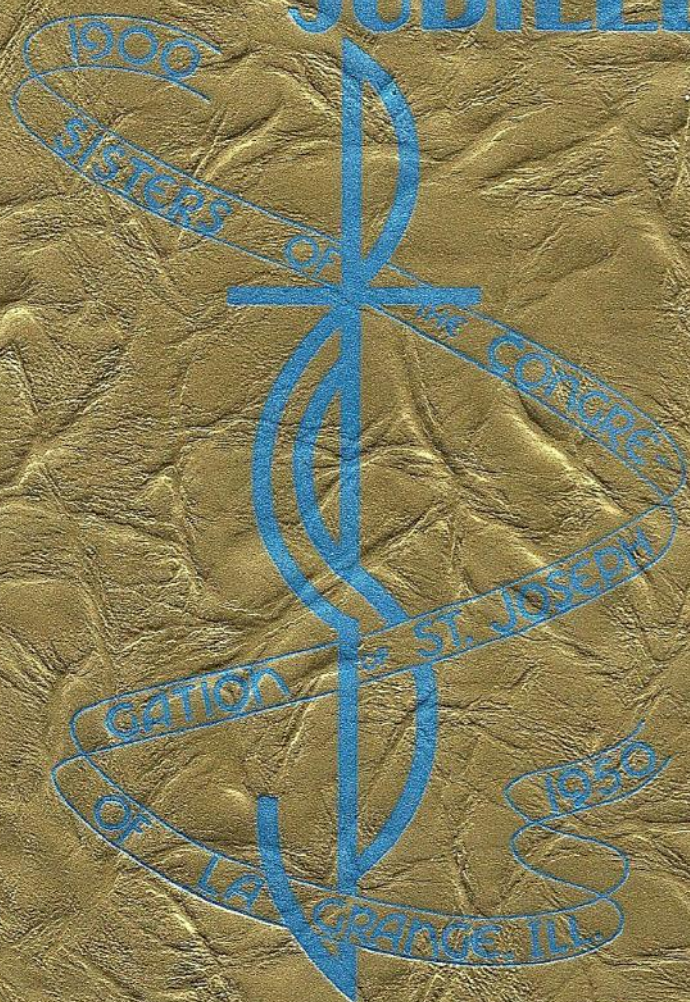
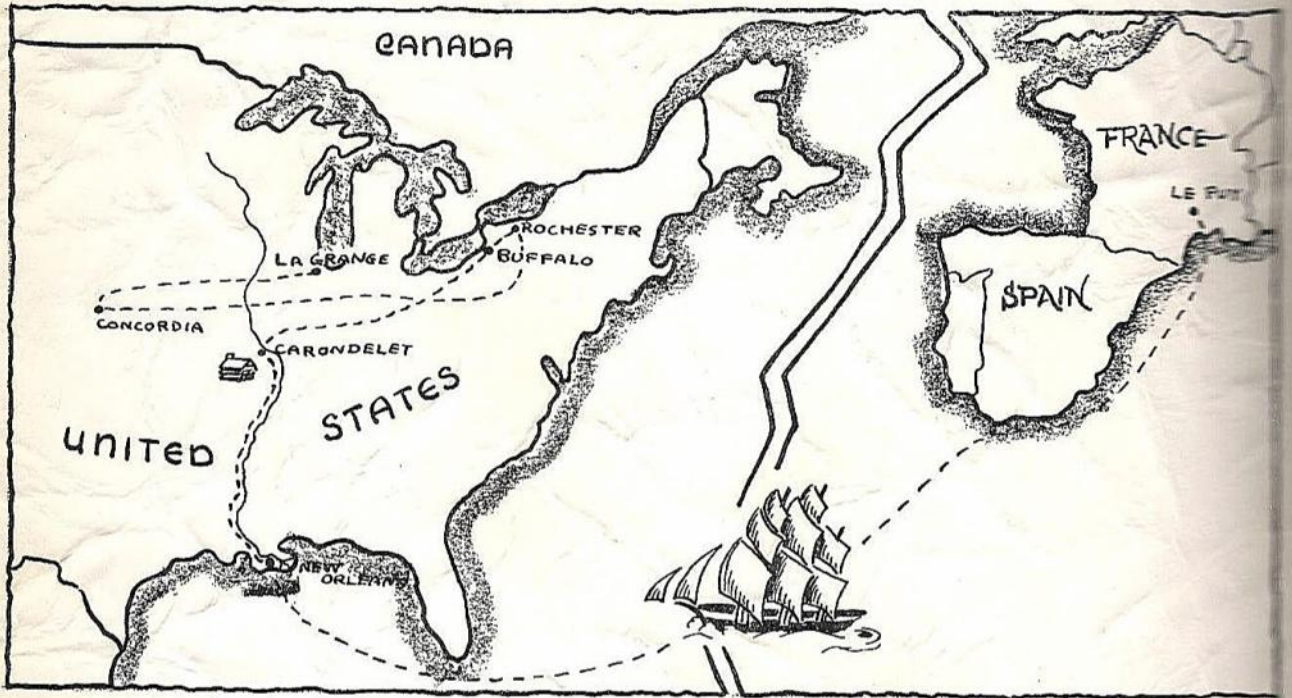
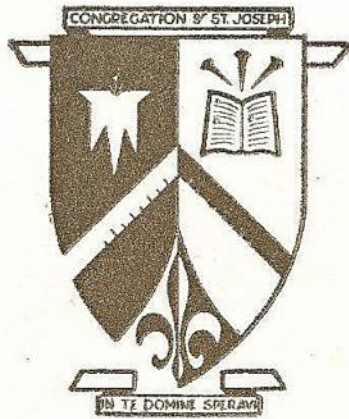


# GOLDEN JUBILEE

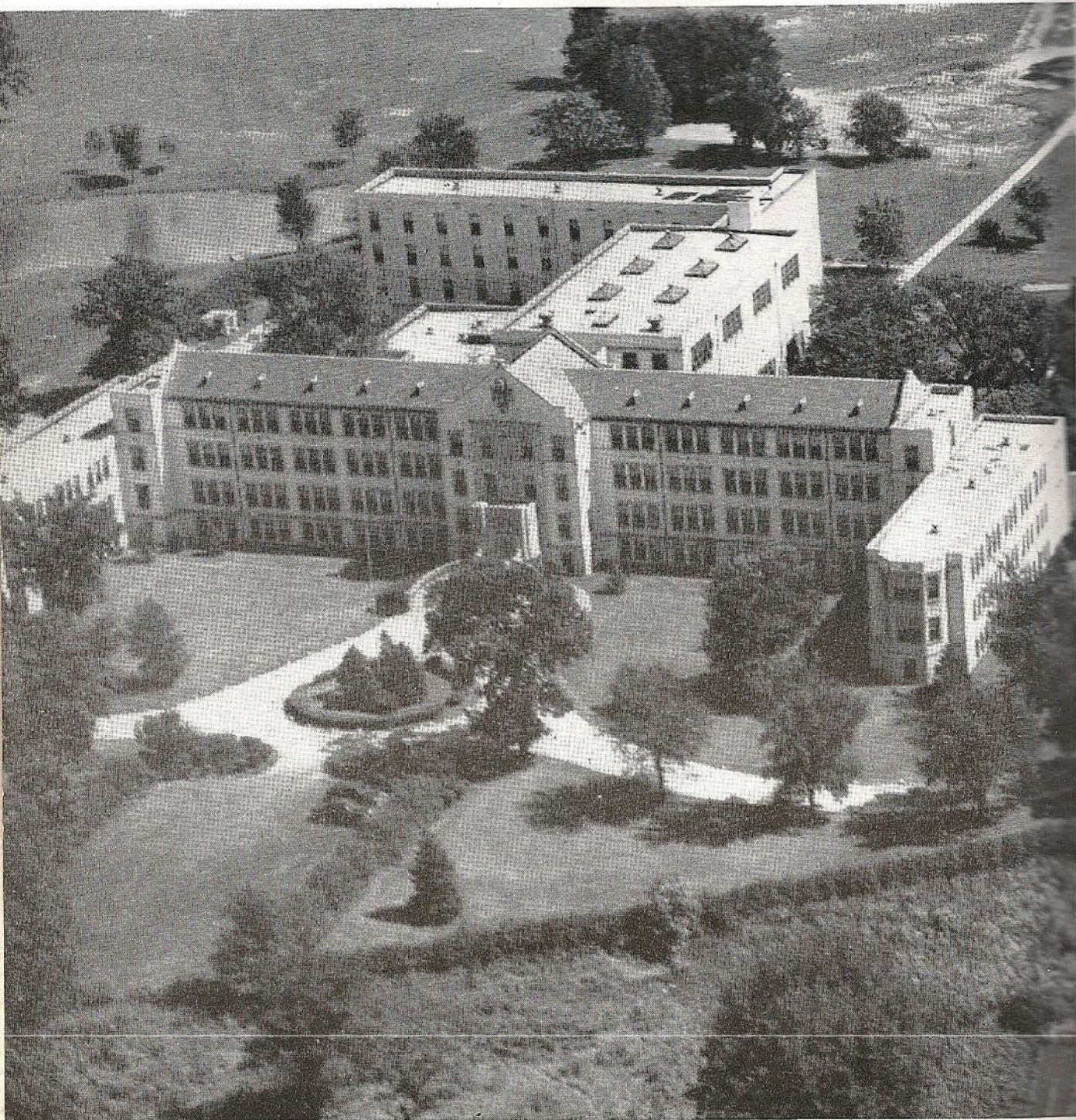












*Our Lady of Bethlehem Academy*



1900

1950

# Magnificat

The Story of the Sisters of St. Joseph  
of  
La Grange

Written by a member of the Community  
On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary  
of the  
establishment of their Congregation in La Grange

*"My soul doth magnify the Lord,  
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior."*

1650

1950



To the valiant pioneers  
of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of La Grange  
who fifty years ago in the days of their early youth  
joyously followed the Master's call  
who labored long and arduously  
who sacrificed their "all" so generously  
that the Congregation might take root  
that it might flourish  
that it might bear a rich harvest

*Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*

with a prayer that the future Sisters of St. Joseph of La Grange  
be not unworthy of their rich spiritual heritage of the past  
this history  
is gratefully and affectionately dedicated.



