

The Missionary **Catechist**



July-August, 1947

1922

1947

Explanation of . . . A HYMN FOR VICTORY

by Reverend Placidus Kempf, O.S.B.

Stanza I.

"Our Lady of Victory" was the title given by God Himself to Mary, though not in so many words, when, after Adam's sin, He foretold to the serpent that she should crush his head. "I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel" (Gen. 3:15). God thereby lighted the "Beacon of Hope" for Adam and his countless posterity. The promise of a Redeemer was to serve as a guiding star through the dark centuries of waiting for the Redeemer, whilst faith in Him was to serve as a means of sharing in the fruits of the promised, future redemption. The Prophets of old kept this torch burning. Mary, who had concentrated as it were all these prophecies in her virginal heart with their light (faith) and heat (hope and desire) could have blown out this "light of hope" by a single breath—the refusal to become the Mother of the Redeemer. But she "believed" the words of the Angel and gave her free consent. For this, her faith, she is praised by her cousin Elizabeth: "Blessed art thou for thy believing" (St. Luke 1:45). By faith (and baptism) we are enlisted in God's great army. Mary is our Model, our Standard or Banner. The "legions" are Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters and those whom they train to be good soldiers of Christ, our King.

Stanza II.

The main work of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters is to dispel the dense darkness of the night of unbelief in souls. Mary, our bright Morning Star, must encourage and comfort them in this arduous task of causing the dawn of a new life to break in souls.

Stanza III

Mary crushed the serpent's head by giving birth to Him, Who, dying on the Cross, conquered sin, death, and hell. Although vanquished, Satan is not rendered helpless. He can and does achieve victories by making men forsake God by loving forbidden objects. Again, Mary is our Standard of loving truly and ardently. Love of God and sin are both acts of our free will. We have but to put our heel down on unlawful desires and our love of God, growing

stronger by each act, will always be victor.

Stanza IV

Our Leader told us that we can conquer only as He did—by carrying our cross after Him and dying upon it. The only road to heaven leads over Mt. Calvary. Difficulties (the dragon) on the road are apt to frighten us and cause us to turn back and take the easy road to eternal perdition. Again, Mary, our "Beacon of Light" goes before us to encourage us to struggle manfully until we, too, "go over the top."

Stanza V

Mary's grace of her Immaculate Conception was a free gift of God (blue-heaven). But she also kept her soul (robe) pure by her faithful co-operation with grace. We need inspiration and help to keep our soul unspotted in this filthy (sinful) world. God's grace is a free gift, but rendered useless unless we freely accept and use it.

Stanza VI

Having thus encouraged ourselves to place new and firm trust (our sin-resisting armor—polished by daily co-operation with grace), we remind Mary that we have a special claim to her maternal protection and all-powerful aid in our conflict against Satan because we are her children (of whom she ought to be proud) and soldiers of her Divine Son, our Leader.

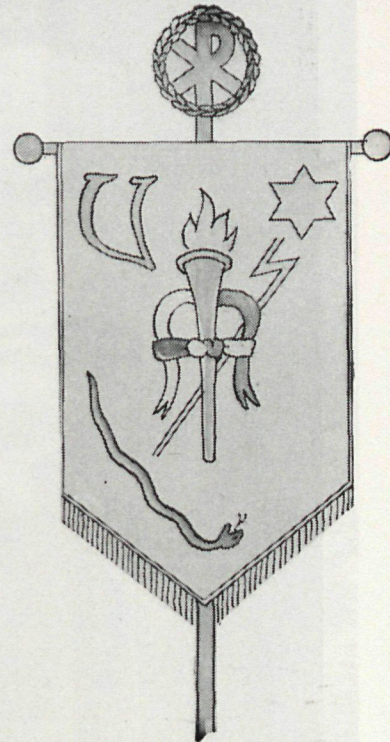
Yes, we are "drilling" daily, but not in sham battles. We learn our weakness in daily, actual conflict. We are daily victorious because God and Mary are with us, not as pleased spectators on the side lines (with a box seat in the gallery of heaven) but in our very midst, sharing with us our every danger and helping us in every need. Hence there can be but one battle cry from our confident, loyal hearts:

VICTORY
through
CHRIST
and
MARY!

A Hymn for Victory

*Dedicated to Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters on the occasion of the
SILVER JUBILEE*

*of the foundation of their community.
by Placidus Kempf, O.S.B.
St. Meinrad's Abbey
St. Meinrad, Indiana
1947*



*Our Lady of Victory Beacon of Light
The lone torch of firm faith gleaming down from afar,
Be the Standard for legions now drilling to fight.*

*Drive away the dense darkness of unbelief's night,
By hope's shafts of refulgent rays, bright Morning Star;
O Our Lady of Victory, Beacon of Light.*

*Crush the base serpent's head with the heel of thy might,
That our love may be victor in sin's ruthless war;
Be the Standard for legions now drilling to fight.*

*Guide our eyes and our feet up to Calvary's height;
Let not fear of the dragon our onward march bar;
O Our Lady of Victory, Beacon of Light.*

*Let thy mantle of blue and thy robe of pure white,
That the grime of earth's battle could not tarnish or mar,
Be the Standard for legions now drilling to fight.*

*As we arm with new courage and trust, firm and bright,
We remind thee, O Mother, thy soldiers we are;
O Our Lady of Victory, Beacon of Light,
Be the Standard for legions now drilling to fight.*

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His Excellency
Most Reverend John F. Noll, D.D.
Bishop of Fort Wayne

THE Society of Missionary Catechists of Our Blessed Lady of Victory, now called Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters, is currently celebrating the Silver Jubilee of its foundation by the Reverend John J. Sigstein, a priest of the archdiocese of Chicago.

