

sisters **S of S** service

*Gather up the Fragments
Lest they be Lost*

by Madge Barton, S.O.S.

1997

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INTRODUCTION

The story of how the Sisters of Service initiated a Correspondence School of Religion in Edmonton, Alberta in 1925 for isolated Catholic families scattered over the western prairies and the remarkable expansion of this work show in a variety of ways God's action among His people. So successful was this venture in Edmonton that the Sisters were invited to open a Centre for Religious Correspondence in Regina in 1934.

On December 18, 1937, a call came from Bishop A.J. Muench, Bishop of Fargo, N.D., asking for Sisters to help parents in rural areas teach religion to their children. Three Sisters were appointed to Fargo in August 1939. Bishop Muench gave them an assignment to visit and take the census of families in two parishes. Two years later in October 1941, they opened a Correspondence School of Religion at Fargo.

Because of the centralization of schools in Newfoundland in the late 1960s and 1970s, Bishop A.L. Penney of Grand Falls decided to use the correspondence method to reach children in the centralized schools who were unable to receive regular Catholic religious instruction. At his request, therefore, the Sisters opened a Correspondence Centre in Clarenville, Newfoundland in September 1975.

In the 1960s and 1970s following Vatican II, the religion series, *Come to the Father*, provided an updated presentation of the Christian mystery to children. Parents were then urged to take more responsibility for the faith education of their children in their homes. It was in the 1980s, Correspondence Course in Religion was changed to the more meaningful Home Religion Program. This shorter name was adopted because parents and others were referring to the program by this name. Added emphasis was given to this program when in 1981, the Bishops of Canada stressed that "faith grows in families." Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, there was an increased demand across Canada from Clarenville to Nanaimo, BC, for the Home Program.

How the correspondence schools served and survived through the bleak 1930s and how the Sisters aided by noted religious educators made adaptations to their courses from the 1940s to the 1990s is a fascinating chapter in the history of religious education in Canada.

The primary purpose of this story is to provide the Sisters of Service and others interested in the history of religious education in Canada with the answer to the "how" and "why" religion by correspondence came about and what contribution it has made to religious education in Canada. The theme that, like a thread, runs through this history, is the effort that individual Sisters have made in trying to transmit God's message to children and adults in order to evoke faith and commitment to Jesus Christ. What sparkles through their efforts are their enthusiasm and zeal as they seek out the scattered families. Many families welcomed them, a few did not. We marvel at the Sisters' ingenuity as they tried to reach the latter.

When researching this history, I discovered that intermingled with the correspondence work were many fragments. The title of *Gather Up the Fragments That Remain, Lest They Be Lost* (John 6:12) was therefore chosen because in addition to the story of the origin and development of the correspondence apostolate, there are a variety of fragments that contributed to this work.

These fragments were the many and varied activities of numerous Sisters from the community's girls' residences, coast to coast across Canada; Sisters from the Toronto Motherhouse and

Novitiate as well as nurses from the community's hospitals who responded to a request from the correspondence house and went forth during summer days to teach children. In most cases, these catechists referred names of their students to the correspondence houses. The correspondence history, therefore, is more embracing than correspondence work itself. Because religious correspondence work is but one component of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) and because some Sisters of Service were involved in various other activities of the CCD, the work of these Sisters is also recorded. If these fragments, the good saving deeds of this wide catechetical apostolate were not collected, they might, indeed, be lost to history!

Other fragments gratefully recalled are the contributions that came to the Sisters from every province of Canada. Their greatest and constant benefactor was the Catholic Church Extension Society of Canada to whom the Sisters will be forever grateful. Other benefactors from across Canada, who supported them through donations of stamps, money, Catholic magazines, and voluntary assistance were people of all walks of life, including family members, priests, seminarians, elementary and high school students, members of the Catholic Women's League, Knights of Columbus and other club members.

Of all documents, letters provide the most essentially human and intimate tools. They reveal much about conditions and lively personal relationships and at times are perceptive. Besides showing the whole gamut of emotions, they speak more eloquently than a researcher's facts could ever do. They show the urgency and missionary character of the writer and are more valuable and informative than any autobiography. Letters also contribute authoritative interpretations of what the letter writer considers significant. This contribution to the authenticity of memoirs and reminiscences, helps to present a picture of diversity of personalities in correspondence work. Furthermore, letters allow readers to draw their own conclusions.

During the first few years of the Edmonton correspondence school's operation and even preceding its foundation, many letters were written by those involved in this new venture and answer the questions of the how, what and "why of religious correspondence teaching. The letters illustrate the difficulties, disappointments, uncertainties and successes of how the maverick Sisters of Service gained acceptance to operate in the West as well as to pioneer a new "apostolate of the pen." Because these letters furnish a more accurate documentary history of the early happenings of religious correspondence history than a summary account could do, for the most part, they are in their entirety.

Good history is not mere chronology; it is a commentary on the past and is associated with a search for meaning. We can see God's hand at work in events. It is substantial and contains much human content. Some sections grab you because you can identify with them. History should also be understandable, clear and critical. Besides recording great events, history also recorded the experiences, the interests and the trend of thought of the ordinary man and woman. Excellent examples of anecdotal history in these "fragments" are the accounts of summer activities written by many Sisters about their experiences during religious vacation schools. These perceptive accounts provide realistic narratives of the heroic struggles of pioneers, their faith, hopes, fears and difficulties as they battled with loneliness, homesickness and disappointments. The reader marvels at their perseverance and inventiveness, rejoices at their successes and is refreshed by their good humour.

Sister Madge Barton, SOS
Autumn 1997

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PREPARATIONS FOR THE EDMONTON MISSION IN 1925

The Sisters of Service were daringly different. Through the flexibility of rules and constitutions, the Sisters of Service departed from the tradition of religious communities by living in small groups and travelling alone. Furthermore, Fr. George Daly, CSsR, a co-founder, urged the members of this new community to:

Look at big maps!
Take the long view!
Don't tie yourselves down with too many written rules and customs
Always remain flexible

The Sisters hoped that this different way of life would enable them to adapt religious life to the needs of the 1920s. Under the rules and constitutions, the Sisters were to serve in the home mission field of Canada, "particularly among immigrants and children living in outlying districts."

On February 23, 1922, Fr. Daly, who had been appointed as the community's director a month earlier by Fr. Arthur Coughlan, CSsR, Toronto Provincial Superior of the English-speaking Redemptorists in Canada, decided to find whether the bishops of Western Canada would accept this untried community to serve in their dioceses. He sent a letter outlining the proposed work of the Sisters to Archbishops Alfred Sinnott of Winnipeg; O.E. Mathieu of Regina; Henry O'Leary of Edmonton; J.T. McNally of Calgary; Thomas Casey of Vancouver, and N. Budka, the Catholic Ukrainian Bishop of Canada at Winnipeg. Fr. Daly wrote a form letter:

Your Grace:

I am sending you, under separate cover, a booklet on the proposed work of the "Sisters of Service." To offset the proselytizing influences of the various denominations working so actively among foreign-born Canadians in the West; to help the Church in the outlying and unorganized districts of our Western Provinces: these were the two main objects that the Archbishop of Toronto and the Very Reverend Arthur Coughlan, Provincial of the Redemptorist Order (Toronto Province) had in mind when they launched this new order of the Sisters of Service.

The Community of the Daughters of Mother Mary McKillop in Australia was the inspiration for this new undertaking. Had not these Sisters living in the Australian bush under similar conditions as are known to us throughout the Western Prairies, proven a success and a great help to the Church on that Continent, we may have doubted the issue of this Apostolic venture. But what the women of Australia and New Zealand have done for the Church of God and the salvation of souls, Canadian women, we are confident, are also ready to do.

The Sisters of Service, - some as qualified teachers, some as nurses, some as social workers, will go in small numbers and found houses where there is no resident priest. By their presence and continued activities among the children and the people, they will keep the fires of faith burning. They will constitute a real Sisterhood, although they will have no distinctive garb. They will take annual vows for a certain period of time before their final profession and comply in all ways with the requirements of Canon Law.

Already, several girls have offered their services and we are confident that this work, when known throughout the country, will appeal to many.

The Sisters of St. Joseph, Toronto, are willing to come to our assistance in the religious formation of these generous women.

We sincerely hope that this new venture in the Apostolic Field will meet with your approval and prove, in the not too distant future, a help to Your Grace in that part of the Church Christ has placed under your care.

Hoping to have, before, long the pleasure of meeting you, your Grace, and to receive your views on this work so freighted, we believe, with great possibilities for the future of the Catholic Church in Western Canada, we beg to remain, with your kind blessing,

Your humble servant,

G. Daly, CSsR

P.S. I will be more than anxious to meet your Grace and have your impressions on the West. But you can see that we are trying to help your cause which is that of the Church.

Enthusiastic replies from Bishops

The bishops replied with great enthusiasm and promise of support. Archbishop O'Leary of Edmonton replied on March 2, 1922.

Reverend and dear Father:

I received yesterday your interesting booklet entitled "Sisters of Service," and immediately sent a letter to the address given, asking for more information and stating that we would be delighted to have as many of these sisters as we could get.

Since sending this letter, I have received your letter. Somehow or other, I suspected that you were instrumental in starting this work. May God bless you for it: It would certainly fill a great need out here. The only limit to their labours would be the number of subjects they could supply.

Another question, of course, would be their support. I think, however, that some method would be found to work this out satisfactorily. I shall be very pleased to meet you and discuss the matter with you. Are you coming out West soon? If so, come and stay awhile in Edmonton. There is a wide field for the discussion of many matters which could not easily be put on paper.

