

12-56



The Missionary Catechist

O Come, Let Us Adore Him!



Once again the holy season of Christmas is near and our hearts are overwhelmed with the tremendous mystery of the Incarnation. They are filled with gratitude to you, our benefactors, who make it possible for us to reveal this mystery to His little ones. These children join us in wishing for you all the joys of Christmas. May the Divine Infant, in the arms of His Holy Mother, bless you and yours now and throughout the year.

Mother Cecilia
and
Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters

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

Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters

Huntington, Indiana

Volume 32	Number 1	December 1956
A CHRISTMAS LESSON		4
<i>Ronald Murray, C.P.</i>		
HARVEST		5
<i>Sister Bernardine</i>		
SPANKY		6
<i>Sister Mary Camillus</i>		
HOW WOULD I KNOW?		7
<i>Lavada Ward Strona</i>		
LAS POSADAS		8
<i>Sister Evelyn</i>		
BAPTISMAL-CHRISTMAS PARTY		10
<i>Sister Angela</i>		
DESERT CHRISTMAS		12
<i>Sister Estelle</i>		
IN THE HOME FIELD		14
TRUE DEVOTION TO MARY		16
SISTER MARIE VIANNEY		17
ASSOCIATE CATECHISTS OF MARY		18
MARY'S LOYAL HELPERS		20
BLINKEY'S CHRISTMAS MISSION		22
<i>Sister M. Dorothy Louise</i>		
BOOK REVIEWS		25
THE EDITOR'S BY-LINE		26
IN MEMORIAM		26
SODALISTS SPREAD CHRISTMAS CHEER		27
<i>Sister Beatrice</i>		

COVER

Our lovely Navajo Madonna is Alice Goodluck, a student at Intermountain School in Brigham City, Utah. Philip Lee took the part of St. Joseph in the Christmas play. Both Alice and Philip are Catholics. Our sisters teach religion classes at Intermountain.

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A Christmas Lesson

by Ronald Murray, C.P.

THE entire life of Christ, from His nativity in the stable at Bethlehem, to His ascension into Heaven from the mount of Olives, was one long sermon to His disciples. By His birth, life and death, our Divine Lord wishes to teach His followers until the end of time, just what is expected of those who profess to be His disciples.

When we say that every Christian must conform his life to that of Christ, of course we do not mean that we must imitate all the accidental details of His life, sufferings and death. To be a Christian, it is not necessary to have been born in a stable at Bethlehem, nor crucified on the mount of Calvary. If such slavish conformity were required, then there would have been only one Christian in the entire history of the world, our Blessed Lord Himself.

But everyone who claims to be a follower of the Son of God, should read, study and meditate on the details of His birth, life and death, to know the lessons He would teach us, and apply these lessons to the circumstances of our own lives, whatever they may be.

There have been men and women in the history of the world who were born in palaces, yet who imitated their

Divine Master so perfectly that the Church has proclaimed them saints. And there have been those who died, surrounded by all the trappings of wealth and luxury, whose final, earthly breath, was but the beginning of a never-ending union with their Lord and Master.

As we kneel in humble adoration at the crib, our bodily eyes behold a tiny Child lying upon the straw. Only a new-born Babe to whom a woman of Nazareth has given birth. Our eyes see nothing more than His fellow-countrymen, who later called Him simply, "a carpenter's son" (Matt. 13, 55). But, basing our knowledge on God's inspired and infallible Word, the eyes of our Faith see that a much higher life pulsates within this Child, for He is the very Son of God. He is the second Person of the Most Blessed Trinity, equal in all things, to His Father and the Holy Spirit. He, the Eternal God, to whom thousands of angels ministered, and before whom they veiled their faces in mute and loving adoration, now becomes a trembling Child, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger.

Looking upon the Word made Flesh, as He sleeps His first sleep on



the rough straw, let us ask ourselves: Why this condescension on the part of God? The answer is simple, and should be indelibly engraved on our hearts. God has become the Son of Man, in order that men might become the very sons of God. He came to win our affection, our love, our service, that He might elevate us from the lowly condition of men, to a participation in His own Divine Life. He came to abolish sin, and to restore us to Divine friendship through sanctifying grace.

A Christian kneeling at the Christmas crib need never regret that he was not born nineteen hundred years ago, or that his first breath was not drawn

in the poverty of a hillside cave in Bethlehem. But, every Christian, no matter what the circumstances of his life, has reason to regret, if the divine life of grace, which Christ came to impart, is absent from his soul by serious sin.

This is one of the many lessons we can learn, as we read, study, and meditate on the details of that first Christmas. A hatred of serious sin, and a deep appreciation of the life of grace can be acquired by everyone who takes the time and makes the effort, to kneel in thoughtful adoration at the crib, and ponder over the mystery of God's Infinite Love for each one of us.

Harvest

by Sister Bernardine

WE doubt whether St. Paul was ever so lucky as we are. We had just returned to Hawthorne, Nevada, after our retreat, dusted off the desert after our long ride from Ely, and had gone out to buy a few groceries. We were hardly inside the market when a smiling couple approached us. The woman spoke: "Sisters, I would like to know if I can become a Catholic. My husband and children are Catholic and I want to be one also."

We settled that quickly by making arrangements for her instruction. Then we went to the post office. There we were met by an eighth grade girl, non-Catholic, who had been coming to class frequently and to Mass faithfully. Now, she told us, she had her parents' permission to prepare for baptism.

And our doorbell! It is really a herald for the Church. "Sister," says one of the three smiling high school

girls at the door, "we were just talking to Father and he told us to come to see you. How can we get to be Catholics?" Briefly we explain the procedure and set a time for the first class. The next time the bell might bring a group of younger boys and girls, a family, a young couple, a bride-to-be, or a young man. We just never know who will be the next seeker of Truth.

Sometimes the bell ringing is done by us, but the results are the same—more converts, from seven to seventy-four. Even bicycle bells can introduce a prospect. As we walked along the street one day a bicycle bell rang to hail us. A boy of about twelve years dressed cowboy style with a ten-gallon hat and high-heeled boots, jumped off the bike. "Hello, ma'am," lifting his hat in real western manner, "how can I start to be a Catholic?" More arrangements, more encouragement, and one more added to the list!

Spanky

by Sister Mary Camillus



Spanky loves to pray to Our Lady of Guadalupe.

SPANKY is a typical Mexican boy with all the cultural heritages of the great land of his ancestors. He has piercing brown eyes, a vivacious personality, and an abundance of amiability. Most of all, Spanky has a great love for Nuestra Madre de Guadalupe. He calls her madre mia. Perhaps I can tell you why!

Five years ago Spanky's mother, Senora Juarez, came to La Clinica de Guadalupe in San Diego. She came seeking medical care; she was expecting her first baby. This being a new experience in her life, she wanted to share it with those close to God, those who would understand the sanctity of such a great event. She found these in the Missionary Sisters of the Guadalupe Clinic.

