroism of his virtues. It would also have been a sweet consolation for me to be present at his last hour; but God has otherwise ordained. Voluntarily exiled for the love of Jesus Christ, he died in a foreign land, many thousand miles from his country, leaving to his parents and his friends no other inheritance than his lessons of virtue, and of himself no other remembrance than his name. It is not so much to contribute something to his memory as to console his many friends, and to render our dear deceased a last tribute of attachment, that I transmit to you this short biographical notice of Father Poilvache, who is at present mourned not only by the Congregation of St. Mary’s, but by all the Catholics of Michigan.

“Francis Poilvache was born May twelfth,

1812, in the village of Eban-Emael, in the Diocese of Liège, in Belgium. His estimable parents are still living. They are in easy circumstances and enjoy in their country a great reputation for virtue and probity. Young Francis commenced, early in life, his studies at the Royal College of Liège, and completed them under the guidance of pious and learned masters in the *Petit Séminaire* at Liège, established in the ancient Abbey of Rolduc. It was in this happy asylum of virtue and piety that his vocation to the religious state, as well as mine, was formed and matured, and on the ninth of September, 1834, he entered as a novice the Redemptorist Convent at Saint Trond. He was then twenty-two years of age. The years of his novitiate being finished, he was admitted to the religious profession of the perpetual vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. As he had been in the world a model of regularity, he was in religion a constant example of a true Religious. His ill health, which did not permit him to apply his mind, delayed for some years his theological studies, and he was not ordained priest until July third, 1842. From that time he exercised the holy ministry in Belgium with a zeal and devotedness that caused his departure to be deeply regretted.

“He had for a long time ardently desired to go to America. His zeal and his charity kept his mind constantly turned to these distant regions, and particularly after he heard that beyond the ocean, in a remote corner of America, in Michigan, there was a certain number of Catholics, speaking the language of his country, who, on account of the scarcity of priests, were deprived of the consolations of religion. Continually haunted by this thought, he solicited for two years the permission of his superiors to devote himself to the salvation of these abandoned souls. His generous offer, so long tried, was finally accepted; and three hours later he was on his way to the United States. After a voyage of thirty days, he landed on the hospitable shores of America, which became his new country and the place of his grave. He was at first sent to Rochester, where he was charged with the care of a French and German Congregation; some months afterward he received orders to go to Michigan, which was to be the field of his last earthly labors. It was there he worked for nearly four years with a fervor and a devotion truly worthy of an apostle of Jesus Christ, which rendered his name dear to all who knew him. His courage never wavered, his zeal

never relaxed, when he was called to any place to exercise his ministry. How often, when sick himself, did he not leave his bed at night to carry to others the consolations of religion, frequently traveling great distances, fearing not to expose himself to the scorching sun of summer or to the cold winds of winter! The children, the poor, the afflicted, the sick, all experienced the effects of his constant charity. His charity and devotedness were not confined to the limits of Monroe. Oh! how many evangelized and fervent parishes are indebted to him, after God, for the happy change of which Michigan is to-day the witness. How many families, how many individuals, owe to him the peace and serenity that they enjoy since their return to religion! It was above all in our great Missions that Father Poilvache knew how to manifest the resources of his apostolic zeal, and the unalterable sweetness of his character which enabled him to subdue the most obdurate hearts. It was then that, entirely forgetful of himself, he appeared no longer the weak and suffering man, but the indefatigable apostle, whose only hunger and thirst was the salvation of souls. On these occasions he knew how to throw off, as it were, his habitual infirmities, in order to clothe himself alone with the

strength of Jesus Christ. Such in a few words was the public life of Father Poilvache. God alone was witness of the many acts of interior virtue which were practiced by this man of God, this true Religious.

“So many arduous labors could not fail to destroy a constitution which had always been weak, particularly since his charge of the French Congregations. For a long time Father Francis had felt his strength sensibly diminishing, and was not deceived with regard to his approaching death; much less did he fear it. His last words, on my parting with him on the fourteenth of November, to which I did not then pay attention, have proved but too true. ‘Adieu,’ he said to me, ‘in three months I shall no longer be of this world.’

“Father Francis was the first member of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer who died in America. Without doubt he has gone to a better world to receive the reward of his labors and sacrifices. He left to his Brothers in religion, as an inheritance and consolation, the remembrance of his virtues and example; to his parents, who are still ignorant of their loss, the consolation of having given an apostle to the Church; to his friends, to the Congregation of Monroe, and to the French settlers of

Michigan, the lessons of salvation that he never failed to teach them, both by word and example.

“Such will be the most lasting and most glorious monument that can be raised to the memory of this apostolic man; and the pious remembrance of Father Francis, engraven in the hearts of the French Canadians, will be the living epitaph that time will not efface.

“LOUIS GILET, C.S.S.R.”

How great was the sorrow of the little Community to lose their friend, their Father, their benefactor, the one who had so ably assisted their Founder in organizing their Institute and in training them, its first members, in the way of perfection. Yet God’s will must be accomplished in all things; and great as was their sorrow, they had the sweet consolation of knowing that they had a friend before the throne of the Most High who would intercede for them.

The two school-rooms being too small to accommodate all the children, Father Smulders, confident that he would receive aid from the Missionary Fund of the diocese, erected a new frame structure adjoining the Convent; but he found himself greatly embarrassed when obliged to meet the payment of the debt thereby

incurred, without any assistance. The Very Reverend Father Bernard, Provincial of the Redemptorists in America, visiting Monroe at that time and seeing the condition of things as they existed, generously defrayed all the expenses of the new building. Father Bernard's act of disinterested charity is inscribed in the annals of the Institute, claiming for him the gratitude of the Community.

On the feast of the Immaculate Conception, 1849, Sister M. Alphonsine was appointed Superior by the Right Reverend Bishop Lefevre.

Miss Mildred Whipple, niece of Mother Alphonsine, was received as a candidate in 1849, taking in religion the name of Sister Mary. Her entrance was followed by that of Miss Mary Soleau, who became Sister Rose.

The Redemptorists, everywhere celebrated for their devotion to our Blessed Mother, the characteristic spirit of St. Alphonsus, having ardently taken up the devotion of the Arch-Confraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, which was then being promulgated in Paris, the Reverend Father Poirier, who had succeeded Father Smulders as Superior of their Mission-house at Monroe, suggested that the habit of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, should be blue in honor



of the Blessed Virgin Mary; and the Bishop consenting to this proposal, the habit, which until then had been black, was changed accordingly.

The habit is of serge, in the form of a gown, confined to the waist by a girdle, with a full-length scapular. The bandeau and guimpe are of white linen, also the bonnet, over which is worn a long black veil. A crucifix on the chest, a rosary at the girdle, and a plain gold ring, symbol and pledge of an eternal alliance with their Divine Spouse, complete the religious dress of the Sisters.

## CHAPTER VI

### FORMATIVE YEARS



**D**URING the first eight years of its existence, the Community had received but two Sisters in addition to the four original members, as it was deemed wiser, during its formative period, "to make haste slowly"; but in 1853 Miss Mary Ann Walter of Rochester, N. Y., Miss Ann Elizabeth Walker of Prescott, Ontario, and Miss Isabelle Renauld, Sister Celestine's sister, were admitted; and at their religious clothing they received the names of Sister M. Aloysius, Sister M. Ignatius, and Sister M. Frances; one year later the Community was augmented by five estimable members: Miss Mary Lafferty, in religion, Sister Mary Philomena; Miss Mary Ann Martin, Sister Mary Magdalene; Miss Phoebe Walker, sister of Sister Ignatius, Sister Mary Joseph; Miss Susan Lafontaine, Sister Mary Liguori; Miss Eleanore Duillette, Sister Mary Gerard.

During this period the Institute made great progress towards perfect organization and

gave evidence of its eminent utility in the education of youth. The children placed in their schools received the benefit of the careful training the Sisters bestowed upon them.

The following Prospectus is found in the *Monroe Journal* of December 25, 1845:

"YOUNG LADIES' ACADEMY,  
"MONROE, MICHIGAN.

"This Institution, lately established in the city of Monroe, with the approbation and under the patronage of the Right Reverend P. P. Lefevre, Bishop, Administrator of the Diocese of Detroit, is situated in the most beautiful and healthy part of the city, opposite the Catholic Church.

"This Institute combines every advantage that can be desired in a literary institute for young ladies. Having been engaged for many years past in the instruction of youth, these ladies will endeavor to justify the confidence of parents who will entrust their children to their care.

"The plan of education, together with the benefit of Christian instruction, unites every advantage that can be derived from a punctual and conscientious care bestowed upon pupils in the branches of science suitable to their sex,

and from the uninterrupted attention which is given to form the manners and principles of the young ladies and to train them up to habits of order, neatness, and industry. The diet is good, wholesome and abundant; spacious grounds afford the pupils the facility of pleasant walks and useful bodily exercises. Their health is the object of constant solicitude. In sickness they are affectionately attended to and never are they left a moment beyond the reach of inspection.

#### “TUITION

“The branches taught are Reading, Writing in various styles, Grammar both French and English, Arithmetic, Chronology, Mythology, Polite Literature, Geography, Elements of Astronomy, Natural Philosophy, Domestic Economy, Bookkeeping by Single and Double Entry, History Sacred and Profane, Ancient and Modern, Plain and Ornamental Needlework, Bead Work, Tapestry, Lace Work, Embroidery with Gold and Silver Painting, Worsted Flowers, Music, Vocal and Instrumental.

“The scholastic year commences on the first Monday in October, and closes with a public exhibition and distribution of premiums on the

last Tuesday in August. Pupils will be admitted for no less time than a half session.

“TERMS FOR BOARDERS

“Board and tuition per session..	\$70.00
Half Boarders.....	35.00
Washing, if done at the Institute .....	10.00
Mending .....	2.00

“TERMS FOR DAY SCHOLARS

“Infant Class, per quarter.....	\$2.00
Elementary School.....	3.00
For the more advanced.....	6.00
No extra charge for French.	

“EXTRA CHARGES

“Vocal Music, with the use of piano .....	\$12.00
Worsted Flowers.....	6.00

“Boarders pay the current charges half a session in advance, day scholars per quarter.

“For further information apply to the Superior of the Institute. The classes will commence on the fifteenth of January.

“SISTER M. TERESA,

“*Superior.*”

Before the departure of the Redemptorist Fathers they had made arrangements for the Sisters to teach the girls' school at St. Michael's

parish. This was the first time the Community received any remuneration from a Parochial School. The Sisters were agreeably surprised when they received six dollars a month for their service. Sister Aloysius felt that the bank account of the Community was really growing, and that the many wants could then be supplied.

Reverend H. Rivers, Pastor of Vienna in 1855, requested the Superior to establish a school in his parish. This being the first experience of the Sisterhood in opening a Mission-House, Mother Alphonsine was given charge of it as Superior, Sister Teresa having succeeded her as Superior at Monroe. The greatest success attended this undertaking for three years, but on the opening of the Mission in Pennsylvania, Sister Magdalene was recalled and appointed Superior of that establishment. There was no one to take her place in Vienna and the two remaining Sisters returned to the Mother-House.

For ten years the Redemptorists had faithfully safeguarded the little Community, laboring with zeal and energy to promote its spiritual and temporal advancement, and had preserved for its members the precious heritage bequeathed to them by their Founder,

namely, the Rules and Constitutions and the spirit of St. Alphonsus; but in 1855 they were recalled to Baltimore, and in the loss of all the ministrations of religion, with desolation were the hearts of the Sisters made desolate.

The day preceding their departure, the saintly Father Poirier gave the Sisters a farewell conference. The text was, "Fear not, little flock, for it has pleased your Heavenly Father to give you a kingdom." He said in part: "It would seem to me, dear Sisters, that our Divine Lord wishes me to say these words to you to-day when your hearts are heavy with sorrow and filled with anxiety for the future, because they are His own words, words most calculated to fill your souls with confidence in Him. As God chose the Apostles of old, who were naturally weak and timid, so has He chosen you to do His work; for God 'chooses the weak things of this world to confound the strong'; and because they were weak, having no power or honor, He pleaded with them, often saying to them, 'Fear not, confide in Me.' Once it was 'Fear not those who kill the body. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father's will. Fear ye not there-

fore; you are of more value than many sparrows.' Again, 'Fear not, little flock, for it hath pleased your Father to give you a kingdom.' Fear not, but do manfully, and let your hearts be strengthened; wait a little while and this kingdom shall be yours. Continue your work in the schools, draw the hearts of the children to God, and your heavenly Father will one day raise up to you a protector, a Father, and in that day you will exult and rejoice and the sorrow of to-day will be changed to joy. Take courage then; correspond to the exalted vocation to which you are called, and the Kingdom of Heaven shall be yours."

Father Poirier had been appointed Assistant to Father Smulders after the death of Father Poilvache; and in 1850 he succeeded Father Smulders as Superior of the Mission. During the seven years of his ministry in Monroe, he bestowed the greatest kindness upon the struggling Community and labored earnestly and devotedly for the advancement of its best interests.

The names of Reverend E. Smulders and Reverend F. Poirier are inscribed in the archives of the Institute among those of the greatest benefactors of its pioneer period.

That the Congregation of the Sisters, Ser-



vants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, survived during the two years following the departure of the Fathers from Monroe seems little less than miraculous. Often at intervals of several weeks the Community had no Mass even on Sunday, as there was no resident priest in the city. Reverend Father Rivers of Vienna said Mass for them occasionally and gave them Holy Communion.

“During that long, sorrowful time,” Mother Teresa writes in her diary, “we were always on the alert to be informed when some priest would stop in Monroe, either passing through the city or attending some sick call in the parish, so anxious were we to assist at Mass or to have an opportunity of going to Confession and receiving Holy Communion.