With sincere best wishes and prayer for the success of your great work, I am,

Yours very devotedly in Christ,

(signed) + Henry J. O'Leary

To the Sisters of Service, the archbishop also wrote on March 2, 1922:

Reverend and Dear Sisters:-

I recently received a pamphlet entitled "Sisters of Service" and am very interested in the establishment of your community. Such an order or congregation is very necessary in my Archdiocese and could do a splendid work for God and Holy Mother Church. As soon as you would be able to undertake work in the scattered missions, I would be pleased if you would communicate with me. Thousands of souls are being lost in the West and you would help to save them. I would be glad to receive further information concerning your work. Asking God to bless your work, I am,

Very sincerely yours in Xt.

+ Henry J. O'Leary

Archbishop of Edmonton.

The Sister of St. Joseph of Toronto, who had accepted the request of Toronto Archbishop Neil McNeil to provide a Sister as Superior and Novice Mistress, handed this letter to Fr. Coughlan, who replied on March 10, 1922:

Your Grace:

The Sister of St. Joseph who is in charge of the Sisters of Service' work has asked me to reply to your very kind letter of the 2nd. I may add that at present they are under my direction.

We are very much honored and grateful to have the approval and blessing of Your Grace on this new undertaking. And as soon as the Sisters are ready to begin their labours in the West, they will be glad to communicate with you and place their services at your disposal.

This congregation, of course, is just beginning, and every beginning, you know, has its difficulties. Through the kindness of Archbishop McNeil, they are starting with a suitable home, the former Newman Hall here. This is now being equipped with all the necessities of a convent.

We expect to begin the canonical novitiate this coming summer, so that these novices may start for their future field of labour in the summer of 1923. Several promising young women have applied for admission, and we feel that when the novitiate opens, there will be a goodly band of entrants. The field of labour is so extensive; many vocations will be needed and we are praying the Lord to send us as many as possible.

They will prepare themselves for every kind of work among the poor and abandoned and in order to reach the most scattered missions, will be ready to make the sacrifices of frequent Mass and Holy Communion. They hope, too, to take charge of public schools in Catholic districts; and on that account, we judge it advisable, at least in the beginning, to dispense with a religious habit. Such employment would probably enable them to have a house and would help to support them financially.

During the summer season and perhaps when some schools are closed for some months in winter, it is planned to gather the different groups in a convent of their own in some central city. That, however, is a matter of the future. The undertaking is, indeed, a big and difficult one, and only God can make it a success. Letters such as yours, will be a source of encouragement to the Sisters and those directing them, and spur them on to the great work ahead. With every good wish for your Grace and your Archdiocese, I remain,

Your obedient servant,
Arthur T. Coughlan, Provincial, CSsR

Archbishop O'Leary, responded enthusiastically to Fr. Coughlan's letter on March 15, 1922:

Very Reverend and dear Father:

I received your letter and am quite confident that your work is inspired by God. I have often thought of how useful such an order would be here in the West. Their work would be varied but the principal work would be the teaching of catechism to children in the far-off missions. Some of our clergy have from ten to twenty missions to attend to. They can see their people only occasionally and the teaching of catechism is extremely difficult. These people are surrounded by Protestants and soon become indifferent. In this Archdiocese, I am convinced that twenty-five per cent of the Catholics have practically lost the faith owing to such conditions. This frightful leakage could be greatly diminished by these good religious.

If they are to teach in public schools, they would need to have a licence of some kind. The Ontario licence would be all right. For the beginning, however, I believe that their greatest work would be to go from place to place, spending two months or so in each locality catechizing the children. This would serve to renew the religious spirit in many families far from church.

I am endeavoring to multiply the missionaries here as fast as possible. It is a work of

years to supply this vast territory. I believe that the good people will willingly support the Sisters when they come and the Catholic Women's League can concentrate their energy on this great work.

I am also of the opinion that they would be joined by many ladies in our more fortunately-placed missions. There, their work will soon be known and appreciated. We are perhaps a little late getting into the field but it is better late than never. I wish the Sisters to know that they can count on my strongest support and encouragement in their great work to fill this long-felt need. I pray God to bless you and the Sisters who are undertaking this work. With sentiments of deep esteem and best wishes.

On receiving another letter from Fr. Daly, saying that he hoped to see the Archbishop soon, Archbishop O'Leary replied on April 18, 1922. Fr. Daly, foreseeing that the Sisters might soon be establishing a mission in the West, and wishing to obtain the assistance of the Catholic Women's League, wrote to Archbishop O'Leary from Vancouver on May 4, 1922:

Most Reverend and dear Archbishop:

I hope to be with you Wednesday morning - going from here to Edmonton via G.T.P. [Grand Trunk Pacific Railway].

As I will have only a few days at my disposal, could someone interested in the Catholic Women's League have a meeting called for Thursday or Friday - (May 11 or 12) at which I could address them on the proposed work of the "Sisters of Service". - We need in this great Catholic and National work the backing of the League - . Moreover, nothing in my mind will bring out the value and the possibilities of this Catholic National organization as the cooperation it can bring to make a success of our proposed endeavour.

Archbishop O'Leary visited the Sisters of Service Novitiate in 1923 and wrote to Archbishop McNeil, the ecclesiastical superior of the new community, on July 4, 1923:

Your Grace:

It is with great pleasure that I have learned of the founding of your Sisters of Service. I have visited them and after seeing the work of preparation, I can only say that they will be a God-sent blessing to our missions in Western Canada. I hope sincerely that the Holy See will soon approve of them so that we can obtain them with the least possible delay. When they are ready, may I ask you to send the first group to our Edmonton missions. With sentiments of respect and fraternal esteem, I am

Yours faithfully,
Henry J. O'Leary
Archbishop of Edmonton

In receiving this letter, Archbishop McNeil now had written proof that the Sisters would be accepted in Western Canada. In a letter to Camillus Cardinal Laurenti, secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Religious Orders in Rome, Archbishop McNeil solicited support in obtaining the permission for canonical erection in a letter in August 1923:

Your Eminence:

In Canada, the Catholic Church has to encounter very serious problems and difficulties. During the past twenty years, the number of Catholics who have left the church in Canada is not less than one hundred thousand, and the probabilities of the future are much more serious. The losses have occurred in the Western Provinces - Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

Catholic immigrants have come from Europe, especially from Austria-Hungary, and

Protestants were better organized to help them than we. Protestants helped them by supplying hospitals and schools and in other ways. The Catholics have been much divided by differences and antagonisms of race and language, as well as by the absence of co-operation between the various dioceses.

One of the means used by the Protestants is the public school in Catholic rural districts. The teachers employed are mostly Protestants. They distribute their tracts by means of the school children on Sundays. The priest cannot prevent this. In very many cases he knows nothing about it because he has charge of a vast area, and it is only every two or three months that he is able to visit any particular place. The parents become indifferent or hostile.

Many of us have discussed this problem and tried to devise some means of protecting the faith of Catholic immigrants. One plan which Bishops of the West approve unanimously is that of forming a new religious community of teachers and social workers, and of sending them to teach in the public schools of the West. Many of those schools have dwellings attached for the use of the teacher, and Sisters could use this dwelling. Not fewer than two Sisters would live together. It was by a plan of this kind that the Church of Australia protected her scattered members.

We have proved that it is possible to found such a community in Ontario. The Redemptorist Fathers have undertaken to develop it and to guide it spiritually, and the Sisters of St. Joseph have loaned one of their best Sisters for the training of the first novices of the Sisters of Service, as the new community is called.

We have all that is needed in Canada to inaugurate the new community, namely vocations, spiritual guidance, and financial support. What we still need is to comply with Canon 492. As far as I am concerned, I complied with Canon 492 in March of this year, when I gave to the officials of the Sacred Congregation of Religious, in writing, all the necessary information and recommendations of Bishops.

All concerned are anxious to begin this work of zeal and piety. We need this work not only for teaching the children of immigrants but also to obtain the necessary information for future missionary undertakings. The area of those provinces is so great that Bishops and Priests cannot know much about the intimate lives of the people. Three of the four provinces named above - Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, have a combined area that is greater than the combined area of England, Scotland, Ireland, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, France, Italy and Spain, and have only ten Episcopal Sees and 621 priests. British Columbia is larger than any one of the other three provinces. Protestant activities are well-organized and well supported in those provinces. We get few of theirs but they get many of ours.

In the absence of any executive committee through which all the Catholics of Canada could bring their forces to bear upon such problems, our Catholic hospitals are placed in cities where they can be self-supporting. The Protestant bodies have such committees, and they place many small hospitals in rural districts in the midst of Catholic populations, thus gaining the good will of our people. Through the Sisters of Service, we hope to compete with Protestants in hospital service.

I, therefore, beg your Eminence to enable us to place another organized Catholic activity in those provinces of the West.

With profound respect I beg to remain,
Your Eminence's humble servant,
Neil McNeil
+ Archbishop of Toronto

A positive response to this request was received from Cardinal Laurenti on January 19, 1925.

Archbishop O'Leary, previously Bishop of Charlottetown in his native Prince Edward Island, had brought Fr. Peter Hughes, his secretary, when he was named archbishop of Edmonton in 1920. At the western appointment, the archbishop assigned Fr. Hughes as an itinerant missionary and director of various works especially among the Ruthenians.

Through his missionary work, Fr. Hughes had become acquainted with Fr. Daly and had learned about the Sisters of Service. On a visit to Montreal in 1924, he had asked about the possibility of some Sisters coming to assist him in missionary work in Alberta. On his return to Edmonton, he discussed this possibility with Archbishop O'Leary. It was now one year since the Edmonton archbishop had written Archbishop McNeil and not received a positive answer. Upon returning Edmonton, he discussed this possibility with Archbishop O'Leary, writing to Fr. Daly on November 23, 1924:

Dear Father Daly:

We arrived home a few nights ago very tired of travelling and resolved never to leave again this land of sunshine. I sincerely hope that all went well in Halifax and that in future we shall have the S.O.S. at the port of entrance of immigration.

