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SKETCH OF HER LIFE

SISTER M. LUCIDA SAVAGE, C.S.J.

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A SKETCH

of

THE LIFE OF
MOTHER MARY AGNES ROSSITER

by

SISTER MARY LUCIDA SAVAGE

of

The Congregation of St. Joseph of Carondelet

43113

1947
Mother House
6400 MINNESOTA AVENUE
St. Louis 11, Missouri

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MOTHER MARY AGNES ROSSITER

Fifth Superior General

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FOREWORD

This sketch of our beloved Mother Agnes is the work of Sister Lucida, prepared for the press by Sister Anne Catherine. Sister Lucida's long association with Mother Agnes was an admirable preparation for the picture you will find in these pages so truly representative of one who for nineteen years held the position of Superior General of the Congregation of St. Joseph of Carondelet and executed its duties with much distinction and generosity of spirit.

Today when the new and the cheap and the tawdry would seem to be so largely replacing the more permanent values in life, when the world seems to seethe in a ferment of change, it is refreshing to read the life of a person of the calibre of Mother Agnes. Calmly she met each new movement, whether in scholastic circles or in the domain yet dearer to her, the life of her religious Sisters, looked it in the face, appraised its value and gave assent if she believed it would further the great aim by which her life was colored, the glory of God.

Mother Agnes was exceedingly retiring. A casual acquaintance gave no indication of her character: of her splendid judgment, her keen powers of discrimination, her superb self-control, her appreciation of good in others and her ready

commendation of it. These were the qualities that won the respect of those outside the Community with whom she came in contact, and the devoted regard and allegiance of her own Sisters. Mother Agnes was never so happy as in the company of her Sisters as the details in the following pages show.

Let us be true to her ideals and standards, allowing nothing of good in the past to slip from us, but welcoming all that is of signal worth in the new, so that as we increase in number and influence each member of our dear Community may mirror the true Sister of St. Joseph exemplified so well in Mother Agnes.

Sister Mary Pius Neenan
Superior General

St. Joseph's Mother House
Saint Louis, Missouri

MOTHER MARY AGNES ROSSITER

I

"Mother Mary Agnes reproduced in her own life the virtues of your patron, St. Joseph. She was just, faithful, prudent. She was known to all as a saintly leader."

The late John Cardinal Glennon thus eulogized the fifth Superior General of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet after an association with her of almost forty years, for her administration was nearly co-extensive with his incumbency in the archbishopric.

Reverend Mother Mary Agnes Rossiter was born on June 29, 1858, at Rockland, Michigan, of Irish parents, Patrick and Anna McGinniss Rossiter. Deprived by death at the age of three of a loving mother, Catherine, as she was christened, with a younger sister and brother was tenderly reared by a devoted and pious grandmother, who left nothing undone to instil into the hearts of her young charges principles of the highest virtue and a deep love of Holy Mother Church. Catherine as a child attended the schools of her native city, and was later sent to St. Joseph's Academy, Marquette, Michigan, taught by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, from St. Louis, Missouri.

This was one of the very early academies of the Congregation, having been established in 1870 under Mother de Chantal Martin as its first superior. At the time of Catherine

Rossiter's entrance as a boarder, the academy had attained a high reputation among the schools of the Congregation in the North. It enrolled among its students daughters of the best families in Marquette, and boarders came from distant parts of the country. The docile and attractive little girl proved an apt pupil. Early evincing a fondness for music, she was trained along musical lines. On completing her course in the academy, she entered at the age of eighteen the Novitiate of the Sisters of St. Joseph, at that time located at Nazareth Convent, St. Louis County, Missouri.

Nazareth, an estate of sixty acres of farm land situated five miles from the Mother House, Carondelet, was purchased by Reverend Mother St. John Facemaz during her term of office, and buildings were erected on it to serve as a home for the aged and infirm Sisters of the Congregation. It was later thought to be ideally located for a novitiate, and the novices were accordingly moved here in the early 1870's. Mother St. John, after the completion of her term of office as Superior General, was appointed to Nazareth as Mistress of Novices. Here, Catherine Rossiter, her postulancy ended, received the habit on March 19, 1876, and the name Sister Mary Agnes of the Sacred Heart. Presiding at the ceremony was the Coadjutor Bishop, the Most Rev. Patrick J. Ryan, later Metropolitan of Philadelphia, and signing the new novice's act of reception was Reverend Mother Agatha Guthrie, third Superior General.

Then commenced her two years of novitiate. In this quiet and beautiful retreat, not only luxuries but many of the ordin-

ary comforts of life were unknown. Occasions were not wanting of practicing fortitude in an extraordinary degree. Many are the stories that have come down from those days of wood fires kindled in the early dawn of cold winter mornings; of excursions far afield to gather fresh corn husks for the poor pallet beds; of long rows of homely vegetables gathered in under the summer sun; of trees stripped of glowing fruit; or of vines denuded of the luscious grapes that were presently to be pressed into wine for the use of the altar. There were the recreations that relieved the tedium of long hours of study or of spiritual reading in which their devoted instructors knew well how to direct their eager young minds. The spirit of self-sacrifice was strong, and the injunction "Rejoice in the Lord always" faithfully followed by the novices made all burdens light.

In time Sister Felicite Boute, member of the pioneer band of 1836, beloved of old and young, came to spend her declining years in the seclusion of Nazareth. She diffused about her the gaiety and good humor so readily imbibed by the young, especially those of the child-like heart. Sister Felicite passed to her reward on September 23, 1881. She was followed a few years later by the chaplain, the Rev. J. M. Irenaeus St. Cyr, early apostle of the mid-West and founder of the first parish in Chicago, who after spending his last twenty years as chaplain and religious instructor at Nazareth, died there on February 23, 1883. Both rest in the convent cemetery, where the ever increasing number of mounds challenges the prayers of the living and reminds of the passing of time.

Nazareth as a Novitiate has long been a memory though a revered one. In its soil rest the ashes of illustrious leaders: pioneers who left home and country to cross a stormy ocean never to return; Superiors, general and local, who labored much for the advancement of the early Congregation; mistresses of novices and chaplains, whose direction, ever full of unction, served as a light to guide their young charges along the way of perfection; faithful missionaries from north, east, south, and west, returning home to rest beneath the pines; young and old whose beautiful lives brought down many blessings on the growing Congregation.

Here, on March 19, 1878, Sister Mary Agnes, with five companions--Sister Columbine Ryan, Sister Laurentine Ryan, Sister Salesia Early, Sister Aimee Callaghan, and Sister Aniceta Byrnes--pronounced final vows, for at that time final and perpetual vows were made after two years of novitiate.

She was almost immediately assigned to Mobile, Alabama, as a member of the faculty of St. Patrick's Academy, then a flourishing institution. The South, so recently the victim of an epidemic of yellow fever, was not yet immune, and young Sister Mary Agnes was among the Sisters of the academy attacked by the dread disease. One of these Sisters, Sister Catherine Aurelia Cashin, succumbed after a brief illness. Sister Mary Agnes recovered, however, and at the beginning of a new school term was sent as music teacher to St. Joseph's Academy, Marquette, Michigan, the school of her girlhood, in the hope that her native climate would be more congenial to her in the weakened state of her health.

She was accompanied from Mobile by the newly appointed Superior of St. Joseph's Academy, Mother M. De Pazzi O'Connor. Mother De Pazzi, a potent factor in the development of the academy from August, 1879, to April, 1893, was a native of St. Louis, a woman of fine character, high scholastic attainment, and deep spirituality. She exercised great influence in developing the talent and virtue of her young music teacher. When, in August, 1888, a change of superiors was called for at St. John's Convent, Ishpeming, Michigan, Sister Mary Agnes was assigned to that responsible position, continuing at the same time her instructions to the pupils in music. This post she held seven years.

In April, 1895, she returned to Marquette as head of St. Joseph's Academy, replacing her former superior, Mother De Pazzi, appointed to other fields of labor. In Marquette at this time, the Superior of the academy had also under her charge a small home for orphaned children, there being no other provision made in the city for these boys and girls. Mother Mary Agnes administered both charges with equal kindness, wisdom, and firmness, winning the love of all as well as their admiration and confidence. She was relieved of many active duties in the care of the orphans by Sister Mary Aurelia McGrath, a native of Platteville, Wisconsin, and in her later years a member of the Mother House community. It was in this mission that Mother Mary Agnes' endurance and her firm faith in Providence were tried to the utmost, for on February 21, 1903, there occurred a disastrous fire that completely destroyed the academy building and all its contents.

After successfully inaugurating the new Baraga School, elementary and high, which replaced the old academy,

Mother Mary Agnes was recalled to the Mother House in Carondelet in April, 1904. Here until December of that year she filled with the zeal and devotion which marked all her efforts, the position of Mistress of Novices, temporarily replacing Mother Mary Clotilda McCormick, removed to the novitiate in Los Angeles. In January, 1905, Mother Mary Agnes was appointed superior of the Academy of Our Lady in Peoria, a position left vacant by the death of Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart Hall. Here, also, Mother Agnes was greatly loved for her gentleness and unfailing kindness.

The general chapter of that year, May, 1905, elected Mother Agnes Gonzaga Ryan as Superior General and Mother Mary Agnes Rossiter as her assistant. This choice of Mother Mary Agnes gave universal satisfaction to the Sisters, but left many regrets in Peoria, where in her short regime she had done much to preserve the high standard of the academy. She was succeeded there by Mother Bernard Joseph Dunne, who had entered the Congregation from Kansas City, Mo., in 1887.

Mother Agnes then took up her abode at the Mother House in Carondelet, where she was to remain for over thirty years. Mother Agnes Gonzaga Ryan, the superior general whom she assisted for twelve years, was a native of Hancock, Michigan, and had been received into the Congregation in Troy, New York, in 1873 at the age of eighteen. After fulfilling successfully assignments as teacher and administrator, she became in 1896 a member of the General Council of Mother Agatha. Thus she received a providential

preparation for the responsibilities that in 1905 she assumed as Mother Agatha's successor. The latter had died in office on January 16, 1904, and the interim was filled by her assistant, Mother M. Gonzaga Grand. This was according to the statutes of the Congregation at the time. It was during this interim that a decision was obtained from the Holy See providing for a General Chapter and the election of a Superior General within three months after the death in office of one holding that position.

To the new Assistant General, Mother Mary Agnes Rossiter, the work of the government of the Congregation was not unfamiliar, for she had participated in three general chapters prior to the one which elected her to office in 1905. Her first experience was at the intermediate chapter of 1887, when she was among the youngest of the delegates, ranking thirty-sixth in a group of thirty-eight. She was a delegate likewise to two election chapters, those of 1890 and 1902, both of which returned Mother Agatha Guthrie to the generalship.

In her position as Assistant General, Mother Agnes gained a wide and varied experience. On her frequent visits with the Superior General to the houses of the Congregation, she learned to know the Sisters and she became familiar with their institutions in all parts of the country. Reverend Mother Agnes Gonzaga had implicit confidence in her Assistant, and relied much on her judgment and advice. The perfect harmony and beautiful friendship which existed between them was a source of edification to the Sisters and of spiritual strength to the community which they governed with ability and sympathy.

Mother Mary Agnes also became acquainted with the European communities of St. Joseph, having been one of the group of Superiors from St. Louis and St. Paul, headed by Reverend Mother Agnes Gonzaga, who went to Europe in the fall of 1908. In Rome they were graciously received by His Holiness, Pope Pius X. Matters of grave importance for the Congregation motivated this visit, and all were favorably considered by the Holy See. Among these matters was the status of the "lay" or aggregated Sisters, an institution which by request of the Carondelet community was entirely abolished as being incompatible with American ideals. This group comprised the Sisters who were engaged in the domestic duties of the Congregation. These were denied the right of active and passive voice in the community and other privileges enjoyed by the teaching and nursing Sisters. In the words of the Constitutions at present:

> The Sisters of our Congregation form only one class and are engaged principally in teaching and in works of charity.
>
> They may be employed in other duties of the convent when required by obedience to be so employed.

The request for these changes was a matter of much surprise to some of the Roman Cardinals approached on the subject, who evidently were not familiar with democratic customs and so not in sympathy with them.

In her report of the General Chapter of 1908, Reverend Mother Agnes Gonzaga writes thus of this visit to Rome:

That the success of the works of the Congregation at all times is due mainly to the prayers and the truly religious spirit of the Sisters in general is always conceded, and was particularly evident in the blessing that seemed to hover over everything connected with our visit to the Eternal City, where we were privileged to kneel at the feet of Christ's Vicar, our Most Holy Father, Pius X, and to hear from his lips words of encouragement and benediction for ourselves, for every member of our Congregation, for our benefactors, for our pupils and all others for whom we labor, and for our relatives.

It is not possible to name all who by acts of generosity, consideration and courtesy toward us showed esteem and love for the Congregation we represented. They will always have place in our prayers for benefactors. Mention must be made, however, of His Grace, Archbishop Glennon, of St. Louis, and His Grace, Archbishop Ireland, of St. Paul. Archbishop Glennon most kindly gave sanction and support to our plans, and while in Rome, just before our arrival there, said many good words of our Congregation to those whose interest it served our purpose to have, besides speaking to our Holy Father, and to several of the Cardinals, in approval of the special business which caused us to go to Rome. Without this kind approbation of the Archbishop, in whose jurisdiction the Mother House is, all efforts would have been vain. Archbishop Ireland, with whom we had the honor to go and come, gave without stint, his time, his advice and his interest, and by his knowledge of affairs and his influence smoothed away difficulties and greatly helped to bring to a happy issue the affairs of the Congregation which we had undertaken to lay before the Holy See. Let these two names be often on our lips in prayer.

While in Rome, Mother Agnes saw much of its monuments, especially its celebrated churches and the catacombs. The

party of Sisters also inspected the work being done in the galleries of Rome and Florence by two Sister artists, Sister Marie Therese Mackey and Sister Anysia Keating of the College of St. Catherine in St. Paul. As a result these were later joined by two Sisters from the St. Louis province, Sister Baptista Montgomery and Sister Natalie Brassiere.

During the five months spent in Europe, the Sisters knelt at many shrines and spent pleasant and profitable days with various religious communities, among them the Sisters of St. Joseph at the ancient Mother House of the Chartreuse in Lyons, thus strengthening the existing bond between the Old and the New World communities. In Lyons they found that once flourishing community suffering much from the recent Act of the French Government in 1905 separating Church and State, and interfering seriously with religious schools and institutions. In dire poverty and hampered in every way, these Sisters, true to the traditions of the Chateau Yon of centuries past, were carrying on bravely under changed conditions. Mother Mary Agnes' admiration of this community and the understanding friendship and sympathy aroused on this occasion lasted throughout her life, and she stood always ready to assist them in every possible way. An affectionate correspondence was kept up between her and different Superiors General of the Lyons Congregation, though personally unknown to her. Sisters traveling from Lyons to their missions in Mexico in 1923 found a warm welcome in Carondelet, and a hearty *bon voyage* on their way.

The return of the travelers in May, 1909, was welcomed with enthusiasm by the Sisters everywhere, by none more

than by the community at the Mother House, eager to hear all the particulars of the long journeying of the Superiors. These brought with them among other memories of Italy, one of their visits to the Ambrosian library and their meeting with its prefect, Don Achille Ratti, later Pope Pius XI, whom they had seen hidden away among the books and manuscripts which he loved so well.

Mother Agnes Gonzaga and Mother Agnes were continued in their respective offices as a result of the election chapter of 1911. Mother Agnes Gonzaga's health failed during the latter years of her second term as Superior General, and a long siege of illness resulted in her death, June 14, 1917, six weeks after its expiration. During this time Mother Mary Agnes spent herself in carrying on the tasks of the generalate and in endeavoring to provide encouragement and relief for the beloved patient.

The Sisters who met in chapter on May 3, 1917, chose Mother Mary Agnes as the successor of Mother Agnes Gonzaga. With the permission of the Holy See, always graciously given, she was re-elected for two successive terms, in 1923 and in 1929. Her frequent re-elections to the highest office in the Congregation were eminently satisfactory to the Sisters, as she endeared herself to all by her just and kindly management of affairs.