“On the Feast of the Ascension, Sister Magdalene and I set out early in the morning for Vienna, a country parish ten miles from Monroe. We tried to hire a conveyance, but as it was a gala day in the city every vehicle was engaged. So desirous were we of hearing Mass that we resolved to walk the whole distance, hoping that we might possibly meet some charitable person on the way who would take us to our journey’s end. When we had gone about three miles, we saw a woman seated in a door-

way and we asked her if she knew any one who could take us to the church at Vienna. She had the kindness to go to one of her neighbors who was willing to furnish a conveyance. We reached the church in time for the Offertory. Who could describe our feelings on beholding again a priest at the altar saying Mass! We assisted at the children's dinner at the Presbytery, it being First Communion day. In the afternoon we found more than one friend ready to take us home.

"We were not discouraged in our bereavement, living in hopes that something better would come. We knew that God had not forsaken us; and at the end of seven months, Reverend John Van Gennip was appointed Pastor of St. Mary's; but he was also obliged to attend St. Michael's Congregation and several Missions.

"A few months later he was assigned another parish and not until the advent of the Rev. Edward Joos, two and a half years after the departure of the Redemptorists, had we a permanent Director."

That death loves a shining mark was verified in the passing of Sister Mary Ignatius to her eternal reward on the morning of February twenty-seventh, 1856; for she was an exem-

plary Religious and a highly educated woman. Her sweetness, gentleness, and ardent love of God caused her to be esteemed and admired by all who came under her influence. She was an ideal teacher ; through all her words and deeds a love and reverence for religion and for spiritual things was dominant. Her mere presence was a potent factor in ethical training, and her personality exercised a resistless power for good over her pupils, who became imbued unconsciously with right principles of thought and action, and were drawn to God.

Sister Ignatius was the first Sister that died in the Order, and she will be the standard bearer in the procession of its members in Heaven.

## CHAPTER VII

RIGHT REVEREND MGR. E. JOOS, V.G.



HE Reverend Edward Joos, known later as the Right Reverend Monsignor Joos, V.G., was appointed by Bishop Lefevre, on November fifth, 1857, Pastor of St. Mary's Church and Director and Superior of the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In that day, it would have required the far-reaching vision of seer or sage to foretell what the future of the little Community would be; a fragile bark without mast, spar, or sail, and to all appearances without a pilot, as it drifted out on an untried sea; but to-day when, with sail set free, it is borne out on the ocean like a fair argosy, in the gleam of the "light that was never yet on land or sea," the Sisters realize that, next after God, they owe their preservation and the blessings numerous and diversified that they now enjoy to that dear and saintly Father who, for forty-three years, devoted all his labors, his energies, his prayers, and his sacrifices to the upbuilding of the Community,

whose history during that time is an embodiment of the history of his own life.

Edward Joos was born in the beautiful village of Somergem, East Flanders, Belgium, on the ninth of April, 1825. His parents were widely known for their sterling worth of character, their honorable position, and their intense Catholicity. His family enjoyed the respect of all; in the eyes of the world, the practice of virtue is always enhanced by social standing.

In his childhood, Edward attended the school of his native parish and there laid the foundation of that sound learning and deep piety that marked him in after life. At the early age of thirteen, he was sent to the College of Thielt, in West Flanders. Here he pursued his classical studies, graduating with honors in 1843. His vocation to the priesthood seems to have been a foregone conclusion, as from his earliest youth he had cherished the desire to serve God at the altar, and accordingly we find him a short time after his graduation in the Seminary of Ghent.

From childhood he was handicapped by weak sight. He had never seen the beauties of the stars until he was six years old. Having accidentally put on a pair of spectacles one evening, he ran out of doors and looking up to the



RIGHT REVEREND MONSIGNOR E. JOOS, V.G.



sky, he saw, for the first time, the firmament studded with stars. From this we can judge how difficult it must have been for him to apply himself to books, yet even with his poor sight, he persisted in studying late into the night.

At the Seminary of Ghent he laid the broad foundation of the perfect sacerdotal life he was to lead, never swerving from the strictest path of rectitude and duty for fifty-three years. Here he met the faithful friends with whom he formed a sacred and priestly friendship which continued throughout life. Animated by the same zeal for souls, which caused him to leave his native land and consecrate his priesthood to America, they were his life-long co-operators, in the field of missionary labors in the diocese of Detroit. One who knew them intimately thus describes them: "Warm-hearted and strenuous John De Neve, who fanned into flame the dormant faith of many an immigrant in Niles. His zeal and enthusiasm attracted the attention of Bishop Lefevre, who, two years after his arrival in America, selected him for the responsible position of Rector of the American College in Louvain, which he, with Archbishop Spalding, had founded in the University city of Belgium. Like his cousin, Father Joos,



he was honored with the dignity of Roman Prelate, and died full of years and merit in 1898. Broad-minded and large-hearted August Lambert, whose saintly memory and generous alms-giving are still green in the minds of the Catholics in Marine City, New Baltimore, and Mount Clemens. Practical and methodical Charles Ryckaert, who laid the foundations of the missions around Hillsdale and who spent the savings of a lifetime in helping to build the church, school, and pastoral residence at Mount Clemens."

Our young seminarian's close application to his studies, his more than ordinary ability, and his earnest piety made him beloved and respected by his companions as well as by his professors. Here he laid the deep foundation for the solid theological, scriptural and patristic knowledge which distinguished him in the priesthood as an authority whose opinion his brother priests eagerly sought in ecclesiastical conferences.

The day at last dawned; and in 1848, on the seventeenth of June, in the grand Cathedral of Saint Bavon, he was ordained, "and from that day until the day of his death," as Right Reverend Bishop Maes said of him in his magnificent eulogy, "he honored the priesthood

by every sacerdotal virtue which mortal man, strengthened by God's grace, can practice for a lifetime."

After his ordination, Father Joos spent two years in Wachtebeke, East Flanders, and was then transferred to Eecloo, where he remained for seven years. But there had been growing in the heart of the young Levite a desire to go to foreign lands, to spread the gospel of Christ. He had read of America, and he understood how great was the need of laborers in that new and growing field. Many from his native land were there at work, some of them his youthful friends. The missionary spirit grew upon him; and at last, with the consent of his Ordinary, he made up his mind to give himself to the Missions of the United States.

The Reverend P. Kindekins, V.G., having been sent by Bishop Lefevre to Belgium to recruit priests for the Detroit diocese, had a long talk with Father Joos, which confirmed him in his resolve to go there. They were seated under a tree in the garden during this conversation; and eleven years later, when Father Joos returned for his first visit to his home, the Venerable Dean said to one of his guests, a near relative of Father Joos: "Do you see that tree in the garden? Well, under that tree my faith-

ful assistant was tempted to go to the American Missions!"

It was no easy task to leave his home, his relatives and friends and go into a strange land. But his spirit of zeal was stronger than the ties of home and kindred; and, bidding farewell to Belgium, he sailed for America in 1856.

Before his departure, a dinner was given at the American Seminary in honor of the missionaries going to the Detroit Diocese. Rev. Louis Gilet, C.S.S.R., the Founder of the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, who at that time had returned to Europe, was also present, and by a strange coincidence, he who had sowed the seed, and he who was destined to cultivate it and tenderly care for it for nearly half a century, met. They conversed together, and Father Gilet described Monroe, where he had been stationed some years previous, and told Father Joos that there were Sisters there who conducted a very flourishing school.

In September of that year, Father Joos reached Detroit and was appointed assistant in old St. Anne's Church, whose pastor at the time was the genial and self-sacrificing Father Soffers; one year later he was transferred to Monroe.

What could have been less promising than the field upon which Father Joos entered on that drear November day in 1857? He came to it bringing the buoyancy and hope of youth, its zeal and its energy; bringing, too, the wealth of wisdom garnered in the great schools of the old world, the aspirations, the ideals, the necessary gifts of a noble mind dedicated to a noble cause. Surely, the prospect opened to him must have been a disheartening one; to his eager spirit it must have appeared that he had been assigned a dreary and inglorious task, so little was there that appealed to the merely human, so little to gratify the natural desire for success, the pride inherent in every heart and the ambition that brooks no failure; and thus it was that he whose soul, while in his own land beyond the sea, glowed with desire to spend itself for God in the Mission work, rested here where less ministerial labor was required, less learning, and less zeal than would be called into activity in the lowliest village of his native land; but for the faithful and courageous soul there is always work to do, no matter in what part of God's wide domain he may find himself; and here Father Joos saw his lifework outlined by a divine hand, and noiselessly but persistently and unerringly he took up the task

appointed him in the guidance of an Institute through whose labors, under the patronage of Mary Immaculate, God would be better known and better loved and served.

To others, whose eloquence will do justice to the theme, do we leave the task of giving the details of the many years that Father Joos was pastor of St. Mary's—a pastorate rich in sacrifices and fruitful in spiritual conquests; and we confine ourselves to his work in Catholic education, a work which extended through the greater part of half a century. When he came to Monroe he found a Community of fourteen Sisters and four postulants. Mother Mary Joseph was at that time Mistress of Novices.

It was not difficult for the Sisters to practice the poverty which they had vowed. They were poor and destitute, having but little income, hence in fulfilling their vow they had but to love and submit cheerfully to that which was a stern necessity of their condition. Monroe of that day might well have been regarded as the Monument of a Lost Opportunity; for the prospect which seemed so bright at the dawn of the nineteenth century and to which the early settlers looked forward as to the promise of a hope fulfilled, had been swept away by the

**“Tragedy of the Raisin,” a tragedy so appalling that no other colonists for a long time could be persuaded to come to live in old Frenchtown, as it was then called. The consequence was, the people, for the greater part, were poor and without means of obtaining a livelihood for themselves, much less of helping to provide for the Sisters. If these religious teachers were going to be a burden to them, they preferred to see them go to some more prosperous place. They threatened Father Joos if he would endeavor to retain them. In the words of the Bishop of Covington:**

**“The modest, retiring Pastor, who readily yielded his own rights and whom self-appointed censors hoped to frighten into immediate submission to their whims, turned out to be a giant of resolution and strength to defend the rights of the Spouses of Christ and to attempt the building up of Catholic schools. The very hopelessness of the undertaking in the face of unreasoning opposition, and the lack of Catholic spirit of his parishioners were to him the best proofs of the necessity of an education based on the eternal principles of duty to God, of respect and obedience to the Church whom Jesus Christ had commissioned to teach all nations in all climes. He resolutely set to work.**

Upon the little flock of Religious he not only lavished the wealth of his spiritual stores, teaching them to suffer for Christ's sake and for the sake of His own little ones, persecution and contradiction; but he shared with them the scarcely awakened generosity of a few devoted men of Monroe, whose Catholic instinct had divined the treasure of soul-love hidden under the apparently cold exterior of the frail-looking foreign priest."

Earnestly and persistently, Father Joos took up the work of extending the apostolate of teaching. He devoted to the spiritual instruction of the Sisters all the time he could spare from the heavier duties of the parish. He endeavored to infuse into them his own spirit of faith and duty, of meekness and firmness, of prayer and self-sacrifice. They must place constantly before their pupils the highest ideals, that the souls entrusted to them might learn to know and appreciate the value of Christian ethics and understand the necessity of shaping their lives according to their divine and unalterable precepts. As religious teachers, they should never lose sight of the object of education; that education does not consist in filling the mind with facts or fads or fancies, but in preparing it to receive the truth.

With a clear insight into the needs of the times, and seeing the false and perverted idea of education abroad in the land to which he had so recently come a stranger, Father Joos determined to introduce a course of Catholic training which would procure the greatest good for the pupils in the schools of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, a system of education that from the very dawn of reason would draw out and culture all the qualities of mind and heart and fit the individual for a life of usefulness as a social, moral, religious being, whose noble resolves and exalted ideals would lead him from the preparatory school of this life to the higher halls of learning—Heaven.

After a long and persevering quest, he found a course of instruction that seemed to meet all the demands of the times. It was that used in St. Andrea's Normal College, Belgium, an Institute regarded as one of the leading Colleges for women in Europe.

This work is a Psychology of Pedagogy. Its ultimate aim is true education, which consists not in erudition, but power, knowledge; the development of the spiritual as well as the intellectual activities of the individual in the attainment of Truth. It shows how education in its widest scope embraces all human rela-



tions and obligations, all possibilities of human activities, bearing with it the influence of home and school, Church and State, while it in turn determines the character of each. Its four divisions deal with the essential elements of education: the religious, the ethical, the intellectual, and the physical.

It emphasizes the prerogatives of the teacher to deal with life, to impart such knowledge as will impel the individual to activity, call into action the manifold powers of the soul, energize the dormant faculties of the intellect, awaken interest, concentrate the attention upon the marvelous beauties of the universe and the glories of the world beyond, the Home of God, of His Angels and His Saints, and of all who love Him and serve Him in spirit and in truth.

Directing thus the thought, the mind is awakened and rises to a consciousness of its own divine origin and comes to a knowledge of the fundamental truths of religion. God created me. He sustains me. He has redeemed me. He is the embodiment of all beauty and goodness, all truth and love. I came from God, to Him must I again return.

Father Joos translated this work from the original French, and every week for over forty

years, unless prevented by absence or something unforeseen, he gave an hour's conference upon this subject to the assembled Sisterhood, so convinced was he that the most successful means to check the tide of godlessness in this country was to instill into the hearts of the children the principles of truth, pure and unchanging as the source from which they spring, that taking deep root therein they might bring forth fruit tangible and eternal.

On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, 1857, Father Joos presided for the first time at a religious reception. Miss Cecilia Flanagan was invested with the habit of the Congregation, taking the name of Sister Mary Egidius; Miss Philomena Labadie, Sister Mary Stanislaus.