Now Father, I trust there will not be any further delay about letting us have the Sisters. We should have a group of catechists to spend the winter in the city here and organize Sunday Schools in many different places - centres, later of future Separate Schools, and perhaps parishes. - When I was in Montreal, I did not have an opportunity of telling you my findings in the city. Unless some new system of getting in touch with the people be adopted, at least one-third of our Catholics will be lost. It is not necessary to say anything about the country. I am leaving for there in the morning and shall spend until Christmas trying to arrange with the trustees to engage Catholic teachers for the new year and establish Sunday Schools. Of the 100 school districts north of the [Saskatchewan] River, with 5,000 children - all foreign - there is but one Catholic teacher and one Ruthenian priest.

I told His Grace today that it would be necessary to make an application for the Sisters. He said that was superfluous as he had already made this request several times and had been the first Western Bishop to approve of the idea.

This is confidential - so far no red tape - but send the Sisters along pronto. Please accept this as the Archbishop's request and me as his spiritual attorney in this matter.

If you can interest someone who has too much money, in the work of the missionary, "inter Ruthenos." you can send the cheque along. I am going to be broke very soon. You can answer this to Waskatena, Alberta. Good luck!

Au revoir,
P.F. Hughes

Fr. Daly responded to the archbishop's request by writing of a delay of the Sisters' departure to Western Canada. The archbishop responded by writing Fr. Daly on December 10, 1924:

Dear Father Daly,

I received your letter and have handed it to Father Hughes to answer. He is devoting himself to this work and is labouring faithfully. Through his efforts, we hope in time to accomplish a great good. Asking God to bless you, I am

Very truly yours
H.J. O'Leary

On returning from the northern missions, Fr. Hughes replied to Fr. Daly on December 11, 1924:

Dear Father Daly:

I have just returned from another missionary voyage that would knock Paul's clean out of business. His Grace showed me your letter. Of course, if it is the will of God that the Sisters come only in the spring, I should not object. But really, I thought I had given you sufficient reason why they should be here to take up catechetical work in the city with the New Year. I said that on this depended the salvaging of about 500 children at present attending public schools and Protestant Sunday Schools or even worse, the Blue Labour Hall, and whom I hoped with the assistance of your Sisters to have in our schools next year.

Surely that is sufficient reason for immediate action. Personally, I am unable to distribute peanuts and chocolates over the whole city. I must have help! But seriously, Father, I shall be in the city for the winter months, and shall see that your Sisters do not lose the faith if they come. Could you not send a community of Sisters to take up the work temporarily in the city where God knows there is pioneer work to be done and when you have time to come yourself, you can fix the location of your house in some outlying district, if, as you told me, you did not intend your Sisters to engage in work in the cities where other Sisters might do the work.

Surely, Father, I am sacrificing a good deal by sticking to this work and unless help comes at once, I shall have to abandon it. It is my firm belief that at least one-third of the children in our city here are Catholic. You know how useless is the community of Sisters here who do not go out into the highways and byways.

Do give us three Sisters with the New Year; they will make such discoveries and accomplish such results that by their work here, with God's grace, their foundation will be justified. I have heard you speak of the unfortunate fact that many religious communities become institutionalized and their efficiency impaired. Is the absence of a Sister who seems apt as a superior going to delay this work a year and perhaps forever?

I do not bargain to be at the call of the S.O.S.; in another year I might go to the Promised Land. Please pardon my insistence, Father. Surely, you know it has only one reason. Father, on one of the Flats, an insignificant corner of the city which I explored, I discovered twenty-one cases of marriages of Catholics, or of Catholic with Protestant ministro acatholico. The best salvation for these people is to build a chapel among them. The same thing must be done in a dozen places in the city after these have been fully explored.

You know, however, that the priests do not think they have time to go from door to door! They are saving the traditional Catholics and the leakage is appalling. This information is confidential. I do not want the pastors on my trail, but you know it is very true.

Trusting, then that my insistence will move you to send your Sisters immediately and assuring you that I already have temporary quarters for them I am,
After this strong plea from Fr. Hughes, Fr. Daly replied on December 30, 1924:

Reverend and dear Father,

I submitted to the Archbishop the question of our going to Edmonton and showed him your letter. He agreed with me, and we will be ready to send you two Sisters in January and a third one, sometime in February.

Now what about the furnishing and maintenance of the house for the Sisters of Service? I presume that the League there would do this for the Sisters. My commitments of late have been so heavy that I could not see my way clear now to meet that extra expense. I do know that money will not be a question in this important matter. Only, I would like to have some assurance in the matter. You know, Father, my great desire to help you, and I will strain every effort to do so.

I will, therefore, expect a letter from you by return mail. By the middle of January, I will

send you two Sisters and another one by the middle of February.

Hoping that this will meet with the entire approval of His Grace, your Archbishop, and wishing you once more a Happy New Year and great success in your noble undertakings.

Fr. Hughes on January 9, 1925, sent the following Night Letter through the Canadian National Railway Telegram Service to Fr. Daly in Toronto:

WAS ABSENT HENCE DELAY STOP GRATIAS STOP WE SHALL ASSUME EXPENSES AS PER LETTER STOP ARCHBISHOP SUGGESTS THAT PERHAPS SISTERS WOULD PREFER LIVE IN ONE OF CITY CONVENTS SINCE RESIDENCE IN CITY LIKELY ONLY TEMPORARY STOP HAVE HOUSE IF PREFERRED BUT THOUGHT THIS ARRANGEMENT WOULD LEAVE SISTERS MORE FREE STOP WIRE COLLECT YOUR WISHES STOP FATHER HUGHES

That same day Father Daly wired the wishes of the Sisters:

THREE SISTERS WILL LEAVE TORONTO FOR EDMONTON JANUARY 18 STOP THEY WILL WIRE YOU DATE AND HOUR OF ARRIVAL IN EDMONTON STOP WE PREFER HOUSE TO CITY CONVENT STOP MUNDARE PROPOSITION UNDER CONSIDERATION STOP WILL WRITE YOU IN A FEW DAYS G. DALY

3

THREE SISTERS START EDMONTON MISSION, JANUARY 1925

On the night of January 19, 1925, Srs. Catherine McNally, Ann Geraghty, and Josephine Stokes left Toronto by train on the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), bound for Edmonton.

By happy coincidence on the same day, a letter from Cardinal Laurenti of the Sacred Congregation of Religious Orders in Rome arrived for Archbishop McNeil with the approval of the name, the habit and the specific mission of the Sisters of Service, an important step in the canonical recognition of a religious order by the Church.

The three Sisters considered this approval from Rome as a good omen and heartening news as they set out to their first mission on the feast of the zealous apostle Paul. This first foundation in Edmonton was the third mission opened by the Sisters of Service. At the request of Archbishop McNeil, a residence was opened on May 31, 1924 for immigrant young women in Toronto next door to the Motherhouse. Three months later, three Sisters, including foundress Catherine Donnelly, established a teaching mission in Camp Morton, Manitoba after a request by Archbishop Sinnott of Winnipeg.

Arriving at the Canadian Pacific Railway station in Edmonton on January 25, at 6:50 a.m., the Sisters were welcomed by Margaret Duggan, Edmonton archdiocesan president and Dominion organizer of the Catholic Women's League (CWL). Mrs. Duggan with her husband drove the Sisters to Rosary Hall just in time for the 7 a.m. mass at the residence of the Sisters of Providence of Kingston. Srs. Carmelita, the Superior, Stella and Remigius operated a residence, which provided room and board accommodation for working girls.

J.D. Donoghue, a Canadian Pacific executive and a friend of Fr. Daly, sent a wire to Mother Lidwina, CSJ, the Superior and Novice Mistress at the Toronto Motherhouse:

WINNIPEG, MAN. JAN 25, 1925, 2:15 P.M. SISTERS ARRIVED SAFELY EDMONTON THIS MORNING STAYING AT ROSARY HALL. J. D. DONOGHUE

Also, later that day, Sr. McNally wrote an enthusiastic letter to Mother Lidwina, a Sister of St. Joseph, who was assigned as the Superior and Novice Mistress of the Sisters of Service:

9947-104th Street
Rosary Hall. Edmonton,
Jan. 25, 1925

Reverend and dear Mother,

We arrived safely this morning in time for seven o'clock mass here. Mr. and Mrs. Duggan met us at the station and brought us over.

Father Hughes called this afternoon. He is very kind and I feel confident that we will get along all right. He said he had been out of town, otherwise different arrangements would have been made. He received Reverend Fr. Daly's letter only on his return, so had to leave matters to the Catholic Women's League. He said "I hope you won't give Father Daly a bad impression of us." I assured him not, and told him we would take what we were given.

However, I did point out some difficulties to him. If you were here, I feel certain that you

would agree. Not that I wish to make any complaint, but if our hands are tied, results must necessarily be poor. Father seems to understand the situation and said he would make different arrangements this week. I know he has a great deal to do this week, so said we were quite willing to let matters stand until he had more time. Rosary Hall is conducted by the Sisters of Providence. There are only three Sisters here. Two little school girls help a little; they have an employment office also, similar to that at our Toronto Hostel.

The Sisters are kept very busy here. We have one room only with two beds. Everything is neat and clean. We eat with the boarders. Tomorrow, we start to work. Till we have the situation sized up, we will make most of our devotions in our rooms. With kindest remembrance to all, I am,

Respectfully yours in Christ
Sister C. McNally

P.S. This evening, we will consecrate ourselves and our work to the Sacred Heart and leave all in His care. It is intended that we spend some months at Rosary Hall. - Sr. C. McNally.

Initially disappointed that a house was not provided, the Sisters accepted the temporary arrangement at Rosary Hall. The day following their arrival, a letter written January 21, 1925 arrived from Fr. Coughlan, also their spiritual director in Toronto:

Dear Sisters:

I regret very much that I was unable to call to see you and bless you and your great undertaking on the night you left for the West as I had planned. And I am writing these few lines to assure you that this did not happen through any lack of interest or good will for you on my part.