THIS mission-minded priest had a particular interest in the instruction of the Mexican people on this side of the Rio Grande who, he was convinced, were being neglected because, while in many cases concentrated in large cities, they were, for the most part, thinly scattered over a vast area. He knew that it would be impossible for Bishops to supply a sufficient number of priests to instruct them, and that the provision of Catholic schools would be out of the question.

WOULD there be any way of bringing instruction and spiritual guidance to the large number of Mexican children in danger of falling victims to Protestant proselytizing efforts? One way, he conceived, would be to found a Religious Community of Women, whose members would be

Silver Jubilee

by the Most Reverend John F. Noll, D.D.

offered to Bishops according to a plan whereby vast numbers of the neglected Mexican people could be reached.

ACCORDING to that plan, Missionary Catechists would be placed in definite centers from which they would go out in four directions to visit the huts of all the people, and invite parents to send their children, once or twice a week, to a designated place for religious instruction.

FATHER SIGSTEIN had no means with which to launch his movement, but he was convinced that if he made some kind of start, Almighty God would provide the way. Accordingly he persuaded two spiritual-minded young Chicago women to become the first members of his Community. The good Sisters of Notre Dame, who conduct the Longwood Academy for Girls in Chicago, agreed to house his candidates.

NOW Almighty God did begin to show His interest. Father John F. Noll, then pastor of St. Mary's Church, Huntington, Indiana, and editor of *Our Sunday Visitor*, chanced to be at Hot Springs, where he preached on Sunday at a local church. Immediately after the Mass, a gentleman from Long Beach, California, Peter O'Donnell by name, called at the sacristy to ask for an interview with this priest, which was granted that very afternoon at St. Joseph's Sanitarium.

WITH what did the interview concern itself? With the same Mexican problem that filled Father Sigstein's thoughts. Mr. O'Donnell, unaware of the Chicago priest's intentions, told Father Noll that a Religious Community of Women to conserve and spread the faith among the Mexicans of the Southwest was an absolute need. He offered to contribute a sizeable donation towards the establishment of a Novitiate and Training School for such a community, provided *Our Sunday Visitor* would match the same, and that Father Noll would sponsor the community through *Our Sunday Visitor*, locate it at Huntington, Indiana, and make it the prime interest of *Our Sunday Visitor*.

ON his return from Hot Springs, Father Noll called on Father Sigstein to tell him of the offer of Mr. O'Donnell, and agreed to back his Community with financial support and with



East view of Victory Noll, Mother House and Novitiate of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters. The building, which was erected by Our Sunday Visitor in 1924, stands on a high hill overlooking the beautiful Wabash valley.

country-wide publicity through *Our Sunday Visitor*.

SOON thereafter Our Sunday Visitor employed an architect to draw up plans for a Motherhouse and Novitiate to be erected on *Our Sunday Visitor* farm, having a frontage on a high eminence overlooking the beautiful Wabash valley, after which Indiana's anthem was named.

THE Society has grown during the twenty-five years from its original two members to two hundred and eighty. If it had one thousand members, they would all be usefully employed chiefly in the States of New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, and California. We say "chiefly" because they also have centers in midwestern states, including Indiana, Ohio, Michigan. Their latest center was established in Alabama.

BECAUSE "the harvest is great and the laborers are still too few," will you not join us in prayer during this Jubilee Year, that "the

Lord of the Harvest may send" an adequate number of "laborers into His vineyard" to meet the needs of the Church throughout the nation?

YOU, who have children in parochial schools, must not forget that more than half the Catholic children in this country are in public schools, either because they live in parishes too small to conduct a parochial school, or too remote from an existing school, as are the Mexicans. There is absolutely no other way of bringing them to religious instruction with any regularity except by a Sisterhood specially dedicated to the task of finding the children by a house to house canvass, and by bringing them together at some point where they can be taught their prayers, given religious instruction in simple language in preparation for their First Holy Communion and Confirmation. Through Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters, they are brought to Mass, shown how to participate in the Mass, and made little Apostles for Christ in their respective homes and neighborhoods.

Meet Mother General

by Sister Eunice

MEET Mother General. Most of you have known her through the years as Catechist Catherine Olberding. To tell the truth, so have we. But a few months ago when our title was changed from *Catechist* to *Sister*, we acquired a *Mother*. Not that we did not have her before, but after all there is something in a name, isn't there? Although we like the title *Mother General*, most of the Sisters prefer the more familiar *Mother Catherine*.

MOTHER CATHERINE entered our community, then called the Society of Missionary Catechists, on March 1, 1924, and was professed on the feast of the Annunciation, March 25, 1926. Shortly after her profession Mother Catherine was appointed superior at Gary, Indiana.

IN 1928 Mother Catherine led the first band of Catechists to California, where she was superior at Dos Palos, in the diocese of Monterey-Fresno, for two years. In 1930 Mother Catherine was appointed superior at Santa Paula, California, the first house of the community in the archdiocese of Los Angeles. In 1932 she was recalled from her beloved California and appointed superior at Indiana Harbor, Indiana, where she remained until 1938.

DURING the years of the depression, Mother Catherine saw much poverty and suffering among the Mexican population of Indiana Harbor, and her efforts to bring relief to the poor have endeared her to them for all time. These people, employed almost exclusively in the steel mills, were badly hit by the depression. Most of the Mexicans were thrown out of work altogether; a few worked one, two, or three days a week.