— Contents —

Testimonial Letters

History of The Sisters of St. Joseph

“Walking in Her Footsteps”









September 22nd, 1950

My dear Mother Walburga:

The Tercentenary of the founding of the Sisters of Saint Joseph and the Golden Jubilee of your foundation at La Grange are memorable events. The Sisters of Saint Joseph have grown in numbers and in their works and today are spread throughout the Church, consecrated virgins working for their Divine Spouse. Fifty years ago a little group of Sisters of St. Joseph founded your Congregation at La Grange. Your schools and your charities have been and are a precious thing in the Archdiocese of Chicago through these fifty years. We could on your Jubilee give statistics and show the great work that you have done in the cause of Catholic education among us. Rather we prefer to point out that all of this work has been but the expression of love of consecrated virgins to their Divine Spouse. It is this deep, edifying religious life which is the great contribution through these fifty years. There are those among us who have given of their substance to religion in the Archdiocese. You have given yourselves, and this is the greatest love. May we on the occasion of your Golden Jubilee join with you and your Sisters in your hymn of thanksgiving. We shall ask Almighty God to continue to shower His blessings upon you and to make you grow in numbers and be always to all of us and to those who will come after us what you have been in these fifty years - an edification, a consolation and a boast.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Archbishop of Chicago

Mother M. Walburga, C.S.J.  
Our Lady of Bethlehem Academy  
La Grange Park, Illinois









September 20, 1950

Congregation of Sisters of St. Joseph  
1000 Ogden Avenue  
LaGrange, Illinois

Dear Mother Walburga:

I would like to take this opportunity to join with the many friends of the Sisters of St. Joseph to congratulate you on the three hundredth anniversary of your foundation in France and the Golden Jubilee of your foundation in LaGrange. Probably the Foundress and the first Sisters in France met with many difficulties in the early years. Certainly the first Sisters in LaGrange accepted many sacrifices and crosses to bring the Sisters of St. Joseph to LaGrange. Now as we look upon the progress you have made in these fifty golden years we see how God has blessed those sacrifices and yours. The progress and the vitality of the Church in the United States is due in great measure to the Sisters who bring the knowledge of Our Lord and His Church to our children in their earliest years. Our people are good Catholics because they are given the teachings of Our Lord in their formative years. In addition the Sisters have done much to bring about frequent and even daily Communion. This anniversary should make the Sisters of St. Joseph at LaGrange very happy when you look back upon what you have accomplished in the relatively short period of fifty years.

May God continue to bless your sacrifices and your works for His Church.

Gratefully yours in Christ,

*+ Martin D. McNamara*

The Most Rev. Martin D. McNamara, D.D.  
Bishop of Joliet in Illinois





THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE UNITED STATES · EXTENSION SOCIETY OF AMERICA · ♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

1307 SOUTH WABASH AVE.



CHICAGO 5 ILLINOIS

MOST REV. CHARLES D. SWANEN, D.D. PRESIDENT  
 MOST REV. JOSEPH B. LUX, D.D. VICE-PRESIDENT  
 MOST REV. MOSES E. WILEY, D.D. VICE-PRESIDENT

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 CHARLES C. BROWN, M.C.P. VICE-PRES. & CHIEF CLERK  
 JAMES E. BURKS, M.C.P. VICE-PRES. & COUNSEL

September 18th, 1950

Mother Mary Walburga, C.S.J.  
 1000 Ogden Avenue  
 La Grange, Illinois

Dear Mother Walburga:

Hearty congratulations to you and all the members of your Community on the occasion of your Golden Jubilee.

It was my privilege to be present at several of the closing exercises and other festive occasions of the Community back in the early years of this century, when your young Community started in the original Nazareth building.

In those years, Mother Mary Alexine, together with her sister, Mother Mary Bernard, had not a for difficulties in trying to build up the Community, and as the records of those years will show, they were ably assisted by the late Bishop Francis C. Kelley, then the young Monsignor Kelley who was just starting the Society of the Catholic Church Extension in Chicago, and also by Monsignor Francis Purcell, then the Rector of the Quigley Preparatory Seminary.

Besides Mother Mary Alexine and Mother Mary Bernard, I can recall very well how Mother Mary Aloysius, always very active in the work of the Community, was most gracious at all times with the younger priests like myself, or who accompanied Monsignor Kelley and Purcell in their visits to your Academy.

It is to be regretted that Mother Mary Alexine, who, above all others, is the Foundress of your Community, did not live to see the Golden Jubilee of the family of St. Joseph Sisters which she mothered so zealously, and with such splendid results, during the last fifty years. Personally, I have not the slightest doubt that on the Golden Jubilee of the Community, she will be looking down through some blue window of Heaven upon her hundreds of spiritual daughters, who are now doing such great work for the honor and glory of God here in the Archdiocese of Chicago and the other Dioceses to which the Community has spread in the past fifty years.

That Almighty God will continue to bless and prosper St. Joseph Sisters of La Grange, Illinois, in the future as He has in the past, and with my humble blessing upon you and all the members of your Community, believe me

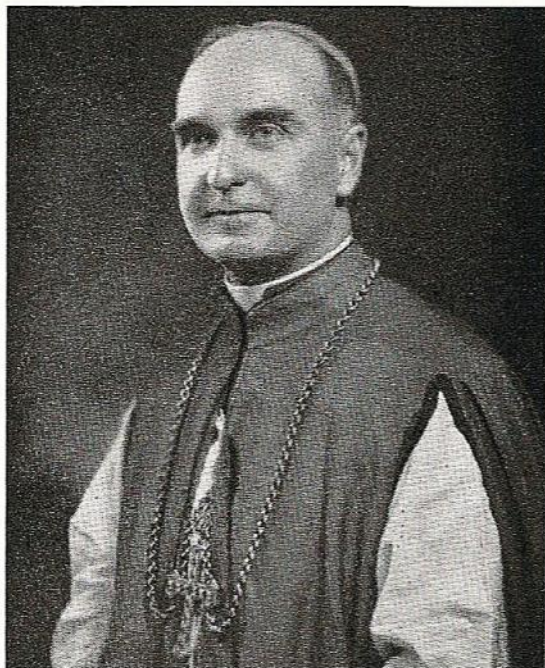
Sincerely yours,

*Walter Edward Brennan*  
 President  
 Catholic Church Extension Society  
 Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago

PLEASE SEND ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.

WDOB:MK





31 E. Congress Street  
Chicago



Dear Mother Walburga:

It is a source of continual wonder and reverence to contemplate how God raises up great religious communities, such as yours, and sends them forth to do His work of bringing souls to the abiding city.

The particular distinction of your community in the field of primary, secondary, and college education, here in America, is high-lighted by the 50th anniversary of the St. Joseph nuns in La Grange.

Since you are celebrating the latter event in concert with your tercentenary observance, may I doubly extend my heartiest blessings and felicitations to you all.

With the promise of a special remembrance on the altar that the future work of the Congregation may prosper in Christ, I remain

Cordially yours in Our Lord,

Bernard J. Sheil, D.D.  
Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago

Mother Mary Walburga, C.S.J.  
Our Lady of Bethlehem Academy  
Ogden Avenue and Willow Spring Road  
La Grange, Illinois





St. Columbanus Rectory  
331 East 71st Street  
Chicago 19



September 13th, 1950

Dear Mother Walburga:

For three centuries the Sisters of St. Joseph have realized in zealous, fruitful service throughout the world the promise born in their founding. Christ's, "Go, therefore, teach all nations", has been an injunction ardently obeyed and consistently treasured as an inspiration.

We in Chicago have, for fifty years, known and profited by the willingness, cheerfulness and laudable simplicity, comprising in part a community spirit that reflects in action the lessons of your Eternal Spouse.

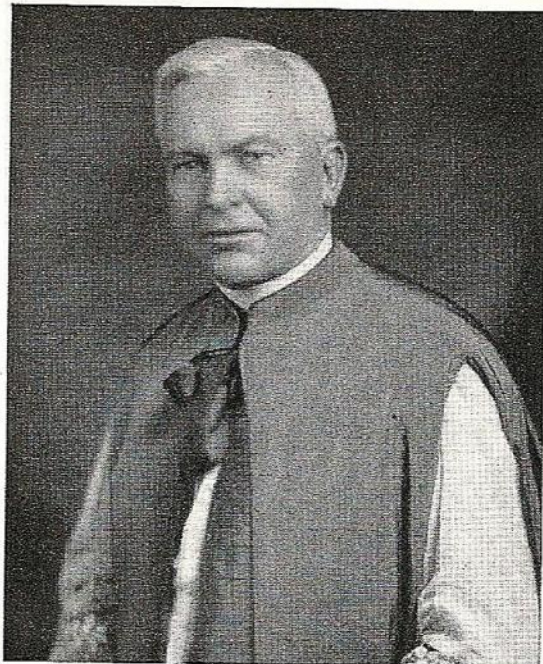
On the occasion of this double anniversary my congratulations and good wishes take the form of a fervent prayer that God's blessings will be abundant and continuing - a reward for a task well done, and a staff upon which you, individually and collectively, might lean in the years of progress that lie ahead.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ *W. E. Cousins*

Most Rev. William E. Cousins,  
Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago





ST. MEL RECTORY  
22 N. KILDARE AVENUE  
CHICAGO 24, ILL.

As the chosen people of God, in the old Dispensation, sanctified the fiftieth year, so the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of LaGrange have set aside the fiftieth anniversary of their foundation to give thanks to Almighty God for the blessings He has shown them and for the great works He has accomplished through them.

In retrospect, the pioneers, reviewing the days when poverty and anxiety encompassed the foundation, can thank God for the strength He gave them to overcome what seemed unsurmountable obstacles.

Singularly blessed has the Community been, in the good "Mother" God gave them in the beginning. For the fifty years the Community was guided by the heroic spirit of Mother Alexine the spirit that said, "With God's help we can do anything". God has called Mother Alexine to Himself. Heaven honors her today for her sublime work of sixty five years in His service and fifty golden years of prayer and sacrifice through which she mothered the Community she founded. Her spirit lives on in your great community.

Well may the Sisters make jubilee. Well may they unite to give glory to God for all He has done for them. God to Whom all hearts turn in humble gratitude today has blessed their efforts and has enabled them to bring their foundation to the perfection which we see about us. The consciousness that their years of toil have been so fruitful justly fills their hearts with joy at this golden time of jubilee.