Senora Juarez prayed daily to her Dios and La Madre de Dios. She did not ask for mercenary things, but one of the greatest of all gifts—the blessing of having a normal, healthy child. Perhaps if her Spanish prayer could be interpreted properly it would well say:

“Hear my prayer, O God. I offer Thee the body, soul, and entire life of this little one. Help me to be a good mother to him in word and in action, so that this child may learn at an early age Thy greatness and Thy goodness, and love for Thine honor and glory.

The day finally came and with it came Spanky—baptized Marco. He was indeed all that a mother and father could hope for. He was a beautiful, healthy child, and at a very early age he learned to love to pray.

His mother says, “Someday he will be a priest and will bring many souls to God.”

“But why do you call him Spanky?” I gingerly asked.

“Because,” answered Senora Juarez, “it is a reminder that he is subject to a bit of carving in this business of holiness. As a tree is bent, so shall it grow.”

His mother tells us that on the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, on December 12, Spanky likes to act out the part of Juan Diego in the story of the apparition.

This little one has yet a long way to go before his God-given task is terminated. He too must ascend the summit of another Tepeyac, and every follower of Christ and His Mother knows it is filled with thorns, cactus, and poisonous reptiles. But Mary, the Virgin of Guadalupe, will show him the way. Her image will always be in his heart and in those dark vivacious eyes—the pride of the Mexican race.



How Would I Know?

by Lavada Ward Strona



CONVERTS can sometimes get themselves into most embarrassing positions. I know one who washed and ironed all the altar boys' surplices, returned them to the sacristy shortly before Mass, and broke off the key in the door. Father couldn't get in to vest for Mass!

I took up Confraternity teaching instead of clergy lock-outs. Four years I studied and taught and read widely on the CCD. If you had asked me, I'd have admitted I was hep!

So we went to a convention in Kansas City, Missouri, my husband and I; he as a plumbing delegate and I for the ride. Like an inquiring reporter I prowled the city asking questions of anyone who wanted to talk about anything from integration to how cold it got in winter. Since it was August I already knew how hot it got in summer.

On the feast of the Assumption I went to Mass at the cathedral. As I was leaving, a priest walked briskly by and a whole new series of questions popped up in my mind. Did Kansas City have release time? How many grades did it cover? Did lay people teach or only the religious?

Politely I stopped this priest and asked him if I could ask a few questions. He turned a face reflecting peace and patience toward me and fell into step by my side. What did I want to know? Kansas City did have an active CCD, and since ninety-five per cent of the Catholic children were in parochial schools those in public schools could be followed from the first grade through high school.

Then skillfully he began to question me. Where did I come from? How active were our Confraternities? What were our problems?

I outlined our diocesan troubles as I knew them: our shift in population, our new housing tracts and new public schools, our double sessions, and the difficulty of getting people to take the training courses.

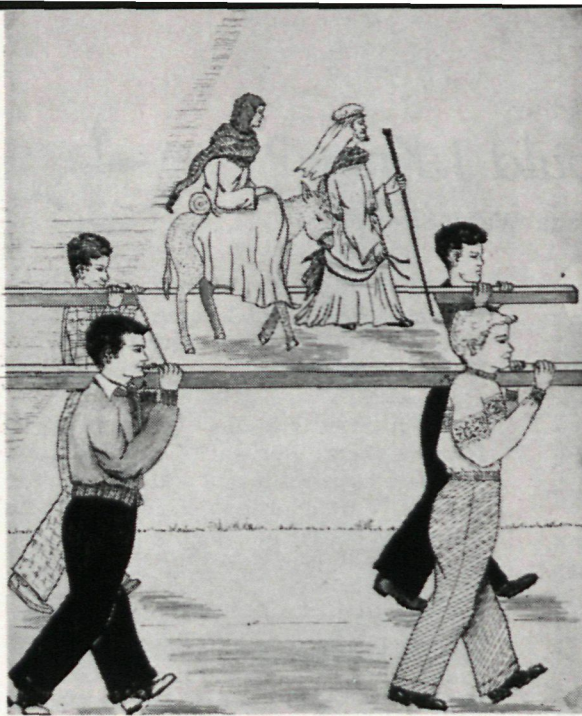
At the corner where we separated I introduced myself and asked his name. That man turned a most benignly smiling face toward me and said, "I'm Bishop Edwin O'Hara."

I was petrified, but not exactly struck dumb. I almost yelled, "I couldn't have!" Still smiling he said, "Yes, you did!"

Aside from my acute embarrassment I felt resentment that bishops don't at least carry their crosiers when wearing ordinary clothes. Also I had a confused idea that there was a definite title I should use in addressing a bishop, but the only one I could think of was "Your Holiness," and I didn't use that.

Not until I reached home did I discover that I had been teaching under the direction of the Most Reverend Edwin V. O'Hara, Episcopal Chairman of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine of the whole United States.

Mrs. Strona writes from Pomona, California, where she is active in her parish CCD. She was its first president. Her reminiscence was prompted by the news of the death of the late Archbishop O'Hara.



Las Posadas

by Sister Evelyn

PABLITO'S eyes widened as he left the church, his pudgy hands tugging at his mother's skirts. Last year mamacita had carried him in her arms in the Posadas, but now a little sister was the baby and he was a big boy, big enough to walk. All around him were men and women, boys and girls. It was the first night of Las Posadas, the Christmas Novena, and they were leaving the church, singing all the while. Four big boys were carrying the statues of the holy pilgrims, Mary and Joseph. Now they stop before the first door seeking posada, shelter.

For nine nights before the feast of the Nativity of Our Lord there is held in Spanish-speaking churches this touching devotion of the Posadas, commemorating the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem.

The holy pilgrims are represented by statues. These might be small figures handcarved from wood that have been treasured in a family for generations. This was the case in Santa Paula, California, where we were introduced to the custom of the Posadas.

When we next took part in it in El Paso, in Christ the King parish, the statues were larger and were of plaster. Our Blessed Mother was seated on a donkey while St. Joseph walked beside her. An angel guided the way and there was even a palm tree included in the group!

The services begin in church with a beautiful opening prayer to Our Blessed Mother. This is said every day. Next there is a reading, a brief meditation on the journey to the city of David. This, of course, varies from day to day and offers for our consideration the obedience, humility, charity, and other virtues taught us by Mary and Joseph.

The meditation is followed by three Hail Marys and one stanza of a hymn. Then there is a final prayer to Mary and Joseph. This too is the same each night of the novena.

It is now time for the congregation to leave the church, all singing the Litany of Loretto as they do so. At the end of the *Agnus Dei* the procession

halts at a house or at one of the doors of the church, whatever arrangement has been made. The statues of the pilgrims are brought up and in a simple Spanish refrain the people stand before the door and ask shelter for the travellers. Singers inside respond that the hour is late and the house is filled.

The procession then moves on to a second posada. The pilgrims ask shelter

A social celebration after the novena services is by no means a necessary part of the Posadas. In the parishes in California, Texas, and New Mexico where we have had the privilege of taking part in Las Posadas it was never followed by a party (pinata). In fact, the Mexican bishops have spoken very strongly against having the so-called Posada Baile (dance) during this time of Advent.