MOTHER CATHERINE and her co-workers begged without ceasing for food and clothing for these unfortunate people. She arranged for a truck to go to Chicago twice a week to pick

up food supplies donated by various wholesale firms. A wholesale baking company donated day old bread, cakes, and other bakery goods; a wholesale fruit company donated fruit; other firms, individuals, or Associate Catechists of Mary groups donated pinto beans—an important item in the diet of the Mexican—spaghetti, and other staples. It was not an unusual sight to see cars from Chicago drive up to the Catechists' Convent with food and clothing for distribution among Harbor's poor. It is difficult to say what would have happened to the Mexican population without this help . . . but Mother Catherine saw that the help was there, even though it meant that she and her companions must work throughout the day and often far into the night in order to take care of the many calls for help.

IN 1938 the first General Chapter of the Community was held, and Mother Catherine was elected the first Superior General. Since this was the first attempt of the community at self government, Rome provided that the election should be for three years only. In 1941 Mother Catherine was re-elected Superior General, this time for the regular six year term.

DURING her years as Superior General, Mother Catherine has had the consolation of seeing the community grow from 163 to 242 professed members; the number of houses increase from 21 to 37; and the number of public school children enrolled in our classes increase from 23,000 to 46,000.

MOTHER CATHERINE has through the years contributed much to the establishment and development of the community. She has devoted herself wholeheartedly and unselfishly to the work before her, whether in the mission field or in the more arduous task of governing the community. She has given to all her Sisters a splendid example of generosity and unselfish devotion to duty.



Truck which Mother Catherine sent to Chicago twice a week to pick up food and clothing for the poor during the years of the depression.

Our Superior General



Mother Catherine, First Superior General of Our
Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters.



Dinner given by the Sisters as a token of gratitude to Our Sunday Visitor employees on the occasion of the thirty-fifth anniversary of the founding of O.S.V. and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Community. Standing at back of auditorium are His Excellency, Bishop Noll, Very Reverend Monsignor Feltes, Reverend Fathers Dillon and Conroy, Mr. Joseph Mehring, General Manager of O.S.V., and O.S.V. Trustees.

Beginnings

by Mother Catherine

THE growth of our community has been so interwoven with and dependent upon *Our Sunday Visitor* that it seems more than a coincidence that this year marks our Silver Jubilee and the Thirty-fifth Anniversary of the founding of *Our Sunday Visitor*.

Our Sunday Visitor grew out of the social conditions of the times. The Socialists, at the peak of their power, were openly attacking American institutions in general and the Catholic Church in particular, and like modern communists advocating a godless, materialistic society. Catholicism was the only outspoken adversary of Socialism. The *Menace*, published by the Socialists for the purpose of discrediting the Catholic Church, had a wide national circulation. The Most Reverend John F. Noll, D.D., present Bishop of Fort Wayne, and pastor of St. Mary's Church, Huntington, Indiana, at that time, saw the need of a national Catholic organ to counteract the dangerous influence of the *Menace*.

IN those days there was no Catholic Press Association, nor was the N.C.W.C. News Service available to diocesan papers. Father Noll, there-

fore, undertook the task of publishing a National Catholic weekly. Its first edition had an actual paid circulation of 35,000; at the end of the year it had a circulation of 200,000; and at the end of the second year the circulation had reached 400,000. Today it is the largest national Catholic weekly in the world.

BY carefully refuting the errors contained in the *Menace* and by exposing the characters of the men who published it, who, unfortunately for the Socialists, were men of bad reputation, *Our Sunday Visitor* did much to stop its pernicious influence. In fact, instead of being harmed, the Church actually benefitted when the American public learned the real purpose of the *Menace*, the calibre of its publishers, and the truth about Catholicism and its position in regard to the un-American tenets of Socialism.

ESTABLISHED for the good of Holy Mother Church, *Our Sunday Visitor* has always been a non-profit organization, whatever income remained over and above expenses being devoted to charitable purposes. Thus it was that when a zealous Catholic layman, Mr. Peter O'Donnell,

placed before the editor of *Our Sunday Visitor* the urgent need of spiritual assistance for the Spanish speaking population of the Southwestern part of our country, Father Noll was in a position to do something about it.

FATHER NOLL described to Mr. O'Donnell our little community which had already been founded by the Reverend John J. Sigstein, a priest of the Chicago Archdiocese, for the express purpose of preserving the faith of the very group whose cause Mr. O'Donnell was pleading. After a visit to Father Sigstein, Mr. O'Donnell offered to give \$100,000 to Father Noll on condition that *Our Sunday Visitor* match the sum to erect a Novitiate and Mother House at Huntington for the Missionary Catechists, and that—through its nationwide circulation—it rapidly recruit the Novitiate in order to meet the pressing need for religious workers in the Southwest.

THE result of this meeting was that our community was invited to Huntington, where a Mother House and Novitiate—far beyond the dreams of any community for its early days—was built and has been maintained through the years by *Our Sunday Visitor*. The Mother House, named in honor of Our Lady of Victory, Patroness of our community, and His Excellency, Bishop Noll, is known as Victory Noll. It was dedicated by His Excellency on July 5, 1925, the

first Sunday after his consecration as Bishop of Fort Wayne. Today on a high hill overlooking the Wabash Valley, Victory Noll stands as a monument to the generosity and success of *Our Sunday Visitor* and to the faith and zeal of its Editor, Bishop Noll.