*Francis A. Purcell*



## *Magnificat*

*"Come, and hear, and I will tell you . . .  
what great things the Lord hath done . . ."*

Ps. 65, 16

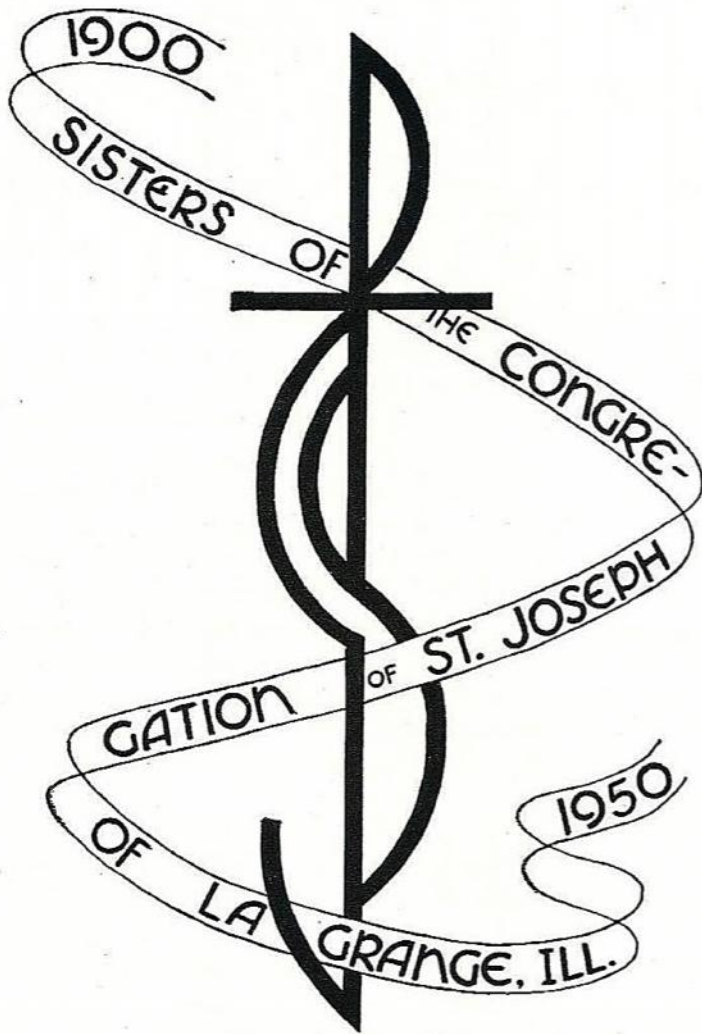
"It is good," Scripture tells us, "to give praise to the Lord" and to sing to the name of the Most High. That is why the faithful servants of God daily chant to the Lord their joyous "Thanks be to God! Alleluia!"

If praise and thanksgiving are a constantly recurring motif in the theme of daily prayer, it is fitting and proper that they become the principal theme in the commemoration of a fiftieth anniversary, for we have been commanded to sanctify unto God the fiftieth year. "Thou shalt sanctify the year . . . for it is the year of jubilee." (2 Lev. 25, 10)

The year 1950 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation, in La Grange, of a motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Looking back over the story of the Community's pioneer days, back farther still to the very origins of religious communities of women actively engaged in the apostolate of charity, the designs of God working through circumstances of time become apparent.

Viewed in its historical setting, the genesis of the Congregation is seen in its proper perspective. Thus seen, its purposes in the plan of God are more easily understood and appreciated. What better theme could be chosen by the Sisters of St. Joseph of La Grange, upon which to build their jubilee hymn of thanksgiving to God on the occasion of their fiftieth anniversary than the story of their humble participation, under the loving protection of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, in the manifold outpourings of God's grace upon men of all nations; upon the souls of all men—the innocent child, the helpless sick, the destitute poor, upon the souls too of those gone astray from the House of their Father. Far greater than any of its founders dared hope, has been the influence of the Community of "poor Sisters of St. Joseph" on the social needs of all who have benefited by its labors since the days of its humble birth, three hundred years ago. In simplicity and lowliness of heart, the Sisters of St. Joseph sing to God their joyful Magnificat: He that is mighty has done great things unto them. From generation to generation He has regarded them as the handmaids of His mercy to men.









### A NEW PATTERN OF CHARITY

As we consider the evils and misfortunes of the times in which we live, we are sometimes inclined to think that our own epoch is one of the darkest in history. That our judgment should follow this line of thought is not surprising. The evils of our times have come within our actual experience; those of other days we have only read about. Wars waged by past generations have affected the destinies of nations; they have imprinted their record on the pages of history; but the wars fought by those who are "flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone" are everlastingly imprinted in our hearts with tears and blood, and pain and sorrow.

The world changes little as generations succeed each other, because men change little from one generation to another. In every generation there is love of one kind or another that attracts; in every generation there is hatred that repels; always these two opposing forces strive to master and control the hearts of men. In every age, the good are oppressed and the oppressor, masquerading under the appearance of good, sometimes even of a god, strives to dominate the souls of those about him by seizing control of their social, political or economic life, as the circumstances of time and place may dictate.

Many periods of history might be chosen to illustrate these statements; France of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries will be selected for that purpose because it furnished the social and political factors that led to the formation of a new mode of religious life for women; more particularly because it was in France during the seventeenth century that the social needs induced the bishops to launch the apostolic work of a group of pious women who came to be known throughout the world as Sisters of St. Joseph. The circumstances of their origin and growth form the subject matter of this history.

To men who loved liberty, and all men do, the despotism of seventeenth century France had become unendurable. The common man



seemed to have been born only for the use of the higher class. Men were thrust into prison without trial, without charges, and they were kept there until death released them. (How often does history repeat itself!) Deep hatred existed between the bourgeoisie and the nobility. Religion was made a subject of ridicule. The writings of philosophers mocked at virtue and truth. Materialism threatened to engulf the nation; men were bewildered by the godless theories that were the product of their era. Some way had to be found of stemming the flow of the forces of evil; means had to be devised of renewing the spiritual life of the poor and the oppressed.

In every age, whether men will or no, God remains Lord of the universe. He directs the course of men so that, wittingly or unwittingly, they conform to the designs of a loving Providence. The good may be oppressed; but the evil intentions of the wicked are often involuntarily diverted from their original purpose and are made to serve as the occasion of a great spiritual work, whose influence may extend to the limits of the earth and even unto the end of time. This truth we see exemplified in the origin of every religious community, and, in fact, in every great social crisis. When the Church needed a champion to defend her divine position on earth God raised up a Paul, an Athanasius, or a Peter Canisius; and the enemies of God and of His Church were confounded. When error threatened to obscure the light of Truth so that men could no longer discern the Way, God sent a Benedict, a Dominic, an Ignatius Loyola, each accompanied by a multitude of disciples, to dispel the errors that would otherwise plunge men's minds and hearts into an abyssal darkness of Godless living.

It is not only men; women also are called upon in the workings of Divine Providence to combat and counteract the forces of evil striving to effect the destruction of the children of God. It was, as has been noted, as an antidote to the social evils of the seventeenth century in France that the Sisters of St. Joseph were founded.

There are few people today, whether Catholic or non-Catholic, who do not have some knowledge of the splendid services rendered to the Church by the "teaching Sisters" or the "nursing Sisters." There are few who can not identify the religious habit of at least one or two Sisterhoods as they see these Sisters on a bus or train or walking down a busy city street. No one expresses surprise upon meeting Sisters at the counter of a large department store or, as the case may be, in a bargain basement or in the notions section of the newest "dime store." They know that the Sister is looking for a toy or an ornament that her meagre resources will permit her to buy, not for herself, but to bring back to the face of some forlorn and lonely child the smile of happiness. They know that "their Father's business," in which the Sisters are engaged, is more diversified in character



than are the religious habits that distinguish the members of one Community from those of another.

It may surprise many to learn that, up to the seventeenth century, Sisters in convents did not engage in active works, such as teaching and nursing; religious life for women was patterned upon the lines of contemplation; conventual life was cloistered. So generally accepted was the idea that "the cloister was the only form of consecrated life adapted to women," that it was difficult for founders of active Sisterhoods to obtain ecclesiastical approbation for a mode of religious life that combined service to the sick, the poor, the ignorant, with the interior life of contemplation.

The story is told of a holy founder, who, having sent his well-prepared candidates to the bishop to ask his approval on the establishment of their Community, instructed them to answer "No" if the bishop asked them the direct question, "Are you religious?" He knew that if they expressed a desire to become religious in the then accepted sense of the term, they would be advised to embrace the cloister. Even so great a churchman as St. Francis de Sales, himself a bishop and a saint, did not succeed in founding a community of women whose Rule did not impose the cloister.

Saintly priests labored zealously among the poor, the sick, the orphaned of seventeenth century France. Their service was generous; their work was good. But how, they asked themselves, could two human hands, albeit they were saintly consecrated hands, minister to multitudes of neglected sick and poor? Was there no way of multiplying these hands dedicated to the service of Christ in the person of His afflicted poor? Could nothing be done to help the countless numbers of souls "fainting of hunger in the way" because there were none to bring to their side the basket of "fragments" of broken "loaves and fishes"?

A way must be found, reasoned these saintly shepherds of souls, to bring Christ to the neediest of His members. God, Whose name is Love, could not spurn the cries of His orphaned children for a human heart to love them; He could not be indifferent to the pleas of the sick and the oppressed that the comforting of Christ be extended to them to lighten the burden of their misery. Surely the prayers of the saints would be answered; God, they felt certain, would not only enlighten the mind of a Vincent de Paul or a Francis de Sales; He would also move the hearts of the bishops to permit them to carry out their plan; to permit women to organize into Communities that would unite the apostolate of contemplative love with that of service; to organize religious Communities of women whose duty and privilege it would be to instruct the young, to mother the motherless, to care for the sick, "according to the orders of Holy Obedience," that is, according to the rules and vows of an approved religious community in which service to one's neighbor would be recognized as an integral part of one's consecration to God *as a religious*.



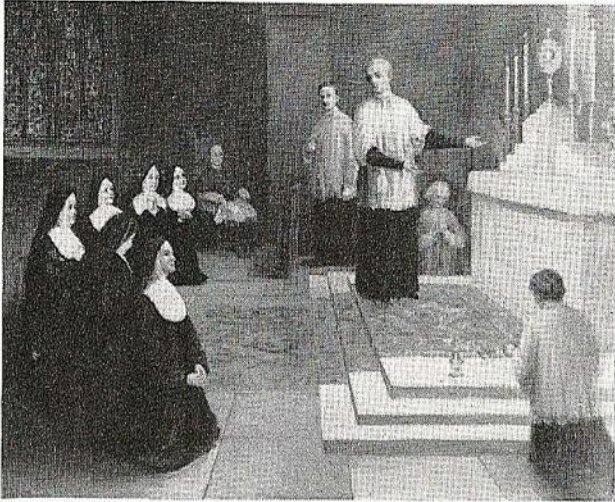


Now that the colors have been sketched into the backdrop, the story of the founding of the Sisters of St. Joseph at Le Puy, France, in 1650, should unfold with ease and comparative brevity.