LAS POSADAS

La Procesion

Ya van ca - mi - nan - do Jo - sé y Ma - rí - a.

Va - mos al - mas to - das si - guien - do sus pa - sos.

¿Quién les da po - sa - da a es - tos pe - re - gri - nos?

a second time and again are refused. When the third door is reached, however, the identity of the holy couple is made known and they are bidden to enter with a joyous welcome by the inside choir.

The doors are flung open and the procession re-enters the church. All join in the singing. The second verse begs pardon for not recognizing the pilgrims at once.

We reproduce here part of the melody used in the procession. The other melodies and all of the verses sung can be found in Book Two of our Spanish-English "Bible Stories in the Language of Youth."

A little book entitled Posadas, containing the prayers and words of the hymns (not the music) is published by Buena Prensa, Mexico City. The meditations it contains are especially beautiful and practical.

It is nice to know that the Posadas were first enacted in a Carmelite Monastery in the sixteenth century. We are told that St. John of the Cross himself took the part of St. Joseph begging for lodging.

How delighted St. Teresa must have been when he told her about it! Can't you just hear her telling the nuns at recreation, "Now, Sister Josefa with her bass voice will make a perfect St. Joseph"?

Baptismal-Christmas Party

by Sister Angela

LONG winter nights had settled down on us here in the foothills of the Cumberlands. Thanksgiving had afforded us our first break in the teaching and mission-work schedule, but now we were anxious to get back to classes and our plans for the next holiday.

Our first thoughts of Christmas, of course, was to find ways and means to keep our children's minds on the most important phase—the spiritual outlook. We hoped to initiate the Christmas novena to replace the long custom of plays, parties, etc.

In one of our missions especially we knew we could add much to the happiness of this great day if we could provide toys or gifts for our less privileged children. At once our minds turned to our generous benefactors in Fort Wayne who had always helped us in this regard.

Nor were we disappointed. Hardly had Thanksgiving passed when the large cartons arrived. That evening found all four of us holding one article or another, mentally checking who was to receive each gift. "This scarf is just right for Joe!" "Won't little Catherine love this beautiful doll?" "Don't get this tag mixed. Annette would never have a chance to get a dress as pretty as this." By the end of recreation we were able to tell fairly well whether everyone was provided for, and all items piled neatly in boxes (not yet gift-wrapped), ready for the mountain trip.

On our weekly trip to Lee County we loaded the station wagon to its utmost with toys, clothing, and other gifts. Then came several evenings when Sister Doris and I, who are as-

signed to this mission, began the loving task of wrapping every item. Over the gifts we would chat of our dreams and hopes for the different children. But always a bit of sadness would come as we thought of five of our pupils from two separate families, who had not as yet been baptized. All five had attended class for some time, but due to circumstances, it had been inadvisable to proceed with plans for them to receive this all-important sacrament.

Many times, and many times again, they would come to us asking, "Sister, will anything ever change so I can be sure I have sanctifying grace?" Or "Do I have to wait until I am grown and then go ahead on my own?" Each time we tried to encourage them to hold on at least to the hope of baptism



Sister Doris puts the last of the gifts under the tree.

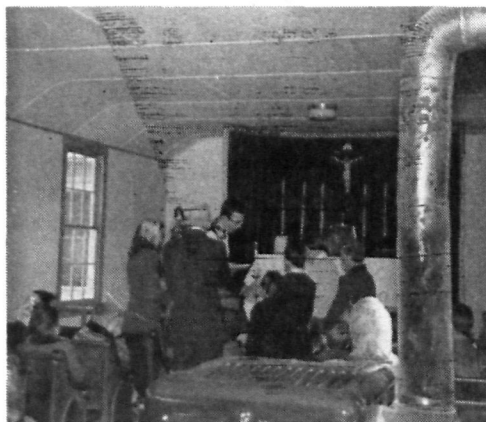
of desire. No wonder then, as we came nearer to another Christmas, these thoughts returned to us. Soon, however, unknown to us, God was to take a hand in the matter.

Two weeks before Christmas a decision was reached by all involved to arrange for the baptism of all five children. The three oldest would receive their First Communion on Christmas; another would receive with the regular class in May; the youngest would wait until another spring had passed.

None of the children needed much extra instruction for baptism. They had been faithful to religion classes for a long time; they had either attended Mass regularly or had waited hopefully and patiently on the highway week after week to be picked up by other parishioners. Happiness and expectation gleamed in all of their eyes when we were able to tell them the good news of their coming baptism and the subsequent reception of the other sacraments.

What day would be more appropriate for the great event than the Saturday of our Christmas party? Then all the children would be present for Mass and all could witness the ceremony immediately following.

Our minds were busy with many plans to make this coming day one long to be remembered. All the children caught the spirit and we were carried along with enthusiasm. Before the trip from our central convent to the mountains that final weekend we double checked every item. We just could not forget last minute gifts, religious articles, refreshments for the party, especially the large decorated baptismal cake (enough to treat at least fifty people). The only safe place for it was on the lap of the non-driver.



All eyes were fixed on the children and their sponsors.

Never will we forget the happiness of this great day. A deep fervor and expectancy was over everyone throughout Holy Mass, and afterward as our five catechumens took their places in the aisle, with their sponsors, not a glance was shifted. All the doctrine on sanctifying grace, eternity, perseverance, seemed to come alive in our tiny chapel. Even the small children hardly moved as one ceremony followed another. The usual thrill and clamor for toys and gifts seemed pale beside the joy of these five. Many remarks were overheard among the children themselves: "I'm sitting next to a real saint now," or, "Gee, I'm glad for you."

After the excitement was over and one car after the other had pulled away from the hill top, we had a few minutes to spend with our new "saints." We longed to give our pupils those last minute hints on the receiving of Christ Himself for the first time. But He rewarded us in a special way, all His own, when we heard, "Sister, I have known for years what I want to tell Him when He comes for the first time," and, "I never intend to lose sanctifying grace; I have waited too long to be sure of it."

“NO snow for Christmas . . . oh! How can you possibly enjoy Christmas in the desert?”

Merry laughter greeted this remark from Sister Margaret Therese, a newcomer to the Indio mission.

“Just you wait and see,” I told her, “how we celebrate Christmas in the desert.”

Sister smiled, but one could sense that she just could not envision a snowless Christmas.

“What are you doing with all those things?” gasped Sister Margaret Therese a few nights later as she watched Sister Adelle carry wallpaper, paste, cotton, glitter, and half a dozen other objects into the recreation room.

“Trying to get an idea for the children’s Christmas. You know gifts don’t fall from heaven. It’s not easy to manufacture a gift for over 1,000 children and I thought I’d get an early start.”

“Early start is right,” teased Sister. “Why it’s only October.”

“There are a number of things put away which our friends have been sending through the year,” I said. “Let’s get them out and prepare them also.”