In those years receptions and professions were more frequent than now; the candidates were received generally at the expiration of three months' postulancy. A few months later Miss Margaret Mohr became Sister Mary Anthony; Miss Isabella Sheeran, Sister Mary Ignatia; and Miss Mary Jane Eagan, Sister Mary Xavier. Later Miss Frederica Uebbing was admitted to the Novitiate as Sister Mary Clara; Miss Johanna Gerretsen, Sister Mary

Gertrude; in September, Miss Mary Burke, Sister M. Joanna; Miss Margaret Myers, Sister Mary Colette. They were soon followed by Miss Catherine Biry, who became Sister Mary Catherine; and Miss Antoinette Paull, Sister Mary Aloysius.

In 1860 Father Joos succeeded in having the Home of the Orphan Girls incorporated. This orphanage is private, having no diocesan support. It is known now as St. Mary's Home, and has an average of thirty inmates each year.

Mother Mary Joseph earnestly requested Father Joos to revise the Rules and Constitutions, which were found to be incomplete and not sufficiently clear in some points to prevent misunderstandings as to their interpretation. No Constitution had been given regarding branch houses. The changed conditions of the times required additions to be made; and while the original Constitutions remained practically the same, as Father Joos would never tolerate the slightest change or infraction of the Rules, they were systematically classified and arranged, and provisions made to meet the exigencies of the times.

Bishop Lefevre not only gave the work his approval, but generously had it printed at his



THE PRESENT CONVENT—REAR VIEW  
(Main building erected in the Sixties)



own expense and presented the Community with three hundred bound copies.

With the exception of a small chapel, which was built of lumber that had been used in the soldiers' camp in the early part of the Civil War, and which was sold at a reduced rate, Father Joos did not begin the work of building any of the brick edifices until 1868, and then only on the principle, "To build in keeping with the means to defray the expense."

The east wing of the Academy was the first to lift its head; then the main building, the west wing, then the chapel, music hall, and science hall. In 1894 a large building east of the Academy, St. Edward's hall, the present Novitiate, was erected, and the new chapel, built in 1891, was enlarged in 1898.

Under the fostering care of Father Joos, the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, rapidly increased. It had numbered but fourteen professed members at his coming in 1857; fifteen years later its enrollment was one hundred six.

In 1870 the Convent had made such rapid progress that it began to take more of Father Joos' time; the following year he practically gave up all parish care and devoted himself entirely to the needs of the growing Institution.

In his quiet but effective way he gave the right direction to the work of the Community of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Through him it became thoroughly identified with the Catholic life and education of the diocese of Detroit.

To the persevering efforts of Father Joos do we owe the exceedingly great favor of the primal recognition of the Holy See. For this purpose he made two journeys to Rome, where he presented to the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith the Rules and revised Constitutions. The former he accredited to the Founder, Reverend Louis Gilet, C.S.S.R., who compiled them from the Rule of St. Alphonsus; the latter he presented as his own revision to meet the changed conditions of the time.

How great, then, was his joy when, in 1889, he received the first Papal Decree of Approval.

Father Joos was one of the best known priests in Michigan and none was more highly esteemed; for he was a true "*Alter Christus*," who spent his life in doing good and in exemplifying the teachings of Him whose apostle he was.

His Bishop found in him a counselor and



THE CHAPEL



THE NOVITIATE





friend, the clergy an adviser and a model. When, therefore, in 1877, Bishop Borgess went on his visit, *ad limina*, to Rome, Father Joos was made Administrator, with the title of Vicar General. Again, in 1887, when Bishop Borgess resigned, Father Joos was placed in charge of the diocese until the appointment of a new Bishop. With prudence and zeal he fulfilled these responsibilities until 1888, when the Right Rev. John S. Foley, D.D., came to take charge of the Diocese of Detroit.

Bishop Foley was not long in recognizing the worth and ability of Father Joos, and a few weeks after he made him his Vicar General. His labors and sacrifices for the sake of religion became known to the Sovereign Pontiff, and in January, 1889, Pope Leo XIII raised him to the rank of Monsignor, conferring upon him the dignity of one of his own Domestic Prelates.

On June twenty-first, 1898, Father Joos reached the Golden Milestone which marked the fiftieth anniversary of his priesthood.

Never before in the history of the Diocese of Detroit had there been so great an assemblage of prelates, priests, and people to participate in jubilee festivities as that which met in

St. Mary's Academy, Monroe, to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the ordination of Rt. Rev. Mgr. E. Joos, V.G.

Magnificent tributes of honor and esteem came to him, not from Catholics only, but from a most complex body of men, representing every nation, every creed, every social and political belief. From the beautiful Floral City, so proud to acknowledge him as its first citizen, to the happy children of St. Mary's, who claimed him by the endearing name of Father, all took up the song of gladness, of jubilee, of praise.

The Most Reverend Archbishop Elder, in addressing Monsignor Joos, manifested a father's admiration and appreciation, not only of the work he had accomplished for Catholic education, but also for his fidelity to duty and the constancy with which he sustained the exalted dignity of the priesthood through fifty years of faithful service.

Archbishop Ireland of St. Paul, after paying a glowing tribute to the Right Reverend Jubilarian, showed that upon the higher education for women depends the power of the Church and the future of the Nation because of the influence of the Christian Woman, Christian Wife, Mother, and Sister.

At the Alumnæ Reception the following original poem was read:

### LIFE'S VOYAGE

Beyond the harbor of Youth's narrow bay,  
The wide sea opens distant to the view;  
Restless its waves, unfettered, ceaseless roll  
Moaning ever as in hapless rue.

Now placid its sunlit waters lie,  
And now, by fierce winds lashed and tossed,  
No bounding line o'er all its vast expanse,  
Till in the blue horizon it is lost.

But as the stars that brilliant gem the night  
No method to eyes unmasking show;  
So life's great but lawless tumult is,  
Whether its throbbing waters ebb or flow;

To him who seeks not reverent for the cause  
That unchanging rules the changing tide,  
Or who in self-confidence assured,  
Elects unskilled to enter ways untried.

For when ships go down on the wind-swept sea  
We moan for the lost who lie fathoms deep;  
Yet blame not the master who had no chart,  
Nor him who traveled ways disdained to  
keep.

But Youth at danger laughs; from vantage  
safe

He catches the gleam of a silvery oar,  
And hears the surges' mystic call to him,  
"Come with me,—haste to the far-off shore.

"There is joy forever on my lambent wave,  
There is life and power on my waters free;  
Come, take the heritage I hold for you,  
List to the magic name, sweet 'Liberty.' "

Nor vain the call, from home's haven sure,  
Ten thousand sail exultant go each day,  
While loved ones watch with wistful gaze  
As their shallops seaward glide away,

Merrily go singing a gay adieu,  
Buoyant their hearts, expectant, eager-eyed;  
What fortunes will the morrow bring to them  
Who homeward waft the airy, glad "Good-  
by."

We only know that never more returns  
The bark that sails on that great, broad sea;  
For currents there resistless bear it on  
To the unknown shore of eternity.

Yet safe betimes its destined port 'twill reach,  
If reason guide the helm and charts are true,  
If signals heeded are, and watch close kept  
Of starry lamps aglow in heaven's blue.

You, dear Father, heard the impelling voice,  
The low heart whisper, "Do thou come to  
Me,  
Fear not to venture on the ancient deep  
Or trust thy bark to the propitious sea!"

Soon on the ebbing tide slowly outborne  
With rope and spar, and sail set fair and  
white,  
Glided your ship across the narrow bar  
Into the boundless ocean's wavering light.

Nor lingered near the shallow, pebbly strand,  
To watch the gleaming lamps of home;  
But out to the mid-sea where currents strong  
The billows hurl and dash to crested foam.

Long years have passed; full oft the main  
Has reflected summer's smiling grace  
And returned the angry, sullen frown  
That enshadows winter's darkened face.

But all unscathed by rock, or wind, or wave,  
Onward your vessel's course, stanch and  
free,  
But no more its keel the waters lightly skim,  
Laden now, a treasure-freighted Argosy.

And we who hailed you in the long ago,  
Who follow, still follow your beacon light,  
Hail again; a voyage fair to you,  
On prosperous waves to the harbor of de-  
light.

A voyage calm, air slumbering, peaceful seas,  
Within whose limpid depths no hindering  
bars,  
And soft winds waft, 'neath blue and tranquil  
skies,  
To yon bright shore stretching beyond the  
stars.

The exquisite poem appended was written  
for the occasion by a Religious of the Sacred  
Heart, who claims the happy distinction of  
being the first graduate of St. Mary's:

#### THE TEMPLE

Ah! hast thou seen Jerusalem,  
The storied city of God's peace,

Or has its vision come to thee  
Bidding life's wild throbbings cease?  
Hast stood on Mt. Moriah's height,  
To gaze upon the temple fair,  
And watched the towering marbles blush  
As e'en they knew their God were there?  
For now 'tis morn, and long afar,  
As from the gateways of the sun,  
A slender sound of bugle comes:  
Jehovah's worship has begun.  
The mellow note, so long and sweet,  
Has waked the city; and its eyes  
Are turned on Zion, as the clouds  
Of curling incense slowly rise.  
Reverent stands the High-priest there,  
The light of morn upon his face,  
Its glory with his gladness blent,  
As filling all the Sacred place.  
The day is growing o'er the hills,  
Its gold is tingeing tower and wall,  
The trumpets, many-voiced and rich,  
In life's harmonies now rise and fall.  
Away the High-priest turns, but lo!  
The light is deeper on his face,  
Deeper than the burning hills or fane;  
'Tis lighted by the holy place.  
The day is spent, and once again  
Jerusalem is hushed and still;



Again the sacred music plays,  
And myriad hearts are all a-thrill.  
What does he there, the chosen one,  
The Priest who pleads? The angels hear;  
Methinks the awful veil is rent,  
Heaven is listening—God is near;  
“The glory of thy house I loved,  
Mine eyes shall see the King in all  
His beauty. On His land afar,  
Ah! let my eager vision fall,  
O Ariel, Jerusalem my home,  
Strong lion of the Lord, Thou’st let  
Me take the honey from thy mouth  
To feed thy people, that they may sit  
In peace, in tabernacles blest,  
And dwell in beauteous harmony  
In confidence and wealthy rest.  
And they shall say: ‘Tis thou hast wrought  
Our works; and from thy vineyard we  
Have drunk pure wine, for in thy love  
Our fruitfulness and strength shall be.’  
The lambs within his arms shall rest  
Upon his bosom lying safe,  
When strifes are raging fierce without,  
And angry waves the wild sea chafe.  
How beautiful upon the Mount  
The feet of them that carry Truth,

And spread the light afar and bear  
The yoke of Christ from early youth.  
"Father, keep them in Thy name,  
For they are Thine, and Thou hast loved  
Them with an everlasting love,  
No mortal ken has spanned or proved,  
But Thou hast given them unto me,  
And when the evening shades are come,  
Ah! may I, like the shepherd, bear  
Them joyous on my shoulders home?  
Arise, O Zion, put on thy strength,  
The garments of thy glory wear,  
Thou city of the Holy One,  
Jerusalem, my gladness share.  
O land of corn and wine, O land  
Of bread and vineyards rich, arise  
And let your song of Jubilee  
Pierce the glittering portals of the skies."  
Hast seen and heard? 'Tis thus he prayed,  
And as the lengthening shadows fell,  
From all the hills mighty sounds  
Of wondrous harmonies rise and swell.  
The harpers' fingers touch the strings  
And a glad new song was made that night,  
And there came on his spirit a vision fair,  
The new Jerusalem; and the light  
Thereof was the Lamb, and the walls were gold.  
And the streets were gleaming, and the throne

Was of crystal, a shining sea. He looked,  
And the Lamb was the golden light of the Sun.  
Is this his reward to be? Ah! ye  
Can tell who had knelt, as he prayed and blessed,  
Whose feet through changing years now gone,  
The courts of Jerusalem have pressed,  
Ye know if the golden palm and crown  
Are his, the broidered robe and ring,  
The Jubilee smile of the Angels bright,  
The love and the blessing of the King.

But sorrow, it is said, ever follows in the footsteps of Joy; the song of gladness was changed three years later to the solemn dirge which, on May 18, 1901, told the passing of him who, "Honored in life, was mourned in death."

The dear, saintly Father Joos was dead! We quote again from the funeral sermon of the Right Reverend Bishop Maes:

"In the sunlight of St. Mary's fame, the flame which lighted the torch of religion and education and communicated its warmth and glow, has flickered and vanished. Father Joos is dead.

"May the example of his holy life prove for many years an inspiration to the zealous Detroit priesthood, whose honor was so dear to

his priestly heart, and an everlasting incentive to holiness to his spiritual daughters, for whose sanctification he spent himself without stint or measure.

“Beloved Father, devoted friend of my priestly years, true and loyal David to a Jonathan whose soul was knit to thine by spiritual bonds stronger than death, strength of my sacerdotal youth, comfort of the mature years of my episcopacy, farewell! Rest in peace in God’s acre; the curse of a mercifully avenging God has been lifted from its earth by the blessings of the Church and by the burial of a serried crown of virginal bodies who securely await a glorious resurrection under thy leadership, thou who wast the enlightened, devoted, loving Father of their gentle souls. Rest in peace in the comforting shadow of the redeeming cross of Jesus. Yon cemetery is a consecrated field; may it give up a holy harvest of sainted bodies of thy spiritual children at the last day; may it be a chosen field of golden wheat free from all tares; may we meet thee at the sound of the judgment blast in the merciful light of the glory-beaming eyes of our King and Pontiff, Jesus Christ, to whose name be glory and honor forever and forever. Amen.”

For nearly half a century, Father Joos had

been to the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, friend and father, counselor, consoler, and spiritual guide, and during all those years he had not changed except to grow kinder, more tender, thoughtful, zealous for the glory of God and the good of the Community, which had become as dear to him as his very life. Every member of the Sisterhood fully reciprocated, with the heart of a grateful child, the affection of this dearly venerated Father and thanked God for having given him to lead her onward and upward to the realms of eternal peace and joy.