There were in France in the middle of the seventeenth century many priests whose daily labors among the poor revealed to them the need of an active apostolate of charity. To the priest is given the

**THE  
SISTERHOOD  
TAKES  
ROOT**





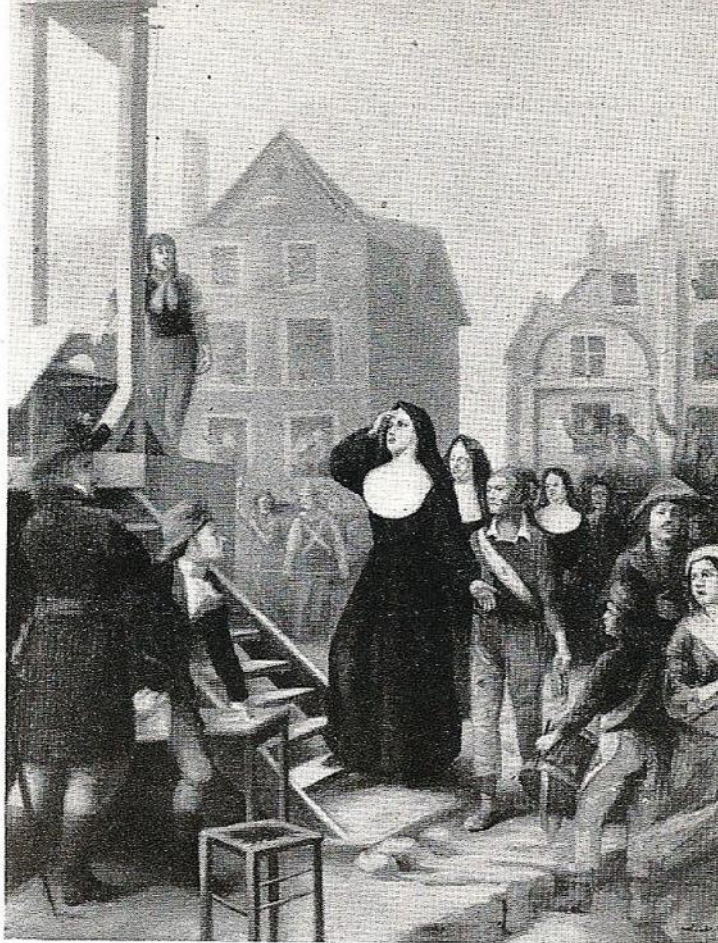
power of administering the sacraments, of pronouncing over the bread and wine the powerful words, "This is My body, this is My blood." When, however, it is a question of performing the manifold works of mercy it is doubtful if the Church could adequately fulfil her mission as a mother without the assistance of devoted religious women. That is why many French priests had given thought to the formation of a religious community of women whose hearts, like Mary's, would be imbued with the spirit of Christ, but whose hands, like Martha's, would be dedicated to the service of Christ in the members of His mystical body.

A famous Jesuit missionary, Father Jean Paul Medaille, obtained permission of the bishop of Le Puy, Henri de Maupas, to form this new type of religious community. Having carefully trained and prepared his candidates for their new mode of life, Father Medaille presented them to the Bishop. On October 15, 1650, they were invested in the religious habit and placed under the patronage and guidance of St. Joseph.

St. Joseph is the model of the interior life. He is also the model for devout souls whose days are filled with worrisome cares about problems of housing and fuel, about income and taxes. It was therefore decided that these Sisters whose ambition it was to imitate St. Joseph by uniting the active with the interior life would be known as Sisters of St. Joseph.

Generous souls were attracted to this new form of religious life. The Community grew rapidly. Soon, bishops of other dioceses, observing the work of the Sisters and realizing the urgent need for their services, requested establishments of the Sisterhood in their dioceses. By 1700 there was scarcely a diocese in France that remained without the ministrations of





the Sisters of St. Joseph in schools, hospitals, and orphanages. The Sisters also conducted dispensaries for the poor and homes for unprotected and unfortunate girls; they visited the poor sick in their homes; there was scarcely a work of mercy in which they were not engaged. Thus their apostolate expanded and the Community continued to prosper until the middle of the eighteenth century. By that time, ominous rumblings of a rising revolution resounded through the length and breadth of France. Both the masses and the classes were disturbed; the even tenor of convent life was doomed to disruption.

When the Reign of Terror finally descended upon France, the Sisters of St. Joseph were among the first to feel the hatred of the terrorists. Armed with hatchets, rude ruffians broke open the doors of their convents. To the Sisters they offered two alternatives—apostasy or death. Their convents were violently confiscated or turned into prisons. Their orphanages and hospitals became the property of the Commune. Imprisonment and ultimately the guillotine were allotted to many of the Sisters. Some Sisters were driven from their convents to live wherever they could find shelter—refugees from the “liberty, equality, and fraternity” of the revolutionists; some fled to the mountains and hid in remote



caves; some sought refuge in the homes of their parents. The streets of the cities ran red with blood of the "citizens" of France. Daily the guillotine counted among its victims both laymen and religious who were martyred for their faith. Among the religious whose names are listed as "traitors" are five Sisters of St. Joseph. Three other Sisters, while not guillotined, were barbarously put to death. Many languished in foul prisons. How many of these attained martyrdom through the sufferings inflicted upon them is not known.

Here mention must be made of Mother St. John Fontbonne, superior of the convent at Monistrol when the religious persecution began. Her intrepid courage won the admiration of her persecutors and almost won for her the crown of martyrdom. When the apostate priest Abbe Ollier went to the convent and demanded of Mother St. John that she summon the Sisters into his presence so that he might command them to assist at his mass, he was met with an outright refusal. "It is not necessary for you to see the Sisters," said Mother St. John. "Here the head speaks for the members. I am the head. No Sister of this Community will assist at the mass of an apostate priest." As might be expected, the convent of Monistrol was taken over by the Commune and Mother St. John, together with her loyal Sisters, was thrown into prison. After many terrifying days Mother St. John and her companions were informed that their turn to be guillotined had arrived. "Citizens, it is your turn tomorrow." When on the following morning the doors were flung open, the Sisters were well prepared to accept their horrible death calmly. Indeed, they were better prepared for the terrors of the guillotine than they were for the startling announcement made to them, "Robespierre has fallen! You are free!"

Released from prison, Mother St. John and her companions returned to the home of Mother St. John's parents. Here for twelve years they lived in retirement and in the exercise of works of charity. They tried while at home to follow as well as they could the rules they had so loved during their happy days as Sisters of St. Joseph.





When peace had once more settled upon France, Mother St. John was summoned from her retirement by Cardinal Fesch and commanded to reorganize the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Once more clothed in the habit she so cherished, Mother St. John took up the work assigned to her. In an incredibly short time, France was again dotted with convents of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Simultaneously, foundations were being asked for and established in Italy, Norway, Sweden, Russia, Denmark, Great Britain, India, Australia, Africa, Canada, the United States, and South America.

It was Mother St. John who sent the first group of Sisters to the United States of America. They had been invited by Bishop Rosati of St. Louis to assist him in his work of instructing the children of the woodsmen and semi-civilized Indians of the middle west. From among the Sisters who volunteered for the arduous mission work that awaited them in the new world, six were chosen. Two of these were Mother St. John's nieces.

**A LAND  
OF NEW  
BEGINNINGS**

It cannot be said that their voyage to New Orleans was pleasant. The Sisters were seasick; in all probability they were also homesick. The journey was long and perilous. After forty-nine days of sailing they arrived at New Orleans in March, 1836. A kind welcome was extended to them by Bishop Rosati, who had gone to New Orleans to meet them, and by the Ursuline Sisters who received the worn and weary travelers with characteristic religious hospitality, inviting them to rest at their convent until they would be able to continue their journey. On March 15, they boarded the ship that was to bring them up the Mississippi River to St. Louis where the first permanent and subsequently independent foundation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in America was made.

With indomitable courage these first Sisters fought the barbarity of paganism as valiantly as the early American pioneers fought the wilderness. Where there was darkness they brought the light of truth; where there was light, they planted love; where there was love and charity they knew they had raised up Christians. Just as the Congregation spread rapidly in France, so too did it expand in America. In succeeding years, numerous foundations were made in other parts of the United States. In 1854 the Sisters went from St. Louis to Canandaigua, New York; in 1864 they opened a house in Rochester, New York; in 1883, in Concordia, Kansas.

At the turn of the century fifty years ago, a time that seemed propitious for new beginnings, six Sisters from the Concordia motherhouse, of whom Sister Mary Alexine Gosselin was one, began the establishment of a house of the Congregation in the diocese of Chicago. The village of La Grange, a suburb of Chicago, was chosen as a suitable location. In February, 1900, just

**A  
FOUNDATION  
OF THE  
MIDDLE  
WEST**

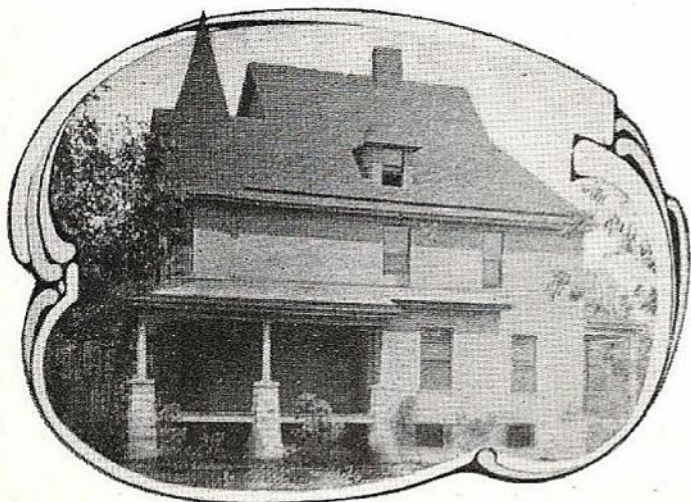


a few months after the Sisters' arrival, Mother Stanislaus Leary, foundress of the Concordia motherhouse and now the leader of the new pioneer group, died. The succeeding weeks were filled with anxiety and doubts as to the wisdom of attempting to carry on the foundation without the direction and encouragement of one who was experienced in grappling with the difficulties of a new foundation. On June 21, 1900, Archbishop Feehan of Chicago resolved these doubts by appointing Sister Mary Alexine Gosselin, Mother Superior, and imposing on her shoulders the burden of foundress of the Sisterhood in La Grange. The entire financial resources of the Community on that day were a meagre thirty-three cents. No definite source of income had been established; for a period of three weeks the Sisters subsisted solely on food that had been donated. A temporary means of support yielded the sum of thirty-five dollars. This project, in reality a humble soliciting campaign, was made possible by a generous printer who offered his services gratis, and a gift of five dollars for stamps contributed by Mrs. John Blaser of La Grange.