On the contrary, I am delighted that you have so bravely and cheerfully left the Motherhouse here to take up this work of your noble vocation, and to labour for the most abandoned souls. And I am sure that you will just as bravely and cheerfully bear all the hardships and inconveniences that will fall to your lot in your new home. For indeed, especially in the beginning, you will meet with difficulties and problems, but you are labouring for God's honour and for the good of souls, and this high purpose of yours will give you strength and courage. Love of God conquers all things. And in return for your consecration of yourselves and your energies to His service, our Lord will comfort you in all your trials. He will guide you how to serve Him best and He will assist you in your work and give great success to your humble endeavours.

Ever keep in mind my words to you last Friday, "Love and seek always to labour for the most poor, the most ignorant and the most abandoned."

I shall always remember you in my poor prayers, especially at the Holy Sacrifice, and I commend myself to yours.

With every good wish for you all, I remain,
Yours sincerely in Xt.
Arthur T. Coughlan, CSsR.

Fr. Daly also wrote the Sisters an encouraging letter from Toronto on January 27, 1925, in which he gave them some pertinent advice for their personal lives:

Reverend and dear Sisters,

I have just returned from Montreal and I come to you in your new foundation. Since you left, I have followed you all along the Western Trail and now that you are at your destination and facing the work that has been marked out for you I am sure that you will

not be found wanting.

I insist upon two things: Charity among yourselves and zeal in your work. If you show these two great virtues, you will always be a real Sister of Service and realize your sublime motto, "I Have Come To Serve." You may meet with hardships in the beginning, but I am sure that you will be equal to them by patience and resignation.

Do not forget your spiritual exercises and remember that your spiritual life must be the background of all your activities. I will be anxious to get news from you - to know the conditions with which you are confronted and the work you are asked to do. Rest assured that your memory remains fresh at No 2 Wellesley Place. We are all with you in thought and prayer and I am confident that you will all be a credit to the S.O.S.

Nothing very new here; everybody wishes to be remembered to you. Sister Mary Ann Brigid Burke leaves Thursday for Morton and I am sure her broad cheerful smile will be a ray of sunshine on the shores of Lake Winnipeg.

Asking God to bless you, I beg to remain,

Yours Devotedly,
G.Daly, CSsR

Mother Lidwina also wrote them an inspirational letter on January 29, 1925:

My dear Sisters,

How delighted I was to receive your letter yesterday. I am longing to hear from you at Edmonton. Truly we are with you in spirit. Send on some more pen-pictures.

Brother Jailaith came to tell us about the 15 teachers bound for Alberta. It will be well for them to be friendly with the S.O.S. In fact this would be useful, for many of them are not well instructed. You see, dears, your work will be widespread. I have great confidence that God will bless your work.

FIRST ASSIGNMENTS OF FAMILY VISITING AND TEACHING RELIGION

The first week was a busy one. Archbishop O'Leary's chauffeur drove the Sisters on a tour of Edmonton, pointing out the various churches. Mrs. Duggan took the Sisters to see the archbishop, who assigned the Sisters to visit families, particularly immigrants, and to follow up this visiting by organizing classes for religious instruction of the children attending public schools.

The Sisters visited Fr. O'Gorman, pastor of Sacred Heart parish, where many immigrants had settled. He asked for a census of his parish. Srs. Stokes and Geraghty began that very day to make the rounds of the parish.

On February 1, 1925, six days after their arrival, Sr. McNally wrote a glowing letter to Fr. Daly describing their activities:

Everything seems to be going all right so far, and the Sisters appear to be very happy. The work is so interesting; it would be difficult to be otherwise. Our room at Rosary Hall is warm and comfortable and the Sisters of Providence are extremely kind.

I have not yet made any visits as I have to get a list ready and get the whole picture mapped out in my mind first. Sisters Stokes and Geraghty have already made thirteen visits. Father asked if we would visit separately. I said I did not see any objection; however, for different reasons I did not think it prudent to do so just yet and sent the two together. I think more progress can be made singly and would like to hear what you have to say about it.

Father seems anxious to have us settled in a place of our own, which, by the way, will be temporary. We can do very little here although we have no trouble keeping ourselves busy. I think we will be settled before long.

I am in an extremely awkward position which I hope you will take into consideration when making decisions. Anything that you absolutely don't want done, I wish you would state it emphatically, otherwise I shall give myself the benefit of the doubt every time.

Mrs. Duggan is very nice and obliging, but the Catholic Women's League in Edmonton have more than they can do and would be glad to hand over a lot of odd jobs to us. However, I think she will be very reasonable. Mrs. Duggan is the Diocesan President; Mrs. Gaboury is the city President. Mrs. Duggan is anxious to get Girl Guides started and mentioned it to His Grace when we were there, but I gave my opinion afterwards to which His Grace agreed. In the first place, although Sr. Stokes knows a little about it, she has never completed the Guides' Course.

I told His Grace that it was impossible at present for us to think of any such thing as to organize those classes and take charge of them as we will have more than we can manage with Fr. Hughes' catechetical work. His Grace said that even with Fr. Hughes, it would be well not to undertake too much to start with as he is so enthusiastic that he puts too many things in the fire at one time.

Of course, in a few months after we have things going fairly well, I agree with Mrs. Duggan that Girl Guides would be very nice if these Guides appealed to the Ruthenians.

The Catholic Women's League have a training class in the Separate School Building on 103rd Street and Mrs. Duggan asked us to go and take the course. It is on Monday's at 7:30 p.m. I told Mrs. Duggan we would attend the meeting tomorrow evening, and then let her know later whether or not we would take the course. They could not get a

Catholic, so the teacher is a Protestant but I do not see that it makes any difference.

I can see that this course will be of some benefit to us even if we never had anything to do with it afterwards; and if you have no objection, we would be glad to follow this course. It is a matter of three months or so - one evening a week.

We called on Fr. O'Gorman. He is very much in sympathy with the work we have begun in his parish and offered to help us if he could.

Sister also reported that the Archbishop, Father Hughes, Fr. O'Gorman and Mrs Duggan seemed keenly disappointed that the three Sisters were not teachers. These four persons had hoped that through teaching, the Sisters might have obtained some much-needed income. This moved Sr. McNally to write Headquarters for permission to look for remunerative work that would not interfere with their assigned ministry. Sister added:

The Lord certainly prepared us ahead of time and it looks very much as if He were blessing our little bit, even now.

We are not going to worry about other peoples' worries. - When we move, His Grace promised us the Blessed Sacrament.

Poor Father Hughes; the last time I saw him, he had slept only two hours and looked the part. I was afraid that if I asked him for a book of meditations, as you suggested, it would paralyze him. Would you please give me the name and let us get it ourselves? We are using *The Imitation of Christ* for now as a source of our meditation. However, if you insist, I shall ask Father for a book.

Because of the numbering system for streets and avenues, here, we can find our way around fairly well now. It is so much easier to get around Edmonton than around Toronto. We expect to hear from you soon and ask your blessing.

Respectfully,
C. McNally, SOS

P.S. I hope you never fully realize, Father, what a chance you have taken, but if our Lord chooses to make a success of this work, in spite of our limitations, He will do so.

Fr. Hughes wrote to Fr. Daly on February 15, 1925 about the Sisters in their new Edmonton apostolate:

I am ashamed that I have not been able to write you since the arrival of your Sisters amongst us. I have been so busy arranging for teachers in a few places where they are so much needed that I simply had not time to think of anything else.

I cannot thank you too warmly for your great consideration in sending the Sisters immediately. Until the present time, as you know, they have been at Rosary Hall, but we have now arranged for a nice cottage for them, one block from your Redemptorist Fathers here. The Pastors of the city are today announcing a shower for them for Shrove Tuesday on which day they are going to move into their new quarters. The Catholic Women's League are going to take care of them; though considering how things are here, it may be necessary to get help from without; we shall discuss this later.

Nothing could be more consoling than the success that is attending their efforts in the work here. Some days after their arrival, they commenced a survey of the city, beginning around the McAuley School in the immediate vicinity of the Sacred Heart Church. They are unearthing all kinds of spiritual defections and today, Sunday, they are opening in Sacred Heart Convent a special Sunday school for about fifty children who are attending the above-named Public School. This is only one of the six schools in the district, and if the number of children frequenting them increases with the distance from the Sacred Heart, I leave it to you to figure how much good is to be done even in this one parish.

Our plan for the moment is to have the Sisters find the children and their addresses,

start the classes and then hand them over to the Sisters or Lay Teachers working with the Sisters. They are making a house-to-house survey so that nothing escapes them. A beautiful feature of it is the cooperation which is given by the Non-Catholics. They show them where the Catholics are, and the Sisters have had as yet only one rebuff from them. This may be explained by the fact that up to the present, we have not said anything about the Sisters or their particular work. Some take them for district nurses; others for Red Cross people, and the Sisters have the information without being suspected.

Of course, they may soon be known as "Roman agents", but up to the present, all has been well. Though The Observer published their pictures as in the Toronto Globe and Mail, we thought it better to say nothing for the moment. It created something of a furore to bring out a "batch" of Catholic teachers to thwart some of the Methodist Missionary efforts. With God's help, we shall place many hundreds of them in the near future.

Now, Father, I am delighted to hear that you have a goodly number of missionary nurses in the making. It seems to me that it is through them that we must work our way with the lives of these New Canadians so long neglected. Since my return here, I have travelled through the entire immigrant district. On the one hand, I met a piety such that we in this country have no parallel; it is these districts which the Ruthenian Fathers have been able to serve sufficiently.

But on the other hand, I found some districts which had gone over to the Seventh Day Adventists, to Bible students or turned out-and-out socialists through the Soviet papers which have been their only mental food. The teachers among them are invariably Protestant, sent to them by the Methodist Mission, the Inspector or the Department. - What matter! The end of all is the same.

Now, Father, we must get into the lives of these people this year. Mundare must have a hospital to "kill" that centre, Lamont; Smoky Lake, a hospital for the North country and away to the East, at Myrnan in the heart of the foreign colony, we must build, at least, a mission centre. When you arrive, we shall go and visit these centres and make definite arrangements. I have arranged for the providing of enough lumber.