Each day the little pile of gifts rose higher and higher. “It’s a lot of work to get all these things ready for the

Desert Christmas

by Sister Estelle



Sister Estelle (left) and Sister Adelle with the boys who helped pack the boxes of good things.

children, isn’t it?” commented Sister Margaret Therese.

“Yes,” answered Sister Adelle, “but when you see their joy it really repays you for all the time and labor.”

“You were wise to start in October,” smiled Sister Margaret Therese. “Here it is time for the parties and we are just finishing the gifts.”

“Tomorrow,” I said, “we will begin sacking the candy for the children.”

“How many bags will we need?” innocently inquired the newcomer.

“Oh, about 1,200.”

“It surely *was* a good idea to start in October,” gasped Sister. “Next year let’s start in September!”



Sister Margaret Therese stands beside one of the trucks just before they drive off to deliver the Christmas gifts.

"Then the next thing we must do," I told her, "is to beg for provisions for the poor. We will have to get strong boxes, too in which to pack the things. On the twenty-third the CCD Helpers and the members of the Diamontes Club will come to help us pack and deliver the boxes."

"The strong arms of those young men really come in handy when it comes time to wrestle with those heavy boxes," said Sister Adelle.

Sister Margaret Therese was delighted when I asked her to accompany me in one of the three trucks. Some of the isolated ranches were too hard for the boys to find, so we ourselves made the trip.

As the miles rolled by Sister kept commenting on the beautiful scenery. "Just look at those mountains!" she said. "You can see every crevice in them. Isn't it beautiful to see the rows and rows of palm trees loaded with golden fruit, and the peaks of San Jacinto and San Gorgonio topped with snow!"

"It's all part of our desert Christmas," I put in slyly.

"What are we going to do tomorrow besides clean the convent?" asked Sister.

"Oh, we never know what Our Lord will want us to do the day before His birthday."

Toward seven-thirty on Christmas Eve Sister Margaret Therese made this meaningful remark, "The one who wrote 'The Night Before Christmas' never lived in a convent of Victory Noll Sisters."

"No," I answered, "how did we know that we had to take an expectant mother to the hospital? And how did we know that several more poor families had to be supplied with a bit of Christmas joy? And whoever thought that the department store would call late this afternoon to come to pick up toys to distribute to the poor?"

"I'll never forget my first Christmas in the missions," said Sister Margaret Therese. "I've been so busy I forgot to notice that there isn't any snow. You know, I like the beautiful desert landscape. I've been thinking that it must have been something like this in Palestine." She paused to ponder a little, and then went on, "I wonder if they really did have snow? I'm beginning to think they probably did not."



Sister Mary Joachim and children from St. Frances of Rome parish, Azusa, California.

ANSWERED

All of my first and second graders were gone and I was packing my briefcase when one small boy returned with a very important question.

"Sister, when did you start catechism?" he asked.

"At quarter after three," I answered.

"No, I mean when did you start catechism?"

"Why, we started last September," I tried again.

"I don't mean that. I mean . . ." he groped for words. "I mean when did you start catechism?"

Try as he would, the question came out the same and we were right back where we started.

"We had our first catechism class last September and we always start at three-fifteen."

I could think of no clearer way to put it, but he was not satisfied.

IN THE HOME FIELD

LIVE CURTAIN

At our Christmas party at Intermountain School we planned to have tableaux of the first Christmas, but we did not know how to change scenes without a curtain. The result was a living curtain provided by the Senior Indian Choir that sang carols during the changing of scenes and then walked to the side for each tableau.

SISTER MARY DAVID

SILVER ADVENT WREATH

Necessity, we always hear, is the mother of invention.

It was with this maxim in mind that we sisters in Sebring, Florida set about to make our Advent wreath. With no evergreens or pine branches in sight except those safely protected by barbed wire fences or "State Property" signs, we turned our eyes heavenward. Was it in prayer?

There before our eyes, hanging from almost every tree, was the beautiful silver Spanish moss. A silver wreath? Our prayer was answered, and now our convent dining room boasts a lovely Advent wreath with Spanish moss substituting for pine branches.

SISTER MARY MARTHA



Four of the El Paso Sisters watch for the giant star to be lighted on Mount Franklin. Left to right: Sister M. Amelia, Sister James, Sister Mary Josephine, and Sister Priscilla (seated).

"When did you have the first catechism class?"

He was determined to get his question answered at any cost. So I tried once more.

"Billy, Jesus had the first catechism class. Remember our lesson today when Jesus taught the apostles how to pray the Our Father? It was Jesus who had the first catechism class."

Billy thought that over for a minute and then grinned with satisfaction. "That's what I wanted to know, Sister. G'by, Sister."

SISTER MARTHA MARY

FAR AND NEAR

In our weekly trips to our sixteen mission places, we four sisters from Abilene, Texas, cover a distance of 530 miles. Our nearest mission is right across the street from our convent, and our farthest is sixty miles away.

SISTER ROSE MARY



ABIE

Abie, who is shown here making his thanksgiving at our convent in Ely, Nevada, after his First Communion, is eighty-eight years old. Although of Jewish parentage he did not practice any religion. He was baptized three days before Christmas a year ago and received Our Lord for the first time on the feast.

SISTER M. IMMACULATA

True Devotion to Mary

SOME time ago a bishop told us of an experience he had with a convert, an ex-Lutheran minister. The young man accepted Mary as the Mother of God, but at the same time he considered our devotion to her as somewhat exaggerated. He simply could not "warm up" to it.

After endless conversations on the subject the bishop finally put into his hands the *Treatise on True Devotion* and told him to read it. Weeks later the man was back. "This," he said, indicating the book, "is the most difficult thing I ever read. But I am convinced that if we are to believe in the mystery of the Incarnation, then everything De Montfort wrote of Mary and our devotion to her must be true."

Over a hundred years ago another convert, a very famous convert, was more fortunate in his acceptance of Mary's role in the economy of our salvation. With his keenly logical mind, aided by God's grace, Orestes A. Brownson saw everything in the light of the Incarnation. "Devotion to Mary," he said, "is devotion to the Incarnation."

It is hardly to be supposed that Brownson ever read the *Treatise* of St. Louis de Montfort. He became a Catholic in 1844 and died in 1876. The *Treatise*, you will remember, was not discovered until 1842, and it was years before it was widely disseminated. But if Brownson had read it, how he would have loved its magnificent logic! What the ex-minister discovered only after reading De Montfort, Brownson learned early in his Catholic life, so that he could write in his *Quarterly* soon

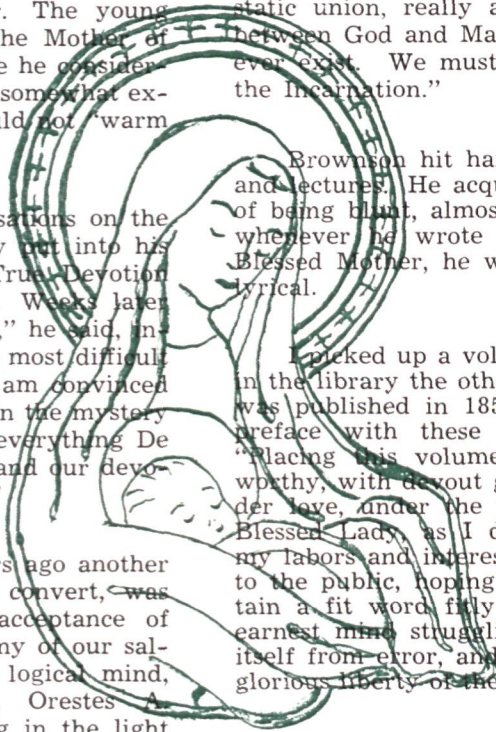
after his conversion: "The relation of Mother and Son, by virtue of the hypostatic union, really and truly subsists between God and Mary, and must forever exist. We must say this or deny the Incarnation."