In October of 1900, the first "Nazareth Academy" was opened in the residence which had been rented by the Sisters. This house, located at 120 Spring Avenue in La Grange, consisted of six rooms; since living accommodations and classroom space had to be provided for both teachers and pupils, the house did not adequately fulfil its purpose.

Meanwhile, the fund-raising campaign, which by this time had netted seventy-five dollars, continued. Greatly encouraged, Mother Alexine (after a serious interview with St. Joseph) approached a Chicago banker in regard to financing the erection of a building which would serve as a motherhouse as well as a school. Be it said to the credit of the financier, or to the intervention of St. Joseph—who knows?—that Mother's disclosure of the Community's collateral did not result in the gentleman's death from a heart attack. Mother Alexine attributed this to a natural cause: The financier thought that she was deliberately understating her securities. More probably the banker's keen judgment of human nature led him to regard her as "a good risk" and it was his personal judgment of Mother Alexine that persuaded him to make a "character loan without any specific collateral."

With courage undaunted and enthusiasm running high, Mother Alexine began to draw plans for the proposed building. First a site must be selected; then the site must be purchased. Before this could be done at







least part of the money must be at hand. To help raise the sum required, Mrs. John Blaser and Miss Jean Fox of La Grange, with other members of St. Francis Xavier Parish, sponsored a benefit bazaar. It netted almost a thousand dollars and enabled Mother Alexine to purchase the site on which Nazareth Academy was later built, a parcel of land located at Ogden and Brainard Avenues. A few items of interest on the bazaar as reported by the "Suburban News" follow:

Among the attractions was the fish-pond, which was arranged in the center of the hall, decorated in the oriental colors; from the ceiling was suspended the American flag, a relic of the Cuban War. This interesting feature was designed by Mrs. J. A. Marshall.

Friday afternoon from two to five o'clock a "tea" sponsored by Mrs. F. D. Cossitt, was given at the bazaar . . . A quartette composed of the Misses Harbison and McAllister, Professor Drill and Mr. H. G. Lytton, manager of the "Hub", fittingly closed the program of the evening . . .

Mr. P. H. O'Donnell . . . was the winner of the beautiful doll donated by Mrs. Carter H. Harrison.

By this time the Community had opened a novitiate; candidates had begun to ask to be admitted into the Congregation. And at about this time Sister Mary Bernard Gosselin, Mother Mary Alexine's own sister, also a member of the Concordia community, came to La Grange to aid her sister in the labors of the new foundation. Among the pioneer Sisters whose faith and courage were of the sturdy type that remains firm and undismayed by trials and opposition were Sister Mary Theresa Lanoue,<sup>1</sup> Sister Mary Aloysius Lawlor, Sister Mary Thomas Joynt, and Sister Mary Anthony Fritz.<sup>2</sup> To their tireless energy and their determined

1. Died July 31, 1914.

2. Died January 29, 1946



courage and especially to the deep faith which inspired these Sisters and their enthusiastic leader, Mother Mary Alexine, the Sisters owe the success of the La Grange foundation. They dug the foundations deep, so that they might also be strong and secure. They acquired for their Community one of its greatest assets, namely, the respect, confidence, and esteem of the priests and people of the archdiocese.

The work of these pioneers was not easy. They rose early; they labored far into the night. In summer they suffered from the stifling heat of their attic rooms; in winter they almost froze in the extreme cold of their dormitories, unheated as a result of a fuel shortage. The Sisters "almost" froze; on many a winter morning they found the water in their wash basins actually frozen into a solid cake of ice. As a by-product of their experience, these pioneers could offer to the feminine world a valuable beauty hint: The application of ice to one's face at five o'clock in the morning keeps the complexion ruddy and helps to preserve one's appearance youthful.

Three times every day there was the problem of meals. Food was plentiful but money with which to buy it was scarce. And Sisters who worked hard for long hours brought to the table with them at each meal plenty of that "best sauce," hunger. The Congregation will never forget, nor does it hope ever in this life to repay, the debt it owes to the Chicago wholesale grocer, Mr. John Sexton, who extended the Sisters' credit for groceries far in excess of the limits of reason. Their debt of gratitude can never be repaid; thanks be to God, the grocery bill was eventually paid.

After several more conferences with the Chicago banker, an understanding was reached; the "deal" was closed. Not only was the money for new building promised; this generous benefactor made many trips to La Grange personally to supervise the construction of the academy. Only the charity of this "friend in need" and his confidence in the ability of the Sisters to succeed, made possible the erection of the Sisters' first motherhouse in La Grange.

In June, 1901, the work of excavating (plain digging in those days) for the foundation of the motherhouse got under way. Hopes ran high and the hearts of the Sisters beat lighter; soon they would have their very own home. What matter if their working hours were lengthened; what difference if their meals became more frugal? Every sacrifice they made became an integral part of their new motherhouse. And every sacrifice they made was molding more surely and completely the fundamental spirit of the Congregation, the spirit upon which its success and achievements, whether in the past, the present, or the future, absolutely depend—the spirit of unselfish, generous, even heroic giving—giving to God, giving to one's neighbor, giving oneself wholly and unreservedly to be



used as an instrument of Divine grace to others. These pioneer Sisters were not only "digging" for the material foundation of the building; they were also, by their spirit of humble sacrifice, digging deep down into the bedrock of faith, building a solid foundation to support the superstructure of that spiritual edifice they hoped to rear *ad majorem Dei gloriam*, "to the greater glory of God"—their Congregation.

Building operations, someone has said, invariably have their "ups and downs." But the "downs" encountered in the erection of Nazareth were few in number and of short duration. The tactics employed by Mother Alexine to keep the workmen "on the job" were less complicated than those in use today. It must, of course, be remembered that she did not have labor unions to consider; there was no fear of anyone's being asked to produce a union membership card.

One hot, sunny Monday morning during the summer of 1901, the bricklayers decided that they needed a rest. They slunk into the tall grass of the surrounding fields and lay down to recover from the effects of a "spirited" weekend. When the foreman told Mother Alexine that the men could not be prevailed upon to work, she quickly sent a message to the Sisters. More quickly still they responded; pinning up their long billowy skirts and donning their denim aprons, they hurried to the low brick wall where Mother Alexine and the foreman, all set for action, awaited them. The foreman took orders from Mother Alexine (he was working for her, wasn't he?) and the Sisters, bricklayers at the moment, took orders from the foreman. No statistical evidence on the number of bricks they laid is available. But the records testify to the effectiveness of the strategy employed by Mother Alexine, for they tell us that the workmen, roused from their stolen slumber by the sound of unusual activity, hurried to resume their task of laying bricks. Whether their motivating force was embarrassment at seeing the Sisters working in their stead or fear of the kind of brick wall the Sisters would "lay up," the records do not state. That the bricklayers were gentlemen of high principle is proven by the fact that they reimbursed the Sisters for their time and labor, paying them their earnings immediately in the amount of seventeen dollars.

The cornerstone of the new building was laid on July 14, 1901. By Christmas of that year, part of the building was ready for occupancy. This was indeed a happy and blessed Christmas for the Sisters of St. Joseph. God had enriched their humble, arduous efforts with His blessings; their cherished dream was realized; their fervent prayer was answered; they now had a convent home.

"Unless the Lord build the house he labors in vain that builds it." For three successive years, near the feast of Christmas, fire broke out in various parts of the house. The damage was serious but not irreparable;



the trials God permitted kept the Sisters humble; His provident watchfulness over them kept them happy.

More candidates sought membership in the Community; more pupils attended the Academy. The sword of Damocles had been removed from the convent door; the Sisters no longer lived in extreme want, although available funds were never proportionate to the needs of the growing Community. As a means of increasing their income, the Sisters for a number of years published a school magazine, "Nazareth Chimes," spending the summer vacation "chiming," or soliciting subscriptions to their magazine. At another time it was decided to take in laundry work to help meet expenses; an outbreak of measles among the resident students placed the laundry in "quarantine" since its patrons refused to send in their laundry. Fortunately for all concerned, the Sisters decided to make the "quarantine" permanent.

After the first ten years of struggle and hardship, the Congregation entered upon a new decade, a decade of growth and expansion. In 1909, a residence opposite Nazareth Academy was purchased and converted into a school for boys. In 1912 the Sisters launched their first "missionary" project; they opened a parochial school, Mt. Carmel School, in Chicago Heights. The fledglings were strong enough now to venture into new fields of labor.

Other parochial schools opened in the years from 1912 to 1916 were St. Bonaventure and St. Anthony (Kensington) in Chicago, Mt. Carmel School in Melrose Park, and St. Francis Xavier in La Grange.

A few years earlier another significant move had been made by Mother Alexine; it involved a business transaction of immense importance to the Sisters of St. Joseph, influencing their future development more perhaps than anyone realized.

A half mile west of Nazareth Academy lay an eighty-acre tract of farm and wooded land, known by some as the Babcock estate and by others as the Leitch farm. Mother Alexine wished to purchase this parcel of land. Friends, business advisers, ecclesiastical superiors, all discouraged her, or tried to do so. What use, they argued, did a small Community of Sisters have for so large a piece of land? Their holdings at the time would serve their needs for many years to come. Why burden the Community, they asked, by incurring a debt for the purchase of "a farm" which the Sisters did not need and would not use, and which would in the end prove to be "an albatross" hung about their necks?

No one, it seemed, had anything to contribute to the problem excepting "cold water"; of that there was plenty. But to an enthusiast like Mother Alexine, cold water acts as a strong stimulus. With clear, far-sighted vision, Mother evaluated the pros and cons of the matter. She had no money. But St. Joseph would see to it that some generous individual of



means would supply the money if God willed her to purchase the property. Her Community was small. But, reasoned Mother, it would not long remain so. Had not the rapidly increasing enrollment at Nazareth Academy already obliged the Sisters to relinquish their portion of the building and once more to establish their sleeping quarters in the attic? More property *would* be needed if more buildings were to be erected. More buildings would have to be provided if the Community membership was to increase. The Leitch farm was available at a reasonable cost; the Leitch farm would perfectly suit the Community's needs; she would buy the Leitch farm.