If you are in touch with some architects in Toronto, perhaps you might bring with you some rough ideas or blue prints of the kind of building that would be suitable in these smaller places. Of course, at Mundare, we must build a first class building.

If possible, you might wire me collect some days before so that I may be in the city when these blue prints arrive.

Thanking you again for your great goodness towards us here and asking a prayer, I am,

Sincerely yours,
P.H.

The Edmonton Sisters were doing their best to follow instructions yet wondered if their first efforts in this new field were acceptable. The Sisters and Fr. Daly in Toronto were reassured by Fr. Hughes' letter. Fr. Daly wrote the Sisters on February 20, 1925:

Reverend and dear Sisters:

I received a letter from Fr. Hughes telling me how pleased he was with your work. This is a great source of consolation to us all and reflects well on yourselves and your devotedness. I see by his letter and yours that you are working very hard. Only take this bit of advice - be careful not to overdo it and take a reasonable care of your health. But above all, see that you do not neglect your spiritual life. Take full time for your spiritual exercises in the morning and in the evening. This is essential to the value of your work.

I am sending you by mail a book which I would like you to read together for spiritual reading; you will find in it much food for thought. It shows you how necessary it is to give to your apostolic life a deep spiritual background. I exhort you all to be very charitable among yourselves. You are only three, and naturally at times the difference of character, the strain of nerves, and the difficulty of your present position may be hard upon you. Have patience; forgive one another, and always remember that the honour of the Sisters of Service in Edmonton is in your hands. I know you appreciate this.

You will receive from the Catholic Church Extension of Canada, Montreal Branch, a box of altar linen and vestments. When you will have received them, I wish Sister Superior to write a nice letter of thanks to the President, Miss K. Egan, 62 Aberdeen Avenue, Westmount, Montreal. Do not fail to recommend in your prayers those good ladies who have been so kind to our work.

I hope to be with you some time in early March. In the meantime, I ask each and every one of you to write down the various questions which come to your mind for the welfare of our work in your city.

In a letter on March 5, 1925, Fr. Daly postponed his Western Canadian trip due to a severe cold, writing to Sr. McNally and asked her to tell Fr. Hughes about this change because he had promised to see him on his visit there:

I just read your report to Mother Superior, and must say that I am very pleased to see how you all have met the strain of your new foundation. God has marked it with the cross, and that is a good sign. I will be anxious to meet you all. Have all your questions prepared for my visit. We will try to settle matters more definitely together.

P.S. Don't forget to advise Fr. Hughes, as this is very important.

After a visit to the Sisters at Camp Morton, Manitoba, Fr. Daly wrote to Mother Lidwina from the rectory of Holy Rosary Cathedral in Regina with enthusiastic optimism: "Had we in Western Canada about 500 posts of the S.O.S., I can assure you that the Church would have a different tale to tell in another decade." He also mentioned that he would be giving a lecture on March 16, to the Junior CWL before leaving to visit the Sisters in Edmonton.

Sisters rent their own house

On Shrove Tuesday, the Sisters moved into a rented house at 120-36 - 82nd Street, not far from the Redemptorists. Members of the CWL had not only acted quickly in obtaining this house but also had organized a combined reception and shower for the Sisters. This reception was well attended. Archbishop O'Leary, besides giving a generous donation, spoke in glowing terms of this first SOS foundation in Alberta. He hoped that in future days, there would be many more Sisters to contribute to the welfare of the Church in Alberta. The archbishop's wish came true. By 1988, the community had established 19 missions, more than those in any other province of Canada. Priests from various Edmonton parishes also attended as well as Fr. Hyacinth OFM from the Franciscan monastery in North Edmonton. From the shower, the Sisters received much-needed blankets, linens, dishes, and other useful articles, a generous supply of groceries and \$55.50 in cash donated at the door. Grateful to the CWL members for the house and for the gifts, the Sisters were heartened by the expressions of welcome. Fr. Pat Sullivan of Clyde, the first rural pastor to make a special trip to Edmonton to give the first recorded donation of \$15. Fr. Sullivan remained a faithful friend and supporter.

On March 18, 1925, the Sisters welcomed Father Daly on his first visit to their new residence. After supper, he blessed the tabernacle and the altar which the Sisters had just received from

the Ladies of the Catholic Extension Society, Montreal. On the following day, the feast of St. Joseph, Fr. Daly celebrated the first mass in their chapel. St. Joseph, one of the patrons of the Institute has always been considered by the Sisters as the Great Provider. It was, therefore, an added joy to have the first Mass on his feast day. Unfortunately, Fr. Daly's visit was cut short when he agreed to replace a Redemptorist confrere preaching a mission at St. Andrew's Cathedral, Victoria, BC.

While the Sisters continued to visit various parishes in Edmonton, the Redemptorists at St. Alphonsus parish provided the Sisters with kindness, generosity and good advice. The Sisters were also well received by Fr. Ladyka, a Basilian pastor of a Ruthenian parish. The Sisters visited the Ruthenian Sisters and attended vespers in the Ruthenian church. The pastor of the French Church of the Immaculate Conception also warmly welcomed them, offered his assistance and said, "Je vous presente la paroisse."

By mid-April, the Sisters had conducted 3,111 home visits and had organized catechism classes for the Catholic children attending the public schools. During the survey, the Sisters located the Catholic families, particularly the newly-arrived immigrants. In doing so, the Sisters recognized the benefit of the classes in catechetics given at the novitiate by Fr. Kelly, CSB, author of a catechism used in the Toronto Catholic schools. He was succeeded by two other instructors for the Sisters, who used the catechetical lessons in their own religion classes. In the 1930s, the Sisters in the novitiate received a series of lessons in Gregorian chant from Monsignor Ronan, the well-known director of St. Michael's Choir school. These lessons gave them confidence in organizing choirs in the missions. From their city visits, the Sisters soon discovered that an immense field of activity was awaiting them in the heart of Edmonton. Nevertheless, they looked forward to the summer months when they hoped to go forth through scattered rural settlements to teach children who were rarely visited by a priest.

While in Edmonton, Fr. Daly had noticed that the Sisters had become so involved with a variety of outside tasks that some stress, strain and frazzled nerves had been surfacing. From Victoria, he advised the Sisters in a letter on March 22, 1925:

Reverend and dear Sisters:

I presume that Father O'Reilly explained to you my sudden departure from Edmonton. One of our Fathers preaching a mission here in the Victoria Cathedral, fell sick and they asked me to come to their rescue. So here I am. I will be here for a week and will then spend some days resting in Vancouver. I hope to return to Edmonton in a fortnight or so.

In the meantime, continue your work quietly. Let one Sister remain home and take charge of the house. You owe this particularly to the Blessed Sacrament which you now have the happiness of possessing under your roof.

On my way back, I will give you certain instructions that will, I hope, help everybody concerned. As you know, dear Sisters, all foundations meet with obstacles, and the devil tries all he can to undermine our work. He knows what good can be done if you are all animated with true apostolic zeal and he will do all he can to destroy our work. Let us unite together in charity and mutual forbearance to do God's work.

If you wish to write to me, a letter will reach me at 3756 6th avenue West Vancouver, B.C. In the meantime, I will continue to pray for you. I must say that I was edified by the way you have met obstacles and by the zeal you show for your work. Once more let us all have in mind the great work we are called to do and let us not be crippled by little misunderstandings. Asking God to bless you all.

P.S. Remember that obedience and loyalty to authority and charity among the members are the strength of a community.

On March 25, 1925, Fr. Daly wrote his observations to Mother Lidwina:

Reverend and dear Mother,

Here I am in Victoria. Bishop O'Donnell traced me on the Prairie and had me come here to help out on the mission in his Cathedral. One of our Fathers took sick so I hurried out of Edmonton to come to his rescue. I had not finished my visit to the Sisters, but I will return that way after a little rest in Vancouver.

I have had no mail for some time. I am having it forwarded from Regina to Vancouver this week.

In regard to the property which was offered to us in Halifax at such a low price, I thought it was not prudent for us to rush into this proposal without more consideration and knowledge of present circumstances in that city. If God wants us there, the means will come in due time.

My visit out West has been most encouraging and most instructive. The contact of our work with the reality of conditions will demand certain readjustments in our policies. One thing that I have learned is that the Sisters whom we send out must have characters that blend with one another. Otherwise we have friction and this in the long run engenders discouragement.

The Sisters at Rosary Hall were edified with the spirit of prayer of our Sisters. So let us continue to work at the religious formation of these women destined to do so much good in God's church.

I hope to be home in a week or so after Easter. I will see all our Sisters again on my way back. Remember me to all at home. I am well and enjoying the beautiful weather at the Pacific Coast. How are Superiors Schenck and Egan doing? Remember me especially to them. Asking God to bless you all. I remain,

Yours devotedly,
G.Daly, CSsR

Archbishop McNeil interested in progress

Archbishop McNeil took a keen interest in the progress of the Sisters at Edmonton and asked the Superior Sr. McNally, to let him know which catechism books the Sisters needed so that he could send them a supply. Sr. McNally kept the archbishop informed on the activities of the mission. In a letter to the archbishop on April 3, 1925, she explained some aspects of the work:

Your Grace:

I respectfully enclose the report for March. Without any undue exertion on our part, we should have made twice the number of visits shown, but it seemed better to go easy.

Our work is to go from door to door and get the names of the Catholics sending their children to public schools. We keep the names of all Catholics as these may come in handy later on. The Redemptorist Fathers have asked us to give them the names of all the Catholics in their parish. But all Father wants at present is that we get the names. He has asked me to give Miss Kutzal, the Ukrainian night school teacher, a list of the Ruthenian children and she will go after them. Any other follow-up work will be done later on. Miss Kutzal had twenty-nine pupils on Tuesday evening and they seemed to enjoy the classes.