Brownson hit hard in his writings and lectures. He acquired a reputation of being blunt, almost pugnacious. But whenever he wrote or spoke of Our Blessed Mother, he was tender, almost lyrical.

I picked up a volume of his *Essays* in the library the other day. The book was published in 1852. He ends his preface with these beautiful words: "Placing this volume, though all unworthy, with devout gratitude and tender love, under the protection of Our Blessed Lady, as I do myself and all my labors and interests, I send it forth to the public, hoping that it may contain a fit word fitly spoken for some earnest mind struggling to emancipate itself from error, and to burst into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

Over and over again Brownson emphasizes the Divine Motherhood, the source of all Mary's greatness. "If you concede the Incarnation," he wrote, "you must concede that Mary is the Mother of God; if you deny that she is the Mother of God, you must deny the Incarnation. There is no middle course possible."

No, there is no middle course possible. We cannot then honor Mary enough. The more we honor her, the more we show our belief in the divinity of Christ. Mary is the Mother of the Word Incarnate, Jesus Christ, born for us in a stable at Bethlehem almost two thousand years ago.



Sister Marie Vianney

TO LEAVE this world peacefully and quietly with the community, led by Father Conroy, our chaplain, saying the Rosary was the privilege of Sister Marie Vianney who died at one-twenty in the afternoon of October 8. Sister indeed merited this grace by her patient suffering through many years.

In 1947 when she was stationed in Monterey, California, Sister Marie Vianney suffered a stroke. She recovered enough to return to Victory Noll, but her right side was paralyzed and her speech affected. Still, she attended community exercises and even did light work around the convent.

Two years ago, however, a second stroke, more serious than the first, confined Sister to bed. Since then hers was the cross of being completely dependent on her sisters for care. In each crisis of her illness Sister received the sacrament of Extreme Unction. At last, on the day after the feast of the Holy Rosary, fortified with the rites of the Church, she gave back her soul to God.

Sister Marie Vianney, the former Mabel Denzig, was born September 16, 1890 in Elkhart, Indiana. Her parents were the late Frederick M. and Ida B. Denzig. She entered the community of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters at Huntington April 28, 1927 and made her religious profession August 15, 1929.

Until nine years ago when Sister suffered her first stroke and returned to Victory Noll, she had been assigned to convents in Gary, Indiana; Las Vegas, New Mexico; Redlands and Monterey in California.

Sister Marie Vianney is survived by her brother and sister-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Harold E. Denzig of Toledo, Ohio, and by two nieces: Mrs. James Gibb, Cincinnati, and Miss Judith Denzig, Toledo.



Funeral services were held at Victory Noll October 11, the feast of the Divine Motherhood. Father Conroy was celebrant of the Solemn Mass. He was assisted by the Rev. J. H. Roesler, pastor of SS. Peter and Paul Church, Huntington, deacon; the Rev. Charles J. Ueber, assistant pastor of SS. Peter and Paul, subdeacon; and the Rev. Edward A. Miller, pastor of St. Mary's Church, master of ceremonies. Brother Isidore, O.F.M.Cap., of St. Felix Friary, was thurifer and Brother Marion, O.F.M.Cap., boat bearer. Also present were the Rev. Chester Zurawiec, pastor of St. Joseph Church, Roanoke, Ind., and Brother Mark, O.F.M.Cap., St. Felix Friary, Huntington.

SISTER MARY SALOME

As we were about to go to press we received word from our sisters in Redlands, California, of the death there of Sister Mary Salome Dorava. Her obituary will be published in the January issue of *The Missionary Catechist*.

We ask our readers to remember in their prayers our three Missionary Sisters who died during the past year: Sister Mary Clare Leutenegger, Sister Marie Vianney Denzig, and Sister Mary Salome Dorava.



our Associates'

Dear Associates:

ON Christmas morning when the Christ Child rests before us on the high altar at Victory Noll, we will implore Him to bestow on you, and all those who are dear to you, the bounty of His peace and the riches of His grace. May these royal gifts of His come to you through the hands of Mary, and remain in your hearts during every moment of the New Year is the prayer of your

SISTER SUPERVISOR, ACM.

The round picture above is that of Mrs. D. A. Peterson, Elkhart, Indiana a member of Holy Ghost Band, and mother of our Sister Mary Christine.

ANOTHER CHARITINA CLUB MEMBER DIES

On October 8, Miss Mary Crimmins, a charter member of Charitina Club, died very suddenly of a heart attack. We are convinced she went to a great reward for the many years she contributed to Maternal Heart of Mary Barse. R. I. P.

ST. JUDE'S, Chicago

DURING the past year, the Promoter, Mrs. C. J. Fiala, worked very hard for our Sisters. Besides the cash donations she sent to Victory Noll she kept a group of ladies in Chicago supplied with green felt for scapulars, sent a ten-yard bolt of linen for one of our needy Texan missions and mission boxes of clothing and other articles to Alabama and Missouri convents.

ST. LUKE BAND, Chicago



Every year at this time we look forward to the large Babe of Bethlehem box which this group, headed by Mrs. Lillian Potter, sends to us. These

good ladies spare themselves neither labor nor expense in selecting materials for baby layettes. These little garments for poor babies are then hand stitched, embroidered or crocheted and given to one or more of our missions in honor of the Infant Savior. The members also have made it a custom to arrange for a Requiem High Mass, once a year, for all the deceased members of their Band at which they assist in a body.

DRAWING HELD



Above Mrs. Pierce (left) admires a large walking and talking doll for which Miss Jean Pranton (right) of Chester, Pennsylvania held a drawing. It was for the benefit of our Sisters.

Club Mention



ST. HELEN BAND, *Dayton, O.*



This Band sponsors Sister Eleanor, formerly of this city, and who has two sisters in the Band. Miss Florence Bucher, the Secretary, wrote us some time

ago as follows: "The members sent Sister a donation, part of which was to help pay for a new Catholic Encyclopedia which was one of the items listed by her convent in *Mission Want Ads.*" We are very grateful for the fine help the club has given over the years.