### **In Memoriam**

RIGHT REV. MGR. E. JOOS, V.G.

Standing on time's gray and shadowy shore,  
In the dim light 'twixt day and set of sun,  
From o'er the stream that rushing onward  
swept,  
He heard the all-compelling mandate,  
"Come!"

From its safe moorings, swift his bark was  
loosed,  
Its prow turned to the mystic, far-off shore,  
Upon the ebbing tide 'twas borne away,  
Where flow, alas! shall bring it back no more.

All vainly did we strive to hold him here,  
Nor let him breast that dark and somber  
stream;  
His ears celestial harmony had heard,  
His vision caught a glimpse of heavenly  
gleam.

He would not stay; and with sad, yearning eyes  
We watched the bark glide onward out of  
sight,  
But heard, like messenger of peace to earth,  
His "Sursum Corda" wafted on the night.

Floating on soft-winged zephyrs did it come,  
Lifting the shadows deep, the boding gloom,  
A joyous, living voice, it spoke to us,  
No spectral message it, from out the tomb.

For oft in days that now can be no more,  
When sullen grief, our guest, would not de-  
part,  
His gentle voice, in chiding sweet, would say,  
"My child, God wills it so; lift up thy heart."

His words were strength unto the fainting soul,  
Comfort and peace to those who mourn;  
From lowly things, the heart was lifted up,  
And on vanquished self, to Heaven upborne.

And still his smiling lips, though they be dumb,  
Shall wake our souls to deeds of high em-  
prise,

Still shall we seek with fervent will the right  
And see again the glad light in his eyes.

O noble soul and free! Thou art not dead,  
Nor shalt thou bide in memory alone;  
Till the last harvest shall be gathered in,  
Fruit shall be won from seed thy hand hath  
sown.

Then pray for us, as thou wert wont to pray  
Ere came the message calling thee afar;  
That when the summons comes to us, we, too,  
May voyage safe, nor meet with hindering  
bar.

Till then "Sursum Corda" shall be watch and  
ward;

Re-echoing lessons of those happy days,  
When more to us than all the world's acclaim  
Thy gently spoken word of earnest praise.

But now, nor praise, nor blame shall we hear  
more;

Yet in St. Mary's shall thy spirit dwell,  
Inspiring thy children as of old, e'en though  
To thy dear presence we have said "Fare-  
well!"

—*A Sister, Servant of the Immaculate Heart.*

## CHAPTER VIII

### GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT



THE Sisters had long desired to have a Mission House established in another diocese, and Providence, in its own good time, found a means by which this hope was realized.

The Very Rev. J. V. O'Reilly, having built a Convent at his own expense at St. Joseph's, Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania, had engaged the Sisters of the Holy Cross Order to conduct his school. They remained, however, but a short time, having been recalled to their Mother-House. At the suggestion of Right Reverend John N. Neumann, C.S.S.R., of Philadelphia, Father O'Reilly applied for the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and Bishop Lefevre readily acceded to his request. Sister Mary Magdalene was appointed Superior; and accompanied by Sister M. Aloysius, Sister M. Agnes, and Sister M. Clara, she left the Mother-House on the thirtieth of August, 1858, for the new establishment; Sister M.



Celestine and Sister M. Stanislaus joined them a few weeks later.

On April fourth, 1859, Bishop Lefevre appointed Mother Mary Joseph Superior General of the Order, and subsequent events proved the wisdom of this appointment, for she was a Religious of great virtue and eminent qualities, a saintly and ideal Superior.

The same day Sister Teresa was sent as local Superior to St. Joseph's, Pennsylvania; in July, Sister M. Ann, Sister M. Ignatia, and Sister Mary, Sister M. Rose and Sister M. Egidius followed.

Mother M. Magdalene soon established a large and flourishing school at Reading; this foundation became independent, having its own Mother-House and Novitiate, which were later removed to Villa Maria, West Chester. At the formation of the Scranton Diocese in 1871 a Mother-House and Novitiate were established at Scranton, Pennsylvania.

Right Reverend Bishop Neumann wrote to Mother Mary Joseph as follows:

“PHILADELPHIA, June 1st, 1859.

“DEAR RESPECTED MOTHER:

“About two weeks ago I was in Susquehanna County, and had a conversation with the Very

Reverend J. V. O'Reilly and Mother Teresa about the affairs of your Sisters in St. Joseph's. I found the Rules of your Community incomplete in reference to our circumstances.

"The Rules as they stand now do not define the point in regard to Mission Houses with sufficient clearness.

"As a General Mother Superior is required to keep up the union of all houses in different dioceses, a Rule or Constitution will have to determine how she is to be appointed, whether she is to govern the Community during her whole life or for a certain number of years, where she is to reside, and in what relation she is to be with the respective Bishop.

"As long as the Rule remains unfinished, I consider it due to the Bishops, who have houses of the Community in their dioceses, that no new regulations be added to the Rule without their approbation.

"Religious Houses, when once founded, ought not to be given up without evident physical or moral necessity. When God helps you, to be poor indeed, it is very good for all who profess poverty; Monroe, being moreover in the country, is one of the very places which according to the Rule is to be benefited by the min-

istrations of your Sisters; it is the cradle of your Community.

“I found the Sisters rather too crowded in St. Joseph’s; as the new addition is going on but slowly, they will have hard times there during the heat of the summer. The new house in Reading is being put in order and will accommodate eight to ten Sisters. The schools will be opened in the beginning of September.

“Mother Teresa informed me that your Right Reverend Bishop has appointed you Superior of the Community, and I assured them that I have no difficulty in recognizing you as such. They all respect and love you and I can assure you that you need not fear any want of obedience on their side.

“If your stay in Monroe should have become impossible, and your Right Reverend Bishop allows you to leave his diocese, you and your Sisters are free to come to this diocese, though as I stated there is yet but very little room for so many more. Trials and all sorts of afflictions are usually the beginning of great favors from Heaven, and therefore I would recommend patience and forbearance. In critical circumstances, like yours seem to be, you require much prayer, purity of intention, and the cau-

tion never to act precipitately, even when it seems to be that you are right.

“The projected house in Bellefonte is not yet established. Want of means prevents the Benedictine Fathers opening it; it may be that in five or six months circumstances will be more favorable.

“I finish this long letter at last, after many interruptions, even for days. But I hope it will come to your hands in time.

“I pray to God to bless you and all your Community, and remain with sincere attachment,

“Yours truly in Christ,

“JOHN N. NEUMANN, C.S.S.R.,

*“Bishop of Philadelphia.”*

“Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!” No one can fathom the love of the Almighty for the beings whom He singles out to do His work, or the mystery that enwraps His dealings with them.

In this separation of the East from the West, we are happy to state that the peace and harmony of our religious life were never violated.

We have an evidence of this love and devotedness in a letter which Mother Mary Joseph wrote to a Sister in Reading, Pa.:

“MY DEAR SISTER.

“Your letter to the Novice has been unavoidably delayed, therefore I deemed it best to give you the reason. . . .

“We all pray for our dear Sisters at Reading. In the eternal pleasure of an unerring Providence, we know not God’s loving designs in permitting a separation among those who once possessed, if I may thus express myself, but one heart and one soul in common; yet this much, dear Sister, we do know, that He wills we should be united, and united forever, in the fervent desire of loving and serving our Heavenly Master and in accomplishing to the end His adorable Will here, in order that we may all enjoy an eternal union in the bosom of His love hereafter. Let us all do this, and a happy eternity is ours.

“Please pray for me and for our beloved Sisters, and believe me to remain

“Sincerely yours in the tender love of  
Jesus and Mary Immaculate,

“SISTER MARY JOSEPH,  
“*Servant of Mary.*”

God, for His own wise purpose, permitted Ecclesiastical Superiors to decree the absolute independence of each division, but the deep,

abiding love and esteem of the Sisters for one another never suffered the least diminution.

They were noble, true souls who went out to the fields that were white to the harvest; they were fervent and strong souls who remained to labor in the almost sterile portion of the Master's vineyard, but God's designs were thus fulfilled and His blessing was with each little band.

At the time of the separation, there were twelve Sisters in each division. Those remaining at the Mother-House were Mother Mary Joseph, Sister M. Alphonsine, Sister M. Frances, Sister M. Philomena, Sister M. Gerard, Sister M. Liguori, Sister M. Anthony, Sister M. Xavier, Sister M. Gertrude, Sister M. Joanna, Sister M. Colette, and Sister M. Catherine. Of this number, Sister M. Gertrude and Sister M. Catherine are living today (1915).

Mother Mary Joseph's love and reverence for the poor was second only to that for her Sisters in religion. She saw God in the poor and sought by every means in her power to relieve their necessities. One of her first acts on becoming General Superior was to receive into the Convent, small as it then was, with means still smaller, destitute and neglected

children; for she knew this was a work most pleasing to the Heart of her Divine Spouse and would be the surest means of drawing down God's blessing upon herself and her Community. Hearing of a family whose misery and poverty were so great that the parents had abandoned their children, giving the eldest girl to a non-Catholic family, her zeal and charity were aroused, and although at the time she was in the weak, convalescent state following severe illness, she went with a Sister to the people who had taken this child and begged them to give the little girl to her. The man and his wife demurred, but finally, after a long argument, in which they set forth their claims, they said that having gone to so much trouble to make her look clean and respectable, they could not give her to the Sisters for nothing, but that she might have her for ten dollars. Mother Mary Joseph gladly agreed to this, and told them she would return in a short time with the money.

Overjoyed at the prospect of saving a soul, she went home, and having told Father Joos of her success, he, whose heart was ever full of tender love and pity for the poor and zeal for their salvation, insisted upon paying the whole amount demanded. Mother Mary

Joseph went back for the little girl and then, hearing that she had a smaller sister still in the old dilapidated hut they had called home, she went thither and found a little emaciated child of five years of age in a dying condition. She clasped the child to her heart as a priceless gift from Heaven and brought her to the Convent, where she lived for several years, the darling of the household.

The year 1861 proved an eventful one for parochial schools in Detroit. The first to open wide its doors was St. Joseph's, then Sts. Peter and Paul's Cathedral, and St. Anne's. Painesville, Ohio; Adrian, and Marshall, Michigan, each had a school in 1864.

In 1863 one came to the Community who was destined to do much for the French Catholics in Monroe. Sister M. Teresa, having been a Religious for twenty-five years in Belgium, ardently desired to spend her remaining years in working for souls in America. With the highest testimonials from her own Superior and the Bishop of Ghent, she was received into the Community; and in her the words of Holy Scripture were verified, "As everlasting foundations upon a solid rock, so the Commandments of God in the heart of a holy woman." Imbued with the spirit of Jesus Christ, the



great Ideal Teacher, and possessing the patience and self-control that are born of the virtues so dear to His Sacred Heart, meekness and humility, Sister Teresa entered upon her task of instructing in Christian Doctrine the French children of St. Mary's parish; she continued that work for nearly forty years, and to-day in thousands of homes her name is held in benediction, as the one to whom, next after God, they who were instructed by her owe the faith which has taken deep root in their hearts and leads them to Life Eternal.

Handed down by tradition are two incidents in the life of Mother Mary Joseph which emphasize her implicit confidence in Divine Providence and in the powerful intercession of St. Joseph. At a time when the Community was still very poor, it happened that the Sisters were out of all provisions and the Superior sent one of the subjects to buy some, bidding her tell the grocer that she was not able to pay for them that day, but would do so the coming week. The man was weighing the flour when this message was delivered, and he angrily put it back, saying, "Tell the Superior she will get nothing from me until she pays me first." When the postulant returned and tearfully related what had passed, Mother Mary Joseph

said, "Do not grieve over it, we will pray to St. Joseph and leave the matter wholly to God, whose loving Providence will not suffer us to want." Scarcely had she uttered these words when a stranger called at the door; he handed the portress a ten-dollar gold piece, saying, "Please give this to the Superior," and without mentioning his name, he departed.

Again the storehouse was empty; and having assembled the Community, Mother said: "Sisters, we have but one dollar and we are out of all provisions; so we will give this dollar to St. Joseph and ask him to help us." She knelt with the Sisters, and while they were still praying, Mr. O'Connor, a generous friend and benefactor of the little struggling Community, came bringing a barrel of flour and more than the needed groceries. He asked the portress to tell Mother Mary Joseph that as he was locking up his store that evening, it occurred to him that the Sisters might be in need of some provisions.

Through all the years since then our Holy Patron has kept a gold dollar upon his arm. Occasionally it has disappeared for a time, but has either been returned or replaced by another, a perpetual reminder that St. Joseph has never suffered the Community to be in want.

At the earnest request of Mother Mary Joseph, our beloved Father Joos composed the following prayer in honor of St. Joseph:

“Most dear Father and faithful Patron, behold thy unworthy child prostrate before thee, full of confidence in thy most powerful intercession, which no one ever invoked in vain. I most humbly beseech thee to protect me always, as thou didst the Divine Infant; to obtain for me a spark of that love which devoured thy soul for thy Immaculate Spouse and her Divine Child, and finally the grace of dying like thee in the arms of Jesus and Mary. Amen.”

In the passing of this saintly woman, Mother Mary Joseph, to her eternal reward, the Community experienced its first great sorrow, a sorrow increased in a short time by the death of her successor, Mother M. Xavier, whom good Bishop Lefevre called “the humble little Mother.”

Mother M. Gertrude was but a short time installed in her office when the Silent Reaper took from the Community several of the best teachers,—Mother Xavier, Sister Flora, and Sister Ursula, dying within the brief period of three weeks.

The work of extension continued. Schools were opened in Ann Arbor, Saginaw, Carleton,

Detroit, Marine City, Mount Clemens, Muskegon; and St. Anthony's Asylum was opened for the reception of orphan boys in 1867. After some years the members of the Orphans' Board resigned and the Asylum was handed over to the Franciscan Brothers.