A trip to New York, a visit to an influential business man, a convincing presentation of the Sisters' need, some time for consideration of the matter as requested by the financier, considerable influence on the part of St. Joseph, the exact nature of which remains unknown, and, just as Mother Alexine had visualized it, on the feast of St. Joseph in the year 1911, there arrived at Nazareth Academy a letter postmarked New York and addressed to Mother Mary Alexine, containing—of course you have guessed it—a check, signed by Mr. Thomas F. Ryan, in the amount of \$10,000—the sum required as a down payment on the Leitch farm.

Succeeding years proved the absolute correctness of Mother Alexine's judgment. On the "Leitch farm" now stands St. Joseph Military Academy, accommodating one hundred fifty boys. Among its chief attractions are its vast football field and its extensive campus. Several hundred feet west of St. Joseph's, Our Lady of Bethlehem Academy houses a boarding school for two hundred girls, the novitiate or training school for those preparing to become Sisters of St. Joseph and, temporarily, it is being used also as a motherhouse. When the building as planned is completed, the Sisters will have an entirely separate unit as their motherhouse; there will be a beautiful although simple chapel large enough to accommodate both Sisters and students simultaneously, and an infirmary for Sisters who are ill. In addition, there will be ample space for baseball diamonds, tennis courts, a swimming pool, a dozen or more cabins for camping, and, over and above all these, there will still be acres of wooded campus for those who enjoy hiking or nature study or skating and sledding, as the season indicates. No wonder that the memory of Mother Alexine is recalled each time some glorious autumnal or winter campus scene bursts upon the Sisters' vision. Spring, summer, autumn, winter—each season reveals anew the startling wonders of nature and each new wonder deepens the gratitude of the Sisters to Mother Alexine for having procured for her "dear Community" the "old Leitch farm."

St. Joseph Academy was built in 1912; a dormitory was added in 1918, and a classroom unit in 1948. Our Lady of Bethlehem Academy was erected in 1926, twenty-five years after the Sisters so inauspiciously began



their foundation in La Grange. God blessed their humble beginnings and caused them to bear fruit both spiritually and materially—can we not say, one hundred fold?

Now, in the year 1950, the Congregation is once more engaged in a colossal construction program, this time at the place of its first venture into building. When Nazareth Academy was built, La Grange and all the nearby suburbs were small villages. Means of transportation were few; the days at the turn of the century were literally "horse and buggy" days. Few girls living out of La Grange could attend Nazareth Academy unless they became resident students. Today the population of the suburban towns is counted in thousands and tens of thousands instead of in hundreds; all around, new villages have arisen on what fifty years ago was prairie land. Busses, trains, and autos transport pupils to and from school. As a result of these changes, the facilities of the old Nazareth, including the wing added in 1922, became inadequate as well as outmoded. Today, adjacent to the old school, extending northward three hundred fifty feet, an entirely new high school is nearing completion. It provides accommodations for eight hundred girls. In addition to the academic section, the new high school includes an auditorium, a cafeteria, and a gymnasium. The "old Nazareth," the cradle of the Sisterhood in La Grange, now furnishes living quarters to members of the faculty and resident students. It is no longer a school, strictly speaking; it will always be a "Nazareth," a home patterned upon that home of which St. Joseph was the head, the home of the Holy Family.

The laying of the cornerstone of this new Nazareth on October 2, 1949, was the last public function at which Mother Alexine was able to be present. Long before that time, she had been relieved of the burdens of the office of general superior. Although enfeebled by ill health, Mother Alexine had lost nothing of her enthusiastic interest and concern for all that bore any relation to Nazareth, or to any matter that concerned her "dear Community." Confined to her room during most of the last few years of her life, she nevertheless kept herself well informed on the progress being made on the new school. St. Joseph was commissioned by her to watch over the construction of this new Nazareth as he had of the first Academy fifty years ago, as indeed he had watched over the first Nazareth two thousand years ago, and directed with loving care, the progress of the first Nazareth Student, as He "grew in age, in wisdom and in grace before God and men."

Having made a remarkable recovery from a serious illness in 1949, Mother Alexine, despite a noticeable diminution of her physical powers, planned with undiminished enthusiasm for the double celebration to be held in October, 1950, the three hundredth anniversary of the foundation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in France and their golden jubilee in La Grange.



What memories were evoked by thoughts of those first fifty years! No one so well as she could compare, or contrast, the present status of the Community with the first days of its struggle for existence. How much opposition she had experienced; how many hardships she had endured! How frequently in the course of those early days, had she had occasion to recall with profit the counsel of the poet, Francis Thompson, in the lines of "Lilium Regis,"

*"Sit fast upon thy stalk, when the blast shall with thee talk,  
With the mercies of thy King for thine awning;*

*Lift up thy head and hark what sounds are in the dark,  
For His feet are coming to thee on the waters!"*

Now that her life was drawing to a close, all her trials of the past were regarded as blessings; indeed, for every one of them she was grateful to God.

Throughout the days and far into the night, Mother Alexine reminisced and planned and prayed and hoped. She planned programs to honor the double celebration; she prayed that God would bless all the Sisters and their friends and benefactors on the occasion of the jubilee. And she hoped, yes, she hoped against hope that God would lengthen her days so that she might participate in the joys and blessings of the jubilee celebration.

After several months of gradually increasing weakness during the late spring of 1950, Mother Alexine abandoned the hope of living until the time of the jubilee. Her thoughts turned to God and to the things of Heaven. Always mindful of the interests of her "dear Community," her last words expressed to the Sisters her comforting message: "Tell the Sisters—if I am not here at the time of the jubilee, I shall be with them in spirit." God did not will that she be "here." On the morning of Sunday, July ninth, Mother relinquished into the hands of the Eternal Father her determination to live; she was resigned to die. One by one, quickly and quietly, the forces of nature surrendered. So gently flowed the last stray sands of life that no one could say at just what moment on that July evening the peace that enveloped her paid tribute to the summons of death.

Sixty-five years a Sister of St. Joseph. What an enviable record! Fifty years of guidance and inspiration to the Sisters in La Grange! What an immeasurable debt of gratitude is due her! Foundress of the Sisters of St. Joseph of La Grange! Was it not fitting that, at the time of the Sisters' golden jubilee, her great soul should be summoned to present to their Beloved Master the Sisters' and her own golden offering of their fifty years of service? Are these Sisters not her "dear Community"? Ought she not to represent them at the throne of God on the occasion of their golden jubilee? May not that be the reason why, in the designs of God, Mother Alexine was destined not to be "here" for the fiftieth anniversary celebration?



*Always* she "will be with them in spirit." For the jubilee in which Mother Alexine is participating knows not the limitations of time; it is the eternal song of rapturous joy that bursts from the souls of those who "follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." May the echo of her unending song of joy be felt in the heart of every Sister of her "dear Community" especially on their day of golden jubilee.

**THE  
VINEYARD  
GROWS**

The laws of the Church, called canon law, do not ordinarily permit Sisters to hold the office of general superior for more than two successive terms. According to the Rules of the Sisters of St. Joseph, the superior general's term of office is six years; twelve consecutive years is the maximum length of time during which a Sister of St. Joseph may remain general superior. From this it will be understood that, periodically, in every religious community, there is a change in the officers of administration. Since the Community of Sisters of St. Joseph in La Grange was in the early stages of its development, some leniency was shown by ecclesiastical superiors in the matter of Mother Alexine's remaining in office. After the Community had taken firm root the rules concerning tenure of office were enforced.

On July 3, 1918, Mother Mary Patricia D'Arcy was elected to the office of Mother Superior. Mother Mary Michael McCullagh<sup>1</sup> was her assistant. Let it not be thought that when the mantle of authority fell upon the shoulders of Mother Patricia there were no unsolved problems; the number she inherited was still legion. One of the remarkable accomplishments of her term of office was the reduction of the Community debt from the sum of \$198,000 to \$40,000. These days, it must be remembered, were pre-inflation days. They were the "good old days" when a dime, going into Woolworth's, was not made to feel like a nickel. That the Sisters were well pleased with the administration and accomplishments of Mother Mary Patricia and Mother Mary Michael may be known from the fact that in 1924, at the termination of their first period of office, they were re-elected. During the decade of years from 1920 to 1930 the Sisters extended their parochial school work to include the schools of St. Margaret

1. Died April 17, 1943



Mother Mary Thomas



Mother Mary Aloysius



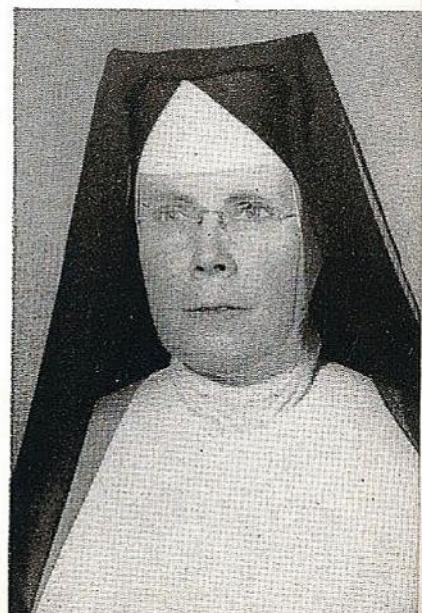
Mary in Chicago, Assumption School in Coal City, St. Mary in West Chicago, St. Attracta in Cicero, St. Barbara in Brookfield, St. Leonard in Berwyn, St. Hugh in Lyons, and St. Mary in Riverside. By far the most magnificent achievement of Mother Mary Patricia's administration was the erection of Our Lady of Bethlehem Academy, referred to earlier in this history. Here may be noted the opening of parochial schools at a later date in the parishes of St. Isaac Jogues, Hinsdale, the Divine Infant, Westchester, and St. John Fisher in Chicago.

At the July, 1930 chapter of election Mother Mary Thomas Joynt, one of the pioneer members of the Community, was elected Superior, and Mother Mary Aloysius Lawlor, another of the pioneers and undoubtedly the most widely known Sister in the Community, became Mother Assistant. Administration was rendered doubly difficult during their years of office by the prevailing world-wide economic depression which affected everyone but from which schools seemed to suffer most. Everyone knows that the salary given to Sisters teaching in parochial schools is at no time large; during this period of depression some of the Community's work was carried on without financial remuneration. Attendance at the boarding schools in La Grange reached an all-time low. In one thing only there was no shadow of change or alteration. Interest dates came round as regularly as the days of the week, and payments on principal were due on interest dates. Under the prudent direction of these two Sisters the Community safely weathered the storm of the depression. In July of 1936 the Sisters paid to these pioneer leaders their finest possible tribute. They re-elected Mother Mary Thomas and Mother Mary Aloysius to office for a second six-year term.