PLAN CHRISTMAS CHEER



RIGHT TO LEFT: Miss Alice Shanley, Sister Mary Agatha, Superior of our Richmond, Kentucky convent, Sister Effie, Victory Noll, Miss Mary Ehrmann and an unidentified member of a small mission band consisting of a portion of St. Patrick's Sodality, Fort Wayne. They discuss plans for Christmas cheer, having played fairy god-mothers on more than one occasion to poor children in our missions. See interesting article on page 10.

BANDS, CLUBS, GUILDS DONATIONS

September 28 to October 31, 1956

Christ the King, Detroit, Mrs. Brusch	5.00
Florentine, St. Louis, C. Luechtefeld	121.00
Little Flower, Chicago, V. Foertsch	50.00
Our Lady of The Bl. Sacrament, Oak Park, Ill., M. Turek	50.00
Queen of Virgins, Madison, Minn., Regina Emmerich	6.00
St. Augustine, Marshfield, Mass., Mrs. Jas. A. O'Brien	10.00
St. Clare, Omaha, Mrs. M. Preiner	20.00
St. Gerard, Chicago, Mrs. F. Perkins	17.00
St. Helen, Dayton, O., Miss Melke	3.75
St. Irene, Chicago, May Walsh	4.50
St. Joseph, Chicago, Mrs. A. Naumes	108.00
Holy Souls, Berwyn, Mrs. McGovern	8.00
St. Katherine, Chicago, Mrs. Hammer	38.00
St. Luke, Chicago, Mrs. E. Potter	32.60
St. Margaret Mary, Omaha, Neb., Marie Egermier	55.00
St. Martin, Omaha, Mrs. H. Wentz	231.44
St. Michael, Chicago, Mrs. Dowling	5.00
St. Omer, Cincinnati, Mrs. Hurlburt	10.00
St. Patricia, Chicago, Mrs. L. Gones	2.25
St. Rose, Marshfield, Wis., Mrs. Huebl	50.00
Seven Dolors, Chicago, Mrs. Murphy	6.50
Srillians, Cincinnati, L. Willenborg	7.00

OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART *Appleton, Wis.*

THE Promoter, Miss Helen Arens, wrote us recently as follows: "The enclosed check for \$76 is to be applied to Sister Marion Frances' Burse. No doubt your community was saddened over the death of your beloved Archbishop Noll. I always read any articles on him or by him. I do not think we have to pray for him but should ask him to intercede for us."



Mary's Loyal

TEXAS HELPER

Dear Loyal Helpers:

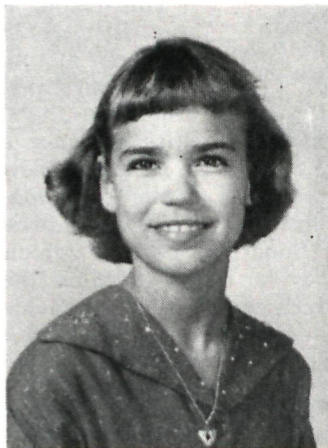
GOOD Saint Joseph prepared the manger-crib of the Infant Jesus with fresh, clean straw while he and Holy Mary awaited His coming. We, too, during Advent should prepare our heart-crib with loving thoughts of Him, little ejaculations and practices of virtue. Perhaps we could whisper, "Come, Lord Jesus" by way of Spiritual Communions often through the day, and try to be more truly obedient, polite, punctual, diligent and pure. Then at Christmas, with our souls all adorned for His coming, we can welcome Him into our heart-crib at Holy Communion. Let us meet, in spirit, at the altar rail on His birthday, praising Him and asking His blessing on ourselves and on one another.

SUNSHINE SECRETARY, MLH.

HELPERS IN FRANCE



Above are Dianne, and Patsy Cecil. Patsy and Leota (her older sister) joined MLH in August. They are with their Dad (Armed Services) and Mother in France.



Pictured above is Mildred Scheel, age ten, grade five, of Assumption School, Ganado, Texas. She likes to work our puzzles.



"It took me a little while to save a dollar because I spent some of my allowance. Tonight Daddy said I could have fifty cents instead of twenty-five cents. Patricia, my sister, borrowed money from me and after I let her borrow it she told me why. She borrowed it to write to you. So I got her twenty-five cents this week."

Linda Ann Wedlock, Gardena, Calif.

Good work, Linda. Ben Franklin once wrote, "Neither a borrower nor a lender be," but when you engage in this kind of finance to help the missions you are doing all right, Poor Richard's A'manac to the contrary, notwithstanding.

Helpers' pages



DECEMBER PUZZLE



As our puzzle for the month we selected eight titles of wellknown Christmas hymns and carols, leaving out a word in each. Supply the missing words, number them and send your

PENNSYLVANIA HELPER



This is Johnny Pranton, of Chester, Pennsylvania. There is wonderment in his eyes on this his second Christmas. He was too little to enjoy his first.

answers to **SUNSHINE SECRETARY** for a holy card.

1. Lovely _____, Dearest Savior.
2. O _____, All Ye Faithful.
3. O Little Town of _____.
4. See, Amid the _____ Snow.
5. It Came Upon a _____ Clear.
6. Rejoice, O Ye _____.
7. We Three _____ from Orient are.
8. _____ We Have Heard on High.

NOVEMBER PUZZLE ANSWERS

D1, C2, B3, E4, A5.

"Please make me a member of Mary's Loyal Helpers mission club. I want to get some girls from my school to join, too. If there is anything you want me to do just drop me a letter. I will always be willing to help as much as I can. I will be fourteen October 23, and am in the eighth grade at St. Anthony's School."



Mary Jean Wilkerson,
Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

Yes, Mary Jean, say a daily Hail Mary for our Missionaries that they may bring many souls to God.

"I go to St. Joseph's School. I will be in the first grade this year. I have five people in my family. My Mother and Daddy. I am five, my brother is seven and my sister is nine. This is money for the missions."

Maryanne Helfrich, Lancaster, Pa.

Her brother Thomas added this note: We don't have Pepper anymore because he scratched me and chewed Maryanne's new shoes and socks. Kathy has a sister doll."

Blinkey's Christmas Mission

by Sister M. Dorothy Louise

"ISN'T it nice that there is no such thing as the Christmas rush for you Sisters!" the lady remarked with a smile as she took the package from the salesclerk and tucked it into her shopping bag.

If Sister and I hadn't been in such a rush to check off the errands on our list, we might have lingered to challenge our good friend's surmise. Because the word aptly described what we had been doing these last two days before Christmas. We were all too aware that at the convent the tree still stood without its trimmings and that the holy figures for our chapel crib were waiting unceremoniously in a corner for the Bethlehem cave to take shape. Yet another important matter had taken precedence over these and the many other details that still remained to be done.

The disaster that had struck the home of one of our Catholic families just the week before was uppermost in our minds. How wonderfully the mother had accepted the new cross.

"God is good," she remarked unwaveringly; "the fire might have started at night. That would have been worse."