THAT *Our Sunday Visitor* has actively recruited candidates for the community is proved by the fact that of our present 280 members the great majority learned of our community only through the pages of *Our Sunday Visitor*.

WE are also indebted to *Our Sunday Visitor* for our beautiful home at Redlands, California. This home with its twenty-acre orange grove, located in one of the prettiest spots in California, was purchased for us by *Our Sunday Visitor* in 1941. During the summer vacation it offers a haven of rest and relaxation to the seventy-five Sisters working in Southern California. The front of the convent is modeled after the Old Mission at Santa Barbara, while the cloister arches which surround the entire edifice are a replica of those of the Old Mission of San Juan Capistrano. Its secluded grounds afford plenty of opportunity for recreational purposes, and the glass enclosed swimming pool at the back of the

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Queen of the Missions Convent, Redlands, California. This convent, together with a twenty acre orange grove, was purchased for the community by *Our Sunday Visitor* in 1941.





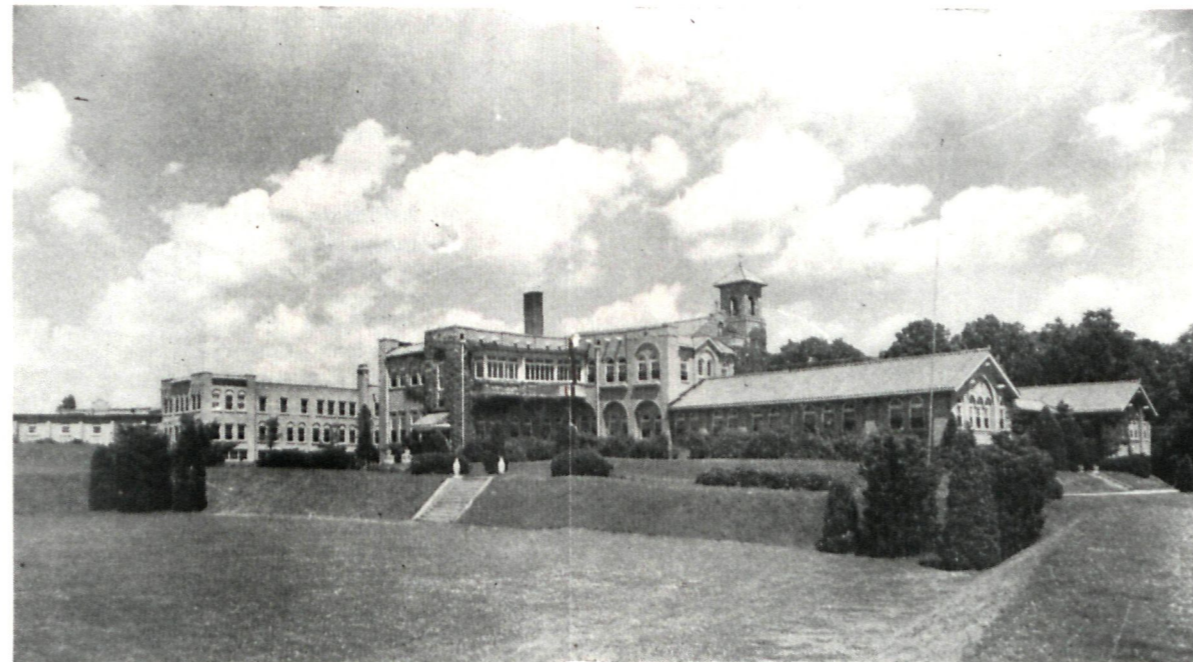
Above: Reverend J. J. Sigstein, founder of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters. Father guided the community in all its activities until his retirement in 1938.

Below: Victory Noll from the Southwest.



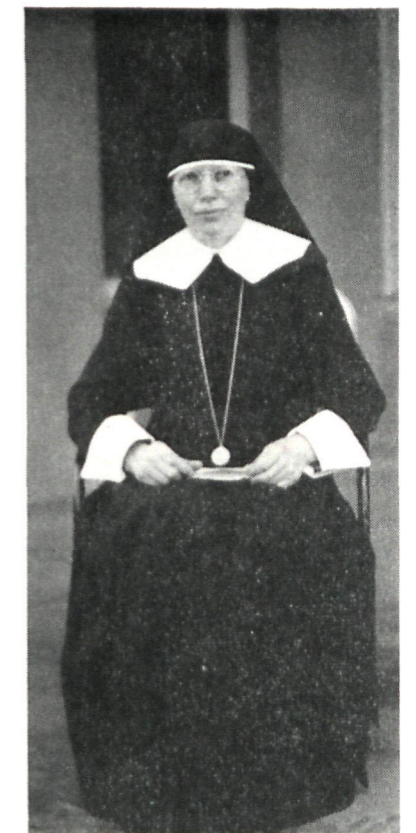
Above: Postulants and Novices at prayer.

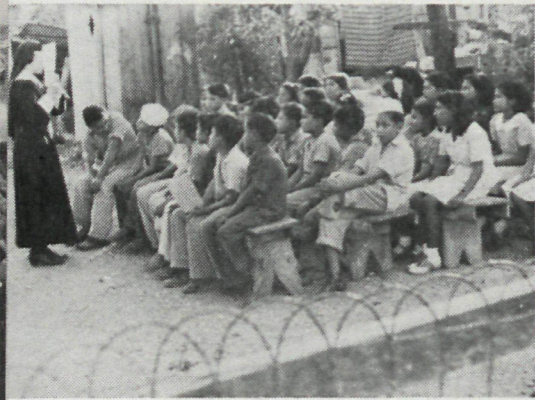
Below: Sister Julia, first member of community. Sister Julia is stationed at Santa Fe and is actively engaged in confraternity work in the scattered missions of the Archdiocese.