At the next general election in 1942, two former students of Nazareth, Sisters Mary Walburga Dieter and Sister Mary David Hayes, were elected Mother Superior and Mother Assistant respectively. Under their leadership, the remainder of the debt on the motherhouse was liquidated. Plans were immediately drawn for the greatly enlarged, up-to-date high school already in use although not completely equipped, which will replace the Nazareth built in 1901.



Mother Mary Patricia



Mother Mary David



It seems fitting and proper that the year that marks the fiftieth anniversary of the coming of the Sisters of St. Joseph to La Grange should be dedicated to the erection of a new high school in the hope that "a better Nazareth" will produce "a better woman," and "a better woman" will make this "a better world."

FROM  
GENERATION  
TO  
GENERATION

Three hundred years have passed since the first Sisters of St. Joseph knelt before their Divine Master in the tabernacle of their simple chapel at Le Puy, and asked to be clothed in the habit that would identify them as religious, without imposing upon them the restrictions of the cloister. Their request, in the designs of Providence, was granted. They were sent by their founders as "mothers to the bedside of the sick, to the attics of the poor, into isolated huts, to far-distant missions among savages, even to the soldiers' camps, 'with the city streets and highways for your convent, obedience for your cloister, the fear of God for your grate, and holy modesty for your veil.'"

Wherever a foundation of the Sisters of St. Joseph is made, whatsoever the age, wheresoever the clime, its first days are days of hardship, difficulty, and oftentimes of bitter opposition. These are the means God uses to render fertile the soil in which the seed of the foundation is planted. So long as the members of the Community keep active in their souls the spirit that animated their holy founders, it matters little what trials or difficulties assail the religious; they will never result in disaster. The spirit of a religious community is to the individual religious "a pillar of cloud" by day and "a pillar of fire" by night, guiding and directing her, leading her gently through the devious paths of life to the promised land of her heavenly Spouse.

Countless were the sufferings endured by those courageous women who were the first to be known as Sisters of St. Joseph. Innumerable too are the blessings God lavished upon these Sisters in the days of their humble beginnings in France. Then, as always, adversities meekly borne fructify in fragrant flowers of humility and gracious love.

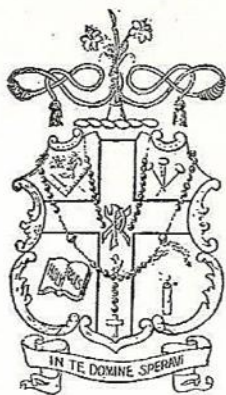
Countless are the blessings God bestowed upon those Sisters who, fifty years ago, left the security of their convent home in Concordia, Kansas, to brave the trials of an uncertain future in a new establishment of the Sisterhood in La Grange. Ranking high among these blessings are those faithful friends who, from the first days of the Sisters' presence among them, gave unstintingly of their time and their services, who shared generously with the Sisters the gifts with which God had enriched them. High among the friends of these fifty years are the Christ-like priests whose example has inspired, whose counsel has impelled, and whose guidance has enabled the Sisters to walk joyfully the way of the Blessed Christ. Special recognition is due to the prelates—monsignori, bishops,



archbishops, those in particular who were friends of the Sisterhood during its formative years, and above all to His Eminence, prince and leader of the great archdiocese of Chicago, Samuel Cardinal Stritch—for their contribution to the growth and development of the Community. Thanks be to God for their patient instruction, their wise direction, and their kind paternal encouragement; the deeply spiritual leadership of the shepherds of the flock has helped to preserve in the Congregation that spirit of humble charity from which stemmed the grandeur of its past and which, with God's blessings, will be the glory of its future.

God be praised! God be thanked! God be forever glorified for the gifts of His love, His grace, and His blessings so lavishly bestowed throughout the first half century of their history upon the least of His children, the Sisters of St. Joseph of La Grange, Illinois. From the heart of every Sister there rises to God on this occasion a prayer of grateful thanksgiving to God for His gift to her of her "dear Community." As she pauses at the milestone of its fiftieth anniversary, reflecting on the wondrous ways in which God has directed its course, whatever may be the words of her prayer of praise and thanks, its theme will be a humble joyful "Magnificat."

**TE DEUM  
LAUDAMUS**









## To Mother Mary Alexine

### In Memoriam

The Creator drafted a blueprint.

It was vast.

It was great.

It was good.

And He chose from among His creatures

A builder, who would build to the pattern printed.

Deeply she dug the foundation,

Valiantly surmounted obstacles,

Lovingly pursued the task.

And her work was a praising song.

Laborers, whom He had chosen, came.

From far and from near they came.

With eager stride they came to make the blueprint live.

It was priceless wage they wanted

As they builded side by side.

It was priceless wage He offered,

If they followed the Planner's guide:

An everlasting glory!

An eternal span of gladness!

An endless surge of joy!

Now the Creator watches a work well-done.

He smiles—and His smile reassures.

He gazes—and His gaze caresses.

With the touch of His hand in blessing

The blueprint has turned to gold.

Golden the longing prayers uttered,

Golden the suffering endured,

Golden the wish to build higher,

And higher,

And higher,

Until heaven is lured to harbor

The souls that the Blueprinter sketched

In His plan.







J. M. J.

Our Lady of Bethlehem Academy

1000 West Ogden Avenue

La Grange Park, Illinois

October 2, 1950

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

Upon me rests the responsibility of discharging the Sisters' tremendous debt of gratitude to their friends. Fifty years blessed with the kindness of innumerable friends! Friends whose assistance during the early days literally sustained the Sisters; zealous priests who gave unstintingly to the young Community of their wisdom and their experience! Who can estimate the blessings that came to the Community in its infancy, through the Sisters' close association with distinguished churchmen like Bishop O'Brien, Monsignor Purcell, and the late Bishop Kelley? Other priests, too, chaplains, confessors, instructors, spiritual advisers - noble, zealous priests too numerous to be counted, not to speak of the prelates who shared and still share so generously the riches of their spiritual heritage; the extent of the Sisters' indebtedness can not be measured.

Numerous other friends there were to ease the hardships of the first difficult years; other friends there are today, friends in high places, friends walking the lowly path of the laborer, each contributing to the growth and development of the Congregation according to the nature of his talents and abilities.

To our parents and the beloved members of our families a special word of appreciation is due. Every Sister is personally indebted to her parents for having prepared her for her vocation by their training and good example. The entire Congregation is indebted to the good mothers and fathers of all the Sisters for their gracious willingness to extend the confines of their hearts to include all the adopted sisters of their own beloved daughter.

A Sister lives very close to the tabernacle of the Divine Lover to Whose Heart she has been espoused forever. Unceasingly there rises from her heart to His her prayer of gratitude. "Vouchsafe, O Lord, to reward with eternal life all those who do us good." The daily repetition of this prayer we ask you to accept, not in payment of your kindness but in lieu of payment. To this prayer we add the simple promise, knowing with certainty that at some time it will be fulfilled, "Have patience. He will pay thee all."

God love and keep and bless you.

Gratefully yours,

*Mother Mary Walburga, C.S.J.*

Mother Superior





*Walking in Her Footsteps*





*Now while my heart is young and my senses are alive I come . . .*



to return God's best gift - my youth - back to Him.  
God loves my youth as I love it.  
Let me love and serve Him now,  
when my youth and service are of some use to Him.  
I cannot wait till I am old and useless.  
Now while my soul has the charm and freshness of early morn,  
I draw near to my God Who giveth joy to my youth.





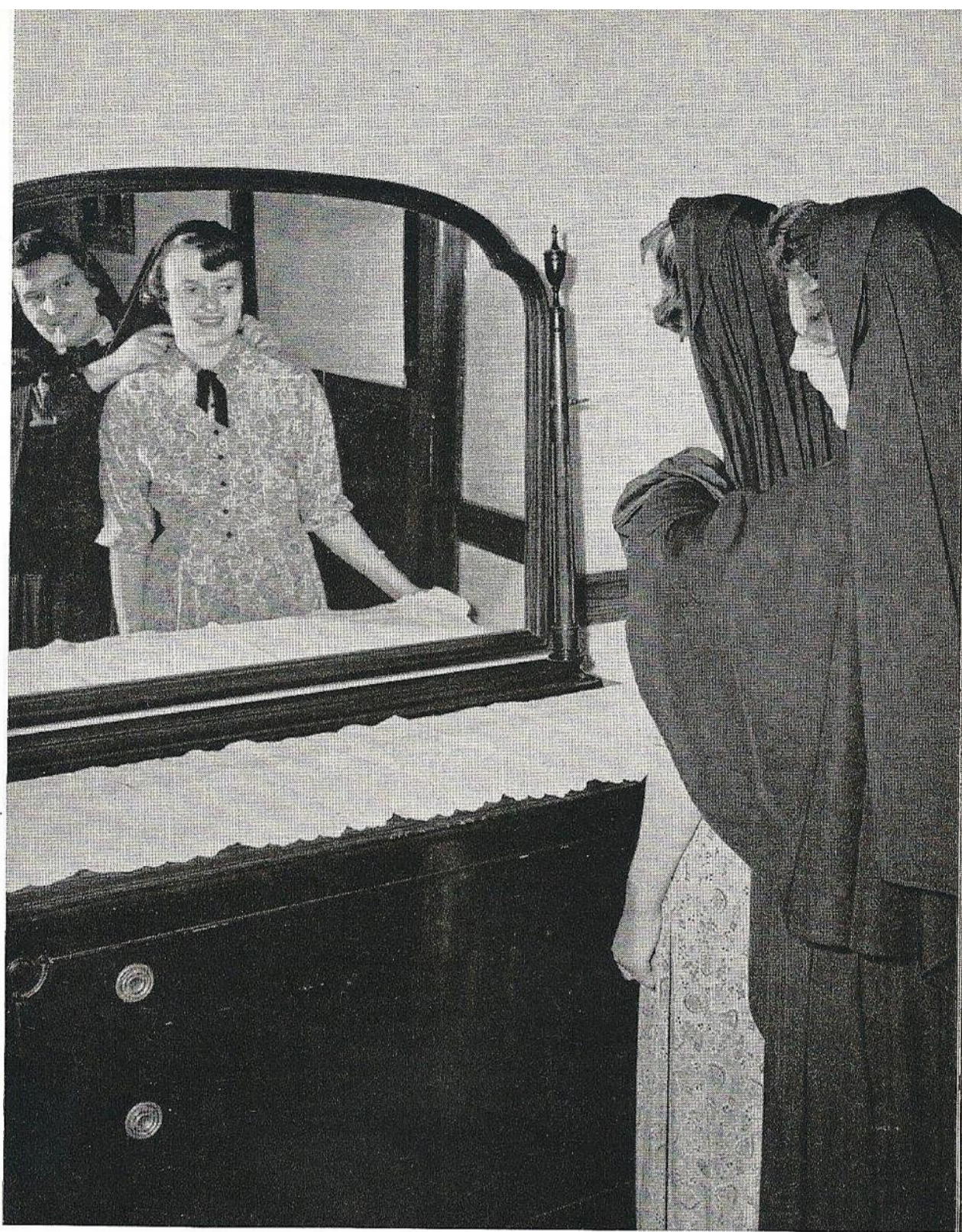
*Please let me see how far I can return it to Him!*