Early in her first term Reverend Mother Agnes put into force a decree of the previous intermediate chapter which was to allow her larger opportunity to labor for the advance-

ment of the Congregation as a whole than her predecessors had enjoyed. Up to this time, the direct care of the St. Louis province had been part of the burden of the Superior General. The chapter of 1908, in legislating for the support of the generalate, had hinted at the impending change, making its provisions "until such time as the Mother General shall have been relieved of the duties of a provincial of the St. Louis province." Six years later the chapter of 1914 "decreed by unanimous vote: That there be appointed a Provincial and Council for the St. Louis Province, that the general officers may be free for general work." For the promotion of the work of the other provinces, the same chapter immediately "further unanimously decreed: That a Local Superior and an Assistant be appointed for the Mother House and for each Provincial House that the Provincial Superiors and Assistants be free for Provincial duties."

Accordingly, in May, 1917, Mother Mary Columbine Ryan, a St. Louisan by birth, was constituted the first Provincial of the Mother province. The adjustments called for by this change were made the more easily since Mother Columbine through long association with Mother Mary Agnes had accustomed herself to the latter's spirit and method. Received into the Congregation on the same day, the two religious had co-operated in many activities; during the twelve years that Mother Agnes was assistant general, Mother Columbine was a member of the general Council. Then after serving six years as Provincial, she returned in 1923 to the general staff and was Assistant to Mother Agnes until her death on September 15, 1935, when her place was filled by Mother Bernard Joseph Dunne. The first Assistant Provincial for St. Louis was

Mother Mary Palma McGrath, a native of Amsterdam, New York, who succeeded Mother Columbine as Provincial in 1923, and who in 1935 was appointed to the General Council to complete its number reduced by Mother Columbine's death.

Other Provincials serving under Mother Agnes were Mother Rose Columba McGinnis, of Mobile, Alabama, who was to succeed her as Superior General, and Mother M. Angela Hennessy, a native of Oakland, California, who assumed office in 1935. The residence of the Provincial Superiors since October, 1923, has been the Convent of Our Lady of Good Counsel, 1849 Cass Avenue, St. Louis.

II

The zeal of Reverend Mother Mary Agnes extended to all the works of the institute--schools, hospitals, and homes. It was in the field of education, however, that the greatest development was taking place in the world around her, and in her thirty-one years as Assistant and General she was identified with remarkable expansion in the instructional work of the Congregation. The increase in the number of students in high schools and the demand for colleges called for special preparation of teachers, and at the side of Reverend Mother Agnes Gonzaga she set about meeting this need.

When in the summer of 1911 the Catholic University of America sent forth its call to the different sisterhoods, seventeen Sisters of St. Joseph were among the charter members who registered at its first session. These represented the

provinces of St. Louis, St. Paul, and Troy, and among the students was Sister Mary Pius Neenan, destined to be the seventh Superior General of the Congregation. In 1913 Sister Mary Pius took up residence at the Catholic University and in 1916 was one of the earliest recipients of the Doctorate of Philosophy given by that institution to members of the Sisters' College. Other Sisters in gradually increasing numbers were encouraged by Mother Agnes to enroll at numerous educational centers in this country and Europe, attending universities in England, France, Belgium, and Germany. She also authorized the Sisters to join professional organizations and learned societies and participate in their meetings and other activities.

The five colleges of the Congregation came into being during this span of thirty-one years while Mother Agnes Gonzaga and Mother Mary Agnes were directing it.

The province of St. Paul as early as 1905, the first year of their incumbency, organized college classes for young women. For several years prior to that a college had been under consideration by the far-sighted head of the province, Mother Seraphine Ireland, and her brother, Archbishop John Ireland of St. Paul. His Excellency was throughout his life the foremost benefactor of the institution, becoming chairman of its board of trustees, a position taken up by each of his episcopal successors in turn, the Most Rev. Austin Dowling and the Most Rev. John G. Murray.

In 1905, then, a faculty of ten with Mother M. Hyacinth Werden as superior began in Derham Hall, the first building

on the superb site of one hundred acres now in the finest residential section of St. Paul, to prepare the student body of seven members for the B.A. degree in a liberal arts college. It was not until 1911, however, that senior college students were accepted, and so that year is usually regarded as the foundation date. Two years later, in 1913, two young women were granted degrees. Steadily the College of St. Catherine developed until in 1936 when Mother Agnes left her office of Superior General it had a student body of 573 with 260 more enrolled for Saturday classes and summer sessions, and that spring conferred degrees on 107, besides granting certificates for art and kindergarten procedure to many others. In 1933 in a survey of sixty colleges conducted by the North Central Association, St. Catherine's was placed third in a rank of one to sixty in effectiveness.

During this period Mother Antonia McHugh was in charge. She had been with the college first as instructor in history; then commencing in 1913 as dean; from 1919 to 1929 as president and dean; and from 1929 to 1937 as president, becoming in 1931 superior also. The material expansion of the college caused the erection in 1914 of Whitby Hall, with classrooms, laboratories, and residence rooms. Next, in 1921, was opened Caecilian Hall, with ample facilities for the study of music. The chapel, dedicated to Our Lady of Victory, was completed in 1924. Situated on the highest point of the plot, it dominates, with its gleaming carved facade, its inspiring campanile, and the mellow colors and texture of its exterior, not only the campus but all the outlying approaches from the Twin Cities. Two years later was commenced Mendel Hall, the

science building, and finally in 1931 was erected the Health and Physical Education Center.

Mother Agnes consistently encouraged St. Catherine's program of scholastic and material expansion, visiting it on many occasions of special note, and a time or two addressing its students. With Mother Columbine Ryan, her Assistant, she attended the dedication ceremonies of the chapel, and on another visit participated in the Mass opening the scholastic year of 1929. During an earlier visit in 1927, the college play, "St. Frideswide," given a month previously, was repeated for her, and she showed evidence of intense but quiet appreciation of this courtesy. In 1931 she received from the Cardinal Protector, His Eminence Bonaventure Cerretti, the announcement that Our Holy Father conferred on Mother Antonia the medal "Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice" and rejoiced heartily at this honor crowning the wide recognition that had come from so many sources to Mother Antonia and the faculty and students.

The second collegiate institution of the Congregation is the College of St. Teresa in Kansas City, Missouri, which opened its first classes in the fall of 1916. These were housed in the new St. Teresa's Academy building erected in 1909 on a twenty-five acre plot in the southwestern, Country Club, section of the city to replace the original academy which had done yoeman service since 1865. St. Teresa's was destined to continue as a junior college for tweny-four years, and its influence on the religious and cultural life of the city was marked. From its first graduation in 1918 to the final year of Mother Agnes' generalate, 189 young women finished its

courses, as did 92 more before the senior college was set up in 1940, the year of her death.

Not only was St. Teresa's a factor in the Catholic life of Kansas City, but it gave a signal service to the Sisters by its summer classes and Saturday courses. These classes are common, of course, to all the colleges of the Congregation and have figured incalculably in the preparation of the Sister-teachers of every province although many other colleges and universities have been resorted to in individual cases.

However in 1917 St. Teresa's commenced a series of summer sessions to which it attracted instructors of such note as the Reverend Jesuit Fathers Alphonse Schwitalla, William Kane, Frederic Siedenberg, John Knipscher and Claude Pernin, the last immortalized in the writings of his brilliant student, Father Daniel A. Lord, who, incidentally, gave to the Sisters of St. Teresa's in 1925 his first retreat.

The choice of the site and the erection of the building for St. Teresa's was the achievement of Mother M. Evelyn O'Neill, who in later years served on its faculty, celebrating her golden jubilee there in 1928. Two factors stand out prominently in the history of St. Teresa's in the administration of Mother Evelyn--the fact that two Sisters, Sister Mary Pius and Sister Athanasia, were in 1908 sent to the University of Missouri, the first Sisters ever to attend this institution, and whose appearance on the campus was attended by no little consternation, especially as there seemed to be "nobody watching them"; and the fact that St. Teresa's Academy was ac-

credited to the University of Missouri in 1908, the first Catholic girls' school in the state to be so accredited.

Mother M. Irene O'Hara was the first president of the college, and succeeding her were two presidents who were likewise active in the development of Fontbonne College, Mothers Mary Pius Neenan and Marietta Jennings. Following the last in 1933 was Mother Marcella Casey, who like her predecessors had the benefit of warm support from Mother Agnes and definite assistance with financial and other problems. The sympathetic Superior General while inspecting the college in 1934 suggested a pageant and elaborate commemoration for the silver jubilee year of the establishment of St. Teresa's in its present location. The busy administrator and teachers saw at first little reason to interrupt their crowded days to memorialize work that to them appeared in no sense extraordinary, but Mother Agnes tranquilly represented the importance of their institution and won them to prepare a two-day celebration in October, 1935, for which she was the first of the out-of-town visitors to appear.

Fontbonne College in St. Louis enrolled its first students in 1923, but its inception goes back to 1908, when Mother Agnes Gonzaga with the advice of Archbishop Glennon, secured a site in St. Louis County and had plans drawn up for its buildings. Many difficulties blocked the execution of her designs, and she did not live to see them a reality. On April 17, 1917, there was obtained from the state of Missouri a charter for the college but a depleted treasury held back the building.

In this project, inaugurated when she and Mother Agnes Gonzaga were acting as provincial officers for St. Louis,

Mother Agnes had a deep interest, and early in her second term as general she authorized the organization of college classes to be held in the quarters of St. Joseph's Academy at the Mother House. Consequently nine students were registered in September, 1923, and Mother Mary Irene O'Hara became the first dean, and in 1925, the first president and superior, with Sister Marietta Jennings her successor as dean.

In the meantime until 1925 preparations for the building of Fontbonne College went forward rapidly under the direction of Reverend Mother Mary Agnes. In April, 1924, ground was broken for the first of the buildings and on July 13 following, the corner stone was blessed and laid by Archbishop Glennon. It was not the original intention of the Carondelet authorities to erect all the college buildings at one time, and their decision to do so came after much consideration and the offer of financial aid from Mr. John D. Ryan of New York and Montana, devoted brother of Mother Agnes Gonzaga, whose plans he had always been ready to assist. The administration building has been named for him, Ryan Hall.

Mother Mary Agnes took an active part in directing the work and spent much time on the grounds to see that the specifications were carried out. She was solicitous about the care taken of the workmen during the great heat of the summer and had installed on the grounds a lunch depot, from which fresh milk and pies were daily distributed to all workmen who wished them.

These five buildings, located in a section of the suburbs of St. Louis sometimes known as the "Latin Quarter" on account

of the number of educational institutions it contains, are of rough-hewn red Missouri granite with Bedford stone trimmings, handsome and imposing. On June 30, 1926, shortly after their completion, John Cardinal Bonzano, then Apostolic Delegate to the United States, visited them in company with Archbishop Glennon. Turning to Mother Agnes as he departed, he remarked: "Two things in St. Louis I will tell the Holy Father about when I return to Rome--its great Cathedral and Fontbonne."

The formal dedication of the buildings was held in 1926 on October 15, a date henceforth observed by Fontbonne as "College Day." The ceremony, conducted by Archbishop Glennon and attended by hosts of clerical and lay friends of the Sisters, had been delayed until the equipment of the buildings was complete and the appointments of the chapel were all in place. The care which Reverend Mother Agnes exercised in furnishing the buildings reached its height in the case of the chapel where altars and statues of marble from Pistrasanta, Italy, were erected and where were also to be seen Stations of the Cross painted on canvas and laid in frames built for them in the walls, the work of Gagliardi, which had been secured from his studio in Rome by Mother Agnes and her companions on their visit to the Eternal City in 1908.

Meanwhile, in 1925, Mother Agnes approved the entering of Fontbonne into a merger of the Catholic collegiate institutions of St. Louis by which it became a corporate college of St. Louis University. In other respects she influenced its broad policies, encouraging such projects as its offering its

quarters for some summers, commencing in 1931, to the Summer School of Catholic Action held by the National Director of the Sodality of Our Lady, the Rev. Daniel A. Lord, S.J., and in August 1936 to sectional meetings of the National Congress of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine.

As often as her duties permitted, she attended the major functions at the college. She was present to welcome to its halls a future Pontiff, when on October 31, 1936, His Eminence, Eugenio Cardinal Pacelli, then Papal Secretary of State, gave a few minutes of his time of sojourning in St. Louis to go with his host, Archbishop Glennon, to bestow his blessing on the Fontbonne faculty and students and to receive their respectful and affectionate greetings. The Cardinal's name became a household word at Fontbonne. He inscribed his autograph in the guest book of the college, and his photograph, taken by the college photographer and r e p e a t e d many times, adorned the desks of faculty members and girls.

The dream of a great future for Fontbonne by Reverend Mother Mary Agnes at its foundation was, owing principally to her indefatigable energy in promoting its interests, material and intellectual, being realized in a large measure when the fall enrollment of 1938 showed the forty students of 1925 expanded to four hundred and eighty-five, including extra-mural and Saturday classes. These with the 1937 summer school of two hundred and seventy-eight swelled the total to seven hundred and sixty-three students. Up to this time there had been conferred three hundred and twelve degrees, of which sixty-two had gone to members of religious orders--Sisters of St.

Joseph, Visitandines, Ursulines, Franciscans, Sisters of St. Mary, and Sisters of the Holy Humility of Mary. The faculty had increased from the original nine to forty-nine, of whom thirty-two were members of the Congregation.

On the feast of St. Rose of Lima in 1920, the first unit of the College of St. Rose in Albany, New York, was blessed. A few days later its doors were thrown open to its charter members, nineteen students. Its organization had taken place rapidly in the preceding months. Permission for its founding had been granted by Reverend Mother Agnes, by Mother Mary Margaret Collins, Provincial of the eastern houses, and by the Most Rev. Edmund F. Gibbons, D.D., Bishop of Albany, who was to show his generosity to the undertaking to the extent of providing a succession of gifted young priests of his diocese as professors of its classes. Sister M. Blanche Rooney was its guiding spirit, and among the members of its first faculty who contributed most conspicuously to its advancement are Sister Rose of Lima Dolan, a future dean, and Sister M. Rosina Quillinan, who spent nine years as dean and superior, leaving it to become in 1935 Provincial Superior and in 1942 Assistant General of the Congregation.

St. Rose Hall, the first building, had been the Keeler estate in a pretentious section of New York's capital city. It was purchased in March of that opening year, 1920, and remodeled for school purposes, while a barn in the rear was requisitioned as a science laboratory. Each year saw the acquisition of a new house--St. Edmund Hall purchased in 1921, St. Cecilia Hall in 1922, and St. Margaret Hall, presented by its owner as a

Christmas gift that year--until in November, 1922, ground was broken for a four-storied main building with chapel and additional school accommodations. Two more residences were bought in 1929, becoming Marion Hall and Aquinas Hall; and later on were purchased St. Agnes Hall and a building which was moved to form an annex to Marion Hall. Finally in 1932 was erected a spacious modern building, Science Hall, which was placed under the protection of St. Albertus Magnus.

The recognition of the Board of Regents of New York was essential, and so each year the classes were inspected and approved with the results that in 1924 the college received its provisional charter and granted degrees to its first seniors, sixteen in number. Later that year the educational department of the college was approved, entitling the holders of its certificates to teach in any high school in the state of New York. Four years after that, in 1928, upon its first application St. Rose's was entered on the approved list of the Commissioners of Higher Education of the Middle States and Maryland.

On December 4, 1928, three days after that gratifying announcement, Reverend Mother Agnes was welcomed to the college, where the faculty and student body in assembly presented a program in her honor. At its close, she complimented the Sisters and girls on the numbers which had been given, and then congratulated them with great sincerity on the recognition their young school had just won. She assured them that she had been watching closely the unusual progress of St. Rose's and earnestly commended the faculty and students for their devoted efforts which had achieved so

promptly this coveted recognition. The previous October, Reverend Mother with the same companion, her Assistant, Mother Columbine Ryan, had been received at St. Rose's with a similar program, and had pleased the students by suggesting that at some future time representatives of the colleges conducted by the Congregation meet in St. Louis and by mutual acquaintance further the interests of all.

