

The Missionary Catechist



Volume II

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Number 1

UNDER THE SOUTHERN CROSS

By Rev. F. A. Thill, Secretary and Treasurer, Catholic Students' Mission Crusade.

Directors of every organization, I suppose, watch the beginnings of new movements in order to determine what relations, if any, will arise between their own Society and the new. This must be especially true when the fundamental purposes of the organizations are allied or directed in the same lines.

For the past six years I have been watching the growth of a movement which, with God's help, has become nation-wide and which, if the opinions of leaders in the field are to be accepted, has caused a new wave of enthusiasm for the missions to sweep over the Catholic people of the United States.

While the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade has been swelling its members until more than four hundred thousand Catholic students of our land are in its ranks, I have been able to watch the development of another Missionary movement in the United States, new, like our own, and seeming to share in the growing interest which all matters of mission intent have been receiving from our people.

The Society of Missionary Catechists of Our Blessed Lady of Victory has had a degree of success in its development that would seem to be a sign of the blessing of God upon it. Without blare of trumpets, it has gone about the work of training volunteer workers for the missions of our great Southwest and now, still without trumpet-blast, it has opened its Training Institute.—Victory-Noll,—where vocations to this great apostolic work may be fostered.

The aim of the Missionary Catechists is clearly understood by everyone who is familiar with the name of their organization. While the Catechists are to serve as social service workers in the wide sense of that term, it remains true that their primary purpose is the spreading of the doctrines of the Catholic Church and the saving of the Faith of those who might otherwise drift away from the haven of truth where early training had once safely moored them.

A large part of the work of the Missionary Catechists is, therefore, educational. For this, a certain degree of intellectual ability is needed, together with zeal for the saving of souls.

It is this fact about the Society of Missionary Catechists which makes its relation to the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade of particular interest. The Crusade is first

AS JOSEPH WENT A-WALKING

An Old English Christmas Carol

As Joseph went a-walking

He heard an angel sing,

"This night shall be the birthtime
Of Christ, our heavenly King.

"He neither shall be born

In housen nor in hall,

Nor in the place of Paradise,

But in ye oxen's stall.

"He neither shall be clothed

In purple nor in pall,

But in the fayre white linen

That usen babies all.

"He neither shall be rocked

In silver nor in gold,

But in a wooden manger

That resteth on the mould."

As Joseph went a-walking,

There did an angel sing,

And Mary's Child at midnight

Was born to be our King.

Then be ye glad, good people,

This night of all the year,

And light ye up your candles,

For His star it shineth clear.

to those who may help in forwarding the cause of Christ.

"That America may know and serve the missions" is a watchword expressing the first objective of the Crusade. If America can be made to know more about the missions—their problems, their necessity and the obligations which they place upon all Catholics—service to the missions is bound to be offered more generously.

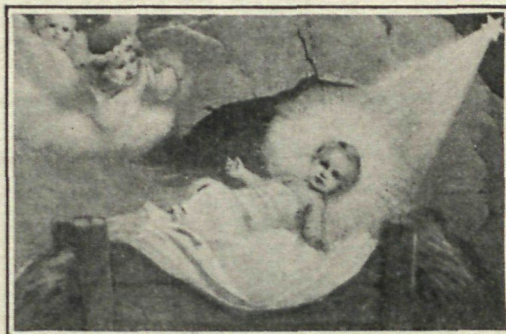
The Society of Missionary Catechists will find, I am sure, an auxiliary in the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade. Without any mission fields of its own, the Crusade encourages its members to support any mission or missionary undertaking which they chose, and the Crusaders are made to understand that support implies not only the giving of alms where they are needed, but the giving of service—of self—when the prompting of God's grace is felt impelling to this noble offering.

The mission zeal of Crusaders has, indeed, found expression many times in work which was quite identical with that of the Missionary Catechists. The teaching of Christian Doctrine, organized work for the welfare of children in colonies of the foreign-born, and other activities similar to those which are undertaken by the Catechists in the Southwest, have been carried on under the auspices of the Crusade Units in all parts of the country.

The Society of Missionary Catechists, therefore, should find vocations among those who have imitated its work in the Crusade. Support of its work, as far as this is needed may as reasonably be expected by the Society as by the other Missionary organizations which have been at work in the home and foreign fields for a longer time.

Between the home and the foreign missions the Crusade makes no distinction. Both fields are deserving of support and in both are the interests of the Sacred Heart at stake.

The Catholic Students' Mission Crusade hails the Society of Missionary Catechists as a new re-enforcement to the army which is fighting in the interests of Christ, and wishes it success as it wishes success to every endeavor for the spread of our holy Faith. And, God willing, recruits from the ranks of the Crusade will be found among the Missionary Catechists as they are found among the volunteers to the other Societies and Religious Congregations which are working for the spread of His Kingdom.



of all an educational organization not only because its membership is composed entirely of students, and those in charge of them, but also because its way of extending the reign of the Sacred Heart over the hearts of men is by making the missions known



IN WAYS THAT ARE STRANGE

By C. E.



Dorothy Collins sat at her desk in Castle High School, Greater Las Vegas, on a late June afternoon grading history papers. From that before her she read: "10,000 years B. C. the Ute and the Navajo came down from the north and drove the Stone Men to the inaccessible cliffs. They forced the pueblos upon the Southwestern people."

Her eyes strayed from the paper to the vista framed by the open window before her. Facing the plaza, its porch abutting on the sidewalk, was a tavern 100 years old, with yellow walls of dove three feet thick, sleepily dozing in the late afternoon sun. In the distance lilac-colored mesas high atop the world were roofed with a sky of bluest turquoise. But the color symphony, beyond the conception or execution of any artist, awakened no sympathetic chord of appreciation in her heart. She was weary of this land of sun, somnolence and silence. Back in the Eastern city of her childhood, she reflected, great office buildings would be discharging at this hour into the canyons separating them, the hordes of workers, who had populated them during the day—animated, hurrying crowds, seemingly permeated with the restless spirit of the waters of the great lake upon whose shore the city stood. She counted the days which must still elapse until the close of the school session, when, returning home, she would again mingle among them.