While the structure had not been demolished, the work of the hungry flames had caused considerable damage to some of the rooms, leaving the home unliveable for the present. The suddenness of the unexpected blaze and the rapidity of its progress had almost trapped the family. Now some kind neighbor had invited the parents and the three children to remain with her until the black-scarred home could be renovated. The past struggle to main-



Sister M. Dorothy Louise gives Blinkey his last minute instructions.

tain an adequate living was going to be increased with this added burden. We could imagine the mother in her kind way preparing the children for the inevitable disappointment of not finding the usual treats little ones look for at Christmas.

Yes, the situation called for more than words of sympathy. How fortunate that the lovely nun doll which had been given to us last year had been put away waiting for the right home. Already we had singled it out for the oldest girl of eight years. But how could we hope to match it with an equally nice present for the younger sister? There wasn't an easy solution at the moment. With Junior it was going to be different. The two-year old we felt would be elated over a red shiny fire engine. And so we turned to

the toy department. Strange purchase for sisters, the salesclerk must have thought.

Early the next evening came a knock at the convent door. Blinkey was being carried in under the arm of a Santa Claus in modern dress.

“... for some little boy or girl who won't be finding much under the tree this Christmas.”

We looked at Blinkey, who was all of three feet, with his slightly bowed legs dangling unconcernedly. He was about the happiest clown doll that we had even seen. We had seen many Dresden-like dolls with smiles that said, “Admire me!” But Blinkey's happy features seemed to exclaim, “Smile with me!” His large bright blue eyes and wide smile, emphasized by a curve of red paint on each cheek and a dot of the same hue on the tip of his nose, would lift the saddest heart and provoke an answering smile from even the most down-hearted child.

Why we should choose to call our new acquaintance “Blinkey” is as much

of a mystery as why a tall person answers to the name of “Tiny.” For as long as his sawdust life would last, his mischievous eyes would remain as they had been painted. Not taking our eyes off Blinkey, we saw the last piece fall into place in our problem puzzle of “but what shall we have for Carol?”

“Perfect,” we exclaimed. Now there would be a fine present for each of the three children.

The hours of the day had a way of evaporating, so that the evening found us just meeting the gift-wrapping deadline. As we tiptoed off to bed, we gave a last glance at Blinkey propped against a be-ribboned box of goodies and surprises that were going along with him to his new home tomorrow.

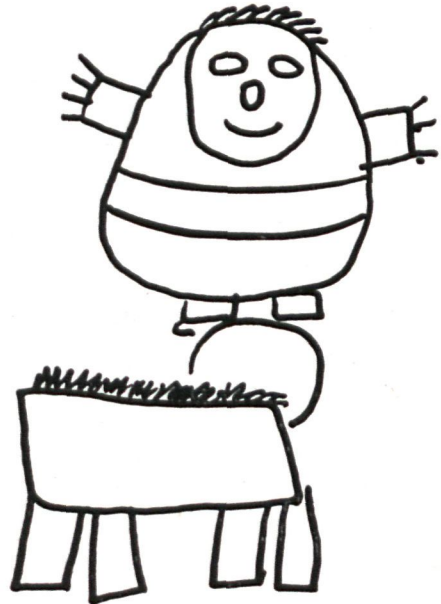
“Just think, Blinkey, you have been picked to be our little apostle of cheer. One little girl will claim you, but your happy smile is going to start paving miles and miles of smiles. So do a good job, won't you?”

Blinkey's only response was a big wide smile.

Sister walked from child to child looking at the drawings of the Nativity scene as interpreted by her first graders. Before Frank's she stopped, puzzled.

“Who is that?” she asked, pointing to the chubby person who dwarfed the manger.

Frank gave her the kind of look that little boys keep for slow-witted adults and answered, “Why, Sister, don't you know? That's Round John Virgin! You know, Round John Virgin in the song.”



BOOKS



A Dictionary of Mary compiled by Donald Attwater. P. J. Kenedy & Sons, New York. \$6.50.

There is a wealth of information contained here. The author himself best explains the contents of this book in his preface. It is a dictionary rather than an encyclopedia. It is a work of quick reference to matters connected with the many aspects of the life, significance, and veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The many shrines of Our Lady are described here, the encyclicals of recent popes can be found, and, as we might expect from Mr. Attwater, valuable information is given on Mary's place in both the Eastern and Western liturgies.

A Dictionary of Mary fills a long-felt need. It should be in every library.

American Catholics and the Intellectual Life by John Tracy Ellis. With Preface by Bishop John J. Wright. The Heritage Foundations, Inc., 75 East Wacker Drive, Chicago 1. \$1.25.

It would seem that there has been for a time a wave of anti-intellectualism in America, but, if the past few months were any criterion, it has abated somewhat. Witness the array of intellectuals (we refuse to use the term egghead) who were called in by both political parties during the recent presidential campaign.

Nevertheless, there is a dearth of Catholic intellectuals. Monsignor Ellis created quite a furor when he first made the charge in May 1955. The publication of his paper

in book form now is welcomed and made even more valuable by Bishop Wright's scholarly preface. Bishop Wright himself has been most articulate on the subject of the Catholic intellectual.

Catholics swing far too little intellectual weight in America, as Monsignor Ellis dispassionately proves. It is not enough that we agree with his charges, but we must do something about remedying the situation. Monsignor ends on a practical note by suggesting steps to do this before it is too late.

Catholic Church Music by Paul Hume. Dodd, Mead & Company, New York, \$4.50.

Mr. Hume is a frankly outspoken man. He has demonstrated this on various occasions: in his articles on sacred music in America and Sign, for instance. As music critic for the Washington Post, he is perhaps best remembered for his criticism of Margaret Truman and the rebuke he received from her father!

In this book, subtitled A Practical Guide for the Choir Loft, Mr. Hume puts the blame for poor and mediocre music on those in authority. Incidentally, he is very kind, perhaps too kind, to the sisters; for we believe he exaggerates somewhat when he writes of them on p. 124: "I have no doubt at all that, given the support of the clergy, they are quite capable of cleaning up the Church music situation in short order."

The author is immensely practical. He covers everything from how to organize a choir to what to sing. Moreover, he writes in an extremely lively style and quotes from choir masters and directors all over the country.

A valuable appendix contains papal documents, a discussion of whether the Motu Proprio on Sacred Music binds in conscience, suggested reading and music lists, a list of recordings, and breathing and vocalizing exercises for use before rehearsals.

This is a must book for choir directors, pastors, and yes, bishops.

A Catholic Child's Picture Dictionary by Ruth Hannon. Illustrated by Ted Chaiko. Catechetical Guild Education Society, 260 Summit Ave., St. Paul 2, Minn. \$1.50.

This is a beautiful book, modestly priced. It is large (9 by 11), the print is excellent, and the illustrations lovely.

Not every word (there are 400 listed) is in itself religious, but it is given a Catholic slant. For instance, the word animal, animals: "An animal is a living being that has a body and can move. A plant also lives, but it cannot move. Here are some animals that Jesus spoke about." And here are pictures of a donkey, sheep, cock, etc.

It is not too late to put this book on your Christmas list. It should delight any child.

Also from the Catechetical Guild are the following excellent and attractively covered paper backs:

The Church in the World, excerpts from the Catholic Digest. 50 cents.