In the death of the Right Reverend Bishop Lefevre, in 1869, the Community sustained a great loss. In a certain sense he was a co-founder of the Congregation; for without his co-operation and support, Father Gilet would not have had the courage to begin the work. Bishop Lefevre gave it the first approvals; and for twenty-four years he was a kind Father and protector to the growing Sisterhood.

With the advent of the Right Reverend Caspar Henry Borgess, D.D., in 1870, a new impetus was given to Catholic education; for he was one of the leaders in the Episcopacy who in that far-off day vitalized the movement of parochial schools and gave it a right direction.

Our holy Mother the Church, always solicitous for the welfare of her children from the cradle to the grave, teaches, with all the earnestness and fervor of her deep maternal love, in what true happiness consists and what education will best secure it. She says with an emphasis stronger than was ever dreamed

of by the philosophers of old, "Know thyself, and know, love, and serve God." With these primary truths our lips are familiar, even before the dawn of reason bids us inquire into their meaning; and when this inquiry is awakened and we know their import, they become to us the key with which we are enabled to solve all the great problems of life. The Church, like her Divine Spouse, has ever extended her arms to the embraces of her children, her hands filled with blessings, her heart full of love. In every age and every clime she has exercised her sacred prerogative of teaching. There has never been a time in her history when schools did not exist. In the sixth general Council of Constantinople, she decreed, "Every church in city, town, or country shall have its school."

The diocese has just cause to rejoice in the fulfillment of this decree; for Detroit was the first city west of the Alleghanies to have a Catholic school. More than a century ago Father Gabriel Richard, then almost alone in the Northwest Territory, opened an Academy in the city of Detroit for young ladies and a high school for boys, taking good care that primary education should receive its full quota of attention. He was also one of the founders of the University of Michigan, and one of the

first among its professors. But it was not until the Archbishops and Bishops of the United States, in an effort to stem the tide of godlessness sweeping over our country and safeguard the sacred deposit of Faith, promulgated, in the Third Council of Baltimore, the decree for the establishment of parochial schools throughout the United States, that Catholic education was put on a firm basis.

To the furtherance of this sublime cause Bishop Borgess gave the best of his energies, his hopes, his prayers; and soon every parish in the diocesan city, and the principal ones outside of it, had a school. In addition to those which the Immaculate Heart Sisters already conducted, they made foundations in Detroit at St. Vincent's, St. Boniface's, Our Lady of Help, and Holy Redeemer; also in Jackson, Battle Creek, Ionia, Wyandotte. A Normal School for the training of religious teachers was opened at the Mother-House in 1876.

In May, 1887, owing to failing health, to the great regret of priests and people throughout the diocese, the Bishop felt that he must resign, that a younger and more vigorous hand should take the helm.

Three years later, May third, 1890, the diocese mourned that the saintly and apostolic

Bishop Borgess was dead. For seventeen years he had labored in building up the diocese that he might leave it in a condition of organization and prosperity, peace, and hope that would mark a distinct epoch in its progress.

In the death of Bishop Borgess the Community lost a dear, kind Father.

The following letter, which he wrote to Mother M. Clotilda shortly after his arrival in Detroit, is characteristic of all his dealings with the Community, and the deep interest he took not only in the work it was endeavoring to do, but also in each individual member :

“DETROIT, January 25, 1871.

“DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST.

“Your last invitation, which I had the pleasure to receive on this day, shall be answered with the desired promptness. Among the many charges of my solicitude, the happiness of all my good Sisters in Christ is not the least ; since they, next to my priests, are my most immediate helpers in the discharge of the ministry entrusted to me. But the Daughters of the Immaculate Heart of our Blessed Mother, having placed themselves under the special protection of the Diocese, it is but just that their appeals should be heard. I will be prepared,

God willing, for the ceremony of February second.

“Whilst I am sincerely sorry that several of the Sisters are sick and prevented thereby from doing good to others, I must confess that I am glad they are in the school of greater perfection, the uninterrupted exercise of patience. The Garden of Agony is the glorious Novitiate for every true follower of the Saviour; and there the secret is discovered to love Him above all, and to divest ourselves from the dross of earthly attachments.

“Is my last patient of St. Peter’s, Sister M. Joseph, continuing to improve in health? Please tell her that she will be asked an account of herself when I come.

“At Mass I see the good Sisters of St. Peter’s nearly every morning, and from that you may judge that they enjoy usual health.

“Please give my kindest regards to Reverend Father Joos and to all the Sisters, and accept the same from

“Yours in Christ,

“C. H. BORGESS,

“*Bp. of Det.*”

The Right Rev. John S. Foley, D.D., was consecrated Bishop of Detroit November



fourth, 1888. Clergy and laity, all classes of citizens, irrespective of creed or political opinion, hailed his coming with glad acclaim.

His welcome was a magnificent ovation, distinguished not only by external pomp and display, but also by the outpouring of universal joy and the spontaneous demonstrations of love, loyalty, and esteem that made him feel he was indeed not a stranger entering the gates but the beloved Father taking possession of his new home.

It is for others to bear witness to the results of his episcopal labors, the reflected light of which we see in the elevated condition of his people, who recognize the successful apostolate of light and love, of one who unites in his person the character of a learned Prelate and a Christian gentleman. But to us he is our Bishop, our Father; and since the death of our dearly venerated Father Joos, he has been our counselor, our guide. Under his auspices, the new and imposing structures, "Saint Mary's College" and a Residence-Hall for small boys have been erected, and under his fostering care the Institute has flourished and progressed.

To him is due the gratitude of the Community for the final approval of the Institute. He spared neither time nor toil in his endeavor



RIGHT REVEREND JOHN S. FOLEY, D.D.

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to obtain it, making even a personal appeal to the Holy See. When he received the Decree, with a father's joy and gladness, he hastened to the Mother-House and read it to his spiritual children, who had so long and earnestly prayed to obtain this great favor.

It is not without a feeling akin to pain that we behold our beloved Bishop standing to-day on the farthest verge of life; but upon the sunlit heights which he has attained, he is recognized from far and near as the good Shepherd, who still keeps faithful watch and guard over his wide fold.

Thirty-six branch houses are established in the dioceses of Detroit and Cleveland, all under the supervision of the Mother-House, to which the Sisters return for the summer vacation and the Annual Retreat. During this period the Professed Sisters, numbering four hundred fifty, attend daily sessions of the Summer School, which is conducted by the best educators along the lines deemed most important for their advancement in study and efficiency as Religious teachers.

The entire Order has reached nearly sixteen hundred Professed Sisters, and it has fifty thousand pupils enrolled in its various schools.

As we take a retrospective glance and view

the growth and development of the Institute we would make a grateful acknowledgment of the debt we owe to our friends and benefactors, —to the Right Reverend Bishop of Detroit for his devoted patronage and untiring interest, to the Auxiliary Bishop, Right Reverend Edward D. Kelly, D.D., whose undeviating kindness and signal favors have reached out to us through many happy years; to the Redemptorist Fathers, and the Pastors of the schools in which we have labored, all of whom have extended to us the strong hand of friendship and the kindly word of encouragement, which have made the pathway smooth and the burden light.

To Saint Mary's Alumnæ Association, who are widely scattered throughout the length and breadth of the land, who are doubly endeared to us, not as our cherished children only, but as our most dear benefactors, we tender a grateful recognition. To their love and loyalty we are indebted in a great measure for our large enrollment of students, as also for the generous bequest of the endowed scholarship presented in June, 1915.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE FOUNDATION IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA



WE ARE happy to present to our readers "Fruit and Blossom," a beautiful pen picture from the gifted Eleanor C. Donnelly. It was in honor of the first Commencement Exercises held in the new and magnificent Villa Maria, at Frazer, Pa. It is a graphic description, not of that seat of learning only, but also of the foundation of the Order, and the work accomplished by the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

#### FRUIT AND BLOSSOM

Our first year at Frazer—our first Commencement exercises at the new Villa Maria.

What varied thoughts and emotions, what tender recollections of a cherished past, do not these words evoke on this day, and at this golden hour!

This superb temple of education,—this modern Parthenon, on the Acropolis, not of

Athens, but of Frazer, is, as it were, the crown of the scholastic labors of our beloved Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. On the jeweled Rosary of Time, angel fingers have reckoned seventy fruitful years since this favored Order of Mary first had birth on American soil. Far away in a lonely log cabin in St. Mary's parish, City of Monroe, Michigan, its pastor, Father Louis Gilet, a zealous Redemptorist missionary, founded in 1845 the Order of the Immaculate Heart, there laid the foundation of this humble teaching community, which then numbered but three members. Surely our Blessed Lady must have whispered that day to the brave trio of women and their holy founder the words of her divine Son to His first teachers of the Gospel: "Fear not, little flock, for it hath pleased your Father to give you a Kingdom"—the Kingdom, indeed, of her own Immaculate Heart—the Kingdom of unnumbered immortal souls, to whom the instructions of these chosen spirits and their successors would mean eternal salvation.

The modest seedling of a religious institute was planted in what was termed "a vast and sparsely settled region, with the crudest means of intercommunication." Hence, the multiplied trials and struggles of the little com-

munity were known only to God and its founders. But the Order took firm root, nevertheless, in an ungracious soil; and under the Redemptorist Rule, and the powerful protection of the Virgin Queen, began the great educational work with which its subsequent career was to be so nobly identified.

In 1858, the venerated Bishop Neumann of Philadelphia, himself a son of St. Alphonsus Liguori, invited the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart to make a foundation in his diocese. This first house in Pennsylvania, known as "Old St. Joseph's," was established at Silver Lake, Susquehanna County, under the spiritual direction of Rev. John Vincent O'Reilly, President of St. Joseph's Theological Seminary at that place. The Sisters from Monroe, Michigan, succeeded there the Sisters of the Holy Cross, who removed, in their turn, to the West.

The second house of the Immaculate Heart was opened the following year at Reading, and in 1872 the Order acquired Wyer's Military Academy at West Chester, Pa., which, after sundry valuable improvements, became the well-known Villa Maria, the Mother-House and Novitiate of the Immaculate Heart in Philadelphia Archdiocese. Thither the academy for young ladies was transferred from



Reading; and a boarding school for boys under the age of fourteen was opened by the Sisters, in adjacent buildings, under the title of St. Aloysius Academy.

For more than forty busy, blessed years these educational establishments have flourished in their respective spheres, sending forth their graduates annually to take an honored place in the ranks of Christian workers who ever reflect credit on their holy Church and their loved Alma Mater.

Nor do the students of Villa Maria or St. Aloysius Academy fail to acknowledge their immense debt to the spiritual care and direction of the successive zealous pastors of St. Agnes' Church, West Chester, among whom may be specially mentioned the present revered incumbent, Very Rev. Samuel Benedict Spalding, V.F., who for almost thirty years has been the devoted friend of the Sisters and their charges.

The first Superior General of the Immaculate Heart Order in our Archdiocese was Mother Mary Magdalene. Mother Jerome, the second in command, gave place to the beloved Mother Mary Gonzaga, under whose administration Villa Maria, of West Chester, came into being. She was succeeded in time

by the able Mother de Chantal, who, dying in 1904, was followed by Mother Mary Camilla. To the last-named modest little Superioress, who departed this life unexpectedly in 1913, are due, under Heaven, the inception and erection of this magnificent structure on the highest point of land between Philadelphia and our State capital. Feelingly alive, in her wise foresight, to the dangers that beset the children of the Faith in secular or sectarian colleges, Mother Camilla (Lord rest her zealous soul!) strove to furnish the rising generation of Catholic maidens with a school which would possess all the advantages and scientific appliances of a high-class college, but safeguarded by the abiding light and protection of the spirit of God, and of Mary the true *Sedes Sapientiæ*.

How well this gifted Religious planned and how admirably she accomplished her conception of an ideal academy for girls is patent to every beholder of the new Villa Maria, of Frazer. An old poet has said:

“Those men are called Divine  
Who public structures raise, and who  
design”;

but before the inspiration of Mother Camilla had been perfected in all its details of harmony,

elegance, execution, beauty, and proportion, the pure spirit that originated it had been called to dwell in the "house not made with hands," to gaze for evermore upon the vision of a Beauty ineffable that could never change or pass away.

At her lamented death, the completion and equipment of the new Villa Maria and its spacious entourage devolved upon the present gracious Superioress, Mother Mary James, who came into office in March, 1913. The task has been a tremendous one; and it is to be hoped that the devoted friends of Villa Maria, past and present, will rally now around the good Mother General, and assist her to support the heavy responsibilities that have descended so unexpectedly upon her shoulders. If "the spirits of the just made perfect" could hasten to the rescue, we might fancy we saw, to-day, the blessed *manes* of the primitive founders of the Order issuing from the shades of their ancient log-convent, and under the leadership of Father Gilet, conducting hither the never-to-be-forgotten Mothers and Sisters of the early foundations, to encourage their loved successors, and to hail with them this splendid development of their own modest hopes and aims. Gazing abroad, as they joyfully behold more than seven hundred Sisters of the Immaculate Heart



VILLA MARIA ACADEMY, FRAZER, PENNSYLVANIA



laboring in nearly fifty schools of our Archdiocese, and identified with the Catholic Girls' High School and Catholic Home Bureau, their sweet voices seem to rise, with our own, in a rapturous "Te Deum" to the Triune God; and kneeling, they gratefully salute their Immaculate Patroness, the "Virgin most powerful," where,

Enthroned upon her em'rald seat,  
Queen of the countryside,  
She sees the land beneath her feet  
With flow'rets 'broidered wide.

Blossoms, pure as her shining gown;  
Rich roses, golden-bright  
As the glory of her starry crown  
In heaven's holy light.