Yet, when Senor Pasquale Amato coming into her room interrupted her reverie and asked her to come to his village—Pecos—and teach school for the summer, she consented, though unable to reason why she did so. She had been telling herself for months that she did not like the desert with its dwarfed peach orchards planted centuries ago by the Spanish padres and fighting valiantly for life in the arid sands; nor the dark-skinned folk whose language she had learned to speak; nor did she draw inspiration from the great white mountain range to the westward. Why, then, had she consented to go to Pecos to teach the summer school, she asked herself when Senor Amato had gone? But she could give no answer. God alone knew.

Mrs. Pasquale Amato, she who had been Clara Downing, a northern teacher, and who had taught at the government school in Taos before her marriage, came for Dorothy. She drove a team of western ponies, stopping when the sun was at its greatest intensity for food and water at the ranch house of Ramon Diaz, where regal hospitality was dispensed to them in true old-time baronial fashion. Then, when the heat was less intense, they continued on, past Indian and Spanish villages and cliff houses, into the twilight with its primrose afterglow. A caressing wind, scented with sagebrush and pine, came down through the juniper hills. The moon came out, sickle shaped. A shooting star dropped. Everything was enveloped in the desert silence. A last abrupt turn, and the lights of Pecos greeted them.

Pasquale Amato owned 1400 acres, on part of which stood the village. The abstract of title showed that this parcel of land had been in the Amato family for more than three centuries. The original grant was forty miles square, but with the influx of the Americans their holdings lessened.

Next day Dorothy opened school in the village. Girdled on three sides by cedar-verdured hills redolent with evergreen, the fourth dropped almost precipitously to the valley below. Squat adobe houses dreamed in the red sands, the doors standing wide

open. Goats bleated everywhere. Beehive ovens outside the house doors sent up spirals of smoke. In the valley a swarthy descendant of Spanish pioneers plowed with a wooden plow such as his ancestors had used for centuries. His barn was a few sticks with a roof of wattles. The village seemed to have been lifted from the pages of Don Quixote—a bit of old Spain set down in the wilderness of New Mexico.

Inez Amato, a far cousin of Pasquale, taught the young children of the village—so numerous as to seem to be everywhere. Dorothy carried out Pasquale's wildest dream—adult teaching for the illiterate workers on the estate and in the village. Her classes were large, and her pupils eager and attentive.

For four months she taught in Pecos. Then one day there came a summons from the Eastern city of her birth urging her to return and accept a more lucrative position awaiting her there. She thought it all out that night as she paced the courtyard of the Amato hacienda overlooking the valley, with the old mission built almost 400 years before dreaming below in the enchantment of the moonlight. Insensibly, she mused, her entire attitude had changed. She had come to love it all—this country and its people. She had visited them with Senora Amato in sickness, aided their dire poverty, had been humbled at their conformity to the Will of God even in the greatest trials. Undernourished, poorly clad, with only the most meagre means of earning a livelihood, their condition was truly pitiful. Pasquale Amato did what he could to relieve their misery, but he, himself, was "land-poor." If there were but some way in which she could help them!

Her mind, searching out ways and means, reverted as she continued her pacing, to stories she had heard from the padre and occasional visitors of missionary workers in the nearby surrounding towns who were known as "Missionary Catechists"—of their devotion to, and daily attendance upon the sick and dying, of their tender care of the poor, of their mother-like affection for the little ones so dear to the Heart of Christ. She might solve her problem by becoming one of them—they were doing just such work as she knew to be necessary—but they were religious, and she had never felt that she had a religious vocation.

Memory turned back the pages of the years. Yes, there was a time when she had received the invitation. In her school

days there had been a Spanish-American nun who spoke to her often of the beauty of the life which had called her away from her home under the sunny skies of New Mexico, to teach in the—to her—foreign land of an Eastern city.

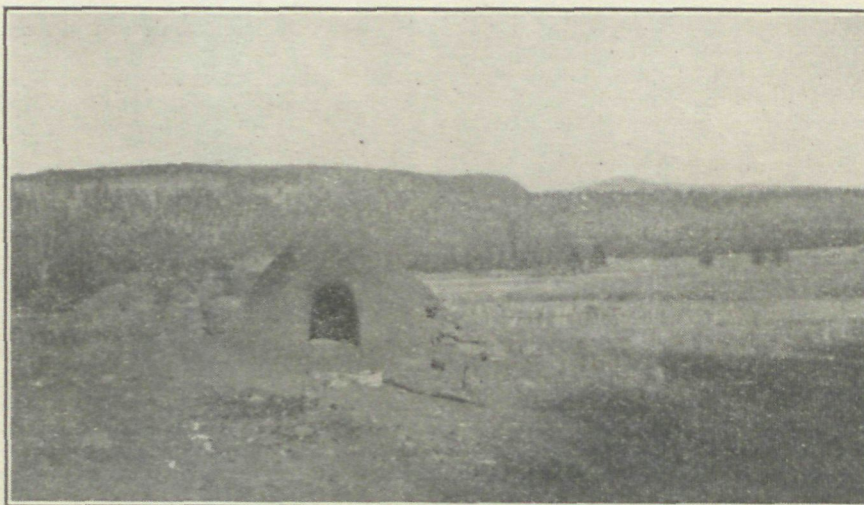
She remembered how entranced she had been with the poetry, imagery, and romance of the stories Sister Mercedes told of her girlhood, and how she began to live them over in the glorious land of "Make-Believe." She saw again the concrete basement of her old home metamorphosed by fancy into a princely adobe mansion; the galvanized washtub which did duty as a fountain in the center of the "make-believe" patio, except on washdays when it was requisitioned by a protesting laundress who "didn't take any stock in such foolishness"; the dusty artificial palms salvaged from a neighbor's ashpit which served as shrubbery and bloomed with artificial flowers from the neighborhood's discarded feminine headgear. She smiled reminiscently at the recollection of the little girl who for days lived in these idealized surroundings assuming the airs, graces and title of a Spanish "Senorita," and at the drastic measures taken by her matter-of-fact brother, christened "John Patrick," but known to his familiar associates as "Irish", to prevent a recurrence of the incident when she had unfortunately addressed him in public as "Senor Juan", to the intense amusement and derision of his playmates. What a childish Castle in Spain the whole conceit had been! Yet its image had fallen like a prophetic shadow upon her later life.