Above: Victory Noll Chapel.

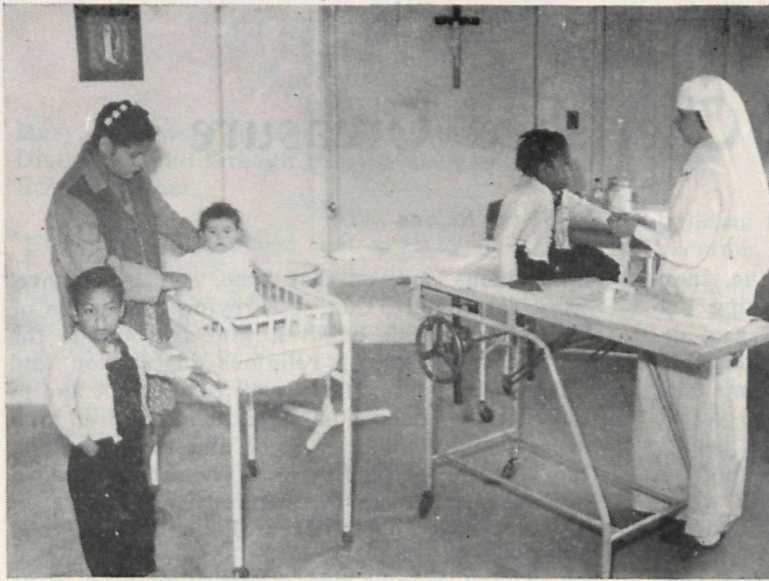
Below: Sister Marie, who with Sister Julia arrived in Santa Fe on August 5, 1922, to begin the work of the community in the remote mission districts of New Mexico.



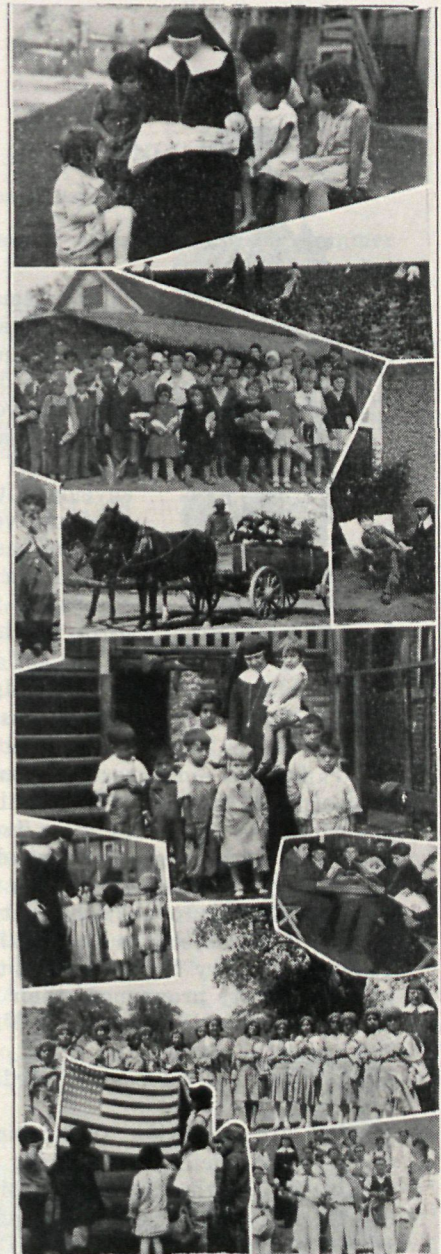


The principal work of the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Victory is the religious instruction of Catholic children attending public schools. Since in most States it is not possible to use the public schools for this purpose, the Sisters must find classrooms in the Church, in private homes, empty stores, garages, or even in fields or along the roadside.





Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters supervise clinics, train altar boys, conduct choirs, organize socialities and leisure time clubs, such as Boy and Girl Scouts, C.Y.O., and other character building organizations.





A Cherished Treasure

by Sister Regina

It is a small statue, inexpensive, and laying no claim to an artistry of design or a delicacy of coloring that would stamp it as extraordinary. And yet an aureole of mystic beauty envelops it, inspiring an awesome veneration which deepens as our budding community impatiently checks off year after year in its earthly career.

WE are, as a community of religious, too young to have long-cherished customs or venerable treasures. The inexperience of our youth has caused us—in times past—unwittingly even to scorn the thought of such things; though all the while we ourselves were inevitably sowing the seeds of customs and branding with affection objects which our Sisters of future ages will be pleased to cherish as treasures. First among these objects is the small statue of Our Lady of Victory before which the members of our community pronounced their act of consecration to Mary in the days when Victory Noll with its beautiful chapel and altar of Our Lady of Victory had not yet been erected.

FROM its inception the community of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters (known until 1947 as the Society of Missionary Catechists of Our Blessed Lady of Victory) was placed under the patronage of Our Blessed Mother and dedicated to her for time and for eternity. Not only was the community as such placed in Mary's motherly care, but each individual Sister made her consecration according to the practice of the true devotion as propagated by Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort.

SO it was that with hearts inflamed with childlike love, the early members knelt before the small statue of Our Lady of Victory and made their consecration to Mary—a consecration which should rather be called an act of total abandonment to the Mother of God for the glory of the Most Holy Trinity.