While blue-bells in their dewy bloom  
Recall her mantle's azure,  
Sweet lilies of the vale perfume  
The pathways of her pleasure.

Dear Lady of the Sinless Heart!  
We greet thee on thy throne.  
Villa Maria's Queen, thou art,  
Her children, all thine own!

Thine are the incense and the grace  
Of Frazer's fairy bower,  
The beauty of thy lovely face  
Reflected in each flower.

Thy presence still shall live with us  
In moments glad and tender,  
In sorrow's hour to give to us  
Visions of heaven's splendor;

For, in our memory's deep cells,  
Till life and thought shall sever,  
The music of thy Convent-bells  
Shall chime and chime forever!

ELEANOR C. DONNELLY.

## CHAPTER X

### THE FOUNDATION IN THE DIOCESE OF SCRANTON, PA.



FROM a finely written historical sketch of the foundation, growth, and extension of the Order in the Diocese of Scranton, contributed by the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart, to "The Religious Communities of Women in the United States," we take this page, regretting that our limited space forbids us to give the article in full:

The Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, are a Congregation of religious women devoted exclusively to the Christian education of youth. They are the pioneer religious teachers of northeastern Pennsylvania, having come here in 1858 from the cradle of their Institute in Monroe, Mich. The Diocese of Philadelphia at that time extended to the northern boundary line of Pennsylvania, and was governed by Venerable John Nepomucene Neumann, C.S.S.R., who had for his Vicar-General the Rev. John Vincent O'Reilly,



a man filled with great zeal in the cause of religion. Father O'Reilly had established, at a place called St. Joseph, in Susquehanna County, a college for young men, and at a short distance an academy for young women. On July 2, 1858, Bishop Neumann applied to the Superior of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary at Monroe, Mich., for Sisters to take charge of this academy. The offer was accepted by the Right Rev. Peter Paul Lefevre, at that time Bishop of Detroit; and six Sisters were named to go to Pennsylvania to begin the new mission. Gladly did the Sisters respond to the call, and amid trying circumstances, with never a thought of faltering, these early laborers in the vineyard began their noble work of Christian education in Pennsylvania. Soon after their arrival at St. Joseph the saintly Bishop Neumann made what was at that time a long and toilsome journey from Philadelphia to welcome to his diocese the blue-robed daughters of Mary's Immaculate Heart, and he remained with them long enough to give a three days' retreat to obtain the blessing of God upon their new mission. The fervent prayers offered in that humble chapel amid the wilds of the forest must certainly have been most acceptable to God; for through the many years

that have elapsed since the pious beginning under so distinguished a Prelate, the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary have increased and multiplied in a truly marvelous manner. The blessing of God has been daily with them to strengthen, protect, and bear them upward and onward in their arduous duties. With no settled income, no hope but in their heavenly Father, they have achieved wonderful results. The Sisters have been blessed with their full share of labors, trials, and losses; but, with St. Paul, they count it all as naught and glory only in the fact that, through the grace of their religious vocation, they have been enabled to help spread the kingdom of Christ in the hearts of His little ones.

St. Joseph's Academy soon became noted for the high standard of its scholarship and the sound religious training of its students. Young women came from all parts of the neighboring States to enjoy the advantages offered. A novitiate was opened, to which the Redemptorists of Philadelphia and New York sent many fine subjects. Receptions and professions followed in regular order. The studies of the novitiate were watched over by the professors of the college. In a few years a veritable Arcadia was to be found in this wilderness, far away from the

regular route of travel and accessible only by stage. All gave hope of an abundant harvest, when the college was entirely destroyed by fire on the night of January sixth, 1864. Father O'Reilly, seeing no prospects of being able to rebuild, most reluctantly sent the young men to their various homes; but as the fire had not injured the academy, the Sisters made strenuous efforts to continue their great work, and kept up the struggle until 1866, when it was decided to abandon St. Joseph's and to transfer Sisters and pupils to the Academy of the Immaculate Heart at Reading, which had been founded for them by their good friend Bishop Neumann in 1859.

A second academy had been established at Susquehanna in 1861 by Father O'Reilly, who continued to keep alight the torch of religion on the northern border. No church was complete, in his estimation, until a school was in operation, and he loved to call to his aid his favorite Sisters of the Immaculate Heart, who to-day hold in grateful reverence the memory of the devoted father of their religious infancy. Father O'Reilly applied to the State legislature for a charter for St. Alphonsus' Academy, but as religious bigotry was rife in those early days, the charter was granted under the secular title

Laurel Hill Academy. The school was thus put on a firm basis and soon a high standard of scholarship was attained. For over fifty years has Laurel Hill Academy kept pace with educational advancement, and it is to-day an honor to religion and the glory of the Church in Susquehanna.

The third school within the limits of the present Diocese of Scranton was opened in 1864 at Pittston. Large numbers of Irish Catholic emigrants had settled in the coal regions. They brought with them from the Isle of Saints the ever-living faith of their fathers, and they had no higher ambition than to transmit to their children this precious inheritance. Under the inspiring guidance of their noble pastor, the Rev. John Finnen, they gave so generously of their hard-earned pittance that soon they were able to purchase a building suitable for a convent and school. Application was made to the Mother-House, then at Reading, for Sisters to take charge of this important mission. A willing response was given and six Sisters arrived at Pittston in September to open St. John's Academy for girls; boys up to the age of fourteen years were also received. The most sanguine expectations could never have foretold the measure of success that was

to be the portion of St. John's Academy. Each year the good being done in the parish by the Sisters' school was more manifest.

Owing to the rapid increase of the Catholic population in this part of the State, which includes the great northern anthracite coal fields, Pius IX created a new diocese with Scranton as its episcopal see, and named Very Rev. William O'Hara, Vicar-General of the Diocese of Philadelphia, to be the first Bishop. His consecration took place on July twelfth, 1868. There were then only two Catholic schools within the diocese, and these were in charge of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. With a wise foresight for the future needs of his diocese, Bishop O'Hara, in August, 1871, assembled the Sisters at Susquehanna Convent and there conducted the annual retreat of eight days. At its close he explained to them his great wish to make a separate foundation for the Diocese of Scranton, advised them to take up the cross of separation from their Philadelphia Mother-House, and gave them the assurance that God, who is ever watchful of His own, would be to them a Father. Any Sister who wished to return to Philadelphia could do so, and those who remained were to commence the foundation with generosity of

heart for God's honor and glory. Fourteen Sisters remained. A Novitiate was then opened in Susquehanna, and many applicants received there.

A boarding and day school was opened on September twenty-sixth, of the same year. This was the first school founded in the new Diocese by its first bishop, who named it St. Cecilia's Academy. The present large structure was completed in 1874 and was opened in September of the same year. Under the patronage and constant encouragement of Bishop O'Hara, St. Cecilia's met with great success. It soon became one of the great educational factors of this part of the State; and years have so increased its usefulness and reputation that it numbers among its alumnæ and patrons many from the neighboring States. In 1883 it was chartered by an act of the State legislature and empowered to grant the usual academic honors.

Orphan children were, in a particular manner, the objects of the tenderest care on the part of Bishop O'Hara. Seeing the evident need of establishing some refuge for the destitute lambs of his flock, he opened St. Patrick's Orphan Asylum in 1875, and placed it under the care of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart

of Mary. Here a great number of children are sheltered every year, and here they are trained to a self-supporting life of usefulness.

Mount St. Mary's Seminary, auspiciously opened on the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, has in the first decade of its existence exerted a far-reaching influence in the home Diocese and in the several other Dioceses to which the Sisters have been called to carry the blessings of Catholic education. Mount St. Mary's is the true home of the Sisterhood and around it cluster all the sacred memories of religious life. Here are held the grand ceremonies of reception and profession of those who in the sweet springtime of youth gladly leave all that they may instruct others unto justice; here are educated young women in the sound doctrines of the Faith, as well as in secular sciences; here the entire Community assemble during each summer vacation to renew in holy retreat the youth of their religious fervor; here is a haven for those who have worn out their lives in the service of the Master; and here, too, on the lonely mountainside, rest, in the last long sleep of death, the bodies of those who have fought the good fight and won the crown of final perseverance.



MOUNT ST. MARY'S SEMINARY, SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA





Mother M. Germaine is the General Superior of the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary of the Diocese of Scranton, who now (1915) number over four hundred.

The Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary have taken active part in a work of great importance, which is destined to save to our holy religion the children of the Slovak and Lithuanian emigrants who come yearly in great numbers to this favored land and whose children were in danger of losing their precious birthright of Faith unless Catholic schools and teachers could be multiplied to supply this urgent need; but the Lord of the harvest knows well how to provide laborers for His harvest. The zealous Slovak priests concluded that the only way to provide teachers for their race was to educate a number of young women with the intention of forming in the future a Slovak Sisterhood at Mount St. Mary's Seminary at Scranton. On November twenty-first, 1903, the Feast of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Reverend Fathers Matthew Jankola, Joseph Murgas, and Andrew Pavco presented the first three aspirants, the "three Marys" to begin this great work; and these were soon followed

by others, as the clergy found deserving applicants.

The first reception of the habit took place in the Seminary Chapel on July twenty-sixth, 1906, when the first three members were invested with the habit of the Daughters of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, as the new Sisterhood is called, in honor of the Apostles of the Slavs.

In 1909, the Right Reverend Bishop Hoban, during his stay in Rome, laid the matter before Pope Pius X, who graciously granted the desired approbation of the Institute. Soon after the Bishop's return home, the profession of the first three members, Sister Mary, Sister Joseph, and Sister Emmanuel, took place at Mount St. Mary's on September twelfth, 1909.

Other receptions and professions have since taken place at Mount St. Mary's and a large number of Sisters are now professed. Under the supervision of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, they conduct schools in many leading cities, care for and educate thousands of children of the Slavic race. The Mother-House of this Sisterhood is at Middletown, near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Another foundation of like importance was laid at Mount St. Mary's, November first, 1905, when, at the request of the Right Reverend

J. W. Shanahan, Bishop of Harrisburg, three young Lithuanian women were received into the Novitiate with the intention of forming a Sisterhood for the education of children of Lithuanian birth or descent. Bishop Shanahan, having laid the needs of the Lithuanian people before Pope Pius X, was accorded the necessary permission to go on with this good work; and on August twentieth the ceremony of the profession of Sister Maria, Sister Immaculate, and Sister Concepta, the first three Sisters of St. Casimir, was performed by the Right Reverend Bishop Shanahan, assisted by the Right Reverend Bishop Hoban and many of the Lithuanian clergy.

The Mother-House of the Sisters of St. Casimir is in Chicago. These Sisters are still under the supervision of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, to whom has fallen the signal honor of being called upon to train the first members of these two infant Communities; and in doing so, they have rejoiced in the Lord to have been able to help so efficaciously in spreading the Kingdom of God on earth. To Him be glory and empire for ever and ever.



## CHAPTER XI

### ADMINISTRATION

#### MOTHER M. TERESA



MOTHER M. TERESA, known in the world as Marie Teresa Maxis, was born in Baltimore in 1810. Feeling that she was called to serve God in the religious life, she placed herself under the direction of the Redemptorist Fathers in that city, and following their advice, chiefly that of Rev. Father Czakert, the Superior of Baltimore, she secured admittance to the new Congregation which Father Gilet was at that time (1845) founding in Monroe, Michigan.

Father Gilet appointed her Superior of the newly-established Sisterhood on the eighth of December. Mother Teresa was a singularly gifted woman. She was endowed by nature with a most amiable disposition, a childlike simplicity of character, and a magnetic personality that won all hearts, especially those who were intimately acquainted with her. But, above all these, her charity, patience, and submission to

God's holy will under the many trials and crosses that came to her predominated, and set the seal of sanctity upon her.

Appointed by Bishop Lefevre Local Superior to St. Joseph's, Susquehanna, in 1859, through some misunderstanding brought about by those who had no connection whatever with the Community, she retired to the Convent of the Grey Nuns at Ottawa, Canada. Later she returned to the Mother-House at Villa Maria, West Chester, where she died, January twenty-second, 1892. The Sisters of Ottawa paid her an eloquent tribute, from which we take the following excerpt:

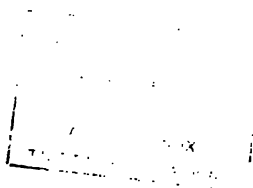
"The bent of her mind seemed to be strongly turned toward the supernatural; whether this was an innate quality or, as is often the case, one acquired, the fact remains that earthly trials and tribulations served but to detach, elevate, and purify her, until an abundance of most beautiful virtues came forth as an aftermath in her soul.

"Her faith in God and Revelation was far above the ordinary. Witness her tender devotion to the Blessed Eucharist, whether in her prolonged daily prayers before the Tabernacle, in her persevering love of Holy Communion, or in what is perhaps the touchstone of sanctity,



MOTHER MARY TERESA





her resignation in accepting all things, good and evil, as coming from the hand of an over-ruling Providence.

“Her obedience, which was a source of edification to our Community, had likewise the same secret spring—Faith. She absolutely disregarded the accidents of a command, seeing therein only the principle of authority or, as she was so often heard to say with very marked emphasis, ‘The Will of God.’

“Her life, with its many trials, her death, with its bright promise, have been to us emphatic confirmations of the actuality of that loveliness, truthfulness, and holiness to which souls attain in the atmosphere of strong Christian belief, fervent trust, and ardent love—in a word, how good it is to enter into life through darkness.

“The remembrance of her life in our midst is to us a testimony to truth, an incentive to good, and consequently a providential grace. She brought to us an inheritance of good example, and an edification with which she never ceased to enrich us, adding to it the interest of many prayers, which she offered in our behalf.

“That no joy may be withheld from her, we offer the prayers and desires of our hearts to Him, whose common cause we have all espoused; to Him to whose love we have dedicated

our lives; little matters it whether spent under the banner of the Immaculate Heart or in the shadow of the Cross!"