The moon, hanging in the sky like a great white Host, and tinting with mauve the glistening peaks of the mountains in the eastern distance, shone full upon the uplifted face and tortured figure of the wayside crucifix at the summit of the winding road mounting the hill. The extended arms pleaded, the thirsting lips spoke to her heart: "Come, follow me! Greater love than this no man hath, that a man giveth his life for his friend."

Only the silent night heard her answer—only the night and God!

* * *

On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, two months later, a band of Consecrates pronounced their Act of Consecration at the Training Institute of the Society of Missionary Catechists at Huntington, Indiana. Among them was Dorothy Collins.



"Beehive Ovens Sent Up Spirals of Smoke"

IN HIS STEPS

VII

"Isn't it a shame that Anne got sick just when she was getting so interested in our class and so active in our little Mission band?" exclaimed Vera.

"I'll say it is!" Rosemary chimed in with the other members of the class.

"What is a shame, children?" asked Sister Charitina as she unexpectedly appeared among her pupils.

"We were just saying, Sister," responded Rosemary, "that it seems a misfortune that Anne should become ill just at the time when she was so interested in our spiritual and charitable activities."

"Well, now, my dear children, I am really surprised to hear you say that it is an evil or misfortune to be sick. Surely you do not mean this, for that would be contrary to one of the doctrines of our Holy Church—the Doctrine of the Providence of God.

"Unfortunately many of our Catholic people neither know nor practice this consoling doctrine of God's merciful Providence. They look upon everything that happens contrary to their will as a positive evil. Sickness, the loss of money, property, friends and a host of other happenings called misfortunes,—all these they look upon as an absolute evil. But are they really such? No, not at all, for according to the Catholic Doctrine of the Providence of God, nothing happens in this world, except sin, without God's express will, or at least His permission. Do you know that, strictly speaking, there is no such thing as bad luck or misfortune? Nothing happens by chance. All the so-called physical evils such as sickness, injuries, loss of property, happen because God either wills them, or at least permits them. We have the words of God Himself that this is true for, speaking thru the mouth of His Prophet Isaiah He says: 'I am the Lord and there is no other. I form light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil. Good things and evil, life and death, poverty and richness are from God' "

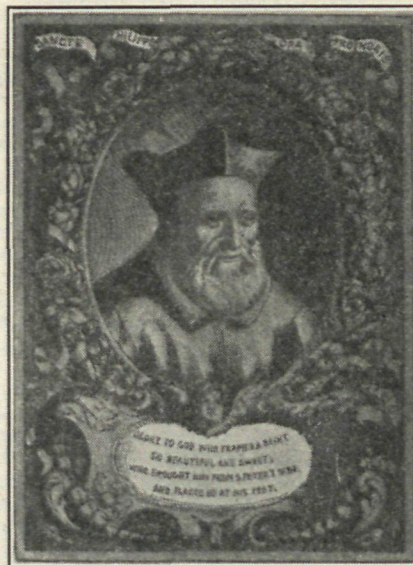
"Oh, I never looked upon it in this way before", apologetically exclaimed Rosemary. "Nearly every one looks upon these things that you mentioned, Sister, as the most dreadful evils that could happen to us in this life. Now, you say they happen according to God's will, or at least He permits them."

"Yes, indeed, He does, Rosemary, and all for the good of His children. I was present on a certain occasion when my saintly spiritual director was engaged in a discussion with a young Catholic lawyer who found it very difficult to believe this doctrine.

"I am willing to believe, Father", said the young lawyer, "that God really permits the loss of health and wealth, that He permits storms and famine and other destructive forces of nature to take their toll of human life and property. I am willing to admit that since He is The Lord and Master of all, He can take away my health, my property and other goods, but I find it a difficult thing to believe, when you tell me that, when an enemy injures me, when he strikes me, or inflicts harm upon me, that Almighty God can have any part in this; that this can be His Holy Will.

"Yes," firmly replied Father, "yes, indeed, He can and actually does have a part in this. God, the Holy Ghost, says in the Sacred Scriptures: 'Who commands a thing to be done, if the Lord command it not?'

'Let us consider the case you mention of your enemy striking you. Upon careful examination we shall discover that there are two parts in this action; first, there is the physical motion by which your enemy strikes you; secondly, there is the bad, or perverse will on his part which urges him to do this. Now, God certainly has a part in the first, that is, the physical motion,



ST. PHILIP NERI

since He gives to this man the power to raise his arm. But with the second part of the action, that is, the perverse will of the man, God has absolutely no part. Remember that man has a free will and he is certainly responsible for the perversity of his will. Now, clearly, that enemy of yours would not have had the power to use his arm unless God had given him this power. Do you not think he might use that power for a good purpose? Suppose, for example, that you were to become suddenly insane and in your irresponsible condition you seized a revolver and began to shoot at your friends. Would not this man be performing a good act by striking you a terrific blow, rendering you senseless and thus depriving you of the power of injuring or killing your friends?"

"Since that discussion I have often thought", continued the holy nun, "how displeasing it must be in the sight of Our Divine Lord when Catholics utter complaints about the disposition of Divine Providence in their regard. No doubt you yourselves have heard, as I often heard when I was living in the world, Catholics complaining against the Will of God. 'Why does God wish me to be deprived of my money or property? I don't see why He should afflict me with this sickness or disease! What have I ever done that God should punish me by permitting this misfortune to come into my life?'