The final permanent charter of St. Rose's was granted in March, 1931. That same year secretarial courses were added, and the following year courses in nursing education. After fifteen years, in 1935, the college had a registration of 250 students, and in Albany alone an average of four graduates teaching in each of the thirty public schools.

The fifth of the colleges of the Congregation was inaugurated during the second term of Mother Agnes as General, in the fall of 1925, in Los Angeles, California. It is Mount St. Mary's, situated on the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains, a picturesque location with a panorama lying below of Los Angeles and six suburban towns, girdled on the west by the ocean, and on the east by miles of mountain ranges. The buildings of Spanish Gothic architecture are designed to follow the contour of the hill, and the entire tract of thirty-six acres is suitably landscaped, part of this plan being an outdoor bowl or theatre used at commencement time for dramatic productions.

The college did not occupy this site, however, until six years after its actual opening and two years after the day in

1929 when the first seniors were granted degrees at a ceremony which concluded with the breaking of ground for the permanent college buildings. Presiding at these exercises was Archbishop John J. Cantwell, D.D., of Los Angeles, who had sponsored the launching of the college, publicly urging the Sisters to it at the graduation exercises of St. Mary's Academy in 1925. That fall, the pioneer class, twenty-five students, was received in quarters of the Academy, and the following year an additional building for them was erected on that campus.

It was in the spring of 1931 that the college classes moved to their new building on the crest of Mount St. Mary, a location that Mother Agnes had part in selecting, for during her visitation of the western province in the summer of 1928 she was called upon to decide among possible sites. When she was conducted to this mountain acreage, she gave it unqualified approval--this in spite of difficulties attendant upon her climbing a steep ungraded hill covered with native flora. Her remark was "Sisters, this is the place to choose. It gives promise of the type of development by which a college should be surrounded."

The scholastic development of Mount St. Mary's was such that in 1931 it became a charter member of the Western Association of Colleges and Universities. By affiliating a year prior to that with the University of California and the State Department of Education, the college was empowered to give courses leading to state credentials for teachers of elementary and high schools. The same year work toward a major in nursing subjects was introduced, and since that time there

have been added for dietitians and medical technicians curricula which have the recognition of the American Medical Association. The Archbishop Cantwell School of Liturgical Music was inaugurated in 1931 as a department of the college. In the last year of Mother Agnes' administration, fifty-two degrees were granted, triple the number, seventeen, awarded at the first commencement just seven years previously.

Among the religious responsible for this growth is Mother Margaret Mary Brady, a former General Councillor of Reverend Mother Agnes who as Provincial in the West worked closely with her in the opening of the college and became its first president. Sister St. Catherine Beavers, prominent in the provincial government which fostered the college in its early years, was its vice-president. Another General Councillor, Mother M. Killian Corbett, as Assistant Provincial from 1929 tc 1935 and then as Provincial had the college as one of her principal interests. Leaders of its faculty were Sister Dolorosa Mannix, its first dean, Sister Agnes Bernard Cavanagh, and Sister Marie de Lourdes Le May.

Mother Agnes surveyed with genuine pride the growth of Mount St. Mary's. Visiting the province in 1932, she made what was rare with her, a comment in her own hand at the end of the record of her visitation, writing, "Building, everything encouraging, thank God." Later, in 1935, Mount St. Mary's conferred on Mother Agnes the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws, extolling her charity towards the poor, her service to the Community and to Catholic education in general, and her interest in the college.

Under the aegis of Mother Agnes, the secondary school program of her Congregation, at the same time, was expanding prodigiously in line with the growing demand in the country for education on this level. Existing high schools were enlarged and additional ones organized, all aiming at meeting requirements for accrediting by state and other agencies. The trend was away from the boarding school and to the day school, parish and inter-parish, which under some circumstances became co-educational. The central high school was being introduced into the Catholic system, and the Sisters of St. Joseph joined other teaching religious to form the faculties of Rosati-Kain Archdiocesan High School, St. Louis, in 1912, and Catholic Central High School, Troy, in 1923, and Catholic Girls' High School, Los Angeles, the same year.

Reverend Mother was quick to avail herself of every opportunity to support the high schools, struggling as they were to satisfy extraordinary demands on their facilities. She attended the commencement exercises of the schools in St. Louis and other centers when she was in the city. In October, 1931, she participated in the dedication ceremonies of the handsome new buildings of one of the oldest of the chain of St. Joseph Academies across the country, St. Joseph's in Tucson, Arizona. It was given at that time the agnomen, Villa Carondelet, befitting it as the development of the first school set up by the Sisters who made the perilous journey to the desert from Carondelet in 1870.

However, it is at the elementary school level that the Congregation under Mother Agnes took its greatest strides. Fol-

lowing the tradition established by her predecessors, she had the parochial school as her primary concern. When she laid down her office in 1936, her Sisters were laboring for the Christian formation of children in 181 parish grade schools. Of this total, sixty-nine schools, or more than one-third of the number, had been established during the nineteen years of her generalate.

The work of the Congregation for the sick received close attention from the vigilant Superior General. The progress made under her leadership was in the improvement and expansion of existing institutions rather than in the opening of additional ones, for Trinity Hospital, Jamestown, N.D., is the sole member of the group of twelve hospitals which was undertaken in her administration.

Developments in the hospital and the school of nursing were phenomenal during her years and the Sisters under her stimulation were alert to them, both in the circle of Catholic hospitals and in the field of hospitals of all types in the country. A proof of their activity in behalf of the Catholic institutions is the fact that the Catholic Hospital Association of the United States and Canada had its beginning at a meeting held by the founder, the Rev. Charles E. Moulinier, S.J., with the Sisters of St. Joseph in their St. Mary's Hospital, Minneapolis, in June, 1915. An evidence that their influence was being felt in the larger sphere is the fact that Sister Mary Giles Phillips, head of the School of Nursing, St. Joseph's Hospital, Kansas City, was one of the first religious to serve on a State Board of Nursing Education, being appointed to that of Missouri in 1930 and eventually becoming its president.

The connection of Mother Agnes with the work was manifested in numerous ways. Two schools of nursing were established at her direct request, those at St. Mary's, Amsterdam, and St. Joseph's, Hancock. She turned the first spade of earth when ground was broken at St. Mary's Hospital, Tucson, in April, 1928, for its memorial Chapel of St. Catherine. Her concern for the Sisters who were patients in the hospitals was such that she took every opportunity of visiting and comforting them. Of a piece with this was her sympathetic anxiety for the infirm and aged Sisters at Nazareth Convent, St. Louis, and other homes maintained for them in the provinces. For their care she authorized every reasonable expenditure. Public recognition of her participation in the apostolate for the sick was to come a month after her death, for at its Silver Jubilee celebration in June, 1940, the Catholic Hospital Association awarded to her posthumously its Distinguished Service Cross.

The child-care homes of the Congregation, like the hospitals, underwent during her incumbency a change not in their number but in the buildings and facilities at their disposal and the character of the training given the boys and girls.

Early in her administration Mother Agnes was called upon to co-operate in a new development of the apostolate of the religious teacher, the religious vacation school. Not that instruction of children not attending their schools was a novelty among the Sisters. Just as in France in 1650 or 1820, so practically since their establishment in America, the Sisters had taught little groups of boys and girls who were without the

benefit of parochial school training. Frequently these classes were held on Sundays after Mass, or before Vespers, or on Saturdays, or even on the afternoons of school days. The preparing of children for first Communion under these conditions was often the task of the Sisters. Now, however, came a concerted movement to extend the help of the Sisters to children of rural areas, and Mother Agnes had contacts with its two clerical leaders, the Very Rev. George J. Hildner of the archdiocese of St. Louis, and then the Rev. Edwin V. O'Hara, later bishop of Kansas City, Missouri, who expanded the plan for catechising public-chool children until it is now a nation-wide structure, the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, of which he is Episcopal Chairman.

Mother Agnes' co-operation in this enterprise was eager, and as early as 1924 she authorized the sending of Sisters for summer work to Byrnesville, Coffman, and Tiff, Missouri. By the end of her term in office, vacation schools conducted by the Sisters of St. Joseph were thriving in all the states in which they have institutions, and a few additional ones, some of the earlier of these being Henry, Ill., Bailey's Harbor, Wis., Big Bay, Mich., Littleton, Colo., Goodhue, Minn., Cavalier, North Dakota, Glendive, Mont., Kennewick, Wash., Potlatch, Idaho, Hermosa Beach, Cal., and Endicott, N. Y.

After the organization of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine and the participation of the Sisters in its first national congress in St. Paul, Minn., in November, 1933, their contribution to the work consisted not only in conducting classes, but also in developing teaching materials and procedures, and in

participating in meetings of Confraternity groups and writing for their periodicals. Mother Agnes viewed all this activity with a sympathetic eye. Particularly she evidenced a satisfaction in the reports of the Sisters returning from the rural field, enjoying their amusing account of rugged life in outlying communities and thanking God with them for the gratifying fruits of their labors--the allaying of prejudice, the kindling of the fervor of Catholics, and the conversion of non-Catholics, as well as the religious formation of the children they had set out to serve.

III

After the removal of the academy and college classes to their new buildings in 1925, Mother Agnes was much occupied with the adaptation of their former quarters in the Mother House to the use of the community. The north and west wings of the building were given to the novices and postulants. An ideal assembly room for the novices was the former study hall, in which for eighty-four years successive classes of St. Joseph's Academy had wrestled during study hours with numerous intellectual problems or waited longingly for the dismissal bell. The ancient cherrywood desks, their surfaces still undefaced, found their way into the novices' classrooms, where they bid fair to serve for another sixty years.

The novitiate in the following year lost the mistress who had presided over it for twenty years, Sister Jane Bal, relieved of her duties on account of delicate health. Become an integral part of life at the Mother House, Sister Jane had given her

charges a thorough training in the observances and traditions of the Congregation, for she had left her native city of Moutiers in Savoy as a novice eager to spend her life in missionary work in the New World. One of a band of four Sisters who had come to Oconto, Wisconsin, then a French settlement, and who were later affiliated to the Carondelet community, Sister Jane had pronounced her vows at the Mother House on March 19, 1890.

She was replaced as Mistress of Novices by Sister Ermen Greene, with Sister Mary Virginia Becker as Mistress of postulants. Both of these had been as successful teachers conversant with the many problems that confront the modern Catholic teacher; and being holders of university degrees, took an active part in organizing college classes in the novitiate. Thereafter, all novices who had completed their high-school work were on finishing the canonical year registered as students of Fontbonne and given courses at the Mother House. Instructing them were Sister Bernard Joseph Dunne and members of the Fontbonne faculty, and in classes in religion, the Reverend Franciscan chaplains, Fathers Fortunatus Hauser and Maximus Poppy.

Mother Agnes encouraged thus the cultural as well as the spiritual activities of the young religious. The writing and producing of plays was a favorite occupation with the novices. Episodes in the history of the Congregation were frequently the material for these presentations, as were also events in the development of the missions of the Church. In inaugurating a novitiate unit of the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade,

Mother Agnes was seconded by Sister Athanasia of her Council. In fact, Mother Agnes was given recognition for her extensive encouragement of the work for missions in all types of schools under her headship when she was named as "Castle Builder" by the governing board of the Crusade.

Reverend Mother Agnes was also a charter member of the executive board of the Archdiocesan Commission for the Promotion of Liturgical Music, formed by Archbishop Glennon. The Sisters' choir at the Mother House, which sings congregationally for the exercises in the chapel and has earned a wide reputation for truly correct and beautiful rendition of Gregorian and approved Church music, was placed by Mother Agnes in 1926 under the direction of Sister Louis Joseph Bauer, trained in her work by the foremost exponents of liturgical music in the country. Each novice before leaving the Mother House has earned credits in musical education, and this thorough initiation in music built upon later by Sister Rose Margaret Vander Zanden, community supervisor of music for St. Louis, has caused a notable improvement in music in the schools and churches with which the Sisters of St. Joseph are connected.

Other provinces, meanwhile, were expanding their facilities for their administrative staffs and their novices. In St. Paul, a carefully planned novitiate was erected on ground adjacent to the College of St. Catherine. This was occupied in 1912 by the novices, who had previously been housed at St. Joseph's Academy, the oldest institution of the Sisters in Minnesota. The aspirants in their new home are formed in

the religious life by their mistresses and the priests of the St. Paul Seminary. In the branches required for their future apostolate they are instructed during their second year by the supervisors of the schools and by teachers from St. Catherine's College.

Likewise from St. Joseph's Academy came the Provincial in 1921 to the novitiate building, where she commenced preparations for its enlargement. Reverend Mother Agnes was present for the laying of the cornerstone of the new chapel of Our Lady of the Presentation, which took place on the titular feast, November 21, 1925. This handsome chapel is connected by cloisters to the novitiate on its west, and on its east to a new structure of generous proportions where reside the Provincial, the senior Sisters of the province, and the teachers of a few nearby parochial schools. These buildings were completed for the diamond jubilee year of the province, 1926, which was observed with devotion in all its institutions, St. Catherine's taking the lead with a brilliant pageant staged on its campus.

Through the early years of Mother Agnes' superiorship, the St. Paul convents were under the care of the distinguished provincial, Mother Seraphine Ireland. In 1921 she resigned, after serving for thirty-nine years, but she relinquished neither her concern for the Congregation nor her position as friend and adviser of Mother Agnes. When in March, 1927, she was attacked with what appeared a fatal illness, Mother Agnes hastened to her side. The venerable religious regained her health, however; and again in September, 1929, Mother Agnes

visited her, celebrating in her company the feast of St. Michael. The following year, on June 20, 1930, Mother Seraphine went to her reward in the eighty-eighth year of her age and the seventy-second of her ardent religious life. Her illustrious brother, Archbishop John Ireland, had preceded her in death by twelve years, and the loss of these loyal leaders grieved Mother Agnes very deeply.

Mother Seraphine was succeeded as provincial by Mother St. Rose Mackey, who completed her term in 1927, handing over the guidance of the province to Mother Clara Graham, who was in 1936 to become Assistant General of the Congregation. In 1933 Mother Eileen Haggerty, a future General Councillor, was appointed to the provincial office and administered it in cordial collaboration with Mother Agnes in the final years of her generalate. In 1933 Mother Agnes made her last triennial visitation of the province.

The building in Troy which in the early months of Mother Agnes' generalate was dedicated as the provincial house and novitiate of the Sisters in New York, had been constructed for Methodists in 1856 and later occupied for thirty-two years by ecclesiastical students of the New York province of the Catholic Church, then in turn by Christian Brothers, Dominican Sisters, and Salesian Fathers. After its purchase in 1908 by Mother M. Odilia Bogan, the Provincial Superior, a complete renovation was in order; and the result is a strong, capacious, attractive structure in Italian Renaissance style standing commandingly on an eminence. To it the Sisters came willingly from their outgrown provincial headquarters in South Troy.

It was His Eminence, John Cardinal Farley, Archbishop of New York, who dedicated on December 11, 1912, this building, which proved adequate as a provincialate, novitiate, and residence for Sisters teaching at the Catholic High School and neighboring parochial schools for nearly twenty years. The increasingly large number of novices, however, put a strain on its facilities, and accordingly a chapel with kitchen and dining room on its lower floor, was projected. The corner-stone was laid on November 9, 1932, by a most faithful friend of the Sisters, the Vicar General, Msgr. Joseph A. Delaney. The chapel, designed on Gothic lines, is imposing in size, seating nine hundred, and magnificent in decoration, as can be seen from an illustrated booklet describing it, which was published in 1934.

The blessing of the chapel on St. Joseph's Day of the following year was preceded on St. Patrick's Day by an inspiring ceremony. Then the holy relics of St. Theodora, Martyr, were translated with a solemn procession led by His Excellency, Bishop Gibbons, to their crypt in the beautiful side altar of the new chapel from their resting-place since 1879 in the chapel of the former Provincial House. The sacred body, like those at the Mother House, was obtained in Rome that year by Reverend Mother Agatha Guthrie, who was the first Provincial of New York.