THEY had need of this abandonment, these young women, members of a newly-founded community, who were to begin in this country

an arduous and, at that time, somewhat novel work for Sisters, that of carrying the truths of Faith to Catholic children who are outside the ordinary spheres of religious instruction and Catholic influence. They were to seek out and to instruct the thousands of Catholic children who are attending public schools, and their parents, too, if need be; they were to visit the homes, to become members of every family, as it were, in order to save the souls of all, both young and old.

THEY were to be *missionary* Sisters—Apostles—carrying the gospel of Our Lord to the poor and the spiritually starving in our own land. For this they would need Mary, teacher and inspirer of the Apostles, as St. Anselm so beautifully calls her when he says, "Many things were revealed to the Apostles by Mary."

THEY were to be Christ-bearers, but Christ must first be formed in them before they could carry Him to others. How was this sublime work to be accomplished except by Mary, who was the original, living mould of Christ!

AS pioneer members of a new religious family in the Catholic Church, the responsibility resting upon them was appalling. As pioneers in a new field of endeavor, they were faced with a work of herculean proportion—too stupendous, indeed, for human strength and ingenuity. And so, with the wisdom of the children of God, they abandoned themselves to Mary as her slaves of love. They flung themselves with confidence into her maternal arms in a total gift of self. After that, the missions entrusted to them became Mary's missions. Their success, Mary's success, and their failures—but there could be no failure under the direction and with the resources of the Queen of Victories!—except, at times, in appearance only.

"ALL for Jesus through Mary," the motto of the new community, became a veritable breathing of the soul for its zealous members. It was continually in their hearts and upon their lips during the busy days of mission life, keeping them mindful of their consecration to Mary and assuring their habitual dependence upon her in all their actions, great or small. Thus praying, working, suffering, playing; doing all things through Mary, with Mary, in Mary, and for

Mary, they were certain of doing them for her Divine Son and through Him for the glory of the Eternal Father.

TODAY two hundred and seventy Professed Sisters and Novices imitate our pioneers in their devotion to Mary. And the small statue of Our Lady of Victory, long since replaced by the beautiful statue in Victory Noll chapel, is to us not just another image of Our Lady of Victory, Patroness and Mother. It stands as a tangible embodiment of the spirit of our new community, that spirit which fired our Founder with the courage and strength to give life to his Great Vision, despite seemingly insurmountable obstacles; that spirit which sent our early members, with light hearts and smiling lips, to attempt the heroic, confident of victory; that spirit which each member of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters strives unceasingly to cultivate and to perfect in her life . . . the spirit of absolute dependence upon Our Blessed Mother as a slave of love; of entire abandonment to Jesus through Mary, in life and in death, for the glory of the Ever Blessed Trinity.

Rhythm band, Azusa, California. This is a big attraction to Mexican children, who have a natural love for music.



BEGINNINGS

(Continued from page 9)

building is an added attraction for the summer vacation.

WE like to think of ourselves as a by-product of *Our Sunday Visitor*. The main purpose of the paper is the dissemination of truth. This it does admirably through its printed pages. But it has also made possible a living voice—the voice of the Missionary Sister of Our Lady of Victory—which is instilling in the hearts of American youth the truth and practices of our holy religion.

WE owe a debt of gratitude in perpetuity to His Excellency, the Most Reverend John F. Noll, D.D., Bishop of Fort Wayne and Editor of *Our Sunday Visitor*, for his guidance and financial assistance through the years; to Mr. Joseph Mehring, General Manager of *Our Sunday Visitor*, who amid the multiplicity of duties has always found time to assist us when the water supply gave out or the heating system balked, when roofs leaked or basements flooded; to the Trustees and employees of *Our Sunday Visitor*, and to its thousands of readers whose continued support through the years has made possible the publication of this National Catholic Weekly—which has proved such a powerful instrument in defense of the American way of life as well as of the Catholic faith.

A Valiant Woman

by Sister Noreen

"Who shall find a valiant woman?" the wise man asks in the Proverbs. "Far and from the uttermost coasts is the price of her."

IF by some juxtaposition of time and place the man of the Proverbs could have witnessed the birth of the Society of Missionary Catechists and then followed its phenomenal development through the twenty-five fruitful years, he would have been content. More than content! Time and time again he would have seen a valiant woman renounce the comforts of a well ordered home to embrace the life of a missionary, who must make her home in a little adobe house, an abandoned mansion, a sacristy—wherever she could best serve the least of His brethren. And would he not have heard the children "rise up and call her blessed" because she brought them the bread of life, the word of God; the aged praise her for the spiritual and material aid she gave? Truly a valiant woman!

AND would not the man of Proverbs, being a man of God, give thanks today for these valiant Missionary Sisters, who have labored tirelessly to bring souls to God from those first days even until today? Yes, his thanks would be joined to ours as we younger Sisters humbly stand today in admiration of their deeds of love and self-sacrifice.

HEAVEN alone knows how many times in the twenty-five years did these valiant pioneers in the community stretch out their hands to the poor, bring comfort to the afflicted, hope to the despondent, and knowledge of God's commandments to the ignorant in their appointed field, the Southwest. And Heaven alone knows the sacrifices made in those early days when, with only meager resources, this small band faced the superhuman task before them. Living conditions were poor, the people's needs, both spiritual and material, were great; and distances to out missions enormous over roads well-nigh impassable to any but these determined women of God.