"Why, to hear these Catholics of weak Faith thus complaining, you would imagine that they thought Almighty God had no right to deprive them of these things! If they but had a deep Faith they would readily understand that God has His own designs in permitting such things. Perhaps He wishes them to become better by depriving them of earthly possessions. Maybe they were too much attached to them

and this unlawful attachment to earthly things might have caused them to lose their soul. By visiting them with sickness, by allowing an enemy to try them, by depriving them of their money, property or friends, He might be giving them the opportunity of gaining great merits and of heaping up priceless graces for eternity. Certain it is, that if such Christians suffered these trials and crosses with resignation to God's Holy Will they might easily become Saints. Surely they could readily offer them up as a penance for past sins, or as a means of gaining heavenly merits for the future. It was in this manner that the Saints acted when so-called misfortunes befell them, or when they suffered at the hands of their enemies. I hope, my dear children, that you will clearly understand that God does not, and can not, consent to the sin of men who wrong us, but He frequently does make use of the perverse will of men for fulfilling His designs in our regard. We find many such instances in the Holy Bible. In the old Testament He frequently chastised His people by the hands of their enemies. At times wicked heathen kings were used by Him to inflict punishment upon the unfaithful people of God and they were called "The instruments of Divine Justice". On a certain occasion God spoke these remarkable words to the Jews by the mouth of His prophet: "Woe to the Assyrian! He is the rod, and the staff of My indignation is in his hands. I will send him to a deceitful nation. I will give him charge against the people of My wrath to lay hold on them and tread them down like mire in the streets. But when I have chastised my people by the Assyrian, then woe to the rod: woe to the Assyrian! As the instrument of my anger will I cast him into the fire!"

"If we Christians are surprised that wicked men are used in the hands of Almighty God as instruments of His justice, then what shall we say when even the devils themselves are made the instruments of this same Divine Justice and Providence? You all remember, children, the story of Job in your Bible History. This holy man recognized that the devil could not harm him without the permission of Almighty God. Bereft of his children, stripped of his wealth, stricken with a loathsome disease, mighty Job fell from the pinnacle of human happiness to the very depths of earthly misery. Now, what do you suppose was the answer he gave to his friends when they came to him and taunted him because of his strong faith and implicit trust in the Providence of God? Did he answer them: 'The Lord has given, and the devil has taken away'? No, rather did he say: 'The Lord has given and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord!'

But we do not have to look to the lives of God's holy servants for an example of this Doctrine. We have the example of God Himself, for Our Divine Saviour attributed His sufferings, pains and bitter torments, not to the Jews who betrayed Him, not to Pilate who condemned Him, not to the executioners who cruelly put Him to death. No, He attributed them all to His Heavenly Father in Whom He saw not a cruel judge, but a loving Father. And so, children, following the example of Our Divine Lord, let us never attribute our losses or misfortunes, our sufferings, our sick-

(Continued on Page Seven)

Telling The Story

V.

We began Holy Week (Wednesday, March 28th) by visiting the parents of our children. On Holy Thursday the whole congregation made the Way of the Cross, and then all day people made visits to the Blessed Sacrament, some of them coming from their ranches at a great distance from the church. On Good Friday we had three sick calls and then in the afternoon made the Way of the Cross with the people of the congregation. We were told that some of the "Penitentes" were conducting services in their Morada. Someone told Mr. Frey that when a certain boy of the village asked his mother for permission to go to the Morada and mortify himself, she told him that if he wished to have any punishment inflicted upon him, she could fully take care of that herself!

On Holy Saturday good Father Dumarest went to Shoemaker and then came here to us for our Easter celebration. We had Mass and Holy Communion, and we were so happy to see nearly all the congregation at the Holy Table. In the afternoon we had various games for the children and distributed candy and prizes. This candy had come to us on Good Friday from our dear friend, Mr. McC—, of Trenton, New Jersey.

On Tuesday, the third of June, our dear Spiritual Father came to us, and we were all very happy. The following Thursday we went with our Father to Valmora, and he heard confessions and visited the sick at the Sanitarium. Afterwards we returned home and Father catechized the children in the Chapel. Today we began our Spiritual Retreat to which we had been looking forward for some time. During our retreat our zealous auxiliary lay-Catechist, Virginia, took charge of our classes at Shoemaker.

On Sunday morning we again accompanied Father to the Sanitarium at Valmora, where he offered up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. It was such a pleasure for us to see all of the tubercular patients who were able to be about, attend Mass and receive Holy Communion. Valmora is a very picturesque spot in the hills. It is surely a blessing for the poor tubercular patients from the cities to live here where they receive every care and attention, both in a temporal and spiritual way.

After Mass we made the usual visits to the sick and poor. We did not feel that we were interrupting our retreat that day when we were called upon to visit and attend the needy and suffering little ones so dear to the Sacred Heart. Father explained to us that one good work of charity may take the place of another and that very often we will be called upon to leave our prayers in order to minister to the spiritual needs of these poor people who depend so much upon us. How happy we should be when we are thus called "to go out of ourselves", and, like Tobias of old, to leave our homes and perform some corporal or spiritual work of mercy for the love of God!

On Monday, the ninth, we were supremely happy when we knelt at the Altar at the close of our little retreat and received Our Dear Lord into our hearts in Holy Communion as we solemnly renewed our Act of Consecration. Father blessed our badges and in giving them to us, spoke of the significance of our motto, which is inscribed upon them: "Omnia Pro Jesus Per Mariam"—"All for Jesus Through Mary". Everything we do, both for our own sanctification, and for the salvation of the poor (Continued on page six)



WHAT AM I GOING TO GIVE FOR CHRISTMAS THIS YEAR?

What a wonderful thing it is to play Santa Claus to some one! What an inspiring thing it is to forget oneself and to open one's heart and purse in order to make others happy on Christmas Day! We may not be able to give much: we may not always give wisely, but our hearts expand at the very thought of cheering others with some little Christmas gift that will draw them closer to our hearts. Much has been said and written in condemnation of Christmas gifts and "Christmas giving". But this custom of gift-giving at Christmas time is too old and too deeply rooted in human nature to be swept away by the dictum of cold, calculating philosophers. Even the Three Magi brought "Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh" as their gifts to the new-born Saviour when they made their first visit to Him at the cave in Bethlehem nineteen hundred and twenty five years ago.

You are no doubt looking forward, dear reader, to a Christmas Day of gladness well-spent in making gifts to your dear ones. You will give as lavishly as your means permit so that your gifts may bring joy to the hearts of those you love. It may happen that your gifts go to some dear little one of your family who has everything her heart desires. Would it not be a beautiful idea for you, during this holy Christmas season, to bring some joy into the life of a poor little child deprived of the very necessities of life? In the far-off Missions of New Mexico there are tens of thousands of Catholic children who are poverty-stricken. In some Mission districts fifty-five out of every hundred of these children die because they have neither food nor clothing. Your generous heart would be stirred to pity if you could see the emaciated forms of these poor little ones who need to be clothed and fed and sheltered.