Mother Odilia, the seventh Provincial, who had acquired the seminary, was succeeded at her death in 1915 by Mother Irene Tyrrell, who three years later went to the reward of her generous work in the province. Assuming the office in 1917,

the year Mother Agnes became Superior General, was Mother M. Margaret Collins, to be followed by Mother Thomas Scanlin, Mother John Joseph Duffy, and in 1935 by Mother Rosina Quillinan. Mother Agnes' visits to the Provincial House were relatively frequent. She came to see the new chapel in February, 1933. Her last visit was in mid-1934. She invariably manifested an extraordinary interest in the house as well as in the community, inspecting to the least detail the installations and improvements made through the years. A shrine to St. Joseph was an addition in 1927, and the saintly Brother Andre of the Oratory of St. Joseph, Montreal, more than once visited it with great pleasure.

The organization of a Novitiate Normal School was a special gratification to Mother Agnes. The first graduation was in May, 1928, when twenty-two Sisters in an exercise in the auditorium of the seminary received certificates signifying the completion of a fully accredited State Normal School Course of three years. Presenting the diplomas was Dr. N. M. Dearborn, Director of the State Teaching Training Division, who set a high value on the work of the Sisters.

As in other cities that are headquarters of the provinces, so in Los Angeles, the original school building was the seat of the government and of the novitiate. Old St. Mary's on Twenty-first street, founded in 1889, served in this manner from 1903 when the Provincial, Mother Elizabeth Parrott, and the novices moved there from Tucson, Arizona. In this province as in the others, the development of the city eventually made the location undesirable, and hence in 1911 there was

blessed the elegant and commodious new St. Mary's, built in Spanish Mission style on a twenty-acre tract in the southwest section of the city, at Slauson and Crenshaw Boulevards.

This adjustment was completed just as Mother Agnes stepped from the assistantship under Mother Agnes Gonzaga to the generalship in 1912. Provincial Superiors in those years were Mother Herman Joseph O'Gorman, succeeding Mother Elizabeth in 1908; Mother Marcella Manifold, next caring for the province until her death in 1916; Mother St. Catherine Beavers, governing from 1917 to 1923; and Mother Margaret Mary Brady, who had served as General Councillor of Mother Agnes from 1917 to 1923, and returning to California was Provincial until 1929. Mother Elesia Dwyer assumed the office in that year and relinquished it to her Assistant, Mother Killian Corbett, in 1935.

Mother Agnes was a guest at St. Mary's several times during her superiorship, as in 1928 and 1930, when she impressed the Sisters with the loving concern she had for each activity of the province, commencing with the provincialate and extending to the smallest school. Her latest sojourn there was in July, 1935. Then she found, with mixed emotions, that the remarkable expansion of the province was already taxing the buildings devoted to the Academy and novitiate and even the additional hall erected in 1925 and used temporarily by the college.

IV

Events of more than passing interest and importance to the Congregation in which Reverend Mother Mary Agnes

Rossiter was a prime mover, were the affiliations to the Carondelet Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Georgia in 1922 and those in Idaho in 1925.

The Sisters of St. Joseph in Georgia were originally from Le Puy, France, and date their foundation in this country to the early days after the War between the States. They came at the request of the Most Rev. Augustin Verot, D. D., Bishop of Savannah. A native of Le Puy and a member of the great Sulpician Order, he was consecrated Vicar-Apostolic of Florida in 1858, and was transferred to Savannah as its third bishop in July, 1861. The intense suffering of his people after the war appealed to his sympathy, especially the condition of the colored population. Distressed and concerned, he sought for means of alleviating their suffering.

At that time, America was a foreign mission field to the older Catholic countries of Europe; so to Europe, particularly to his native France, Bishop Verot turned his thoughts. He was well acquainted with the work of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Le Puy, and in his hour of need he sought their aid. Going to the convent there early in 1866, he appealed for volunteers. It was but thirty years since Lyons, a daughter colony of Le Puy, had sent missionaries to St. Louis, at the request of Bishop Joseph Rosati, as is recalled by the Hon. Richard Reid writing in the *Bulletin*, of Augusta, Georgia, for December 5, 1935:

> It is of interest to note that at the time when the great Archbishop Kenrick of St. Louis, Bishop McCloskey, afterwards the first American Cardinal, and many other equally distinguished prelates were petitioning Rome for the Papal

approbation of the Constitutions of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, the same time found the gentle Bishop Verot petitioning Le Puy for the Sisters of St. Joseph for his diocese which comprised Georgia and Florida.

The Sisters responded generously, and on August 6, 1866, eight of them embarked at Havre and reached Florida four weeks later, and were guests of the Sisters of Mercy in St. Augustine while awaiting the completion of their convent and school building. On April 23, 1867, three of the number and a novice were sent by the Bishop to Savannah, Georgia, where they took immediate charge of a school for colored children in the rear of St. John's Cathedral. In December of that year the Bishop placed the white orphan boys of the diocese in their care, and from St. Augustine to help them in their work came two Sisters who were to leave heroic missionary records, Sister St. Pierre Bore and Sister Clemence Freshon. The former died in 1896 after twenty-eight years of continuous service in behalf of the colored poor, one hundred and fifty of whom she had baptized; and the latter died in Augusta in 1910 in her seventieth year after working for thirty-two years in Georgia.

In 1870 Bishop Verot became the first bishop of St. Augustine and the Most Rev. Ignatius Persico, D.D., was appointed bishop of Savannah. With this change came the separation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Georgia from those in Florida and from the Mother House in France. In March, 1871, they became a distinct diocesan community, and a novitiate was established in Savannah. The first American postulant was received in 1873, Sister Francis of Assisi Burke, who served the community faithfully until her death in 1936.

In January, 1876, the successor of Bishop Persico, the Most Rev. William H. Gross, C. Ss. R., D.D., removed the orphanage and novitiate to Washington, Georgia, and in the fall of that year a boarding school for girls was opened in the buildings which had been purchased by the community there.

Two years later in Sharon, a Catholic settlement fourteen miles from Washington, was founded a boarding school for small boys, called Sacred Heart Seminary. A second private school was opened in Atlanta in 1894 at the request of the Rev. Benjamin J. Keiley, at that time pastor of the Immaculate Conception parish and later Bishop of the diocese. This institution served the Catholics of Atlanta well until 1915 when financial difficulties necessitated its closing.

In 1900 the Sisters were invited by the Marist Fathers to Brunswick, one of the oldest settlements, not only in Georgia, but in the United States, old St. Mary's just outside the city having been founded by the early Spanish missionaries. Nine years later the Sisters commenced in Sacred Heart parish, Atlanta, a school for children of the four lower grades which developed steadily and in 1918 graduated its first high-school class.

In 1916 the Sisters returned to Savannah, the scene of their initial struggles in Georgia, and assumed charge of Sacred Heart School in the parish of the Benedictine Fathers. A year later two teachers inaugurated the school in St. Anthony's parish in the west end of Atlanta.

With the Mother House in Washington, Georgia, and these prosperous missions in the state, the Sisters felt themselves well

established. Several buildings and a beautiful chapel were added to the academy, which was in a flourishing condition, and accredited to the University of Georgia and to the Catholic University of America. A great trial came in 1912, when fire swept the buildings and in two hours laid in ruins the patient labor of thirty-six years.

The courageous community, however, began planning immediately for a new future. Leaving the orphanage in Washington, the superiors moved the Mother House and academy to Augusta, where all were housed with many inconveniences in a building of eleven rooms, the Dickey Cottage, placed at their disposal by the owner. In the meantime, a tract of forty acres, well located on rising ground, was given to the Sisters by the city of Augusta, and a new building was completed, comprising spacious quarters for Sisters, novices, and boarders. To a considerable sum invested by the community was added money borrowed from reliable sources on the usual terms of mortgage with annual payments, but in two short years through bank failures in 1916 and other financial trials wholly unforeseen, all the funds of the community were swept away. The Sisters then, with heavy hearts but sublime courage, gave up their new home to their creditors and took up their abode in the old Chateau Le Vert, purchased for them by a wealthy and devoted friend, Mrs. Raphael Semmes, niece of a venerable member of the community, Sister Gabriel Hynes, a native of Locust Grove, Georgia. Rich in historic associations, among them visits of George Washington and Lafayette, this building became the second Mount Saint Joseph in Augusta.

In the labors and trials of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Georgia, an all-wise Providence was preparing them for new

and better things. Added to their financial difficulties, which bore heavily on the community, was the dearth of religious vocations in the South. The Academy opened at Chateau Le Vert, the new Mount St. Joseph, prospered; however, few subjects presented themselves at the novitiate, and the work of supplying teachers to the schools had to be carried on.

Sisters from Georgia had often been welcome guests at the Mother House in Carondelet, and from this Community they had received sympathy and substantial aid in their difficulties. Among them was Mother Aloysius Burke, a native of Sharon, Georgia, who acted as superior of the group until 1921, when she was succeeded by Mother Regis Passmore, a native of Armagh, Ireland. Others like Sister Sacred Heart Trout, a cultured Kentuckian who had brought the academy in Augusta to a high standard of excellence, had been fellow-students of the Carondelet Sisters at the Catholic University of America. At length these Sisters and the Most Reverend Benjamin J. Keiley, D.D., Bishop of Savannah and for many years Spiritual Father of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Georgia, who was naturally anxious for the future of the Sisters, especially in view of his own aging powers and failing health, conceived the idea of the affiliation of the Georgia community with the community of Carondelet. He made the proposal to Archbishop Glennon of St. Louis and to the two communities concerned. It was looked on with favor by all, and so Mother Agnes traveled to Georgia and met individually the Sisters there, fifty-six in number, obtaining their sentiments with regard to the contemplated change.

A petition was then addressed to the Holy See asking for affiliation, making known the desire of the Georgia Sisters

that they remain a distinct province, subject to the Mother House in Carondelet. The petition was favorably considered by the Sacred Congregation. The document of affiliation, dated at Rome, December 13, 1921, signed by Cardinal Valfre de Bonzo, Prefect, and Maurus Serafini, O.S.B., Secretary, was received in St. Louis early in 1922. It was at once forwarded by Mother Agnes to Bishop Keiley, reaching him on February 13, the day after his resignation from his See.

The news from Rome was received with great rejoicing by all the Sisters, who generously began the process of readjustment. Mount St. Joseph's Academy, Augusta, was constituted the Provincial House and Novitiate for the new province, and according to the wish and expressed request of the Sisters, a Provincial Superior was appointed from the Carondelet community. Again Reverend Mother went south and visited each of the houses there, having as her companion Sister Margaret Mary Brady of her Council. She returned from this, as from her previous visit, with the most favorable impression of the Georgia community and the fine work that the Sisters were doing on all their missions. The feeling of confidence was mutual, and the Sisters in Georgia took new heart as they looked into a future that promised so much for all.

The first Provincial Superior of the Georgia convents was Mother Rose Columba McGinnis, of Mobile, Alabama, who took up her duties in August, 1922, having as her assistant Mother St. John Hobbs, of the St. Louis province, who remained in 1928 as her successor. In 1923 Mother Mercedes Murray, of the St. Louis province, who was to head in succession three institu-

tions in Georgia, joined the southern province. In 1925 Sister Mary Paul Greene was sent from Carondelet as Mistress of Novices, and in 1934 became Assistant Provincial, and then in 1936 returned to St. Louis to represent the southern province in the General Council.

Mother Agnes, in addition to providing zealous Sisters for these offices, sent from time to time Sisters to increase the faculties of the schools, and especially during the summer, experienced teachers to conduct college courses. In this way numbers of members of the Congregation learned the meaning of southern hospitality at its best. The Sisters of the South heeded her invitation to carry on their studies at Fontbonne College and other educational centers.

Another official visit to the Augusta province was made in 1926 by Reverend Mother Agnes, accompanied by Sister James Stanislaus Rogan of her Council. This visit was everywhere an occasion of joy to Sisters and pupils. In the *Carondelet Annual* of that year the Province gives the following account of itself:

> "A review of the educational events in the province shows a healthy growth. Parochial school work is, comparatively speaking, very new in Georgia; but the impetus given this work some years ago does not diminish as the years roll by. That the good work, somewhat timidly commenced, still goes on is evidenced by an increase in the number of pupils, by the up-to-date methods of instruction, the organization and systematization of school work, the earnestness and devotion of the Sister-teachers and

their untiring zeal in securing the latest and best methods in training the young."

Co-operating thus fully with the Sisters of the province and promoting their plans to the limits of her resources, Mother Agnes was to see on succeeding visits remarkable results. In 1924 a new school building in Sacred Heart parish, Atlanta, was dedicated, and two years later a commodious residence for fourteen teachers was completed. In 1928 the Sisters in Savannah moved into a new convent, and the next year they organized their institution as a junior high school. The following year saw a new building erected on the campus of Mount St. Joseph, Augusta, its first floor an auditorium and its second floor a chapel dedicated to the Little Flower. Further expansion occurred in 1933 when were purchased adjoining grounds, giving the Mount an entire city block and a residence in which classes were soon held. Then in 1934 the Sisters in St. Anthony's parish, Atlanta, exchanged for their original quarters a modern school with convent adjoining.

At the same time that their school burdens were increasing, other demands were being made on the Sisters, as for their services for weekly instruction classes, and later for religious vacation schools. The number of subjects received into the novitiate showed a steady improvement over that of earlier years.

Mother Agnes' last visit to Georgia was in 1936 when, though no longer Superior General, she was the honored guest of the Sisters for their celebration on November 9 of the centennial of the Congregation in America, planned by Mo-

ther Discolia Hennessy, whom she had appointed Superior Provincial to succeed Mother St. John in 1934. With pride and hopefulness Mother Agnes participated in the Pontifical High Mass offered by the bishop of Savannah-Atlanta, the Most Rev. Gerald P. O'Hara, D.D., with the former bishop, the Most Rev. Michael J. Keyes, S.M., D.D., and many prelates, priests, and other friends in attendance. In the evening she saw the family of the Sisters in Georgia—pupils, their parents, former pupils, friends—gather in loyalty and great enthusiasm to view a pageant of the achievements of the Congregation in this country.

V

Another small community that sought affiliation with the Carondelet Mother House was that of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Lewiston, Idaho. A request to this effect was made to Mother Agnes by the late Bishop Daniel Mary Gorman, D.D., of Boise, Idaho, under whose jurisdiction this community was a diocesan foundation. To this request was added the solicitation of the Sisters. Consequently, in February, 1925, Reverend Mother Agnes, accompanied by Sister M. Lucida, Secretary-General, made a preliminary visit to the missions of these Sisters, located in Lewiston and in Slickpoo, near Culdesac, Idaho, and in Pasco, Washington. Each of the fifty-three Sisters of the group was interviewed, and finding them agreeable to affiliation, Mother Agnes took steps to bring about the amalgamation.

A petition to the Holy See was drawn up, signed by Reverend Mother and her Councillors, by Archbishop Glennon of

St. Louis, by Bishop Gorman, and by the Idaho Sisters, and forwarded to Rome. The document of affiliation, dated July 14, 1925, and signed by His Eminence, C. Cardinal Laurenti, Prefect of the Congregation of the Affairs of Religious, was received in St. Louis in September, 1925. In November, Reverend Mother Agnes in company with Mother Margaret Mary Brady, Provincial Superior of the Los Angeles Province, made her second visit to Idaho and formally received the community there into the St. Louis Congregation as part of the Los Angeles Province. The choice of provinces had been left to the Sisters of Idaho, who preferred Los Angeles principally on account of geographic location and similarity of climate, Idaho resembling California in the latter respect, for the influence of the warm Pacific currents is felt as far inland as Lewiston and Pasco, Washington.

The history of the Idaho community not only presents like that of the Georgia community a story of hardships bravely borne and difficulties overcome, but opens up an interesting perspective into the missionary activities of the Northwest. Its central figure is a Black Robe, friend and fellow-laborer of Father De Smet, Father Joseph Cataldo of the Society of Jesus. When Mother Agnes met this dean of the Indian missionaries, he was ninety years of age and although able to walk only with the aid of a crutch, was offering Mass daily in the church of the Slickpoo mission.