I hope Fr. Daly lets me continue to attend this class as I am very anxious to learn Ukrainian. The school is three blocks from us. Sisters Stokes and Geraghty have been attending the Polish classes at the Good Shepherd Convent. One of the Good Shepherd Sisters teaches the Polish children. When Father Hughes started the class, he asked me to go, but I was not feeling well that night, so sent the other Sisters and

they have been attending ever since. I went one evening. Twenty-five children attend this class. It seems to me that the Polish language is easier to learn than the Ukrainian.

Fr. Daly has not said much about the work; he was called away suddenly but when he returns, he will, no doubt, arrange about everything.

It is not likely that our work will be among Ukrainians exclusively; it does not look that way now.

In regard to the books, whenever I know what we need, I shall write your Grace. I understood you meant catechisms and asked Fr. Hughes which catechisms were being used. He replied: The Christian Brothers' catechism. He said he had ordered some. Our class is small and so we do not need many at present. I told Father you had kindly offered to send us some and he may possibly speak to your Grace about it when he goes East. We enjoyed Father's visit very much and are looking forward to his return. Father O'Reilly said Mass for us this morning.

We have the Blessed Sacrament since the eighteenth of March. The weather is pleasant, but the roads and streets are muddy, I remain,

Your humble servant,
Sister McNally

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FIRST FINANCIAL AND WORK REPORTS OF THE EDMONTON MISSION

Besides the survey work, the Sisters began teaching catechism on April 15, 1925. The next day, Sr. McNally sent a combined work and financial report to Archbishop O'Leary. Commenting on these reports, Fr. Daly wrote to Sr. McNally on May 7, 1925:

I received your report and I must congratulate you and the other Sisters on the noble work you are doing. Your report was very much to the point and just what we need - facts and figures.

We have been asked by the Archbishop of Regina, through his Vicar General, [Fr. Marois] to send out two Sisters for the summer season [1925] to do catechetical work. This I have accepted gladly to do because this, as you know, has been one of the dreams of my life. Two Sisters shall be detailed for this work during July and August. This may necessitate a little change in your community, but if I take one Sister, I will give you another. So, in the meantime, let everyone live in holy indifference.

The real missionary is like a soldier, always ready to go on orders. Anyway, I will write to you later on this subject. I do so sincerely hope that you are all so taken up with the endeavour of helping the Church and souls that you have no time to think of anything else. All the rest is too small when compared with this immense work. I must say that I am very proud of what you have all done in so short a time in Edmonton. I am sure that your final report to the Archbishop and to the respective priests will be a credit to the S.O.S. and show the value of our contribution to the Church out West.

I ask you to pray very sincerely for our intentions. We have several moves to make, and they will mean much for the further development of our work.

Concern about finances

During May 1925, Fr. Daly was concerned about the finances of the Sisters in Edmonton. Anxious to obtain much-needed assistance for this foundation and aware that the CWL were holding a national convention in Hamilton the following month, he wrote an appealing letter to Archbishop O'Leary from Toronto on May 1, 1925:

As I do not know if you will be present at the National Convention of the Catholic Women's League in Hamilton at the beginning of June, I would like you to send a letter to the National Convener of the Sisters of Service Division, C.W.L., Mrs. J.C. Keenan, 38 Madison Avenue, Toronto, telling her what our Sisters are doing and propose to do in your Archdiocese, and stressing the matter of their continued support throughout Canada for our work.

I have just returned from Halifax where we are opening a foundation for the Sisters of Service for immigration work at the Port. From there we hope to spread to the Port of St. John and ultimately to Montreal and Quebec. Judge Meagher of Halifax has given us his old residence on Morris Street. - The Archbishop of Halifax complains continually of the loss of sleep.

I hope to see Your Grace when you come East this spring. I would be very much interested in knowing the date of your visit to Toronto as I have several matters on which I would like to have your advice. In the meantime I beg to remain, with your blessing,

The Sr. McNally wrote to Fr. Daly about the low attendance at the religion class:

We started catechism class in St. Alphonsus' Parish last Sunday. We had only six children from the public schools. It is slow work trying to get the children to attend catechism classes. It is different at night school; there, the children enjoy it. The Ruthenian teacher has over 40 pupils in one room, and over 20 in another room. There are 26 children attending the Polish classes.

To encourage the Sisters and to increase their missionary zeal, both Mother Lidwina and Fr. Daly wrote some reflections for the Feast of Pentecost. From Mother Lidwina, this letter was dated May 22, 1925:

My dear Sisters,

I regret exceedingly that I did not get a letter to you for the beginning of the Novena for Pentecost. I am sure you have entered upon it in a spirit of fervor and humility knowing that you require these virtues to carry on the work you are engaged in. We are proud and so very happy to think of our dear ones in the Field. Each letter and report that I read, serves as an incentive to zeal to those here waiting to go forth. The enclosed are some notes taken from Bishop MacDonald's last two lessons.

May God bless your efforts with continued success. Our Blessed Mother and the dear St. Teresa will not forget our missionaries. I am glad Sr. Superior is feeling better, and I sincerely hope Sister Stokes and Sister Geraghty are also.

My kind regards to Fr. O'Hara, please, and thank him for being so good to you. Pray much.

Yours devotedly in J.M.J.
(signed) Mother Lidwina

Fr. Daly wrote to the Sisters in a similar vein on the same day of May 22, 1925:

Sunday next is Pentecost Sunday and I would ask you all to say a special prayer on that great day that the Holy Ghost may give to each and every one of you the true apostolic spirit; for, after all, my dear Sisters, our Institution would have no meaning were the Sisters not filled with that divine zeal that Christ had for souls.

I would recommend also to your prayers on that occasion, our Institute, that God may take it under His protection and send us numerous and good novices. The field is so great and the demands are so numerous that there would be place for hundreds and hundreds more.

I wish to thank you also for what you are doing, each of you in your respective fields of action. I admire your devotedness and I am sure that God will reward you a hundredfold even in this life. For, after all, there is no greater pleasure in life than such an ideal as you have continually before your mind.

Let us pray also, that the Retreat this year will be blessed, for you all understand the purpose and the value of this time of prayer.

During the months of July and August, two of our Sisters are going to labour in the great field of the Province of Saskatchewan. They are going to Eston, and from there will radiate through the various missions of that district. I would ask you to pray that this first venture of ours in the Archdiocese of Regina will be blessed. The two Sisters who are going are Sister Egan and Sister Stafford.

The Purple Bag Campaign

In late May of 1925, the Sisters were heartened by a generous contribution collected by the Edmonton CWL through a Purple Bag campaign. The Purple Bag idea was devised by CWL president Margaret Duggan during Lent of 1925. To each branch of the CWL, she had sent a

few hand-made purple cloth bags measuring 3.5 x 1.5 inches with a draw-string through the top, suggesting that the little bag be passed at the regular meetings under the table. The colour of purple was chosen to disguise the money. At Easter, Mrs. Duggan presented a cheque for \$191 to the Sisters as well as four dozen catechisms.

Mrs. Duggan wrote to Fr. Daly on May 24, 1925, giving him the good news of this contribution:

Dear Fr. Daly,

Several things have delayed my answer to your welcome letter. First, I was waiting to be able to tell you what we made on our "tags" and tea. We handed to Sr. McNally one hundred and ninety-one dollars as well as four dozen catechisms for their work.

I was pleased that you were able to arrange for a foundation of the S.O.S. at Halifax where they can do so much good at the ports.

I'll expect to see you in Hamilton, and in Edmonton at the end of July when we can go more into the policy to be adopted for those Sisters in their work for the future.

Thank you for your good work and your appreciation of my work for the Sisters at Edmonton. I only did my duty.

Sincerely,
Margaret Duggan,
President, CWL

Report of Visits, June 30, 1925

When the Sisters were able to do so, they continued their family visits. At the request of Fr. Hughes, a report was prepared covering the period of January-June, 1925.

Total number of visits to families were 513. The number of Catholic children attending public schools in the parishes of:

Sacred Heart	188
St. Alphonsus	151
St. Francis of Assisi	91
St. Mary's - Beverly	74

TOTAL 504

The Sisters added to this report a list of the canvassed streets, public schools and the names of children.

Collaboration with Lay Catechists

During this time, the Sisters had collaborated with some lay catechists in coordinating weekly classes at Sacred Heart and St. Alphonsus parishes. They organized three Ukrainian classes; two at St. Alphonsus parish under the direction of Miss Hutzal with a class of 45; and with Miss Sysko with a class of 20; also one class of 15 at Fairview. These catechists cooperated well with the Sisters and volunteered their services. The Sisters also arranged with a Sister of Charity of St. John to take a Polish night class at St. Alphonsus.

The Sisters were aware of the need for teaching religion in a deprived district of Beverly, a town two miles distant from Edmonton, where many Ukrainian unemployed people lived with little government assistance. The Sisters were offered space in the home of Mr. Pikulyk a Ukrainian man, using one large room of three rooms with blackboards and desks which he made himself from old lumber. The Sisters engaged Miss Santilovna, a Ukrainian teacher, to teach a catechism night class three times a week and one class on Sunday afternoons with a regular attendance of 30 students until September. For this service, the Sisters provided her with room and board for \$20 a month and \$2 a week for car ticket.

Beverly sewing classes offered

To become acquainted with both parents and children at Beverly, the Sisters started sewing classes twice a week. They also held sewing classes once a week at their house for 13 to 15 sewing enthusiasts. The conversation often turned to religion with the result that some members of the class, who had been away from the Church for years, decided to return and to attend Sunday mass again.

Beverly concert raises funds

As another means of cultivating community spirit and perhaps of obtaining some much-needed funds, the Sisters and Miss Santilovna, planned a concert for the close of the summer school. Although the collection was voluntary and amounted to \$8.33, the Sisters considered the concert as a success.

Concern about future projects

As there was still no definite pattern of summer and winter work for the Sisters, Sr. McNally, concerned about this uncertainty, wrote Archbishop McNeil on July 5, 1925:

I am sending Your Grace, as usual, a copy of our monthly report. I am very sorry we have accomplished so little but there are many difficulties.