Reader, they need YOUR help. Now, you can not, of course, go out to New Mexico and help them personally but our devoted Missionary Catechists can, and will do this for you. In honor of the Infant Jesus and for love of Him give this Christmas—"good gifts, gifts from your heart" for God's poor little ones in the Missions. Today set apart and give a Christmas gift of nourishing food, of warm clothing, or of healing medicine to these suffering little ones so dear to the Heart of the Christ-child, and thus you will enable our Catechists to bring new hope and Christmas cheer to those who are in real need of your gifts. Then when you gather together your loved ones on Christmas morn to make merry about the Yule-tree, you will rejoice in that blessed peace and happiness which will come to your heart from the heart of the Infant Jesus as His Christmas gift to you and to yours.

CATECHIST JULIA M. DOYLE.

Carmen (P. O. Mora)

New Mexico.

A PADRE'S CHRISTMAS CONSOLATION

By Reverend Michel Dumarest

An hour past noon on Christmas day. The last Mass is finished, and the Priest, who celebrated midnight Mass twenty-five miles away and has heard many confessions during the last twenty-four hours, is a little tired and cold—also a little hungry. But he is intensely happy, for the "peace that surpasseth understanding," which Christ came to bring on Christmas, has been restored through his ministry in many souls.

Some of his people are still exchanging Christmas greetings just outside the door of the chapel as their pastor stens out. "Father," a woman in a black shawl calls, "I am very late, but I came from a far distance, and the roads are bad. Would you please hear my confession?"

"Surely. Come in," the priest answers, adding kindly, "Get warm and a bit rested before you begin." But the woman does not hear the latter part of the sentence. She is already on her knees reciting "Yo Pecador." (I am a sinner.) The confiteor concluded, she whispers: "It is over two years since I went to confession and I have not heard Mass during all that time." That is all. Her confession is presumably finished.

But Father, reflecting, decides there must be something else—something she is perhaps diffident about confessing—and undertakes to clear up the matter. "Miss your prayers also?"

"Oh, no, Father, never. I would not do that. The children and I always say the Rosary before going to bed."

"Hmm—Was it through your fault that you missed Mass so often?"

"Well, not exactly," comes the answer. "You see, Father, we live on the other side of the mountains since my husband died, (Thirty miles of bad road, at least, thinks the confessor) and we have no horses. I just came with some relatives who brought a load of wood to town. A neighbor is taking care of my little ones during these two days. I cannot thank God enough for this opportunity to come to Church on the birthday of our dear Nino—the little Jesus. And now, Father, may I receive Him in Holy Communion, please?"

So the Child Jesus came to her in that lonely mission chapel, bringing His heaven into her heart. She was deeply absorbed in her thanksgiving, begging of Him sublime Christmas gifts for the dear little ones at home, when her Pastor, beaming with joy, went to his combined Christmas breakfast and dinner at two o'clock.

May The Infant
King



Be Good To You



Our devoted Catechists because of their poverty may not be able to offer material Christmas gifts to their generous friends and benefactors. With Saint Peter they may truly say: "Silver and gold we have not to offer", but we can and do offer as our Christmas gift to all our generous friends and benefactors, the spiritual bouquet of our heartfelt prayers, with the special petition that the Infant Jesus and His Blessed Mother may bless all with the choicest blessings of Their Sacred Hearts.

"Doings" at

Victory-Noll

Dear Sis,

All is quiet along the Wabash—at least in our section. There have been but few interruptions in our usual routine during the past few weeks. Probably the most startling of these is the sad loss sustained by the Catechists resident here in my loss of the community cat.

We had two of them—twin kittens—in addition to our dogs, Happy and Lonesome, but one strayed away and "then there was one." She was white with a yellow tail, and we called her Salina. A very popular and important member of the household, she made it her business to accompany us whenever we went out for recreation.

One day last week Catechist S. and I went to Huntington on a business trip. The kitten followed us down the road to the traction station where we were to board the car, her tiny little feet keeping pace with our hurrying ones. Arrived at the station, she sat down and began to wash her face awaiting further developments. Our efforts to induce her to return home proving fruitless, Catechist S. remarked to me apprehensively that she would very likely follow us to Huntington. I, deriding the idea, offered to board the car last and prevent any such catastrophe from occurring.

The car came along presently and we boarded it, I last, making certain that the kitten remained behind. What was my surprise when I rose to leave my seat at the end of the journey, to have Salina crawl out from under my feet and take her accustomed place at my heels with evident intent of accompanying us on our shopping tour!

What was to be done? All Huntington would smile at the spectacle of two Missionary Catechists accompanied by a white kitten on their shopping expedition—yet I couldn't leave her on the car. I made a quick decision while dismounting from the platform. Salina should be our companion for the morning even at the risk of arousing an occasional smile from passersby. But alas! Just as I reached back for her the car gave a sudden jerk—and was off on its journey to Fort Wayne with Salina mournfully gazing back at me from the retreating platform. What happened to her subsequently, I have not been able to ascertain, but I do know what happened to me, for I had some difficult moments clearing myself of a base charge of deliberating losing her, preferred against me by her bereaved supporters when they heard of the calamity of her loss. So ends the tale of our yellow-tailed cat, from which you are to draw the moral: You cannot trust a cat with a yellow streak.

On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception we had a High Mass of thanksgiving in honor of the first anniversary of our coming to make our home at Victory-Noll. We also had the great happiness of having Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament throughout the day, terminating with a Community Holy Hour and Benediction at 4:30 in the afternoon. In the evening we enjoyed a party with supper served in our favorite festival style—"a la cafeteria."

I could not help contrasting the Victory-Noll of today in its finished perfection with



that which we entered as pioneers on that dreary winter's day a year ago. The entire first floor was then still in the hands of the mechanics. The second floor was habitable—and no more.

At the first Mass celebrated in the chapel on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, we knelt in the midst of packing cases, bed-springs, scaffolding, step-ladders, and about everything imaginable. The chapel was so situated as to invite the temporary reception of heavy articles whose ultimate location was doubtful, and we could not have the Blessed Sacrament reserved until some order had been evolved from the chaos, which was not until after the lapse of three weeks. In the meantime the kitchen served as oratory, community room and dining-room. We ate our first meals from a carpenter's bench in the midst of a floor littered with tools, lumber, and shavings. This room also sheltered our most valued possession—a stove, which although the drafts were temperamental, gave us our greatest comfort, for the installation of the heating plant had not as yet been completed, and when the boilers functioned at all, they did so on an "on a day, off a day," schedule in cheerful disregard of an out-of-door temperature registering 16 degrees below the zero mark.