"GREY NUNS OF OTTAWA."

MOTHER M. ALPHONSINE

Mother M. Alphonsine was born in Detroit in 1804. Her name was Josette Godfroy. Her family was one of the most distinguished of the old French Colony that had followed the fortunes of Cadillac to the City of the Straits. At the time of the foundation of the Community she was a widow, known as Mme. Godfroy-Smith.

In the school of the Sacred Heart of our Divine Lord she had buried her sorrow and learned to be meek and humble. She found the sweetest consolation in prayer, and daily spent hours in church before the altar.

When Fathers Gilet and Poilvache came to Monroe, there was no house ready for them, and they were obliged to seek hospitality among the parishioners. Father Poilvache went to the home of Mr. Dansard, Father Gilet to that of Mr. Godfroy; thus the latter was early acquainted with the virtues of the first candidate from Monroe. Her fervor, humility, spirit of prayer, combined with her

amiability and social dignity, convinced Father Gilet that she would make a good Superior for his new Institute; and he reserved for her the name of St. Alphonsus, but when the others entered on the tenth of November, she was prevented from joining them, as her estate was then in the Probate Court. It was finally settled in February, and she placed the proceeds in the hands of Father Gilet for the building and furnishing of the new school. This was the first substantial aid given the Community.

Mother Alphonsine received the habit in May, 1846. In 1849 she was appointed Superior by the Right Reverend Bishop Lefevre to succeed Mother M. Teresa. She held the office for three years. She was a faithful and most conscientious guardian of the Rules and Constitutions, preserving the spirit of the Community and safeguarding its sacred rights and prerogatives. At the end of her term of office, in her humility she declined to be reappointed; and Mother M. Teresa was elected in 1852.

Mother Alphonsine was the first Mistress of Novices and she opened the school at Vienna (Erie), in 1855, also the school at Sts. Peter and Paul's Cathedral, Detroit, in 1861. She died at the Mother-House, Monroe, November third 1871.

### MOTHER MARY JOSEPH

The Angel of Death visited the Convent of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Monroe, October eighteenth, 1864, and summoned the beloved and cherished Mother Mary Joseph, General Superior of the Congregation, to her eternal reward. Her death left a void in the hearts of her spiritual children that through the fifty intervening years to those who were associated with her in that happy memorable long ago, has never been filled; for if any Superior ever ruled by love it was dear, saintly Mother Mary Joseph.

She brought the light of joy and the warmth of love into the lives of all who fell under her influence. She practiced every virtue in an exalted degree. To be kind one must be divested of self-love. Self-abnegation is essential to its very existence; for true kindness lives in and for others, the kindness that is universal, which feels itself drawn by deep and sympathetic feeling to every creature that bears the image of God in his soul. Mother Mary Joseph's charity reached out to all. It excluded none; her zeal despaired of none; as all belonged to her Divine Spouse, Jesus, to Him would she bring all by example, precept and prayer. To God she turned, forgetful of self,



MOTHER MARY JOSEPH

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for the need of those whose burdens she would lighten, turned to Him as naturally and with as much confidence as a child to its mother, assured that she would not be refused. If she was this to others, what was she not to the dear Sisters committed to her keeping? Confined to her bed for two years and a half by a painful illness that terminated only when death had set its seal upon her holy life; she bore her sufferings with patience and joy, daily offering them to God for His glory, the salvation of souls, the sanctification of her own soul and of the souls of her spiritual daughters.

Mary Phoebe Walker was a native of Canada, and of a highly respectable family. Up to the age of twenty, she was a stranger to the beauties of our Holy Religion, but at that time the truth dawned upon her and she was received into the Church by the Right Reverend Bishop Farrell of Hamilton, Ontario; and so grateful was she for the priceless gift of Faith, that the offering of her whole after existence as one fervent act of thanksgiving could not satisfy her truly generous heart. She had realized that her Divine Master had lavished His choicest treasures upon her, and therefore she resolved to consecrate herself entirely to Him. She entered the Congregation of the



Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Monroe, Michigan, in 1854.

She was appointed General Superior of the Order by Right Reverend Bishop Lefevre in April, 1859, and was continued in office until her death.

#### MOTHER M. XAVIER

Mary Jane Eagan was born in Ireland in 1843. She was admitted to the Novitiate at the early age of fifteen, and professed one year later, taking in religion the name of Sister M. Xavier.

A severe illness during her Novitiate left her heart in so weakened a condition that she never entirely recovered from its effects, yet she continued to labor successfully in the schools and advanced daily in the path of perfection. There was a quiet repose of manner about her, the distinguishing mark of a true lady which greatly emphasized the respect and reverence in which she was held. This gentleness and kindly courtesy won for her the tender regard and affection of all who came in contact with her, and endeared her especially to the members of the Community.

Mother Xavier filled successively the offices of Mistress of Novices, Assistant and Supe-

rior. Three days after the death of Mother Mary Joseph, the Right Reverend Bishop appointed Mother Xavier General Superior. It was a severe ordeal for this young and untried Religious to find herself suddenly placed at the head of the Community, as she was at that time only twenty-two years old.

But her last hour was approaching. For some time previous to the death of Mother Mary Joseph she had been suffering in patient silence, keeping to herself the intense pain which likened her the more to her suffering Spouse, for whom she had renounced all that the world held for her of pleasurable prospects and earthly joys. Such was her zeal for God's glory that she strove to rally her sinking energies and fulfill the duties of the heavy responsibility that had been forced upon her, but it was a futile attempt, and she soon became prostrate.

Mother M. Gertrude was elected to succeed her on the twenty-first of December, 1864; and on April eleventh, 1865, Mother M. Xavier, with the holy name of Jesus on her lips, breathed forth her pure soul to her Creator and received the reward of her beautiful life of charity, zeal, self-forgetfulness, and close union with God.

Mother Xavier was the only sister of Brigadier-General Charles Patrick Eagan, U. S. A., Retired, of New York.

#### MOTHER M. GERTRUDE

Mother M. Gertrude, Johanna Christine Gerretson, was born in Germany in 1839. She made her solemn profession in 1859, and on the thirty-first of December, 1864, she was elected General Superior. She held the office for five years, and then owing to a severe spinal affliction, resigned.

Mother Gertrude is the oldest living member in the Community. Character tells all, and who is there acquainted with her who does not recognize in her the true Mother and exemplary religious, commanding the love, the esteem, the confidence, and the reverence of every member of the Sisterhood.

Out of respect for her humility, as she is still in the land of the living, we are not permitted either to praise her virtue or enter into the details of her administration.

She is as a golden link in the bright chain of tradition that has come down to us from these early, pioneer days and of that heroic band of saintly and accomplished women who

in all things "performed their labors for the King."

#### MOTHER M. CLOTILDA

Lucy Hoskyns, Sister M. Clotilda, was born in Dexter, Michigan, in 1841. Her father was of noble ancestry, the son of an English Earl, by whom he was disinherited for having married her mother, who was of Irish-Catholic parentage and birth. In the early sixties she entered St. Mary's Academy as a resident pupil. In 1863 she was admitted as a candidate into the Congregation; and from the day of her entrance into the Novitiate to the close of her earthly career, the life of Sister Clotilda was one of unrelaxing fervor, deep humility, mortification and close union with God. Hers was a living faith. Her spirit of prayer, devotion to the Sacred Heart and to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, were most remarkable.

One of the sweetest memories that will ever linger in the hearts of her Sisters in religion is that of seeing her kneeling for hours before the Tabernacle, oblivious to all things of earth, her whole soul centered in Him, who is the Infinitely Good, Beautiful, and True.

She shared cheerfully the hardships of pioneer days, both at the Mother-House and on

the missions, bore ungrudgingly the burden of labor which tested the faith and the endurance of the early Sisters in every foundation; and she unselfishly accepted the privations which, half a century ago, had a reality that we can never estimate. God loves a cheerful giver; and He blessed with His manifold blessings the life that was so true and steadfast under every stern and swift vicissitude, no matter how adverse and complex were the conditions of the times.

In 1869 Mother Clotilda, who was at that time Mistress of Novices, was appointed General Superior of the Order; and strong in her implicit trust in Him who had so richly endowed her with the highest gifts of mind and heart and soul, Him who says to every leader in the House of Israel, "I will never leave thee nor forsake," she took up the burden imposed upon her and bore its heavy responsibilities for nineteen years. The harvest was great, but the laborers were few in those years, in which ignorance and prejudice were rife to an extent that is difficult for us now to realize. No one knew better than Mother Clotilda the wants of an institution of learning. She inspired the members of the Community with her own lofty ideals and a desire of attaining the highest ex-



MOTHER MARY CLOTILDA

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cellence as religious teachers. She established the Normal School, wherein they would be able, not only to complete the course of study, but also to be thoroughly prepared for the great work of Catholic education. During her administration she opened fourteen missions; her charities reached out into avenues as innumerable as they were diversified and hidden.

Of charming personality, a splendid presence, beautiful in mind and heart and distinguished by a sweetness and gentleness of manner, Mother Clotilda won all hearts. To her might well be applied what Cardinal Wiseman said of his friend and confrère, Cardinal Cullen: "It would seem that the Angels of Heaven had looked into that face and had left the bright reflection of their own beauty there." But if nature was lavish in gifts to her, grace yet more abounded. She brought to the altar of sacrifice a heart incapable of half measures; she received in return an infusion of heavenly blessings that raised her to the heights of sanctity.

She bore her sufferings, a long and painful martyrdom, without murmur or complaint. And as she lingered, many sweet consolations came to her. She saw the little band of twenty-six members which she found upon her entrance



into the Community increase to over four hundred, and from a diocesan institution grow to be a recognized Order of the Church, with the final approval of the Holy See.

“Give unwithering lilies from full hands,” were the first words Dante heard from the Angelic Choir as he entered Paradise; and while our bereaved Community sorrowed for one whom we loved and revered as a most dear mother, we could but feel that she had gone forth bearing, with overflowing hands, lilies of stainless whiteness to the Throne of God, where alone are the records of all the good deeds, the moral and spiritual benefits that marked the footsteps of our dear saintly Mother Clotilda, who had led thousands upward until their feet were upon the track of dawn, the dawn of Eternal Day.

#### MOTHER M. JUSTINA

Born in Dublin, August, 1848, Mary Riley came to Michigan in early girlhood, and while still in the bloom of youth entered the Novitiate of St. Mary's in Monroe. There the fervor of her religious youth gave evidence of the future sanctity of Sister Justina. To the little orphans at St. Anthony's Asylum she was ever a tender, loving mother, winning them

to perform all their tasks pleasantly; for she loved to see them happy and their joys were her delight.

Through long years of religious life, the virtues of Mother Justina were as fragrant perfume attracting the hearts of all who knew her. Patient sweetness, born of long years of unceasing self-sacrifice, especially characterized her and created around her an atmosphere which charmed and won souls. Conscious of the transitory nature of all things here below, she had learned to concentrate her thoughts on the life eternal and to live by her prayerful spirit in a supernatural world; her words were ever a prayer, proving the oft-repeated adage, "As in life so in death," and showing the force of long-continued submission to the Holy Will of God.

As Mistress of Novices, the same sympathetic nature displayed its depth of peaceful kindness and called forth her wonderful power of exercising that firmness which never yielded when there was question of a principle. Her genuine ability for administration was evidenced in the years when, as Mother General, she governed the Community, and later as Local Superior at Holy Redeemer Mission School. All that she possessed by nature and grace she

placed at the feet of the Master; and in her sweet, humble way walked calmly along the path of each recurring day, scattering around her words of wisdom to guide, of strength to fortify; ever encouraging, ever watchful, and ready to relieve all the difficulties in the lives of those who found in her their guide and friend and Mother. Now she has gone! But ever will her tender solicitude be shown in that Eternal Homeland, where we trust her loving prayers may obtain from the merciful Heart of the God she served so faithfully, blessings and unnumbered graces for the Sisters who so truly mourn the absence from their circle of the dearly-cherished, gentle Mother Justina.

Right Reverend John S. Foley, D.D., fittingly epitomized her life. He said in part:

“This is the wise virgin whom the Lord hath found waiting. To-day, dear friends, we gather round the altar of God to mourn the loss of noble Mother Justina, who was indeed the wise virgin. We come at the same time to recall the good she has done and the example she has set us. Born of truly Christian parents, her life from earliest childhood was beautiful in its simplicity and love of God. By His holy call she entered this Congregation, first to become holy herself and then to lead others in



MOTHER MARY JUSTINA

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the same path. There is no need of a lengthy description of her virtues, for hers was ever a life of union with Jesus Christ. She fulfilled her duties of postulant, novice, simple Sister, and General Superior with exemplary devotedness; and when again she returned to the ranks as a Sister, her watchword still was fidelity to Jesus and the rules. Her life was an example to every one of us and an inspiration to be constant in the performance of each duty to our Lord and Master. When reverses came, hours of sorrow found her ever trusting in the goodness of God; and in moments of joy and consolation she was still the same—ever seeing the Holy Will of God in the various circumstances of life. We find in holy Mother Justina much to imitate, especially her life of humility and union with God. When we pray for her, let us at the same time thank Almighty God for the beautiful character He gave her, for the example she was to us of every Christian virtue. In all your duties, dear Sisters, some of which may be distasteful and irksome to human nature, think of her who has gone before you. From your Congregation a large army is already before the throne of God; and there they plead for you who still fight the battles of life, there they pray and bless God

for the wonderful things He has done for you, and there they await your coming. When the short span of life is over, the loved ones gone will welcome you, if you have been faithful to your holy calling, to join them in praising and glorifying God for all eternity.”

MOTHER M. MECHTILDIS

Mother M. Mechtildis, the present Mother General, was elected August fifteenth, 1900, and has held the office continuously since then.