The community of St. Joseph in Idaho was but two years in existence when on August 1, 1904, he took charge of the Nez Perce mission, and became not only provider for the

children but spiritual guide of the Sisters. He was born in Sicily in 1837. Entering the Society of Jesus in his early youth, he came to America by way of Belgium at a time when many young Belgian Jesuits were entering the foreign mission field. Six months' stay in Boston convinced the superior of young Joseph Cataldo that he was a subject for tuberculosis and an early death. Being sent to Santa Clara, California, he proceeded thence to the Indian missions of the Northwest where he actually filled out an apostolate of sixty-three years. In 1862 he was called to labor among the Flathead Indians. In 1864 we find him in the Oregon Country with Father Peter De Smet, whom he defends warmly in his letters against certain men who would undervalue the work of that incomparable missionary. In 1877, Father Cataldo became superior general of the Indian missions in the Rockies. His indomitable character is illustrated by an anecdote that has been handed down through his Jesuit confreres. A preacher, evidently forgetful that this Man of Peace was also a bristling warrior in the King's service, endeavored to browbeat him by reminding him that President Grant had given over the Nez Perce country to Presbyterian evangelization. Father Cataldo replied, "I believe that President Grant sent you, but Almighty God sent me."

It was for the Nez Perce Indians that Father Cataldo wished the services of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Associated with many tribes in the region, Father Cataldo yet held in special esteem the Nez Perces. According to their tradition, a few of their tribe were in the party of Red men, mainly Flatheads, who went to St. Louis between 1831 and 1835 to beg for priests;

for they had learned of the church from the Catholic Iroquois who had come west from Montreal between 1812 and 1820. It is also of tradition among these Indians that about 1835 a young Nez Perce met a party of emigrants returning east, and by this group was brought to St. Louis where he was taught some Catholic doctrine. On his return to Idaho he instructed the Indians of his camp, and warned them not to accept the religion of the "preachers." When the first Black Robe arrived among them in the person of Father De Smet, he was warmly welcomed by both tribes. Among a large number of neophytes baptized by him on Christmas Day, 1841, at St. Mary's Mission, Montana, where thirteen Nez Perces and their chief.

Left without spiritual guidance for years, the greater number of the tribe gradually succumbed to the influence of the preachers and the superstitious medicine men. In 1901, in answer to a petition of the Catholic members of the tribe, the Most Reverend Alphonse J. Glorieux, D.D., bishop of Boise, promised the Indians that he would try to build a school for them and secure Sisters to manage it. A liberal donation from Mother Katherine Drexel helped him to construct the school for the pastor, the Rev. Hubert Post, S.J.

In the meanwhile, as early as 1897 in Lewiston, Idaho, thirty miles distant from the seat of the Nez Perce parish, plans for a hospital staffed by Sisters had met with the co-operation of the city council, and in 1900 a drive for funds for it netted $1500. Father Post, the pastor in both places, then applied for Sisters to St. Joseph's Hospital, Belvidere, Illinois. Five Sisters, accordingly, in 1902 came to Idaho, members of the

then diocesan community of Concordia, Kansas. Among them were Sister Dominica Ryan, now living at the orphanage in Culdesac, and Sister Angelica Heenan, identified thereafter with the Indian Mission and novitiate. These Sisters being all too few,Father Post solicited aid from Mother Gertrude Moffitt, superior of the diocesan Community of Tipton, Indiana, and early in 1904 she sent to Idaho three Sisters, at their head Sister Borgia Toucher, long indentified with the hospitals in Idaho.

When in August of that year Father Cataldo took charge, five of these Sisters had returned to their convents in the East, and the remaining three had the help of only two novices. Seeing the impossibility of continuing the mission under these circumstances, Father Cataldo immediately set about procuring help. He explained the situation to the Bishop of Boise, who advised him to go himself to Philadelphia and get some Sisters of St. Joseph from Archbishop Patrick John Ryan, at that time on the board of Catholic Indian Missions. Another disappointment awaited the tireless missionary here, as the Archbishop could spare no Sisters; but he gave permission to the different parish priests of the diocese to help recruit postulants for the distant field. God blessed the project, and Father Cataldo returned to Slickpoo with twelve young women as courageous as himself. Seeing ahead only privation and sacrifice, these made the long journey joyfully to become Sisters of St. Joseph for the Indian Mission of the Nez Perces in Idaho. They arrived at Slickpoo on November 13, 1903, and were put on retreat by Father Cataldo, who himself gave them the exercises of St. Ignatius. The Chosen Twelve received the habit on January 6 of the next year and began their novitiate with Mother Angeli-

ca as superior and mistress. Father Cataldo in capacity of director gave to them and to the others who followed them in the novitiate a thorough religious training, in which the virtues of poverty and self-sacrifice were emphasized and exemplified in an eminent degree. Eight of this group persevered to pronounce Final Vows in 1912, and Mother Gertrude came from Tipton for this ceremony. This was her last visit to Idaho, and the Sisters there were constituted a diocesan community under the Bishop of Boise until their affiliation with the Carondelet Congregation.

The original projects of the Sisters could now be developed and new ones added. The first St. Joseph's Hospital on the Snake River, one of the oldest buildings in Lewiston and originally intended for use as a tannery, was a seven-room structure which accommodated nine patients. Early in the summer of the first year, 1902, work was begun on the new building of brick and stone on a site at Sixth street and Fifth avenue, donated by the city. To this wing, three stories high, was added in 1920 another, five stories high. In 1919 the school of nursing was opened. In 1924 the hospital received standardization from the American College of Surgeons.

In the meantime, a second hospital, under the patronage of Our Lady of Lourdes, was opened in Pasco, Washington, in 1916, and was moved in 1920 into a modern building of fifty-five bed capacity, the citizens of Pasco having pledged their support to erect it on a site given by the Northern Pacific Railroad. A school for nurses was established in 1922.

In 1912 two houses were purchased across the street from the hospital and converted into a novitiate, superseding the

original novitiate in the Indian mission. In 1914 the house next to the novitiate was purchased for St. Ann's Home, a residence for old ladies, and in 1918 a house next to that was procured for a nurses' home. The second school of the Sisters was undertaken in 1906 when the Visitation Academy at Lewiston was converted into a parochial school and given into their hands.

From its introduction into the Northwest in 1902, the community had labored under adverse circumstances, and had lost many of its best members by death. During the epidemic of influenza in 1918-1919, eight Sisters were carried off by the dread disease, among them Mother Angelica, then the Superior General. The community overcame its difficulties bravely and at the time of the affiliation in 1925, with Mother Borgia as its superior it consisted of an exemplary group of religious that had made much progress in a short period.

Mother Agnes at this time appointed Mother Madeleine Lyons of St. Paul, Minnesota, a woman of wide experience in hospital administration in the institutions of her province, as Superior of the hospital in Lewiston, with general supervision over the entire group until the appointment in 1926 of Mother M. Berchmans Twohy and Mother M. Charles McIvor, both of St. Paul, as Superiors of the institution at Slickpoo, now an Indian school and orphanage, and of the hospital in Pasco, respectively. In 1928 a residence was secured by the parish in Lewiston for the eight Sister-teachers of the parish school, and a Superior for this house was sent from Los Angeles in the person of Sister Teresa Joseph Monahan. The novices were trans-

ferred to the Novitiate in Los Angeles, and the home for aged ladies was discontinued much to the regret of the small number of inmates at the time, all of whom were able to maintain themselves.

Mother Agnes as General continued to further the expansion of these missions in the country of Lewis and Clark. She was soon, however, to feel the loss of the three persons figuring with her in the merger of the communities. Father Cataldo, shortly after conducting a Holy Week mission for his beloved Indians, died on April 9, 1928, in the ninety-second year of his age and the seventy-seventh as a member of the Society of Jesus. Mother Borgia Toucher, having guided the destiny of her little community until she found for it a safe harbor, went in 1926 to Los Angeles and then on account of failing health to St. Mary's Hospital, Tucson, where she died on January 13, 1929. Likewise, Mother Agnes lost a friend and adviser when Bishop Gorman, stopping at the Lewiston hospital on a visitation of his diocese, died suddenly and unexpectedly on July 9, 1927.

VI

The devotion of Mother Agnes to the Holy See and to the person of the reigning Pontiff was very marked, as was in consequence her generosity to the Pope and the interests for which he solicited help. Likewise the subjects of her great regard were the prelates who served the Congregation in Rome, for from the time of the approbation of the Constitutions by the Holy See in 1867, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet

have enjoyed the advantage of being under Cardinal Protectors residing in the Eternal City. The correspondence which passed between Reverend Mother and these Churchmen has a tone of friendliness and graciousness, and while much of it concerns matters of great weight for the large Congregation, notes of greeting for the feast days of their Eminences are prominent in the collection.

Francis Cardinal Satolli was appointed Protector of the Congregation in January, 1909, and was succeeded by Sebastian Cardinal Martinelli in May, 1910. In the spring of 1921, the eminent Benedictine historian, Aiden Cardinal Gasquet, was named Protector, and made known his appointment in a letter to Mother Agnes on March 3 of that year. "I am very much pleased," wrote His Eminence, "to be named Protector of such a large and flourishing Congregation as yours, and you may be sure that in any way I can serve its interests, I shall do so."

He was soon called upon to serve its interests in an important and practical way. Early in 1922, after the publication of the New Code of Canon Law of 1918, word was sent out by the Holy See calling in to Rome copies of the Rules and Constitutions of religious orders for any necessary revisions in accordance with the new regulations. Cardinal Gasquet graciously undertook to superintend the revision of the Constitutions of the Sisters of Carondelet, placing the matter in the hands of a high official in the Congregation of the Affairs of Religious, and through his own secretary and co-worker, Father Philip Langdon, O.S.B., keeping Mother Agnes in-

formed of the progress of the revision, which was submitted by them to the Sacred Congregation on September 15, 1923.

The fewness of the changes required to bring the Constitutions into complete agreement with the New Code is proof of their canonical character and of the care exercised by the original framers. The principal change consisted in abolishing the intermediate or business chapters, "which are not against the Code, but involve great expense." This alteration, together with a few minor adjustments, was incorporated in the copy of the Constitutions made at the Mother House and returned after some correspondence to the Sacred Congregation for final revision and approval.

A delay was occasioned by the extended visit of Cardinal Gasquet and his secretary to South America and the impaired condition of the health of His Eminence, which necessitated his sojourn for a time in England. At length, in mid-winter, 1925, Mother Agnes received the welcome news sent from Rome on December 15 that Father Langdon was forwarding the final revised and approved text.

The state of the Cardinal's health seems to have been from that time a cause of uneasiness, not only to the Benedictine Order, but to the ecclesiastical authorities in Rome, where His Eminence's services as Chairman of the Biblical Commission appointed by His Holiness, Pope Pius X, were considered invaluable. A letter to Mother Agnes written by the Cardinal on March 15, 1927, states:

> I have been a victim of the prevailing influenza and had to take to my bed about three weeks ago. But, thank

> God, I am now much better in spite of my eighty years, and I am most grateful for the prayers you promise me in your name and in that of your community.

Two years later, the Community heard with great grief the news of the death of His Eminence, which occurred on April 5, 1929, at the Palazzo San Calisto, Rome. Later came the official notification and a lengthy account of the last illness, demise, and funeral rites of the great Churchman, received from Father Langdon, together with photographs of the prelate on his bier, majestic in death. These were followed by souvenirs--His Eminence's cloth zuchetta and a bronze medallion which had been presented to the Cardinal by Pope Benedict XV, tokens much prized by Mother Agnes and carefully preserved with other souvenirs presented to former Superiors by Pius IX, Leo XIII, and Pius X. A letter of sympathy was sent from Carondelet by Mother Agnes to Reverend Father Langdon, who had been the Cardinal's constant companion for twenty years, and who shared his Superior's interest in the Sisters of St. Joseph. The afore-mentioned account of His Eminence's last days, prepared in French by Dom Cuthbert Butler, O.S.B., was translated and sent to each house of the Congregation.

A successor to Cardinal Gasquet was announced to the community on October 29, 1929, in the person of Bonaventure Cardinal Cerretti. The appointment gave much satisfaction to all, especially to the Sisters of the Northern province, where he was personally known to many, having visited St. Paul when he was in the United States as a guest of Archbishop Ireland of St. Paul. He, in turn, had evidently not forgotten the

friends he had made there. In a letter to Mother Agnes written from Rome on April 8, 1932, he says:

> "I had the pleasure to see quite often Mother Provincial, Mother Clara, Sister Antonia and two other Sisters [Sister Antonine O'Brien and Sister Maris Stella Smith] during their stay in Rome. They enjoyed the ceremonies of Holy Week and assisted at the Mass of the Holy Father on Easter Sunday."

Unfortunately, the intercourse between Cardinal Cerretti and the Sisters of St. Joseph was of short duration. His lamented death occurred in Rome on May 8, 1932, after a week's illness. A pathetic interest for the Community is attached to his passing. On May 12, after the news of his death had been received, there was delivered to Reverend Mother Agnes a letter written by him on April 26, 1932, thanking her for the Easter greetings of the Community at the Mother House. He wrote: "I do reciprocate them most affectionately, praying our Divine Redeemer to bless you and give you the abundance of divine grace."

Later there was received from Rome, sent by his sister, Signorina Elvira Cerretti, a memento of the deceased Cardinal. Accompanying it was his portrait on a fine card and an account of his public life and his death, and his last words: "I go to meet death peacefully. I have never been so well prepared. Our Lord has given me many graces. This is the greatest."

On December 30, 1934, word was received from Rome of the appointment of His Eminence, Alexis Henry Cardinal

Lepicier, Servite, Prefect of the Congregation of the Affairs of Religious, as successor to Cardinal Cerretti. Among his communications was one conveying to Reverend Mother Agnes the blessing of His Holiness, Pope Pius XI, "heartily given." He sent also to the Mother House at Carondelet a large autographed portrait of himself in full Cardinal's robes, which, after being handsomely framed, was given a prominent place in the Sisters' corridor.

Like his predecessor in this office, Cardinal Lepicier had but a brief intercourse with the Congregation. His death occurred at Rome on May 20, 1936. He was succeeded October 25, 1936, by Pietro Cardinal Fumasoni-Biondi, former Apostolic Delegate to the United States. The Sisters of St. Joseph were not strangers to His Eminence. Mother Agnes had first made his acquaintance in Viterbo during the visit of our Superiors to Europe in 1908-1909.Then she had entertained him when as Apostolic Delegate to the United States he came on March 14, 1930, to the Mother House in company with Archbishop Glennon. They had been received in the chapel by the assembled community during the singing of the *Magnificat* by the novices' choir; and thence all repaired to St. Joseph's Hall, where His Eminence addressed the Sisters and novices on the happiness of vocation and the religious life. He expressed his pleasure at visiting the old convent, "the seat of a great corporation."

Other establishments of the Congregation known to the Cardinal as a result of visits he made to them during his years in America are our provincial house in the West, St. Mary's

Academy, Los Angeles, that in the South, Mount Saint Joseph's, Augusta, and some of our larger institutions such as St. Joseph's Hospital, Kansas City, the Academy of Our Lady, Peoria, and St. Joseph's Academy, Green Bay. The following letter, though addressed to her successor, Reverend Mother Rose Columba, was highly appreciative of the work Mother Agnes had accomplished in the Congregation as the Cardinal knew it.

Dear Reverend Mother:

The Holy Father has just recently appointed me Cardinal Protector of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. This is for me at once a pleasant duty and a privilege. As I have had opportunity to visit some of your houses, I know from personal observation what you are doing for God and the care of souls in the educational field as well as in diverse charitable fields. As Cardinal Protector, I shall in some small way at least, have part in those good works. At the outset, I wish to send you a word of greeting and my blessing. As the strength and success of a religious community can be measured most accurately by the faithfulness with which the Constitutions are observed, and by the supernatural spirit of co-operation between all the members, I beg Almighty God not only to grant to all a continuation of that fine spirit which already exists, but also an increased desire and accomplishment of that religious perfection for which you are united.