Night came on quickly that first day and with it bedtime. The mover's trucks which had left Gary laden with provisions and bedding forty-eight hours before our departure from there, were marooned, to all appearances, somewhere between that city and Huntington. We had beds and mattresses in plenty, but nary a blanket or a pillow. In this emergency Bishop Noll, then Monsignor Noll, came to our assistance, sending us all we needed to make us comfortable, and a dear aged lady, who had remained up the entire previous night baking bread for us, provided us with a bountiful supper.

The succeeding days were busy ones with quick exchanges of paint-brush, pen, or scrub-bucket for rosary or prayerbook at prayer time, and they had their share of privations, but they were singularly happy, and I never look back on them without a happy thought and a smile.

On the fifteenth we shall be commencing our Solemn Christmas Novena, so form your intention, as mine shall be offered for you. You once asked me why we never make public novenas to the various saints who enjoy a present, or enjoyed a past, popularity, but confine our community novenas to those made to The Holy Trinity, Our Blessed Lord, Our Blessed Mother, and St. Joseph. Do you remember our school days together, and our visits to the church before and after each session? You traveled about from statue to statue, while I knelt only at the feet of Our Blessed Lord, Our Dear Mother, and St. Joseph. You liked, so you said, to go about from one courtier of the heavenly court to another, while I, being of a practical turn of mind, thought it a waste of time and energy not to approach directly to the gracious King and Queen of the Heavenly Kingdom, especially since They, alone, had the power of granting my prayers. Although I could never convert you to my way of thinking, my conviction remains unchanged, so that I was very glad to find on coming here that all our community devotions are centered about the center of our life and our hearts—Our Dear Savior and His Blessed Mother.

Jesus Christ is, after all, the beginning and end of all devotions. He is the very center of our religious and spiritual life. Of course our dear Society permits us to practice devotions and to offer our private novenas to those Saints to whom we may have a particular devotion privately, for we enjoy full liberty of spirit.

* * *

What are you giving the Christ-Child as a Christmas gift? I wish it might be yourself to serve Him and His poor as a Missionary Catechist. I am trying to gather for Him a great armful of white and red roses—the white, souls I am gaining for His Sacred Heart; the red, sacrifices I make for His love. And because these cannot be very great ones, I am counting each small one a petal, trying to form as many perfect flowers as I can before His birthday.

I shall be with you in spirit when you kneel at the crib on Christmas morning, and shall surely pray that you may receive from the Divine Infant reposing there, the gift your heart desires.

Your devoted sister in O. B. L. V.

Letters to Mary

My dear Mary,

Leaden skies are almost unheard of in the State noted for its sunshine, adobe and silence. Therefore when the sun, after struggling weakly with the huge mass of clouds which flanked the Eastern horizon this morning, finally became entirely obscured, we knew that something unusual was going to happen. And so it did. By noon we were in the midst of a blinding snowstorm, and soon the huge, soft, clinging flakes had transformed the whole out-of-doors into a veritable fairyland.

Jack, our faithful watchdog, who thoroughly disapproves of snowstorms, sought his box at the far end of the porch with the falling of the first flake, and could not be coaxed out of it—not even to chase away some vagrant snowbirds who perched on the edge of his pan and ate the crumbs which remained from his dinner.

The huge banks of snow and a frozen radiator in our car made it impossible for us to reach any of our outlying missions today, and so we decided to occupy ourselves in mending, answering letters, and, perhaps, in devoting a few moments to practicing our music. The padre will be here next week and we must be prepared to play and sing High Mass.

Shortly after noon a scraping of feet outside the door announced the arrival of visitors. They were a young man, and two young ladies—brother and sisters—from Golandrinas, a little town some eight miles distant. They had come in an open wagon, through this blinding snowstorm. For what? To get a medal of San Ignacio, a Novena to San Antonio, and perhaps a Novena to Nuestra Senora de Perpetua Socorro. Where in our large Eastern cities can be found simple faith and devotion to rival this?

The father of our visitors had died last month. The news saddened us for we knew him well. "Did they send for the padre," we asked, "and had their father the consolations of religion at the hour of death?" "No," they regretted, "he had not." We felt constrained to chide them for this great neglect, but nades are few and far between in this country of widely scattered missions, and they were not to blame. We asked if they had recited the Act of Con-

trition with the dying man. The assurance that they had done so was no small comfort to us. Nothing we do out here, Mary, is more important than the seemingly simple act of teaching the little ones how to make an act of perfect contrition. It is useful for everyone to know in just what perfect contrition consists, but most necessary here, where because of the dearth of priests, no one can know if he will be so happy as to have the opportunity of receiving the Last Sacraments.

Colds, ear-aches, measles, and chicken-pox have made a marked depression in our attendance records at catechism classes. We missed little Philomena at our Tuesday class, and, since she lived near the school-house, we drove over to see her. A lean dog came forward to meet us, and another stretched himself lazily on the doorstep and looked at us curiously. Neither seemed to regard us with suspicion. Entering the house we found Philomena lying on a little pallet beside the stove—a none too comfortable bed for a sick child—but where quarters are small and beds few, the children have nothing better to sleep on. The room had for furnishings, in addition to the stove, a chair, an old-fashioned trunk, a rough table and a cupboard—nothing more. The adjoining room, we could see through the open door, was even more sparsely furnished. A baby crawled about on the floor, and a little three-year old shyly peered at us with solemn eyes from

behind the safe shelter of her mother's skirts. Philomena, we learned in response to our questioning, had been suffering only from a cold in the head, and she was feeling somewhat better. It is our custom to give the children attending our catechism classes candy as a treat, occasionally, and as we still had some with us, we gave Philomena a piece. Turning to give some instructions to the mother about her care, I observed that Philomena, without waiting to see if we were going to give the others some candy, too, had quickly divided her piece into four bits and had given one to each of the younger children. Generosity such as this, you will agree with me, is seldom evinced by the children of our modern age.