It remains for the historian of a future day to tell of her spirit of prayer and faithful, broad-hearted devotion to duty; her courage, sacrifice, and trust in Divine Providence, which have given such a marvelous uplift to the Institute during the years of her administration.

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As we take this brief survey of the holy, self-sacrificing women who have stood in the front rank of our organization, women who never wavered, never swerved, no matter how heavy the burden or dark the way, but steadfastly toiled onward, we see how they never gave up the battle, but carried the banner, of what in other hands would have been that of a forlorn hope, up to the heights of victory, up to the

ramparts won. Fond memory brings back the faces of the dear departed Sisters who marched in the rank and file during many disheartening years, and kept the banner of Catholic Education waving free and fair throughout our Lake-girt State.

“Not dead, not dead; the noble never die,  
But crowned with splendor of supernal years,  
They shine like stars in God’s eternal sky  
And bless us who linger in this vale of tears.”





## CHAPTER XII

### PROSPECT



**F** to-day those whom we call our own could rise from the sleep that death has cast upon them, those dear ones, who in the long ago were the living, and who held in their hands and in their hearts the germ of the work we have been called upon to carry towards fruition, what a land of enchantment would they not deem themselves to have entered, with what glad surprise would they not wander through the beautiful grounds which are to-day the admiration of all, but which they left only a barren waste. What pleasure would be theirs to see the grand structure which we so fondly call "Home," and which replaces the little log cabin wherein they lived and worked and prayed; with what joy would they read the scroll, whereon is inscribed in letters of gold the names of thousands upon thousands of children whom we, with all who have followed in their footsteps, have instructed in the science of the

world and in the truths of holy faith. Immeasurable their happiness to see the little germ which they bedewed with so many tears, watched over with such anxious care, expanded into a great tree, that Sisterhood which, after God, owes its existence to them, increased more than a hundredfold, yet keeping intact the spirit which they bequeathed to it, the spirit of charity, of poverty, of simplicity, in a word, the spirit of St. Alphonsus.

As we recall those strong and fervent souls who received from our venerable Founder, Father Gilet, the holy Father Poilvache, and the saintly Father Joos, their first counsels of religious perfection, the prayer wells up from the heart to the lips, "Oh, that they were here! Oh, that they had lived to behold how God has changed the wilderness into a garden! How He has multiplied His wonderful works, and poured His tender grace and mercy upon us!" They are sleeping in the little cemetery near by, where a small white stone over each low green mound bears, not the record of her imperishable deeds, but the name only of the dear departed Sister. Many a one resting there, in a short time lived a long life, one in whose perfection may be found the truest expression of all that God wills us to be, a life of Faith and Duty

wholly consecrated to Him. But shall we say they are not sharers in our joy? They see and understand, in a greater measure far, and in the fullness of their happiness may ours be complete!

Here we close our brief survey of "The Three Score Years and Ten" that have swept onward to the great ocean of eternity, leaving their ineffaceable markings along the shores of time, since the Order of the Sisters, Servants of Immaculate Heart of Mary, was organized. The success of the past, it is to be hoped, may prove prophetic of that which the future will bring; but in God's Providence alone do we place our trust.

To meet the urgent demand for the higher education of women, St. Mary's College was opened in 1906. This institution, incorporated under the general laws of Michigan, is authorized to confer degrees; and the State Board of Education will grant teachers' life certificates to those graduates who have completed the required course in the science and art of Education.

St. Mary's College stands for a broad, liberal, cultural, and religious training.

The age is restless, bustling, industrial. It challenges the schools to meet its demands not

of the present only, but of the future as well. This changed condition has necessitated a remodeling of the system of education and a reconstruction of the curriculum. St. Mary's new outline of studies places due emphasis on the liberal arts, music, art, expression, household economics, and the commercial branches.

The Academic Department offers the usual high-school courses. It is approved by the State Normal College, the University of Michigan, and the Catholic University of America. The Preparatory Department includes primary, intermediate, and grammar grades.

With few exceptions, all our parochial schools carry high-school courses; a large number of them are affiliated with the State Universities.

To give greater scope to their usefulness, in each of the three branches of the Order, many Sisters have taken graduate courses in various Universities.

While St. Mary's, with her Sister Colleges, Villa Maria, Philadelphia, and Mt. St. Mary's, Scranton, has taken her place as a school of recognized standard in the educational world, it still remains faithful to its traditional ideals, for these ideals are incapable of change. Woman's place in woman's sphere always re-

mains the same. The world is governed more by ideals than by ideas; it is influenced more by living concrete models than by abstract principles of virtue; hence it is evident that there is no more potent factor for good than the ideal Christian woman, the woman of culture, of knowledge, trained in a spiritual atmosphere, and this is the ideal that St. Mary's holds highest and best.

But independent of this noble work, the higher education of women, a work that can not be too greatly estimated, fostering as it does the spirit of faith and duty, love and sacrifice, in the hearts of those destined to be the builders of the home as well as its angelic guardians, the Constitutions give, that next after their own sanctification, the work particularly dear to the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart is that of preparing children and adults for their First Communion. As this work takes precedence of all others, it follows that parochial schools and orphanages have the preference, reaching out as they do to thousands and tens of thousands of souls to be rescued and saved. Here it is that all the activities of the teacher are requisite, that the harmonizing influence of religion may repair whatever losses the soul of the child has suffered through association and environ-

ment, for of no other period of life can it be more truly said than in childhood,

“It is the little rift within the lute  
That by and by will make the music mute,  
And slowly widening ever silence all.”

The tender mind requires tender care, but the teacher must never lose sight of the fact that the mind must be enlightened before the will can be trained. Upon this foundation we build the edifice of character. What the beauty and proportion of that structure will be depends wholly upon the qualities of the materials and the skill of the builder.

The old Greek loved his work. It was an integral part of his being, his religion, and everything that came from his hands shows that he understood the expression which means so little in these days, the divinity of labor! Shall we then not love our work, which means so much to us, and put all our heart into it, knowing that when

“The heart is in the work, the heart  
Giveth grace to every art”?

In teaching, perhaps, more than in any other

field of human endeavor, is patience the test of love, and infinite patience is but another name for infinite love. If God is patient shall we not strive? By patient perseverance, prayer, self-abnegation, and devotedness to duty shall we attain the perfect fulfillment of the end of our Institute; yet not by prospect, but by results, shall our work be judged.

As the picture which the Retrospect presented was made up of light and shadow, so, too, with that which the Prospect shows. The future is veiled from our sight, but we, with our dear Sisters in the East, who stand with us on the eminence of those seventy years, and look back over the beautiful vista which lies along the slope we have ascended, fair fields now, but where our loved ones gone before, who preserved for us the priceless treasure of our inheritance, toiled often weary and heart-sore, seeking neither human aid nor human sympathy, but prayerful, courageous, hopeful, trusting in the integrity of the cause so dear to them, so doubly dear to God, struggled on and won their crown, so may we, following in their footsteps, and rejoicing in the wealth of our heritage, labor steadfastly to the end.

“Not in East or West or desert plain,” but in the fair garden of Mary’s Immaculate



Heart, counting not the pain or weariness, crosses or trials which must inevitably line the way, but which in reality serve only to increase our merit, to sanctify our souls, may we gather fairest flowers and richest fruits, to lay at the feet of her Divine Son in that glad Day when He shall call us Home to receive our eternal recompense—a Day upon whose brightness nor cloud nor shadow shall ever rest.

## CHAPTER XIII

### APPROVALS

*Letters of his Lordship, Bishop Lefevre, to the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, approving their Rules.*

“DETROIT, November 28th, 1845.

“DEAR SISTERS:

“The Reverend Father Louis Gilet, having favored me with the perusal of the Constitutions and Rules designed for your Community, I am happy to say that I find them wisely conceived, easy and very proper to obtain the great objects of your Institute. Wherefore, I can not but regard them as the most efficacious means to further the designs of God upon your infant but promising Community, and each one of you in particular; and as these rules are founded upon the maxims of the Gospel and the doctrine of Jesus Christ, so you ought to consider them as emanating from God Himself, and be persuaded that, if strictly adhered to in every point, they will surely and safely conduct

you to that degree of Christian perfection and of eternal bliss designed by God, for those whom He calls to that religious state of life.

“Wherefore, after mature reflection and invocation of the Holy Ghost, we have approved and adopted them as the Constitutions and Rules of the Sisters, established at Monroe, in the State of Michigan.

“Hoping that you will all be steadfast and diligent in the strict observance of the Rules, that, so by good works, you may make your calling and election sure and thus inherit the eternal reward promised by God, I remain,

“Your humble and devoted servant  
in Christ,

“PETER PAUL,  
*“Bp. Zela, Coadj., Adm. Det.”*”

“PETER PAUL LEFEVRE, BY THE GRACE OF GOD AND THE APPOINTMENT OF THE HOLY SEE, BISHOP OF ZELA, COADJUTOR AND ADMINISTRATOR OF DETROIT.

“TO THE SISTERS, SERVANTS OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY. HEALTH AND BENEDICTION:

“Whereas, the Rules and Constitutions, which we, on the twenty-eighth of November, A. D. 1845, approved and designed for your



HALL OF THE DIVINE CHILD—PARK PLACE  
SCHOOL FOR SMALL BOYS



then incipient Community, were drawn up rather hastily and without regard to your future increase and more extensive usefulness by filial establishments in other places; and whereas, in consequence thereof, you have long since felt the want of better method and more regularity therein, therefore, in compliance with your expressed wishes, with a view to your greater advancement towards perfection, and for the more permanent stability of your Institute, your worthy Director, the Reverend Father Joos, has spared no pains so to arrange and amend those Rules and Constitutions that they may now be considered complete and submitted the same for our examination. We, then, after a careful perusal and consideration, feel happy in saying that we find them wisely conceived, easy and very proper to attain the great objects of your Institute. Hence we can not but regard them as the most efficacious means to further the designs of God upon your yet small but promising Community in general and each Sister in particular. As these Rules and Constitutions are founded upon the maxims of the Gospel and the doctrines of Jesus Christ, so you ought to consider them as emanating from God Himself, and be persuaded that, if strictly adhered to in every

point, they will surely and safely conduct you to that degree of Christian perfection and eternal bliss which God has designed for those whom He calls to that religious state of life.

“Wherefore, after mature reflection and invocation of the Holy Ghost, we have approved and adopted the hereunto annexed and following Rules and Constitutions, rearranged and amended by your aforesaid Director, as the Rules and Constitutions of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, whose Mother-House is now in the City of Monroe, in the State of Michigan. And further, we hereby desire that all the usual vows which are to be made or renewed shall henceforth be made and renewed according to these Rules and Constitutions.

“Given at Detroit, under our hand and seal, this seventh day of November, A. D. 1861.

“PETER PAUL,

“*Bp. Zel., Coadj., Adm. Det.*”

*Approbation of the Right Reverend John S. Foley, D.D.*

“THE REVEREND SISTERS OF THE IMMACULATE  
HEART OF MARY:

“The revised copy of the Holy Rule of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of

Mary, submitted to me, has my most earnest approbation. It manifests in every point the spirit of the true religious life, and the lines upon which the great work of your high vocation, the education of the Catholic youth, is to be conducted. The faithful observance of the Rule, which has marked the Community in the past, from the very foundation, will insure the blessing of our Divine Lord and the protection of your holy Patrons on every member and on all under your fostering care. Let the Rule, then, be the guide of all the actions of the good Sisters in their daily lives, so that in the end they may receive the great reward promised to those who lead others unto God.

“Given at our Residence, Detroit, October eighth, 1911.

“JOHN S. FOLEY,  
“*Bp. of Detroit.*”

*First Approval of the Holy See*

DECREE

“Whereas letters have been presented begging the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith to approve the Institute and the Constitutions of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, in the United



States of America, the whole has been referred to the Commission instituted for the examination of Constitutions of new Congregations.

“Therefore, the Most Reverend Commission under the presidency of His Eminence, Cardinal Mazella, after mature deliberation, considering the letters of several Bishops, who, testifying to the abundant fruits produced by the aforesaid Sisters, their religious spirit and regular observance, have earnestly recommended them to the Sacred Congregation, and considering that this new Congregation aims at obtaining holy ends; namely, the individual salvation and perfection of the Sisters by religious exercises and seclusion from the world and also the education of youth, has deemed the object or end of the aforesaid Institute worthy of being highly praised and commended by the Holy See.

“This decision of the aforesaid Commission, reported by the Most Reverend Dominic, Archbishop of Tyre, Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith, in an audience of the twenty-seventh day of January, 1889, His Holiness has deigned to approve and has ordered the present decree to be issued.

“Given at Rome, in the Palace of the Sacred

Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith,  
on the first day of February, 1889.

“JOHN CARDINAL SIMEONI,  
“*Prefect.*”

DECREE

“In reply to the earnest prayers of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary, whose Mother-House is situated in the diocese of Detroit, North America, the Most Eminent and Most Reverend Fathers Cardinals of the Sacred Congregation of Religious in a full meeting held at the Vatican, August eighth, 1913, after careful deliberation and a consideration of the letters of commendation from Bishops of places in which are found houses of the Institute, gave their consent for the approbation of the Institute itself and also for the approval for a term of seven years of the Constitutions of this Institute as they are contained at the beginning of this Decree.

“Our Most Holy Lord Pius Tenth, Pope, deigned to confirm this response of the Most Eminent Fathers as it was presented to Him by the undersigned Secretary on the fourteenth of August of the same year, without, however, infringing on the jurisdiction of the Ordinaries according to the tenor of the Sacred Canons

and the Apostolic Constitutions; all things to the contrary notwithstanding.

“Given at Rome from the Secretariate of the Sacred Congregation of Religious the tenth day of November, 1913.

“O. CARDINAL CAGIANO, *Prefect,*  
“DONATUS, *Arbp. of Eph., Secretary.*”