Under separate cover, I am sending you a photograph of myself, that by your prayers you, yourselves, may become protectors of the Cardinal Protector. In anticipation that I may receive many a remembrance in your prayers and with best wishes to all, together with the assurance that I shall be glad to serve you whenever there shall be any real need, I am

Yours sincerely in Christ,
Peter Cardinal Fumasoni-Biondi

The photograph arrived in due time, bearing the autographed inscription: "To the Sisters of Carondelet, with thanks to Almighty God and congratulations to the Sisters for their glorious achievements."

VII

As the Superior General of an immense group of religious women, Mother Agnes was constantly occupied, either in Carondelet or in the convents of the five provinces of her Sisters. To the Mother House she called many important meetings of the governing body of the Congregation, both those required by the law of the Church and those assembled to confer as occasion arose on advancing the good works of the Community.

Changes in the regulations and customs of the Sisters that took place in Mother Agnes' generalate were mainly those made to conform to the Code of Canon Law promulgated in 1918. She called on April 11 of the following year a meeting of the Provincial Superiors who deliberated for two days on the adjustment necessary for the observance of its prescriptions, especially in regard to Superiors and Sisters taking final vows. As to the office of local superiors, their term was to be three years in length and limited in number to two terms in the same convent. For profession, the legislation was that Final Vows be taken after three years of temporary profession, and not five, as had been the usage in the Congregation. That law had already been put into effect the previous year at the time of perpetual profession August 15.

The Chapter of the Congregation in 1920, held at the Mother House May 18 to 22, decreed that the first vows of Novices be triennial, instead of annual vows repeated each year, and applied for an Indult of the Holy See, which was given in due time, so that the profession of perpetual vows by those who make temporary vows on March nineteenth be made on August fifteenth of each year. This chapter also extended the time for the visitation of the Provinces by the Superior General from two years to three years. Mother Agnes was notably faithful to holding this visitation and made it in person more often than by delegate.

The Ninth General Chapter of the Congregation was held at the Mother House in May, 1923. It was composed of delegates from five provinces, the province of Augusta, Georgia, affiliated in 1922, being represented for the first time. The chapter was preceded as usual by a retreat of eight days, conducted by the Rev. James Foley, S.J., and attended by all the delegates. The election on May 3 was presided over by Archbishop Glennon of St. Louis, in his capacity of Apostolic Delegate. Balloting resulted in the election of Mother Mary Agnes Rossiter for a second term of six years subject to the approval of the Holy See. The other officers elected were Mother Columbine Ryan, Assistant General, Sister James Stanislaus Rogan, Sister Athanasia Dunnebacke, and Sister Mary Lucida Savage, General Councillors. The last named was chosen Secretary General of the Congregation. The retiring Councillors were Mother Rose Aurelia Higgins of the Troy Province, Assistant General, Sister Aloysius Andres of St. Louis, Sister Hyacinth Werden of the St. Paul Province, and Sister Margaret Mary Brady of the Los Angeles Province, who

were returned with honor to their respective provinces to resume the duties interrupted for the general good.

An outstanding event at the Mother House in 1929 was the assembling of the Tenth General Chapter, the first according to one of the regulations inserted in the Constitutions at the time of the revision under the new code of Canon Law, which recommended that the business chapter immediately follow the election chapter and consist of the same delegates. This business chapter was formerly held every six years in the intermediate period between election chapters and consisted of a larger number of delegates, apportioned in each province according to the number of Sisters.

Twenty-five delegates assembled for the retreat which commenced on April 23 under the direction of the Rev. Michael O'Connor, S.J., of St. Louis. Archbishop Glennon presided in the chapel on May 3 at the election, which resulted in the choice of Reverend Mother Mary Agnes Rossiter for another term of six years, subject to approval by the Holy See. The delegates then repaired to St. Joseph's Hall, where they chose by ballot the following general officers: Assistant General, Mother Columbine Ryan; Secretary General, Sister Mary Lucida Savage; Councillors, Sister Bernard Joseph Dunne and Sister Carmelita O'Gorman. Sister Emma Teresa Hale was elected Treasurer. The delegates next went into session as a business chapter under the presidency of Mother Columbine Ryan, Assistant General, and continued until May 8. The Holy See was immediately petitioned to ratify the election of Mother Agnes as Superior General, which it did in due time.

Among the decrees voted by the Chapter was one which vitally affected the personnel of the general officers. According to a custom of long standing, these were usually chosen from the Mother Province. It was now decreed that for the better representation of the whole Congregation in administrative affairs, a general officer should be chosen from each of the provinces, this to be put into effect in the election of 1935. This chapter also made new regulations about visits of Sisters to their homes, allowing a visit of a week's duration every seven years and permitting emergency visits in case of the serious illness of parents, brothers, or sisters, the golden jubilee of parents, and other important occasions. A later chapter reduced the time between visits from seven to five years.

At regular intervals Mother Agnes held meetings of the Provincial Superiors with the General Officers of the Congregation. A project of far-reaching importance in the Congregation, which Mother Agnes was instrumental in founding, is the Educational Conference of the Sisters of St. Joseph, inaugurated at one of these gatherings. Proposed by Sister Lucida, Secretary General, at the biennial meeting in 1932, the conference has as its two-fold purpose to encourage literary effort on the part of the Sisters and to bring about an exchange of views on educational topics and work as carried on in the different parts of the Congregation.

Mother Agnes, who presided over this meeting, was heartily in accord with these aims, and never failed to promote the undertakings of the Educational Conference. She immediately made preparations for the first meeting to take place in St.

Paul, Minnesota, where the Catholic Educational Association was to convene that summer. Both convenience and economy suggested that the same delegates might represent the Congregation at both conventions.

Mother Agnes attended the first meeting over which Mother Clara Graham, being provincial of the St. Paul province, was appointed chairman. The sessions were held from June 25 to 28, 1933, and delegates were delighted to find represented among their number, a total of nineteen, all the provinces and all the levels of education, colleges, secondary and grade schools. Sister Lucida explained her plan to the assembled Sisters, a committee was formed to draw up a Constitution and By-Laws, and officers were elected, including the following: president, Sister Antonia McHugh, president of the College of St. Catherine, St. Paul; vice-president, Sister Mary Pius Neenan, head of the department of philosophy of Fontbonne College, St. Louis; secretary-historian, Sister Blanche Rooney, supervisor of schools in the province of Troy.

Presently the delegates took under special consideration plans for celebrating fitly the centenary of the coming of the Sisters to America, and it was agreed to devote the annual meetings of 1934 and 1935 to discussion of the commemoration and of the means to be adopted in each province for making the occasion a memorable one. The second general meeting took place in October, 1934, at the Mother House, St. Louis, and the third in April, 1935, in Chicago, Illinois.

Carrying out the designs of the Conference as outlined in its first meeting, regional conferences were held during 1934 at

various centers, and the custom met with such favor that they have since been called as frequently as circumstances have allowed. Mother Agnes encouraged the work of the regional as well as the general meetings. While she did not always find it possible to attend these sessions in person, especially when held at a distance from the Mother House, she followed the proceedings with interest and approved the plan of publishing these proceedings for the benefit of a wider circle of readers in the community. The influence of the Conference was soon noted in the ability of the Sisters to discuss educational matters and the quality of the papers presented at the meetings.

An anniversary of more than passing significance was observed on March 19, 1928, in the celebration of the triple golden jubilee of Reverend Mother Agnes, her Assistant, Mother Columbine Ryan, and Sister Salesia Early. It was the expressed desire of the jubilarians that the event be informally observed, and only by the community at the Mother House; but because of the ceremonies attendant on the usual reception of postulants and profession of novices held annually on St. Joseph's Day, to have the occasion an informal one was impossible. There was, on the contrary, an elaborate celebration in which both old and young were the principals. Solemn High Mass was offered in the chapel by the Right Rev. Msgr. John J. Tannrath, Chancellor of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, and the sermon was preached by Archbishop Glennon, who, while respecting the wish of the jubilarians that there be no public eulogy, could not refrain from commenting on "the large charity that marked the administration of Mother Mary

Agnes, bringing everywhere peace and content to her spiritual daughters."

Sisters came from distant parts of the community to offer congratulations and to be present for the ceremonies. Many of these guests accompanied the jubilarians to the Provincial House, *Mater Consilia*, on March 20, to receive the felicitations of the Sisters there. A unique feature of this celebration was the presentation of addresses by three of the Sisters who had already passed their fiftieth anniversaries in the Congregation--Sisters Mary Philip Dunn, Antoinette Vogt, and Bernardine Lanigan.

On March 22, Fontbonne College was honored by the presence of the jubilarians, their guests, and many friends, where all assisted, with the college and academy faculties, students, and alumnae at the Solemn High Mass offered in the college chapel by the Very Rev. Michael S. Ryan, C.M., S.T.D., president of Kenrick Seminary. The Rev. Alphonse M. Schwitalla, S.J., dean of the Medical School of St. Louis University, in an eloquent sermon expressed his appreciation of the work of the jubilarians. A musical program by the college and academy students was followed by a festive dinner.

That Mother Agnes was at home in all the houses of the Congregation was demonstrated with special emphasis during the International Eucharistic Congress held in Chicago in 1926. Summoning to St. Joseph's Home for the Friendless there the Councillors and Provincial Superiors, she was tire-

less in carrying out her office as hostess as well as most edifying in her participation in the services honoring Christ in the Most Blessed Sacrament.

Meanwhile Mother Agnes authorized improvements in the Mother House, a part of which was approaching its hundredth year, and its surroundings. Streets bounding it were paved, and an immense sustaining wall was put up. She saw to the equipment of the interior for more extensive employment of electricity for light and power.

In 1927 Holy Family Chapel was decorated at her request. Then in 1935 in preparation for the centennial of the Congregation she commenced a program of decoration of the chapel which included the installation of fifty windows in antique stained glass. The three-opening windows in the transcepts have as their central figures Christ Crucified on the gospel side, and Christ as King on the epistle side. The small windows in the nave have the field in light tints and the borders in rich colors. The windows in the balcony resemble them in treatment and have centered in each a symbol of Our Lady taken from her litany in this order, commencing at the front on the gospel side: Mirror of Justice, Seat of Wisdom, Spiritual Vessel, Vessel of Honor, Singular Vessel of Devotion, Mystical Rose, Tower of David, Tower of Ivory, House of Gold, Ark of the Covenant, Gate of Heaven, Morning Star, and Queen of Angels. In the decorating of the interior a two-tone mottled gray effect predominates, while antiqued gold is used to highlight the ribs of the ceiling, the capitals, brackets and other details. The ceiling of the sanctuary is in gold and the walls have an over-all design in soft colors.

VIII

As Reverend Mother Mary Agnes' third term of office drew to a close in 1935, the Congregation was in the midst of preparations for its centenary celebration the following year. Regret on the part of the Sisters was universal that she who had done so much for its advancement and success for over a quarter of a century and was active in furthering these preparations would lay down the office of Superior General before their completion; universal, also, was the desire that she who held so large a place in the hearts of the Sisters should share in the honor to be shown the Congregation as its loved hostess in the days of its great triumph.

This could only be brought to pass by an appeal to Rome for permission to postpone the General election until May, 1936. Accordingly, after a meeting of the Provincial Superiors held at the Mother House in November, 1934, an agreement was reached between them and the General Councillors to send a petition to the Holy See requesting that if possible the General election be delayed until after the centenary of 1936. This received the approbation of His Excellency, Archbishop Glennon of St. Louis. With his written approval and the signatures of the General Councillors and the Provincials, the petition was forwarded to the Sacred Congregation of the Affairs of Religious. A favorable reply was given under date of January 9, 1935. On account of an unfortunate circumstance in its delivery, the document was not received at the Mother House until February 18, 1935. As the collection of votes for delegates to the General Chapter had gone on apace, these

votes were received and counted on the customary date, February 2, as for the election of 1935. The approval of the Holy See and the general satisfaction of the Sisters over the postponement of the election justified the action of the Provincials and Councillors, and the delegates so elected were held over as eligible for the chapter of 1936.

Accordingly Mother Agnes presided over the beautiful centennial celebration in her usual gracious manner and welcomed prelates and priests, Sisters, alumnae, and friends who participated in the ceremonies of the three-day period commencing April 15, 1936.

On the opening day His Excellency, Archbishop Glennon celebrated Solemn Pontifical Mass in the Cathedral of St. Louis, assisted by the Very Rev. Timothy Flavin, C.M., Provincial of the Vincentian Fathers, the Very Rev. Robert S. Johnston, S.J., President of St. Louis University, and the Very Rev. William P. Barr, C.M., President of Kenrick Seminary, and other local clerical friends of the Congregation. Visiting prelates in the sanctuary were Their Excellencies, Archbishop John Gregory Murray of St. Paul, Minnesota; Bishop Thomas F. Lillis of Kansas City, Missouri; Bishop Henry Althoff of Belleville, Illinois; Bishop Francis J. Tief of Concordia, Kansas; Bishop Francis Joannes of Leavenworth, Kansas; Bishop Thomas J. Toolen of Mobile, Alabama; Bishop Urban J. Vehr of Denver, Colorado; Bishop Joseph E. Ritter of Indianapolis, Indiana; and Bishop Christian Winkelmann, Auxiliary of St. Louis. The rector of the Cathedral, the Right Rev. Msgr. Nicholas W. Brinkman, provided for the enhancement of the services every facili-

ty afforded by the great Cathedral, including the fanfare of the silver trumpets, and the Cathedral choir of boys and men, who sang the ordinary of the Mass, while the recessional and proper were chanted by one hundred Sisters of St. Joseph picked from the community choirs of St. Louis and vicinity.

This was the only service open to the public, and the Cathedral was filled to capacity with Sisters of St. Joseph and their many friends, including representatives from all the Sisterhoods in St. Louis, also pupils from the high schools and from the upper grades of the parochial schools taught by the Sisters of St. Joseph. Of the Sisters from out of the city there were the Provincials and their assistants from St. Paul, Troy, Los Angeles, and Augusta, and Superiors of Communities of St. Joseph from Toronto, London, Peterborough, and Pembroke in Canada; from Philadelphia and Erie, Pennsylvania; Long Island and Buffalo, New York; Kalamazoo, Michigan; and Concordia and Wichita, Kansas, to all of whom Mother Agnes was the cordial hostess, delighted to renew old ties and fashion new ones.

The speaker for the Mass in the Cathedral was the Most Rev. Christopher E. Byrne, D.D., Bishop of Galveston, Texas, whose sister, Sister Rosina, and niece, Sister Leo Christopher, are members of the Congregation. He prefaced his discourse by reading the message of congratulation received from the Vatican in a cablegram signed by Eugenio Cardinal Pacelli. The cablegram read: "The Holy Father sends heartfelt congratulations to the Mother Superior and all the Sisters of St. Joseph on the occasion of their centenary. Your splendid

works of Christian education and charity are an enduring pledge of plenteous graces and Divine assistance."

Bishop Byrne based his sermon on the text of Isaiah 35:1-2: "The land that was desolate and impassable shall be glad, and the wilderness shall rejoice, and shall flourish like the lily. It shall bud forth and blossom, and shall rejoice with joy and praise." He began thus:

> If one were to follow a first impulse, there would be given to you hearty congratulations on the completion of one hundred years of gloriously resultant labor. But the thought of our text brings us to a halt in that well-meaning and well-intentioned purpose. The "desolate and impassable places," how changed! And the wilderness is gone. Our first duty then, is to congratulate the Archdiocese of St. Louis on your one hundred years, then to congratulate the State of Missouri, then, the United States of America. For literally, from the Great Lakes to the Gulf, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, there is rejoicing today because of the one hundred years of your labors and suffering.
>
> Today the six nuns who came to America in 1836 are thousands, and the log hut of the little French village has become the stately convent in the bosom of a great city. The walls bear marks of time and storm and fire, but placidly reflect the beauty of the lives within.

In eloquent terms Bishop Byrne paid tribute to the pioneers--Sisters Febronie and Delphine Fontbonne, Febronie Chappelon, St. Protais Deboille, Felicite Boute, Philomene Villaine--and to the Superiors General who have ably governed the Congregation during the century--Mothers Celestine Pommerel, St. John Facemaz, Agatha Guthrie, Agnes Gonzaga

Ryan, and Mary Agnes Rossiter--and to "the early Sisters whose names and deeds are hidden with Christ in God. To these countless nameless ones we do reverence today."