*I am most willing to give up the trinkets and tinsel*





*for the simple but beautiful gown of Lady Poverty.*





*I sincerely sacrifice the joys - and pains - of homelife*





*to bring happiness to hundreds of children, His "little ones".*





*Dressed in white I happily become a bride - the bride of Christ*





*and I pledge myself forever to labor for Him . . .*





*to give the little ones the necessary tools of life . . .*





*readin', writin' and 'rithmetic, instructing the mind!*





*To introduce the finer sciences of music and art*





*broadening the horizons that lead to a fuller life for God.*





*Mothering the children away from home, tucking in a small lad*





*or taking care of the little accidents that will inevitably happen.*





*But most of all taking the children to the feet*





*the Eucharistic King, the Center of all our lives.*





*The first act of faith I meticulously pattern*





*and garner each rose of Mary's beads with guiding fingers.*





*I will teach the love of God best by demonstration*





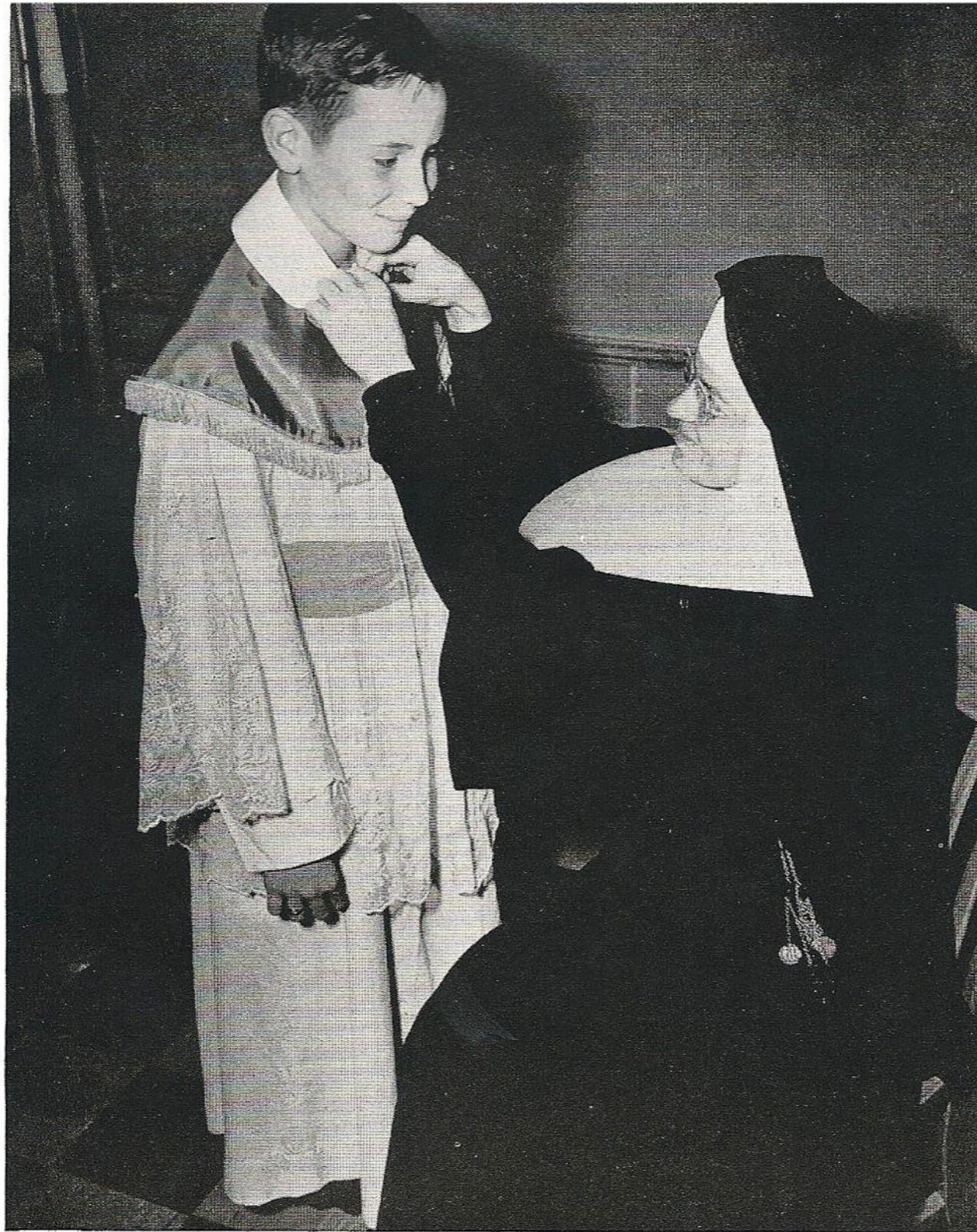
*and inspire the love of neighbor by reasonable counsel.*





*As my God-given charges grow, I will train them for motherhood*





*or for the glorious service in the labor of the Lord.*





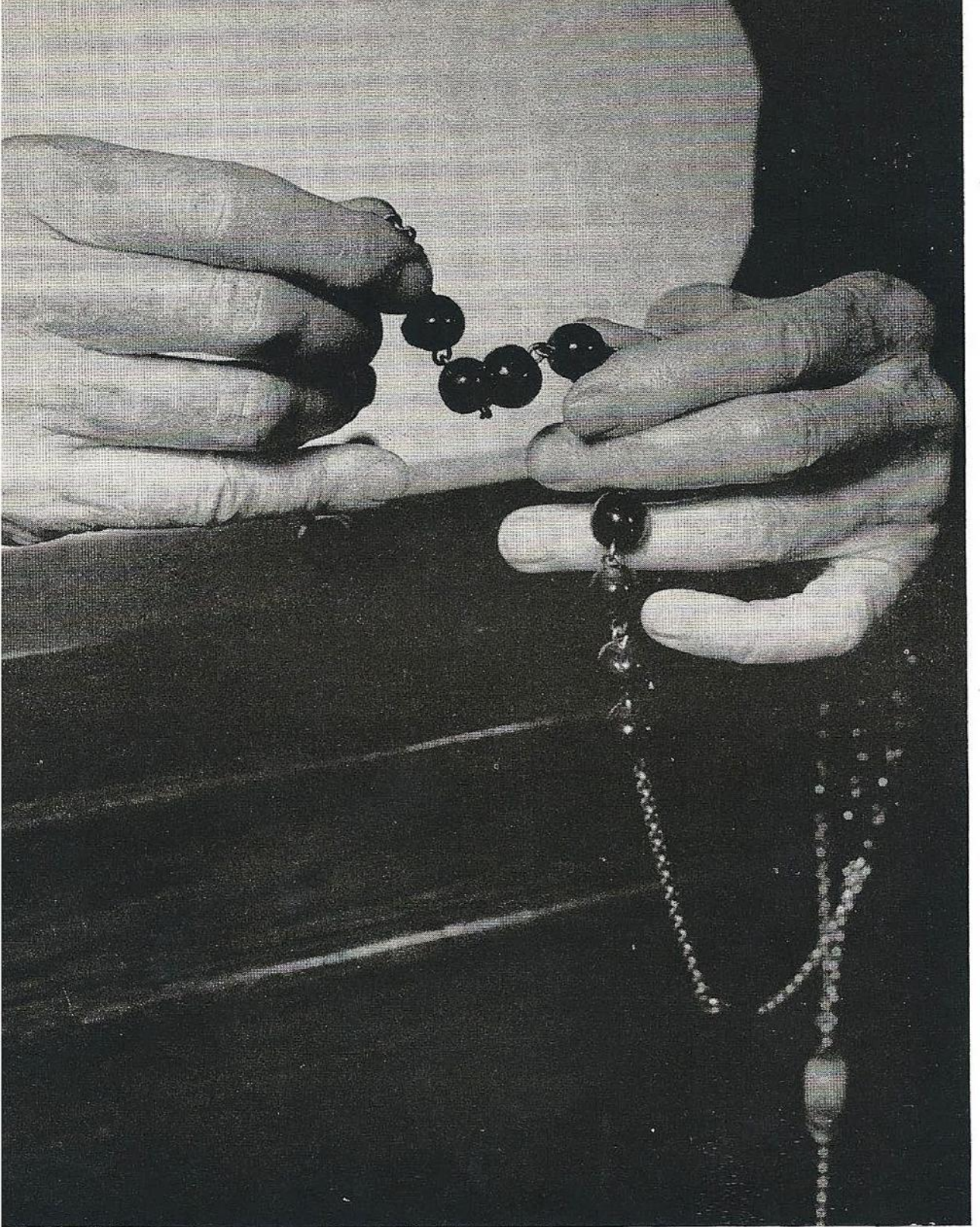
*But in all and above all, I will serve God in all things . . .*





*high and low, they all play a part in my mission for God.*





*And in the silence of my room, though my hands be wrinkled*



*I will pray that I will have spent my life  
only for Him.*

*My thanksgiving prayer will be:  
that that self-same God, Christ my King,  
going broken and lonely to His death,  
looked forward through the centuries to me  
of this generation of Christian youth,  
and foreseeing my generous response to His appeal,*





*went to His death comforted!*



## Thank You

Scores of people contributed to the success of this jubilee program. Some gave financial support, others gave and gave generously of their time; many devoted their efforts to perfecting the various phases of the pageant and other jubilee activities.

To all who assisted them, the Sisters acknowledge their indebtedness; to each person individually they wish to say, "Thank you and may God bless you."

Theodore Wysocki, Photography  
Blomgren Bros., Engraving  
Paluch Publications, Production