My evening chores—lighting the lamps, and replenishing the wood-box—must be performed before darkness sets in, so I shall say "Adios." You are ever in my heart and in my prayers.

Affectionately in O. B. L. V.,
Catechist Blanche Richardson.

TELLING THE STORY

(Continued From Page Four)

entrusted to our care, has but one purpose for us and is done from one supreme motive—"All for Jesus through Mary".

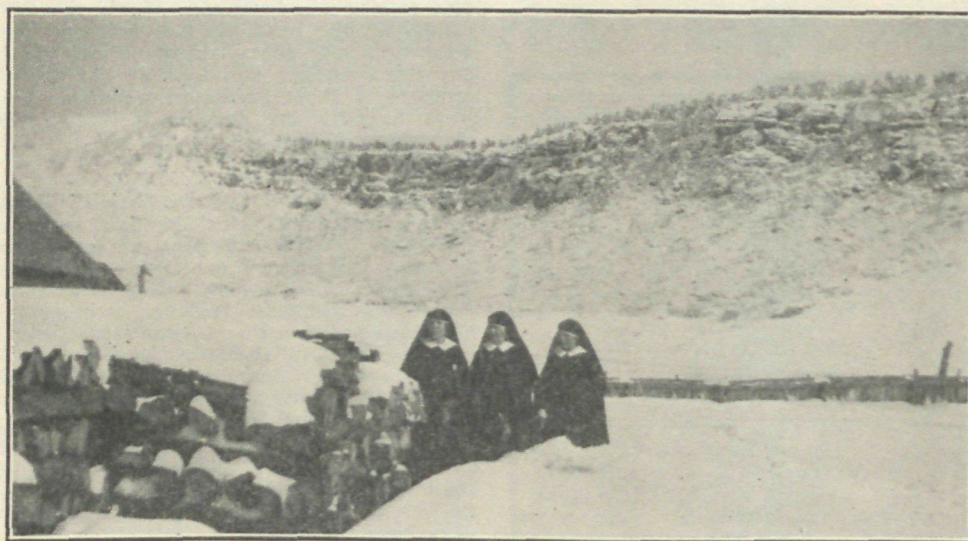
We celebrated our "great day", first of all, by making three visits to the sick poor. Father accompanied us and administered Extreme Unction to a poor man who was down with pneumonia. Afterwards we made a trip to Ocate, thirty miles distant, and visited with Mrs. McInerney and Mrs. Strong. We made inquiries as to conditions at Ocate and nine of its outlying missions, and found that this place will be a fertile mission field for us in the near future. We learned that there are over four hundred children in these missions who are sadly in need of religious instruction.

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The Associate Catechists of Mary



We hear often from women in the business world and in the home, "Yours is a splendid work, and I should so like to help it, but there is nothing I can do." Those who chant this mournful dirge do not understand that there is a place for everyone in this field of mission endeavor whether you work alone or with others. If God inspires you with an interest in it, He has a certain work marked out for you to do, and no one else can do it in just the way He wishes it to be done.

In the Holy Scriptures the Holy Ghost pronounces a lengthy eulogium on women. And what does He especially remark in her? Not her sweetness, kindness, and gentleness—though of course she possesses these qualities for there can be no perfect woman without them. No. He remarks her valor, courage, fortitude, and the robust virtues of initiative, generosity, and self-reliance. The Holy Ghost does not say: "Who shall find a gentle woman," but, "Who shall find a valiant woman? As things brought from afar, and from the uttermost coasts, is the price of her."

The wonderful accomplishments of the women's mission organizations of the various Protestant sects surpass the most sanguine anticipations of their organizers, and convincingly attest to woman's power to perform what she will. The secret of their success lies in united and organized endeavor—the prime factor in achieving results in any field of action. In union there is strength. As individuals we can do but little, in the majority of cases, but by uniting our efforts we create a power that is able to move mountains. This is the purpose of the Associate Catechists of Mary—to coordinate individual efforts and lend mutual support to those of our Catholic laity who are working in the interest of the Missions of our great Southwest.

Anyone can organize a Circle of Associate Catechists of Mary. It requires no superhuman efforts. Win over a friend or two to the idea; and with a nucleus of two, united in a firm purpose to interest others, a Circle becomes inevitable. The main thing is to begin.

The first question likely to be asked is "How?"

First of all, we should be pleased to have you write us of your intention so that we may send you literature for distribution to prospective members. We shall, of course, be glad to answer any questions you may wish to ask about the field and the workers; their aims and accomplishments.

Next broach the subject to your tried and true friends, neighbors, fellow-employees, sodality members, or other associates. As soon as you have interested and secured the approval of these friends, set the date for the first meeting.

The promoter should draw up a plan for this first meeting, and also prepare an outline of the proposed activities of the Circle to be read at it.

When the appointed time for the meeting arrives, the promoter acts as temporary chairman and a temporary secretary is appointed. The meeting should open with prayer, followed by a short talk by the promoter or one of the assembly on the why and wherefore of forming the Circle. She will then read the letter from the Spiritual Director of the Associate Catechists of Mary officially welcoming the new members and confirming their affiliation with the general body of members. After which she will distribute the individual membership

cards. The next order of business is the nomination and election of the Secretary and Treasurer and the setting of a regular date for future meetings. These matters having been decided upon, the Promoter should read the previously prepared outline of the proposed activities of the Circle. This outline will be discussed and voted upon in the order of general business. A short prayer precedes the adjournment of the meeting which is followed by a social hour.

The time not taken up with routine business at subsequent meetings may be devoted to sewing altar-linens, wearing apparel for the missions, etc. Some Circles make of each meeting a purely social gathering at which card or other games are played, each member contributing a regular stipulated sum which goes into the general fund to be applied toward the support of a Catechist, and the hostess contributing a few inexpensive prizes for distribution among the winners.

A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM

Mother has been busy for weeks making little sweaters to send to Catechist Blanche Richardson for her small charges. She has made six of them and they strongly resemble Joseph's Coat of many colors as she used up all the odd yarn she had on them. I had to get her some new of course, to tone them down a bit and keep them from looking too "scattery". But I think it wonderful for Mother to have made them for she is totally blind in one eye (from cataract) and has great difficulty in sewing as a result. She sits up late at night working on the little sweaters, ripping out the stitches very often as because of her defective eyesight, she cannot help but drop them. However, I am sure some little Mexicans will be kept warm this winter!