Archbishop Glennon, in an informal talk following the sermon, said:

> It is not necessary for me to add anything to the eloquent tribute that Bishop Byrne has spoken to you about and in behalf of the Sisters of St. Joseph. At the same time I suppose it would appear as if there were something missing if I were not to say just a word. I see here in the sanctuary the St. Joseph lilies, and I see in the body of the church the St. Joseph Sisters. Well, there are points of contact, of similarity between the Sisters of St. Joseph and the St. Joseph lilies. First of all, the St. Joseph lilies: the lily is one of the fairest, is the fairest, most beautiful of all the flowery creatures. It is held as a symbol of the Blessed Mother, and because of St. Joseph's chaste and noble character one lily is known as the St. Joseph lily. Indeed our blessed Lord says: "Consider the lilies, how they grow." We will consider the St. Joseph lily. It grows from Mother Earth on a great strong stem, and when it reaches the period of its ripening strikes out with great blossoms up to the heavens. As the sun and the heavens lend their light and life, in their unfolding these blossoms turn down towards the people.
>
> Now the Sisters of St. Joseph came from, well, from the land of the lily--the fleur-de-lis--from France and the king whose decoration was the fleur-de-lis, to the city of St. Louis, and they bore with them in their hearts the lilies of France and exhibited the whiteness of the lily in the purity of their souls, and the greatness of the lily in the works that they did, a blessing to all those who came near

them. Planted near here in Carondelet, they grew up to be a great stem, a large stalk, and being matured, branched out into five great blossoms--north, south, east and west--the provinces of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, all united as you are today on that parent stem to celebrate your origin here near the City of St. Louis.

For fifty-three years I have had the pleasure of being intimately associated with, living near, and knowing well the Sisters of St. Joseph. Indeed, I found it difficult to get away from them, whether in Kansas City or in St. Louis. If I did not come to live where they were, they came to live where I was. And the testimony of all these years is that the Sisters of St. Joseph, like the St. Joseph lily, can stand against the four winds of heaven, and that amid the many sorrows of earth they stand as the lily stands towards the heavens, firm and true.

There is a stability about the Sisters of St. Joseph which stability they need, going out to schools everywhere. They have not the protection of the cloister. They have to stand firmly wherever there is work to do and where duty lies. So all through these years they have performed their various duties--to the sick, to those defective of hearing, and to the children in the parish schools--doing God's work.

What a blessing they have been to the priests and to these schools! I may say what has been said more than once, that without the devotion of the Sisters and their sacrifices and help in the uplift of the parochial school system, we would have no parochial schools. We would not be suffering the little children to come to God, because there is no Sister of St. Joseph who does not protect the child as St. Joseph did long ago. And in the field of higher education as well, in the care of the orphan, and in their varied works they have shown that stability,

strength of purpose, and consecration to their work. Where they were planted, there they grew, and they blossomed there in all the virtues of the religious life. So today at the end of these years we see their white blossoms all around and we feel the aroma of their presence, as the preacher said, from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the Great Lakes to the Gulf.

And so I wish that they may still prosper, "*prospere, procede et regna.*" With the individual we have the evening and the gathering darkness, but with a religious community, as with the Church of God, there is perpetuity. They are the doers of the word. They shall live forever. St. Joseph, guard your flowers. Guard them as once you guarded the family at Nazareth. In the name of the blessed St. Joseph, go forth, proceed prosperously through the children to the kingdom of God.

Following the Mass, the bishops and clergy were guests at dinner at Fontbonne College. In the afternoon at the Mother House in Carondelet, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given by the Rev. William L. Shea, pastor of Assumption Church, and a centennial sermon was delivered by the Right Rev. John P. Spencer, S.T.L., pastor of St. Roch's Church. "Ignorance", said Msgr. Spencer, "blindness, deafness, mute tongues, the sick, the poor, the aged, infants, needy mothers, struggling priests and people--all have had a share in the work of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Merely to read the list of the activities in which they have engaged is to know the needs of mankind and the response of the Catholic Church. On this happy occasion of their centennial, we are glad to be with them, not only in rejoicing at the hundred years of work well done in this new land where a century is a long time,

but in learning with them the lessons of their extensive history —lessons of patience, of humility, and of courage."

The second day Mother Agnes greeted the alumnae of the academy and college, entertaining them at dinner and providing an exhibit of art and needlework done through the long decades of the school's life, and also presiding at a program where the oldest of the members gave their recollections of their school days.

The officers of the Mass for this day were the Franciscan Fathers, whose order had furnished chaplains for the Mother House for sixty years. The Very Rev. Father Provincial, Optatus Loeffler, O.F.M., was the celebrant. The choir for the Mass and the afternoon's Benediction was that of the Franciscan Seminary at Teutopolis, Illinois, and some of their selections were the compositions of their Franciscan confreres.

The Right Rev. Msgr. Patrick P. Crane, P. A., rector of Holy Name Church, had prepared the sermon for this Mass, which in his absence, caused by illness, was read by the Rev. Father Victor of the Passionist Monastery of Normandy. Speaking of the early Sisters, Msgr. Crane explained, "What God might do with their lives to further His kingdom was too distant for their vision . . . It was as it has been, and ever shall be, the way of littleness unto greatness. They sowed in tears, privations, prayers, and sacrifices, and these are the integrals that inevitably produce the indestructible pillars of the Kingdom of God on earth."

The speaker for the afternoon of alumnae day was the Rev. Raphael C. McCarthy, S.J., head of the department of psy-

chology of St. Louis University, himself an alumnus of our school in Marquette, Michigan, which Mother Agnes had directed. Addressing the alumnae, he said: "On an occasion like this, we should not be content with sterile words of praise. We should grasp it as an opportunity. We should capture inspiration from it. The sincerest tribute of admiration we can pay is to imitate the virtues of those whom we applaud. One of the real causes of satisfaction that the Sisters feel on this anniversary is the knowledge that during that long time they have been supplying the country with men and women whom they have taught to reverence God and His Law. For a century they have been training boys and girls to choose between God and the world, between eternity and time, between future gain and present loss. They have given their pupils concrete examples of devotion while they taught them that the only reasonable motive for self-sacrifice in life is the hope of a blessed hereafter."

The Most Rev. Christian H. Winkelmann, D.D., Auxiliary Bishop of St. Louis, pontificated at the Mass on the third day, Memorial Day. The Very Rev. William P. Barr, C.M., president of Kenrick Seminary, preached the sermon commemorating the deceased members of the Congregation and their pupils. That afternoon Solemn Benediction was given with the Rev. Thomas V. O'Reilly, pastor of St. Margaret's Church, as celebrant. The Very Rev. Peter Forbes, C.Ss.R., pastor of St. Alphonsus Church, delivered the closing sermon.

The music for this third day's Mass was provided by the choir of the Mother House, embracing the novices and younger

professed Sisters, under the direction of Sister Louis Joseph Bauer. Both the character of the music and the excellence of its rendition reflect the musical ideal of Mother Agnes. Gregorian chant predominated in the program, the Ordinary of the Mass being the Mass of Paschal time from the Kyriale, "Lux et Origo," and Proper being of the Mass for Friday of Easter Week from the Liber Usualis. The insert at the Offertory was "Regina Coeli" in three parts, by Ciro Grassi, sung *a cappella*, and the recessional was the acclamations, "Christus Vincit." Polyphonic and other approved compositions were sung for Benediction on Wednesday and Friday afternoons.

A Centennial Pageant of impressive scope was presented in the St. Louis theatre on the afternoon and evening of April 19 and the evening of April 20. At Mother Agnes' request, it was written and its production supervised by Sister Mary Pius Neenan, head of the department of philosophy at Fontbonne College. Professionals directed the performances, trained the dancing groups, and conducted the orchestra. The cast of a thousand persons was chosen from college, high school, and parochial school students and former students of the Sisters. The pageant traced the history of the Congregation from its founding in France in 1650, and dancing groups symbolized the atmosphere of the various episodes. The Dance of the Elements was especially stirring, depicting the perils of the voyage of the nuns to America with wind, water and lightning interpreted by graceful dancers and colorful costumes, sea green and silver for the billowing waves.

For the benefit of those of the Congregation who could not be present, Mother Agnes had one entire edition of *The Caron-*

delet Annual given over to the publication of the manuscript so that all might at least have the pleasure of reading it.

At the performances of the pageant, there was read, at the request of His Excellency, Archbishop Glennon, a letter of congratulation to Mother Agnes from the President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt. Received by the vast audience with enthusiastic applause, the letter follows:

Dear Reverend Mother:

It has come to my attention that the Sisters of St. Joseph on April nineteenth and twentieth, will celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of the arrival of the members of the Order in St. Louis.

The story of the growth of the order in the United States since those far-away days of 1836 reads like the parable of the sower whose seed fell upon good ground.

I am informed that the Order of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, which made such a modest beginning one hundred years ago when six heroic women landed in Saint Louis, now numbers thirty-one hundred sisters who, besides engaging in educational work, operate hospitals, orphan homes, and deaf-mute institutions--truly a remarkable increase in good works.

Upon the happy occasion of this centennial I offer to you and through you all of the members of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, my hearty felicitations. This anniversary must give to each and every one of your members added conviction to the words of the Master: "Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her."

Very sincerely yours,

Franklin D. Roosevelt

The President's reference to thirty-one hundred Sisters is to those who at that date were under the jurisdiction of the Carondelet Mother House. Today (1947) there are 3,500 Sisters in the Carondelet group, and over 11,000 Sisters of St. Joseph in communities in the United States and Canada that owe their origin directly or indirectly to the Carondelet Mother House. Letters of congratulation were also received from the Hon. Guy B. Park, Governor of Missouri, the Hon. John J. Cochran, United States Representative from St. Louis, and the Hon. Bernard R. Dickmann, Mayor of St. Louis. Governor Park wrote to Reverend Mother Agnes:

> Permit me to congratulate you and the members of your great order on the 100th anniversary of the arrival of the original members of your order in this country.
>
> During the past century you have done a wonderful work, and are to be commended for your works of Christian charity. You have every reason to be proud of your great accomplishments. May your order continue to grow and its charities to multiply.

Representative Cochran wrote from Washington:

> No greater tribute could be paid to the Sisters of St. Joseph than the record that the Sisters have made since they came to the United States.
>
> The fact that you have grown until now you have over three thousand Sisters supervising the education of nearly one hundred thousand children, that you have twelve hospitals in six states, as well as ten orphan homes and two deaf-mute institutions, is a record of which you can be proud.

The message received from Mayor Dickmann read as follows:

> May I, upon the hundredth anniversary of your order in St. Louis extend to you and all those splendid characters who preceded you, my heartiest congratulations. Your order has through its untiring efforts contributed untold benefits to the moral and cultural development of St. Louis. It is my hope and I know that it is the hope of the citizens of St. Louis that it will continue its splendid work and by its endeavors have greater honor come upon it in the future.

Her love for community traditions and holy poverty as it was observed by the pioneer Sisters led Reverend Mother to plan the erection on the convent grounds of an accurate duplicate of the log cabin convent entirely furnished in the fashion of 1836. It was a great disappointment to her that with all plans complete and a builder secured, she found at the last minute that the necessary logs could not be obtained. The impetus was given, however, and in place of Reverend Mother's one building, many cabins sprang up under the skillful hands of the Sisters. These appeared in a variety of sizes and materials, but all exhibited the characteristic features which left no doubt in the minds of visitors of the poor appearance of the first St. Joseph's Academy in contrast to the fortress-like structure of the present day. A few of these remained permanently, serving for the edification of future generations of Sisters and their pupils.

Such was the celebration sponsored in St. Louis by Mother Agnes for the first centennial. It was to echo throughout the United States and Canada. During the course of the year on convenient days commemorative Masses were offered in every

convent and parish in which the Sisters were laboring. In large centers, bishops pontificated, joining with them their clergy and the Sisters with their pupils, alumni, and friends. In many instances generous gifts adding appreciably to the efficiency of the work of the Sisters were received.

To the enrichment of the centennial year the artists, dramatists, and historians of the Congregation made their contributions. Sister Cassiana Marie Vogt of St. Joseph's Academy, Green Bay, Wisconsin, painted in oils an original conception of St. Joseph and the Divine Child. Pageants were prepared by faculty members and presented at many institutions--on the terraces of St. Catherine's, St. Paul; on the campus of St. Rose's, Albany; in St. Margaret's Academy and the Academy of the Holy Angels, Minneapolis, and the Academy of Our Lady, Peoria. Naturally, these productions introduced incidents from the story of the local foundations.

A volume to mark the centenary, *The Century's Harvest*, was at the request of Mother Agnes compiled by Sister M. Lucida Savage, with the aid of Sisters of the various provinces. This gives an account of those institutions only whose property and buildings have been acquired by the Congregation. A more detailed history, Sister Lucida's book, *The Congregation of St. Joseph, 1836-1922*, had been produced in 1923, also with the encouragement of Reverend Mother Agnes. The first interpretation of the Congregation and its apostolate, this volume has been in some manner continued by the private publication since 1924 of the annals of the convents, entitled *The Carondelet Annual*, of which Sister Lucida was editor until 1936.

Another valuable chronicle appearing at this time and dedicated to Mother Agnes is a *History of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet of the Troy Province*, prepared by Sister Aida Doyle and a group of collaborators including Sister Anna Gonzaga McIlvaine, who was in 1943 to become Assistant General. Also published as a centennial volume was *Prince of the House of David*, a collection of meditations on St. Joseph which since then has been in use among the Sisters; its author is Sister Rose Cecelia Burke of Troy. In the province of St. Paul, three publications honored the centenary: *Heritage*, a historical brochure prepared by Sister Antonine O'Brien of the College of St. Catherine; a two-volume work by Sister Anna Goulet of the College, *Pageant of Our Musical History;* and *Ave Bells* and *Centennial Historical Ode*, by Sister Evangelista Melady of St. Agatha's Conservatory.

With the sympathetic approval of Mother Agnes, other significant publishing, especially in the educational field, had been done by the Sisters during her incumbency. Sister James Stanislaus Rogan brought out the first of her textbooks for the grades in 1928. Sister M. Pius Neenan and other faculty members of Fontbonne College, Sisters Berenice O'Neill, Joseph Aloysius Geissert, and Marietta Jennings, were expressing their views in educational journals. Sister M. Giles Phillips discussed problems of nurses in the publications of her profession, and Sisters Anna Loretta Neagle and Anne Catherine McDonald wrote on students' reading.

Sisters in the northern province, especiallly the staff of St. Catherine's with Mother Antonia at their head, were con-

tributing to professional journals--Sisters Eucharista Galvin, Antonine O'Brien, Antonius Kennelly, Jeanne Marie Bonnet, M. Cecelia Marzolf, Annette Walters, St. Mark Wirtz, Alphonsine Welp, Agnes Rita Lingl, Alice Irene Freiberg and Marian Donovan. Sister Maris Stella Smith of St. Catherine's had been publishing since 1928 the poems which won her high rank among contemporary poets.

In the East, Sister Benita Daley had made translations from the French and drawn up books for French classes, while Sister Elizabeth Joseph Byrnes and Sister Teresa Angela Mantica had launched the first of the many editions of their manuals for the study of Latin and chemistry, respectively. In the West, Sister St. Catherine Beavers had published a volume of poems, Sister Dolorosa Mannix had prepared for Latin classes her selections from the Scriptures, and Sister Geraldine Lloyd her book for English classes, while Sisters Hortensia Lynch and Mary Rita McGreerty were contributing to the school journals.

IX

Scarcely had Mother Agnes bidden God-speed to her guests when she turned to preparations for the General Chapter. On April 25, 1936, the retreat for the delegates was opened by the Rev. Frederick P. Coupal, C.M. The election was held on May 3, and was presided over by Archbishop Glennon. It resulted in the choice of Mother Rose Columba McGinnis as Superior General. The following General Officers were also elected, one from each of the provinces, according to a decree of the chapter of 1929: Mother Clara Graham of St. Paul, As-

sistant General; Sister Mary Paul Greene of Augusta, Georgia, Secretary General; Sister Mary Aurelia Meagher, of Troy, New York, Sister Victoria Kelly of the Los Angeles Province, Councillors; Sister Emerita Joseph Egan of St. Louis, Treasurer.