Fr. Daly arrived on Wednesday. It is not yet definitely decided what we are to do but we may go out to the country for a few months and in the winter do settlement work here.

As a central house in Edmonton seems necessary, I would have been glad if Father had opened a hostel. The city is so spread out that a great deal of time is lost getting from one place to another and the winter months are so cold; it is difficult to get around and almost impossible to get the children to come to a class. I am hoping the fall will bring us a nurse and I am trying to wait patiently. I am not sorry for the experience I am getting here, but the strain is great and will likely continue until a change is made.

Sisters renew vows

From August 2 to August 9, 1925 in preparation to renew their vows, Srs. McNally and Geraghty made a retreat at their home directed by Redemptorist Fr. Charles O'Hara from St. Alphonsus. Archbishop O'Leary invited them to renew their vows in his own chapel and to join him at breakfast.

Report of the Sisters of Service - Edmonton Mission, June 1925

Sr. McNally sent a report to Toronto on the work until August 1925, noting that there were 32 visits: "We had a concert in Beverly. The children did very well considering they had never before taken part in a concert. The attendance was small. The people are poor and a great many have been out of work for months, but the children enjoyed it very much. We have reopened St. Alphonsus Night School. The attendance at present is about twenty. The attendance at the two-day classes varies from about fifteen to twenty each."

Report of the Edmonton Mission, January 25 to July 31, 1925

The total number of visits were 188.

The number of Roman Catholic and Ukrainian Catholic children attending public schools included 181 at Sacred Heart parish, Edmonton; 181 at St. Alphonsus parish, Edmonton; 91 at St. Francis of Assisi parish, Edmonton; 74 at St. Mary's parish, Beverly; and St. Edmund's parish, Calder.

After receiving the report about their work, Fr. Daly wrote to Sr. McNally on August 15, 1925:

I received today your letter of August 10 and am pleased with your report. I fully understand the difficulties under which you labour, and I can assure you that we shall do all we can to help you in the near future.

We had today a profession of four, and two took the habit. You will receive in a few days a list of the various appointments of the Sisters. To avoid travelling expenses, I thought to wait a little before making any move in Edmonton. The situation there hinges on the possible opening, in the near future, of the Radway Hospital. The expense of this mission, naturally, is dependent on the decision of His Grace. As soon as a decision will be made, I shall go West again. In the meantime, you and Sr. Geraghty continue quietly with your work. I am happy to hear that you both made a good retreat and are living happily together as servants of God. I am leaving tonight for Montreal but will be back in a few days, and you will hear again from me shortly.

6

FIRST CATECHETICAL UNDERTAKING IN RURAL ALBERTA

Having completed their mandate of taking the census and organizing classes for children attending public schools, the Sisters now turned their attention to Archbishop O'Leary's main concern of reaching out to teach religion to families in rural areas.

At Fr. Daly's suggestion, Sr. McNally wrote to Fr. Battle, parish priest at Stettler who enquired about the Sisters, and explained the purpose of their mission work. Subsequently, Fr. Battle engaged the Sisters. While preparing to set out for Stettler, Sr. McNally received an invitation from Margaret Duggan to address the CWL's annual diocesan convention in Edmonton on October 3, 1925. Sr. Mary Rodgers, who had arrived October 1 to replace Sr. Stokes, accompanied Sr. McNally to the banquet and heard her address:

My Lords Archbishops, Bishops, Reverend Fathers, Madame Chairman and Members of the Catholic Women's League, I wish first of all to express my thanks - deep and sincere - to the officers of this convention for the privilege which is mine of addressing this representative body of Catholic Ladies of the Archdiocese of Edmonton on the work of the Sisters of Service.

The Catholic Women's League of Canada have a special claim on the gratitude of our young community for from its beginning, the League has fostered and encouraged our work and given us its generous support. It is a real pleasure for me tonight to voice my feeble expression of thanks particularly to the Ladies of this city and diocese for the sympathetic help they have given us since we opened the Edmonton Mission. Your pledge to give us still greater help during the coming year assures us of the success of our endeavours and gives us new courage and heart to continue our humble work to extend God's Kingdom in this portion of the Great West.

Since coming here last January, our work has been confined to visiting the poorer and more neglected families of the city itself in the hope of bringing them into closer touch with the Church and of bringing religion into their daily lives. At the invitation of some parish priests, we have visited families of four parishes of Edmonton as well as those in the town of Beverly. We found that in these districts, over 500 children of Catholic parents attended public schools.

We were instrumental in having a number of them transferred to the Separate Schools of this city and of bringing a number of Catholic families to Mass on Sundays and in closer touch with the Church. With the assistance of Dr. Hughes, and the collaboration of some generous lay women, we established two night catechism classes in the eastern part of the city for public school children - mostly of Ukrainian origin - with the hope of saving them to their ancient Faith. The Misses Hutzal and Sysko kindly gave their services gratis until June and we have been giving a stipend to a teacher since then. We fear that for lack of funds, we may be obliged to discontinue this work after next month.

With the approval and blessing of His Grace, our Revered Archbishop, we hope during this coming year that our community will take on two new phases of missionary work - that of hospital work among the New Canadians in the Ruthenian district of Vilna; and the teaching of catechism in the missionary and churchless districts of the Edmonton jurisdiction.

Concerning hospital work, a suitable building has already been secured and it is our ardent hope that by ministering to the bodily needs of the sick and afflicted in this district,

we shall gradually gain the confidence of the people and, if possible, bring religious instruction and the Spirit of Christ into those homes which on account of the great scarcity of priests are deprived of the blessing of a resident parish priest and the continued presence of the Eucharist.

We also look forward with great hope to the work of teaching catechism in the missionary and churchless districts of the Archdiocese. It is well known that His Grace insists with great emphasis on the work of religious instruction to children. It is his wish expressed again and again that no child in his diocese be deprived of its most precious birthright, a knowledge of our Holy Faith.

Conforming to his wishes, we intend, upon the invitation of parish priests, to visit the most missionary portions of the diocese and to spend a few days or weeks especially in the churchless districts teaching catechism and at the same time doing what is possible to spread good Catholic literature, in particular, our own diocesan paper, the Western Catholic. We begin our work next week when we will visit Stettler and surrounding missions.

We believe that by working with the continued sympathy of the Catholic Women's League and guided by the wise counsel of His Grace, our Archbishop, we hope that we may do something in a humble way to further the Catholic cause and the extension of God's Kingdom in this province.

First Alberta rural catechetical teaching in Stettler, 1925

For their first catechetical venture, Srs. McNally and Rodgers set out on October 6 for Stettler and its mission of Big Valley. At Big Valley, they were greeted and hosted by Mrs. William La Vallee who paid their railway fare to Stettler, as well as by Mrs. McElhone, Stettler CWL president, and Mrs. R. E. Johnson who provided lodging. Besides teaching the children, the Sisters also instructed an evening class of converts who were interested in learning about the Catholic Church.

After 10 days in Stettler, the Sisters evaluated the possibility of organizing regular rural work. Experiencing at first hand the vastness of territory, poor transportation, bad roads, and distances between the missions in rural areas, the Sisters concluded that it would be impossible for just three Sisters to reach many rural families by personal contact.

Before the Sisters returned to Edmonton on October 17, Fr. Arthur Coughlan visited Sr. Geraghty during his visit to the Redemptorist parish of St. Alphonsus as part of his duties as Toronto Provincial Superior.

Edmonton house purchased on 85th Street

Both the Sisters and the CWL had been searching for a house, preferably in the same area as their present rented house. An opportunity arose to purchase a three-storey house at 11837-85 Street, across the street from the Redemptorists at St. Alphonsus church. The grounds were suitable for a garden.

At a Council meeting of the Sisters of Service administrative council in Toronto on October 17, 1925, Mother Lidwina proposed a motion that was seconded by Sr. Kathleen Schenck that the property owned by Mrs. Syer at 11837-85 Street, Edmonton be bought for the price of \$3600 in cash and that R. Dunne of Edmonton be appointed the solicitor in this matter.

Since moving day was set for October 21, the Sisters had no time to rest from their missionary venture and were fully occupied with packaging and transferring their household and personal effects to their new dwelling at 11837-85 Street. Soon after moving into their new house, the

Sisters received the following letter from Fr. Daly:

Dear Sisters,

I owe you a letter, and as I have just arrived from Winnipeg, my first thoughts are of you. I am glad to hear that you are now established in your new house and find it comfortable. What interests me most is to hear of your first experience in catechetical work. Remember, it will take time and patience to establish this work on a permanent basis, but I am sure that you have a faint vision of its great possibilities for the good of souls out of touch with the Church on our Western Prairies. I hope your house will become a centre for catechetical workers. I perfectly understand that the work in the outlying districts is not very practical for the winter months. Yet there are many centres, I believe, where you could do good work even during that time. But, as I said, it will take time and patience to bring this about.

I do hope that you are all careful in your vocation, for, after all, what is there greater in this world than to serve God and the Church? With that object in view you have all come to the SOS and have dedicated yourselves to the great service of the most abandoned souls in our Mission Field. At times, perhaps, you may be discouraged; offer contradictions and difficulties to our Blessed Saviour. Think of what He had to go through to redeem the world. His mission is yours. We have all to go along the same path that He has trodden - I mean to say, the Way of the Cross. There is no other way of saving souls.

Be all full of courage. A missionary Sister who leaves herself open to discouragement, very largely cripples her work.

New catechetical classes

Following the move, Fr. Sylla, OMI, invited the Sisters a new area of the Ross Flats, a poor section of the cathedral parish. The Sisters visited 131 families and discovered 23 Catholic children attending public schools. For these, they organized a Sunday school class of five Ruthenians, one Belgian, three Italian, six Russian and six English-speaking children.