My sister has annexed a little child—got her from St. Vincent's Asylum. She is now over four years old, and, of course, gets lots and lots of toys at Christmas and at other times. This little girl is spoiled and rather selfish, but when I talked to her

about the "po' little Injuns" (as she called them) and told her how they were situated, with no toys at Christmas time, she got so enthused that she wanted to give me most of her toys. My sister brought me in quantities of the child's toys, keeping only a few for her to play with, and the little girl was perfectly delighted to give them. Some were so new that I am sure she has never played with them, and all of them were good enough to send to the missions. I have told others the story of this child's willingness to give up her toys after a little persuasion, and I am sure other children would be just as generous. Most of them receive entirely too many and cannot possibly enjoy or use them all.

MRS. S.

IN HIS STEPS

(Continued from Page Three)

nesses, our humiliations either to bad men or to the devil, but to their true author, Almighty God Himself."

Let us, children, follow the example of Our Divine Saviour. Always attribute whatever happens to us in this life to either the direct will or the permissive decree of Almighty God. We know that under His loving protection nothing can befall us contrary to His holy Will. Of this we must convince ourselves, that God is the kindest and best of Fathers, and if for our good He is compelled to visit us with sickness or evils, He acts like a good physician who must sometimes use heroic methods to effect a cure.

"So it all comes back to this—there must always be true conformity of our will to the Divine Will. Our destiny is God's greater glory, and the more perfectly our wills are conformed to the Will of God, the greater will be the degree of glory we render to Him.

"Now this Doctrine of Conformity to God's Will is based upon two very important principles in the spiritual life. The first of these principles we happily brought out today by your remarks concerning the illness of our dear little friend Anne. This is the principle called the Providence of God, that nothing, save sin, can ever happen in this life without the express will or permission of Almighty God. The second principle is that advancement in Christian Perfection consists in entire conformity to God's Will. In our next class we shall learn that the greater our conformity to God's will, the higher will be the degree of perfection to which we shall attain in our spiritual life.

The city of Santa Fe, founded by Onate in 1605, is the second oldest city in the United States.

Generously disposed subscribers who wish to send clothing to the poor in the missions will confer a great favor upon us by sending it direct—by parcel post preferably as the nearest freight depot is an average distance of twenty-five miles away—to any of the following very needy missions:

Society of Missionary Catechists, Anton Chico, New Mexico.

Society of Missionary Catechists, Carmen, (P. O. Mora) New Mexico.

Society of Missionary Catechists, Chaparrito, New Mexico.

A MOUNTAIN "CATHEDRAL"

By E. L.

Across the mesa and up the hillsides, rickety ranch wagons filled with dark-faced children of the plains, move slowly toward their objective, the tiny brown adobe chapel from whose square tower a sweet-toned bell peals forth.

Stalwart, loose-limbed cowboys in bright colored shirts and with clinking spurs, swing carelessly from the saddle and tie their foam-flecked pintos to rough palings in front of the chapel; then gather in groups on the sunny side of a big rock to discuss the all-absorbing topic of the herds.

Overhead, the warm December sun is beaming with its usual radiance but there is a brisk tang in the air, and Don Jose calls his boys to bring wood and build a fire—not inside the church, for there is no stove there—but in a corner sheltered by the protecting walls of the church from the wind. Soon the resinous pine is crackling merrily, and everybody gathers round the blaze, chatting pleasantly of many things in its grateful warmth.

A little Ford sputters complainingly as it makes its way along the rocky roadway and finally stops near the fire. The driver, a pleasant-faced man with iron grey hair, calls cheerily to the waiting group. He is the "Padre". Everyone greets him with cordial respect, the older ones, in the fashion of other days, kissing his hand. He asks after the health of each and gives special attention to the children, then joins in the task of replenishing the fire. The old men sit back on their heels against the wall and roll cigarettes.

A second bell rings and the Padre goes inside to hear confessions. The interior is simple in finish and furnishings. The floor is rough white pine and the ceiling of the same material, supported by large log rafters. The little board altar is covered with a spotless cloth and decorated with a profusion of artificial flowers in many colors. There are white curtains at the windows. A few small, cheap statues, some hand-carved from wood in primitive style, adorn the sanctuary. The figure on the crucifix is draped in cloth from head to feet.

Another bell rings—the last—and soon the little room is filled with worshippers kneeling upright on the bare floor. Two or three have brought their "pews"—rude



homemade benches which served as seats in the wagon on the long journey from home.

The Padre is at the altar; restless children are hushed; a woman kneeling in front rings a tiny bell—and the solemn sacrifice of the Mass has begun. After the Gospel there is an instruction. In simple language such as one would address to little children, the Padre explains the majestic truths of their Holy Faith to his eager listeners.

The instruction concluded, Mass continues, and there is a subdued murmur of whispered prayers as much-used beads slip through fingers worn with age and toil. The bell rings again and consecrated hands raise on high the Sacred Host, while dark-faced worshippers strike their breasts and bow reverently in adoration. The Good Shepherd has sought out His lambs in the

mountain wilderness to bestow upon them the riches of His grace; and at Communion time, men, women and children come forward to receive Him into their hearts. With clasped hands and downcast eyes, they return to their place on the floor and kneel again in humble thanksgiving.

Mass is over. The Padre disrobes, while kindly women extinguish the candles and cover the altar and hungry children rush to the wagons for their lunch. It is noon and some have breakfasted by early candlelight, while still others have come fasting. The Padre gratefully accepts an invitation to share their meagre fare as there are no houses near and it will be late when he reaches home.

The last "adios" said, the wagons are again creeping over the mesa and down the hillsides, while rested pintos race neck and neck on the narrow road. There is a lonely figure at the wheel of the little Ford rattling away in their wake over the plain, but the heart of the Priest is at peace in the happy consciousness of work well done, and he turns at the crest of the hill for another look at the little brown church nestling among the pine trees—a mountain Cathedral—keeping its faithful watch for the King.

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