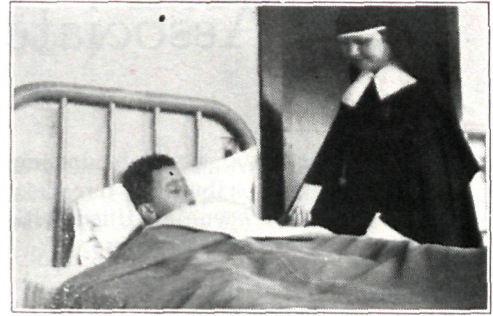
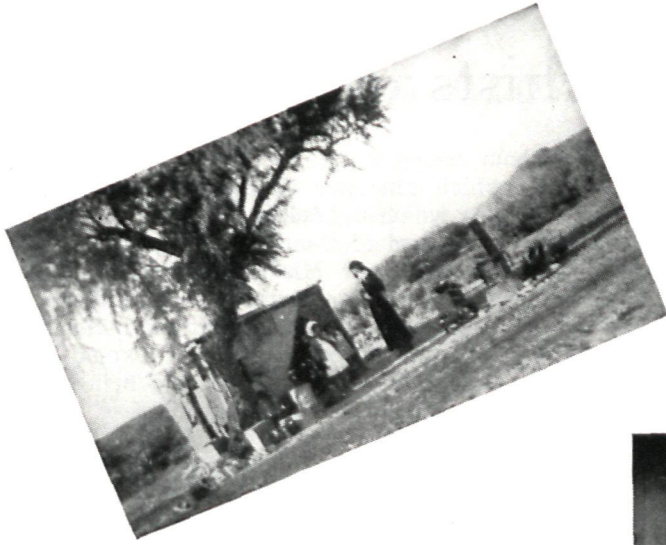
ENTERING the field today we younger Sisters can only imagine the hardships our older Sisters endured to accomplish the wonders they did in the short twenty-five years. We can imagine their resourcefulness in improvising classrooms, their tact in dealing with prejudice, their tireless energy in long hours of work, their

never-failing patience in teaching and ministering to the sick in body or soul, their charity in endless works of mercy. Only in imagination can we picture these valiant women as they went about on their errands of mercy, trusting to God and their Patroness, Our Lady of Victory, to get them through the mud, or keep them from skidding off the slick adobe road down an embankment whose height even their stout hearts dare not reckon; changing tires in the heat of a New Mexico summer sun or the freezing winds of a mountain top in winter; waiting patiently for hours for the roaring, turbulent waters of an arroyo to subside, though the bed of the arroyo had been dry when they passed that morning. Yes we can only imagine all this, for never do they complain, nor even seem to consider their accomplishments anything worth mentioning as today they continue to go about their Father's business with enthusiasm undimmed—a constant inspiration and joy to us all.

LEISURE, rest, idleness, what would they know of such as these? Not idle in those early days when the laborers were few and the harvest great. Not idle when Christ's poor, neglected ones needed medical, physical, or moral aid. Busy setting up soup kitchens in the days of the Depression, riding rocky miles to a lonely rancher or a dying Mexican, bringing knowledge of God's love and His laws to little ones, lending a guiding hand to the penitent sinner—tirelessly performing works of mercy with no thought of personal comfort or even at times of personal safety. No, as one mission center after another opened, they were not idle. Time was sown that eternity might be reaped.

THEIR worldly sisters have been busy about many things—striving for social or financial advancement, for recognition of their beauty or talents, for success in their chosen career. But the early Missionary Sisters, these valiant women of God, have devoted their time and talents, their strength and courage to serving their God and their fellow men, ever mindful that "favor is deceitful and beauty is vain; the woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."

We have found it necessary to omit **Mary's Loyal Helpers'** page in this our special Silver Jubilee number. Our "Sunshine Secretary" promises to be back with the youngsters in our September issue.



Home visiting is an indispensable part of the work of the Sisters. In house visiting, the Sisters take census, locate the children who are not receiving religious instruction, find marriage cases which should be validated, and encourage careless or indifferent parents to approach the sacraments and to foster a religious atmosphere in the home.



Associate Catechists of Mary

Dear Associates:

OUR Jubilee Issue would be incomplete if we did not pay tribute to our faithful Associates, who have been identified with our community from its earliest days.

MOST of you, dear Associates, are quite familiar with our work. You receive our monthly magazine, THE MISSIONARY CATECHIST, which carries articles and pictures describing the work our Sisters are doing among the poor, underprivileged people we serve in the mission districts of our own country.

IN all our good work you have a real part; you help us extend God's Kingdom of souls on earth; you will likewise share in our eternal reward. We can, of course, only gauge the results of our labors by what is tangible or visible. Nevertheless, the gradual extension of our fields of labor is, we believe, a faithful indicator of spiritual conquests, at present known only to God, but which shall be revealed hereafter.

I AM sure it is a source of genuine comfort and joy to you to know that your help—especially in the pioneer days when few people knew of our work—enabled us to carry on and to make our work the success that, with God's help, it has been. As a consequence, we now have a long chain of mission centers which links eleven States and is spread across five archdioceses and ten dioceses, where our Society has thirty-seven houses, from which 210 Missionary Sisters go forth daily to instruct 46,000 children enrolled in public schools.

YOU have helped us in a humble, hidden way, which must surely have given great pleasure to our Dear Saviour, who during His sojourn on earth condemned ostentatious giving, but praised the widow who gave generously of the little she possessed. No stained glass windows or marble plaques register your charitable almsgiving over a long period of time, but, better far, these Christlike deeds are written in the Heart of Christ and will receive, instead of fleeting earthly glory, eternal glory in Heaven.