You and Your Angel by Florence Medge. 15 cents.

You and Your Patron Saints by M. F. Wedge. 15 cents.

The Pope and the Church and Background of Faith by Francis J. Ripley. 15 cents each.

It is always a pleasure to report the publication of more Image Books, the paper backs published by Doubleday. The latest ones are of the usual high standard. Here they are:

The New Testament, Confraternity Edition. 95 cents.

On the Truth of the Catholic Faith by St. Thomas Aquinas. Book Three: Provi-

dence, Part 1 and Part 2. 85 cents each volume.

Apologia Pro Vita Sua by John Henry Cardinal Newman. 95 cents.

A Handbook of the Catholic Faith by Dr. N. G. M. Van Doornik, Rev. S. Jelsma, and Rev. A. Van De Lisdonk. Edited by Rev. John Greenwood. \$1.35.

The Path to Rome by Hilaire Belloc. 85 cents.

Saint Among the Hurons, the Life of Jean de Brebeuf, by Francis X. Talbot, S.J. 95 cents.

Sorrow Built a Bridge, the Life of Mother Alphonsa (daughter of Nathaniel Hawthorne) by Katherine Burton. 75 cents.

Maria Chapdelaine, a novel by Louis Hemon. 65 cents.

Correction

In the Archbishop Noll Memorial Number of The Missionary Catechist (p. 24) we wrote that the Rev. Robert Bliven, O.S.C. brought Holy Communion to the Archbishop the morning he died. It was not Father Bliven, but one of his classmates, also newly ordained, the Rev. Stanley Grabowicz.

When he called our attention to this, Father Bliven wrote: "Father Stan is not offended in having been left out. What only concerns us now is that we who knew the Archbishop will never fail to remember him in our Masses and prayers."

GOD KNOWS

I was giving a private instruction to a little girl and we were talking about the perfections of God.

"Why, Kathy," I said, "God even knows what you are thinking!"

"Well," drawled Kathy, "He don't have to know much 'cause I ain't thinkin' nothin'."

SISTER RUTH

The Editor's By-Line

At this season of the year we sometimes like to think about other Christmasses, even going back to those of our childhood. Perhaps there is a tendency to glamorize them now and think of them as being more wonderful than they really were.

As for myself, to think of a memorable Christmas, I need go back no further than ten years ago when Sister Mary Dolores and I had the happiness — the first and only time — of singing three High Masses. We had the same celebrant, the Rev. Alcuin Feldhues, O.F.M., but the Masses were hours and miles apart.

Father Alcuin has the kind of voice that you hear — I am not exaggerating — only once or maybe twice in a lifetime. Moreover, he loves Gregorian Chant and sings it perfectly. No wonder that for at least a month before Christmas we kept the Liber Usualis always within reaching distance.

Our first Mass, at midnight, was in the little town of Mertzon, a mission of San Angelo, Texas. The other two sisters drove us out during the afternoon because they would need the car in town. Father came in time to hear confessions before Mass.

The little church, which normally holds about ninety people, was packed. Before Mass we had a program of carols ending with a procession of altar boys, a child dressed as St. Joseph, and a small girl impersonating Our Blessed Mother with the Infant in her arms. Father put it in the crib, incensed it, and began Mass.

After Mass we had the veneration of the Infant, a lovely Spanish custom. The priest takes the Infant from the crib and presents it to the people to kiss. By the time all had returned to their seats after the veneration and we had sung verse after verse of *Vamos Todos a Belen, Venid Pastorcillos*, etc., it was well after one-thirty.

Sister and I then went to our convent, the little house we had all to ourselves. We had just finished our coffee and rolls when we were startled to hear

Silent Night outside our window. Carolers! But where in the world had they come from? The whole village must be asleep by now. Father, we knew, had gone to the room off the church where he would spend the few remaining hours of the night.

There was one way to find out, so we went to the door. There were Father Fidelis, another Franciscan, and six young girls and boys. After Midnight Mass in San Jose Church in San Angelo they had left for Big Lake, some ninety miles away, where Father would have Mass at dawn. They had forgotten to bring the Infant with them so they stopped in Mertzon for ours.

When we had seen them on their way again, this time with the Bambino, we went to bed, for we had to be up in a couple of hours to go to Knickerbocker for the Shepherds' Mass. After that, back we went to San Angelo where Father had the ten o'clock Mass at San Jose.

We met our other sisters there, and as we were leaving, a little girl gave us tamales that her mother had just made for the madres. Tamales are very good for breakfast on Christmas morning!

In Memoriam

Sister Marie Vianney, Victory Noll
Sister Mary Salome Dorava, Redlands, Calif.
Mrs. Therese Schneider, Buffalo, N. Y., mother of Sister Mary Dorothy
Mrs. Elizabeth Geiskopf, Milwaukee, mother of Sister Mary Eva
Mrs. Stephania Olivera, Los Banos, Calif., mother of Sister Olivia
Mrs. Carolyn Neff, Indianapolis, mother of Sister Carolyn Marie
Rev. G. Daly, C.Ss.R., Toronto, Canada
Rev. John J. Wroblewski, Terre Coupee, Ind.
Nora Sullivan, North Vernon, Ind.
Mrs. Mary C. Kolling
Mary Crimmins, ACM, Chicago
Mrs. J. Amann, ACM, Chicago
Margaret Munk, ACM, Chicago
Mrs. Elizabeth M. Polhaus, Evansville, Ind.
W. Curtis Pease, Fort Wayne
Mrs. Lacy, Pittsburgh
Ambrose McLaughlin, Mount Morris, Ill.
Mrs. Gertrude Ritter, Chillicothe, Ohio
Bernice Cieliczka, Detroit
Patrick Brennan, St. Louis
Catherine Rogers, St. Louis

Sodalists Spread Christmas Cheer

by Sister Beatrice

OUR sodality at Wagon Mound, New Mexico, has a membership of fifty boys and girls. At Christmas the apostolic committee is very busy.



Sister Beatrice watches the girls make cookie trees.

Last year the girls on the committee baked cookie trees. Each tree was made of seven cookies, all different and trimmed with colored sugar and gum drops. Some of them we gave to



Everybody helps.



Assembling the trees was fun. Each cookie was slipped onto the tree trunk and marshmallows separated the "branches." The trees were finished with an angel at the tip top.

the patients at Valmora Sanatorium; the rest to the sick of the parish.

One aged man whom we visited had been away from the sacraments for years. When he received his gift he said, "I am not deserving of this and your visit." The sodalists sang carols



The girls show Sister their Christmas baskets.

for him and tears came to his eyes. After we had gone he asked Father if he would please come and hear his confession.

Another project was making baskets out of old Christmas cards. These we filled with candy and nuts and took to the boys at a reform school.



AT that time the shepherds said one to another: Let us go over to Bethlehem, and let us see this word that is come to pass, which the Lord hath showed to us. And they came with haste; and they found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger.

From the Gospel of the Shepherds' Mass
at Dawn on Christmas