The General Chapter which followed the election was presided over by the newly elected Superior General, Reverend Mother Rose Columba, and continued five days, after which the delegates dispersed to their respective missions. A decree of the Chapter, proposed by Mother Clara and approved by unanimous vote, gave to the retiring general, Mother Mary Agnes, the title "Mother" during her life time and rank in the Congregation next to the General Councillors.

After a year's rest at the Mother House, Mother Mary Agnes Rossiter, still active and eager for duty, was asked to take upon herself a great responsibility, that of the superiorship of St. Joseph's Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri. This she did most generously, although her heart clung to the Mother House, where she had spent so many happy and useful years. It was with great regret that the Sisters there saw her leave, and their fervent prayers followed her to her new field of labor. All learned with relief that her burdens there were to be greatly lightened. A change in the government of St. Joseph's Hospital called for a Superintendent of the institution to assume a major part of the administrative responsibility, thus allowing the Superior to devote herself mainly to the spiritual needs of the Community and patients.

This charge Mother Mary Agnes, with her customary high-souled courage and unselfishness in the face of duty, accepted

as an opportunity of doing much for God and the good of souls; and for three years, until her death in 1940, gave generously of her time and energy to keeping up the high standard of St. Joseph's Hospital. Though unacquainted with hospital work from a professional point of view, she had maintained close contact with it through her many visitations of institutions of the Congregation, and the provision she had necessarily to make in keeping up this branch of the Community's activities. This experience had extended over a period of thirty years, and Mother Mary Agnes went to St. Joseph's Hospital in full sympathy with the work before her. She made herself familiar with its onerous duties, and endeared herself to innumerable patients through her daily visits to each sick room and her attention to the comforts and needs of all. Her passage through the wards spread radiance, and was invariably followed by murmured blessings. She had an able assistant in Sister Pascaline Gandolfo, Superintendent, who lent the benefits of her long experience in promoting the efficiency of the hospital and increasing its facilities.

During Mother Mary Agnes' three years at St. Joseph's Hospital, her spiritual leadership impressed itself on the members of the Community which she governed; and her generous hospitality, her kindness, and her thoughtfulness for the sick won for her many warm friends. Her death came as a shock to all. It was the result of a heart attack, suffered on Sunday, May 19, 1940. Tired and languid during the morning of that day, Trinity Sunday, she still refused to rest because of the celebration of Sister Pascaline's feast day by the Sisters. In the early hours of the afternoon, all efforts to restore her usual

energy having failed, she realized her condition was serious, and requested to be anointed. The Community was hastily summoned and as the Sisters gathered around what they felt was her deathbed, she recited with them the prayers for the dying. With her last breath, firm and unafraid, and with eyes fixed on the Crucifix, she exclaimed fervently: "My God, into Thy hands I commend my spirit. Lord Jesus, receive my soul." The good fight which she had fought so long and so valiantly was ended and the victory won.

A Requiem Mass was celebrated on the following day, May 20, in the hospital chapel by Bishop Edwin V. O'Hara, D.D., of Kansas City. It was attended by large numbers of the clergy of the Kansas City Diocese, of Sisters, and of friends of the hospital. The final obsequies were to be at the Mother House in St. Louis, with interment in the Sisters' cemetery at Nazareth. Sister Victoria Kelly, General Councillor, and Sister Eulogia Seiler came from Carondelet to accompany the dear remains. Others in the party from Kansas City were Sisters Pascaline Gandolfo and Ambrose Hartigan from the hospital, Sisters St. John Hobbs and Palma McGrath from St. Teresa's College.

In the chapel of the Holy Family at the Mother House, the body lay in state until the morning of May 23, during which time it was viewed by many sorrowing friends of Mother Mary Agnes and of the Community. A touching ceremony occured on the afternoon of the twenty-second, when four hundred children from the neighboring school of SS. Mary and Joseph, accompanied by their pastor, the Rev. George P. Keating, filed

into the chapel and reverently recited the Rosary for the dear departed.

Solemn Requiem Mass was celebrated at ten o'clock on May 23, in the presence of Archbishop Glennon and forty-five Monsignori and priests. Officers of the Mass were Franciscan Fathers from St. Anthony's Friary--the Rev. Barnabas Schaeffer, celebrant; the Rev. Conradin Wallbraun, deacon; the Rev. Maximus Poppy, subdeacon; the Rev. Leo Ohleyer, master of ceremonies. Music was furnished by the novices' choir, under the direction of Sister Louis Joseph Bauer. The Archbishop in a brief eulogy paid tribute to the virtues and character of the deceased:

> She does not need any words of praise, . . . nor does her life need an explanation by me, because it was a life lived among you, open as the day, faithful to its work as the course of the stars in the heavens--a life worthy of such praise as I would be incapable of rendering.

The Most Reverend speaker then paid passing tribute to the three Mothers General at whose obsequies he had assisted in the same chapel--Mother Agatha Guthrie, Mother Agnes Gonzaga Ryan, and Mother Agnes Rossiter. He continued:

> She goes on her way to Nazareth, having finished her work, for she could well say with Christ, "Consummatum est!" She was known to you all as a saint. You loved her. She reproduced in her own life the virtues of your patron St. Joseph. She was just, faithful, prudent. Her duties she took very seriously and calmly, and proceeded to execute them with that firmness and faith which were peculiarly hers.

The remains of Mother Mary Agnes were borne from the chapel through a double line of Sisters bearing lighted candles, and preceded by the honorary pallbearers: Sisters James Stanislaus Rogan, Basilla Hoppinyan, Esther O'Fallon, Lucida Savage, Palma McGrath, and Antonina O'Keefe. The active pallbearers were Messrs. John E. Riley, John A. Purcell, Alfred J. Noble, Daniel Tammany, Thomas O'Meara, and James Rogan, old and honored friends of the Sisters, of whom four had each given a daughter to the Congregation. Representatives from St. Paul, Troy, and Augusta arrived for the funeral; also Reverend Mother Teresine and Sister St. John from the Buffalo Community of the Sisters of St. Joseph. A large delegation of Alumnae members had places in the chapel.

In an amazingly long line the solemn cortege proceeded to Nazareth. A pause was made at the convent there, and the remains were borne in so that the Sisters whom illness or infirmity had prevented from attending the Requiem Mass might view in death the face of her whom they had so loved in life. Meanwhile, the students of Fontbonne in academic gowns, accompanied by the Sisters, waited to join the funeral procession. Marching in advance to the cemetery, they formed an outer circle at the grave. Then after the final prayers of Mother Church, the remains of Reverend Mother Mary Agnes were laid to rest beside those of Reverend Mother Agnes Gonzaga.

X

Since her death those privileged Sisters of Nazareth convent daily visit the ivy-covered grave among the pines, and re-

call Mother Agnes' many kindnesses and her comforting words to them in their sufferings as well as her active and generous assistance under all circumstances.

The kindness and magnanimity of Mother Agnes was not reserved for her Community alone. Her interest in persons, in education, in all phases of Catholic Action, in everything pertaining to the welfare of the Church was known widely. Her hospitality was proverbial. She delighted in welcoming visitors to the Mother House, not only those who came to consult her but those as well who were calling on any member of the household, professed or novice or postulant. She took particular pleasure in displaying the historical features of Carondelet to visiting religious, and did so with especial warmth to nuns of diocesan groups of Sisters of St. Joseph. She received a party of eight refugee Sisters from Mexico for a year in 1927, and had places provided for them at Fontbonne where they carried out their religious customs and attended classes.

The Franciscan chaplains who ministered daily at Carondelet gained a particular esteem for Mother Agnes. To prelates and priests she was deeply respectful while being solicitous to render any assistance or encouragement in her power. Pastors and missionaries in want of funds found a faithful friend in the zealous Superior General. Her name was on the lists of scores of such needy ecclesiastics. Her last act on the afternoon of her death was to sign a check to go to a distressed Bishop of a southern diocese. A spot of ink that had leaked from the pen she was using remained on her finger as she was dying.

It was habitual to Mother Agnes to extend the word of thanks and the word of commendation. Not only Sisters, but tradespeople and employees were praised, sometimes unduly, for their services. Her loyalty was genuine. When John Bow, a deaf man, for years a figure at the Mother House, was buried at St. Alphonsus Church, St. Louis, in 1932, Mother Agnes headed the party of Sisters who attended his funeral.

Not so well known except to her intimates were the sympathy and help which she extended to the poor and suffering whenever and wherever these could be reached. Memorable in the annals of the Mother House were the early depression years—1929, 1930, 1931. Thrice daily during those years, the homeless and destitute filed in a motley line, often numbering two hundred or more, through the Soper Street entrance to the comfortable basement dining room provided for them, and received, not a "hand-out" or a paper-wrapped parcel, but a warm meal served with dignity; for these unfortunates of every age and rank were not to Mother Mary Agnes just bits of flotsam and jetsam in the prevailing maelstrom, but members of the Brotherhood of Man to be regarded with respect if not with reverence. There were even numerous copies of *Our Sunday Visitor* provided weekly, to be carried away, read, and exchanged by these transient guests of Carondelet, forced on its charity during a crucial period.

The extraordinary manner in which crises in the culinary department were successfully met was no surprise to Mother Mary Agnes. It was to her another evidence of the close relationship existing between the seen and the Unseen. Her

confidence in St. Joseph was unbounded. On his shoulders she placed all burdens of the Community, and she trusted him to relieve every spiritual or temporal difficulty. To an excited Sister Treasurer, coming, as happened in critical times, with a sheaf of unpaid bills, and the exclamation: "These are all due and I have no money," Mother Agnes invariably answered with provoking calmness, "Sister, you have no faith. Have you gone to St. Joseph?" She knew that the monthly accounts presented later would show a favorable balance, it might be by a few cents only, but an asset, nevertheless.

Being of an ascetic type, Mother Agnes viewed life in its more serious aspects. She had little sense of humor, though she heard with relish an amusing story and could relate one on occasion in her own inimitable way. The short clever humor in a pun elicited no response from her. She took pleasure in good conversation, and always contributed to the recreation of the Sisters, whom she loved to see enjoying themselves after a long day of duty.

Mother Agnes was a good listener. No Sister, presenting herself for comfort or advice, was left unheard. Reverend Mother might be in the midst of an important letter; it was set aside. That could wait. She rejected, almost indignantly, a suggestion made to her to appoint office hours so that she might not be disturbed at a busy time. All her time, said Mother Agnes, belonged to the Sisters, who were not to be denied entrance to her presence at any hour convenient to them.

While making the required visitations of the Congregation Mother Agnes allowed herself little or no relaxation, though

tired nature often called for such. When the Sisters urged rest, and suggested that she see some interesting or historic spot in the neighborhood, such as the Grand Canyon or the old Santa Barbara mission, grateful for their kindness and forethought, she invariably made it plain that she had come to see the Community, not the country. This does not imply, however, that she had not a patriotic love of her country, its history, and its monuments. In fact, it was by her design that national holidays came to be observed as days of general recreation.

Those who were privileged to accompany Mother Agnes on any of her frequent visits to the houses of the Congregation found in her a delightful traveling companion. If the trip was to be a long one, she provided herself at starting with a few good periodicals, *America*, *The Catholic World*, the *Ave Maria*. Her absorbtion in these, however, did not cause her to overlook the comfort and even enjoyment of her companion. She was always interested in her fellow-passengers, and if brought in contact with these by any circumstances, she in her own gracious way elicited from them their best and made them eager to serve her. This graciousness extended to the train officials and the porters and waiters, to whom she showed herself most generous.

On one occasion, the dining car was supervised by a Colored steward, something out of the ordinary in her experience. On learning from her that she and her companion were pleased with the table service rendered, the steward showed himself highly complimented and ventured to ask a favor.

Would she write a letter to the manager of the road, telling him of the satisfaction derived from the service? To this she cordially acceded. Then came the further request, "If you have any titles, will you sign them with your name?" To this also she seriously agreed. The name of the manager and of the steward and the number of the train and of the coach were meticulously taken, and carefully used in her message. Shortly afterward, she received a reply from the manager in question, thanking her for her kind thoughtfulness in regard to the steward and his service.

On another occasion, Reverend Mother in moving a dish accidentally upset a small pitcher of cream. To this she called the attention of the waiter and apologized for the soiled table cloth and the wasted cream. Not to be outdone in politeness, the waiter, scarcely able to keep his balance as the train rocked from side to side, made reply: "Madam, I'd be 'supprised' if you didn't spill it."

Mother Agnes, though her many and varied activities left her little leisure, read widely, especially religious works and periodicals. She kept abreast of current events and, of course, of educational trends. To the latter she always applied her own wise and well considered interpretation, leaning more to the conservative than to the so-called liberal side. She was an inveterate letter writer, this through force of circumstances rather than choice. She cultivated a pleasing literary style, full of freshness and originality. This was particularly evident in her letters to the Congregation as a whole. Her yearly letter in the Necrology was read by the Sisters with reverence,

and its suggestions noted and remembered. We reproduce here her last annual letter written in 1935, which though it has been read by the Sisters many times, will bear repetition:

> Each year the Reaper, Death, claims his toll from the laborers in the vineyard of the Lord. The freshness of youth, the fullness of maturity, venerable years, all alike fall beneath his inexorable scythe. We who are left must cheerfully carry the burden of the day; with light step in the sunny hours of the morning of life, with strong and sure tread at high noon, and still with courage and hope when the lengthening shadows tell that the day is well nigh spent. The dear Lord for Whom we work does not measure life by the span of years: 'A thousand years in Thy sight, O Lord, is as a day, and a day as a thousand years.'
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> We have been edified by the account given of our departed Sisters and trust that the good they accomplished while on earth has won them eternal felicity. Knowing how flawless must be the soul before Heaven is attained, charity bids us to offer prayers and suffrages for these of our own household. Though poor, we are rich, for from the treasury of the Church we can draw abundant alms to alleviate their sufferings and hasten the time when before the Throne of God they will extol His mercy and goodness for evermore. What we give to others will be given back to us in full measure in our time of need.
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> My dear Sisters, the coming year is one for special rejoicing in the Congregation and of heartfelt thanksgiving to God for the opportunity we have had in spreading the Kingdom of Christ. Thank Him for our brave Sisters of pioneer days who counted not the cost of privations and sufferings that souls might possess the gift of Faith. It is

with laudable pride that we view the results of the past hundred years, yet with deepening humility that the Congregation was an acceptable instrument in helping to save souls. Much has been done but much is waiting for us yet to do. In each specific work, hospitals, schools and homes, there is an ever widening field of action, and while embracing the best in its many ramifications, we must make Catholic principles the warp and woof of it all. In no place is the opportunity greater than in the school. Tender childhood, maturing youth, and the young years of womanhood are in our hands. With hearts and minds attuned to their great needs our efforts should build strong for the future of the Church, home and country.

It is fitting that St. Joseph should be our patron for the coming year. He has been with us in a marked degree through adversity and prosperity, always our kind father and guide. Let me recommend to you an increase, if possible, in your personal devotion to him during this year and do all you can to foster the same in others with whom you come in contact.

I take this opportunity, my dear Sisters, to express my appreciation for the loyal support you have ever given me in all circumstances and on every occasion. May the holy Christmas season bring you and the dear ones of the home circle full measure of joy and peace from the Infant Savior, and in the New Year, blessings manifold.

Yours devotedly,

Sister Mary Agnes Rossiter,
Superior General.

Mother House,
Christmas Eve,
Nineteen hundred thirty-five.

Catherine Rossiter came in 1875 to a Congregation which comprised 411 Sisters laboring in 46 houses. When she resigned its leadership in 1936, it numbered 2995 Sisters in 177 houses. Her influence in the expansion and inspiration of the Congregation is beyond computation. Her own explanation of it is given in the letter just quoted: "St. Joseph has been with us in a marked degree through adversity and prosperity, always our kind father and guide."

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William M. Drumm, J.C.D.

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Die 12a Mensis Decembris 1947

+ Joseph E. Ritter

Archiepiscopus Sancti Ludovici