IT must also be a source of happiness to you to know that our work, which is also your work, has, like the proverbial tree that grew out of the mustard seed, lengthened its shadow and its sphere of activity farther and farther in God's vineyard of souls. You have aided our work

without seeing its fruits. You could not see the tear which glistened in the eye, the smile of gratitude which lighted up the face, or hear the quivering word of thanks evoked by your alms, given through our Missionary Sisters, the instruments of your charity. You have entrusted your money to us in a spirit of blind trust, confident that it would help us extend God's kingdom in the hearts of men and bring alleviation to those suffering bodily distress.

IT is not necessary to give you the history of our community. Most of you have followed it very closely from the beginning; those who have joined our A.C.M. in later years and wish to know more about our foundation and the aim and scope of our work will find this information in the various articles in this issue.

WE shall conclude this brief but heartfelt tribute to our A.C.M. members, by repeating that in all our good works you have a real share. Therefore, we are convinced that when the final day of reckoning comes and each one of us nears the shores of eternity, there will be arms of welcome extended to you and to us by those who have been helped by your charity, distributed through us, and who have preceded us both into eternity. Most prized of all will be that welcome we shall receive from the Divine Master, whom you and we have tried to serve, according to our ability and calling. At that time He will reward you and us with eternal blessedness for having interested ourselves in and done all that we could for the least of His brethren.

JESUS, Father of the poor, have mercy on us all!

ACM SUPERVISOR

NOTICE

We have combined the July and August issues of THE MISSIONARY CATECHIST. No magazine will be printed in August. The next issue you receive will be the September number.

OUR COVER: Novices as they entertained Our Sunday Visitor employees with a short program after the Jubilee dinner in Victory Noll auditorium. The cardboard tableau, showing a postulant, novice and professed Sister kneeling before Our Blessed Mother with the Infant, was made by one of the novices.

An Apostle of Mary

by Sister Regina

MANY a young postulant, hearing for the first time the community prayers of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters, has asked herself, "Who is this Blessed de Montfort whose canonization the Sisters are praying for?"

IT isn't long, however, before she becomes acquainted with this heroic missionary and fervent apostle of Mary, Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort, upon whom the church will bestow the honors of canonization on July 20 of this year.

SOON after her arrival at Victory Noll, the novice begins a comprehensive study of De Montfort's "True Devotion to Mary." She learns also that the holy founder of the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Victory wished the spirit of the True Devotion to pervade his new Community—to be its characteristic and distinctive mark.

BY meditation, prayer, and study, therefore, the young religious strives to make her own the beautiful devotion of "Holy Slavery" as taught by De Montfort and exemplified so perfectly in his life. The essence of this devotion consists in giving ourselves entirely as slaves of love to Mary, and to Jesus through Mary; and after that to do all that we do through Mary, with Mary, in Mary, and for Mary. It is a voluntary, loving abandonment of ourselves to Jesus through Mary, for the glory of our Heavenly Father; and living in that state of total dependence at every moment of our lives.

SINCE the beginning of their existence as a community, Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters (formerly known as Missionary Catechists) have practiced the True Devotion to Mary; they have also prayed that Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort might soon be raised to the altars of Holy Mother Church. Justly then, do they hold it a mark of Mary's maternal graciousness that DeMontfort's canonization should take place in this, the silver jubilee year of their foundation.

LOUIS MARIE GRIGNION de MONTFORT, author of the "Treatise on the True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin," was born in Brittany in 1673, the eldest of seventeen children. After studying at the Jesuit College at Rennes and the Paris Seminary of St. Sulpice, he was ordained priest in 1700.

MONTFORT'S first assignment was to the hospital at Poitiers. Seeing the need for a congregation of nuns to take care of the sick

and to educate the young, he founded the Daughters of Wisdom. On February 2, 1703, he gave the grey and white habit to Mother Marie Louise of Jesus, the first member of the congregation.

ACTING on the orders of Pope Clement XI, Montfort preached missions and retreats throughout Western France, condemning Jansenism and preaching his perfect devotion to Mary. In order to perpetuate his work, he founded the Company of Mary, a congregation of priests and lay brothers, who are now found all over the world.

BLESSED de MONTFORT is also known throughout the world for his manual, "True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin," which has been translated into almost every language. Although hidden away and forgotten for 126 years, the work received the approbation of Pope Pius X, who bestowed his apostolic blessing on all who read it.

TIRED out by his many labors, Montfort died in 1716 at the age of 43. His body is buried at St. Laurent-sur-Sevrem where the Mother Houses of the Company of Mary and Daughters of Wisdom are located. His resting place is marked by the following touching epitaph, which was composed by one of his fellow students in Rennes and Paris.

Blessed De Montfort's Epitaph

"Traveller, what do you see?

A light quenched,

A man consumed by the fire of charity,

Who became all things to all men,

Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort.

If you ask what was his life, there was
none more holy.

His penance, none more austere.

His zeal, none more ardent.

His devotion to Mary, none more
like Bernard.

A Priest of Christ, he showed forth Christ
in his actions.

And preached Him everywhere in his words.
Indefatigable, he rested only in the grave.

Father of the poor,

Protector of orphans,

Reconciler of sinners.

His glorious death was the image of his life,
As he had lived, so he died.

Ripe for God he passed to Heaven

April 28th, 1716,

Aged 43 years."

—Courtesy "Queen and Mother."

WANTED

Young Women between the ages of eighteen and thirty **to serve God** as a Missionary Sister in the **Home Field**

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A hundred fold in this life . . .
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Young women who are interested in the religious life and who wish to labor in the home missions, please write to:

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