Fr. Sylla also asked the Sisters to work among the Polish people in Holy Rosary parish, whereupon the Sisters set up a Sunday school under Miss Ryder. Sr. McNally taught a First Communion class of eight German and seven Ruthenian Polish children. Fr. Sylla was pleased with the catechism classes that he expressed his pleasure to Fr. James McGuigan, Vicar General, and to Archbishop O'Leary.

At St. Alphonsus parish, the Sisters started a religion class of nine pupils and First Communion class for three German pupils. Miss Woods took charge of a class at St. Alphonsus School. For lack of time and funds, the Sisters discontinued the sewing classes at Beverly and reorganized the catechism classes.

Sister McNally sent a monthly report to Mother Lidwina in October 1925"

On October 2nd, 3rd and 4th, we attended some meetings of the CWL Annual Diocesan Convention held in Edmonton and gave a report on our work.

On October 6th, Sr. Rodgers and I went to Big Valley and Stettler to teach catechism. Considering the many difficulties with which we had to contend, we had a very successful trip. We returned on the 17th. In Stettler, we had a class of adults, non-Catholics, very interesting.

Though we are having a comparatively small class at Sunday school, some children are now attending Mass regularly on Sundays and others are starting to go occasionally.

We are gradually working our class into the one held in the Church by the Sisters of Charity of St. John, who live next door us. There are a few children, however, who prefer to come to us so it seems wiser to keep them until they change classes of their own free will. They seem to get lost in a crowd and if we try to force them, they are likely to remain away altogether.

Sr. McNally begins religion by correspondence

After having had some experience in rural and city teaching of catechism, the Sisters decided it was time to plan a course of action for the winter season. Fr. Daly was involved in the discussion. Sister McNally, distressed at not being able to complete some adult convert instructions at Stettler, reported that she had typed the remaining lessons and sent them out by mail and the response had been excellent. She also had typed and sent junior lessons. After a slight pause, Fr. Daly exclaimed: "Why not experiment with simple junior lessons by mail? If businesses can flourish through the use of Her Majesty's mail, why not the spreading of God's word?"

The Anglican correspondence school

When Fr. Daly learned that the Anglicans had been using the correspondence method of teaching religion to children in Western Canada since 1905, he discovered that their correspondence school had been developed from a practical need. Eva Hasell, superintendent of Sunday school teaching in the Saskatchewan Anglican Diocese of Qu'Appelle, was frustrated by the absenteeism of many Sunday school pupils. Due to poor or snow-blocked roads or illness, pupils were absent on many winter Sundays. Miss Hasell began mailing the lessons to the absentees. This method became known as "Sunday School by Post." The Anglican clergy approved this method and introduced to the Anglican headquarters in Toronto, where specially-illustrated lessons were prepared for this method of teaching. Offices were established at Edmonton, Regina and at other centres. The Anglican Sisters of St. John the Divine took charge of the correspondence work in Regina from 1926 until it was discontinued in 1951. The Sisters adopted a system of mailing lessons once a month regardless whether the past lessons were returned for correction. Progress reports were made to the various pastors.

7

RELIGION BY CORRESPONDENCE - A QUANTUM LEAP

Based on Sr. McNally's typed lessons, Fr. Daly developed and built on her initiative to teach the Catholic faith by mail in Canada. From preaching trips in the United States, Fr. Daly was aware of a correspondence course in religion, written by Monsignor Victor Day of Helena, Montana for isolated Catholics in that state. After contacting the monsignor, a set of lessons was sent for young and for older children on First Communion preparation; on the Creed; the Sacraments and the Commandments. These lessons followed the systematic order of Christian Doctrine as it was taught at that time. The Sisters decided to give "catechism by mail" a try.

Archbishop O'Leary supports catechism by mail

Fr. Daly cautioned the Sisters that this was a new venture and needed to receive the archbishop's approval before sending out any lessons. In doing so, the Archbishop O'Leary and Fr. Battle approved this proposed method.

Even before they obtained Msgr. Day's correspondence lessons, the Sisters had begun correspondence teaching in a small experimental way. Much of Sr. McNally's time was spent in composing simple lessons with several pages of explanations of the truths of the Catholic faith and an accompanying question sheet for a pupil's response. She also typed these junior lessons, trying to get as many carbon copies as possible. She sent these lessons to some outlying families around Stettler where the Sisters had taught in October 1925.

The students were encouraged to pray before studying each lesson, and after careful study, write and return their responses for correction. The answers were then corrected and returned with the next lesson. There was a heartening response. The students loved receiving mail, doing the lessons and reading the little notes that the Sisters enclosed.

When news spread about the correspondence method of teaching, some rural pastors: Fr. Ryan from Edson; Fr. Murphy, from Provost; and Fr. Dobson from Lloydminster were among the first to bring lists of names of pupils to enroll in the new method.

As in teaching catechism, the Sisters searched and found zealous helpers to assist with the typing of the lessons. Through the Sisters of Providence at Rosary Hall, they contacted a Catholic Business Girls' Club. Anne Donnelly, the club's president, offered her assistance and other members soon joined in volunteering. After a while, these business girls began to consider the possibility of raising funds to purchase a mimeograph machine.

From 1926 to 1930, correspondence work continued to increase. During those years, only two Sisters were stationed at the 85th Street residence, which was renamed as the Religious Correspondence School. The Sisters were aware that their main task was to spread God's "Good News" through teaching catechism. The teaching of catechism in the 1920s and 1930s was recognized and emphasized as a great necessity by some leaders. At the 51st Annual Congress of French Catholic Jurisconsults at Grenoble, France, M. d'Etang, a former inspector in the French ministry of finance, stated that a thousand tons of law texts will never be worth as much as a few lines of the catechism to prevent frauds and abuses in business. Sir Edward Beatty, CPR President, was convinced that the courageous spirit of people breathes an unquenchable faith in a country's future. Of this observation, Fr. Daly commented: "It is the Catholic view that only by assisting Catholic immigrants to be strong in the Faith of their

ancestors will the New Canadians become great assets to their adopted country.”

Catechism by mail responds to the needs of the rural west

In the latter part of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century, European immigrants transformed barren stretches of land into fertile prairies. Canadian Roman Catholic leaders faced the dilemma of assisting the settlers in preserving their faith and the teaching of catechism was an urgent necessity. With settlers' homes so scattered, no roads and a scarcity of priests, religion by correspondence was a practical solution.

Fr. Daly knew the value of mail service. A prolific writer, Fr. Daly wrote letters of encouragement, advice, warning, inspiration and news. These letters helped greatly to keep up morale in the community's pioneer days. He also encouraged the Sisters to write to headquarters and each other.

On November 3, 1925, Fr. McGuigan called on the Sisters for the purpose of evaluating their work. Pleased and interested with the prospect of teaching religion by correspondence and sending out Catholic literature to Catholic families, he was encouraged and gave his blessing but cautioned to be sure to obtain the archbishop's approval on any new type of work. Sr. McNally was heartened by this visit but was disappointed a few days later on hearing that Sr. Geraghty was needed for the Sisters' new hospital in Vilna, Alberta. Sr. McNally, concerned at the lack of funds, wrote on November 8, 1925 to Archbishop McNeil:

I really think the C.W.L. will give the thousand dollars they promised; they have made some of it already on theatre parties, and a tag day. Father McGuigan, V.G., who is really the director of our work, agreed that it was useless to attempt to go out to the country during the winter months, so it is practically agreed upon that we have two Sunday School classes in Edmonton, do some private catechism teaching to a few families who are far from a church, and attend to the remailing of Catholic literature to isolated families in the country. We keep up correspondence with them, and, where the children are not receiving religious instruction, start a correspondence course in Christian Doctrine; then go out to the country in May.

The condition of affairs out here will soon reach a climax. I have done my best and that keeps my heart in peace. I do not know whether I shall be taken to Toronto next summer or not. I would like to see Your Grace. I do hope that if I am able to see you, you will be there and will see me.

On November 24, 1925, Fr. McGuigan wrote to Fr. Daly about his impressions of the work of the Sisters in Edmonton:

I know you must be anxious to receive a word regarding the Sisters of Service. I really expected to write you long before this but for one reason or another, it has been delayed.

I am happy to report they are making continued and encouraging progress. I visited them in their new home some time ago and found them happy and cheerful. Since you were here, Sr. McNally had the opportunity to meet representative ladies of the diocese at the Diocesan Convention of the C.W.L. At the banquet, she spoke to them of their work.

She, with Sr. Rodgers visited Stettler during the first weeks of October. Fr. Battle was immensely pleased with their work and the Sisters enjoyed the experience which their catechism and convert classes gave them. On account of the lateness of the season, Sr. McNally thought, and I coincided with her views, that it would be well not to attempt any definite mission of catechetical work in scattered districts until the spring, except by

correspondence. We, therefore thought it well not to send the letters we spoke of to the clergy until about the month of April, meanwhile we have outlined the following work during the winter months:

(a) The Sisters will continue their classes in the St. Alphonsus district and with that will take charge of special catechism classes among the Polish people of the Holy Rosary Church, and in the Ross Flats, which are part of the Cathedral Parish. Fr. Sylla, O.M.I. has invited them to do that work among his people, moreover, Sr. McNally has already visited the Ross Flats of this parish and has made some wonderful discoveries. She began a class last Sunday which promises to be a real success. I personally feel that she and her companion will do more among these poor people than we priests can do. These catechism classes more than fill their Saturday and Sunday time.

(b) They will also visit individual families when possible, whose children attend public schools and on account of peculiar circumstances, distance etc. cannot be expected to go to the regular parish Sunday school or sectional catechetical circles.

(c) They will devote the first days of the week occupying themselves by carrying on correspondence courses to the many children of the diocese who are far from Church and out of touch with a priest or religious instruction. I am sending circulars to the missionaries of the most scattered districts and I know they will be delighted to send in the names of the most scattered families. I believe that a word of religious cheer and comfort from the Sisters to the most scattered families will be a source of inspiration for them. The ladies of the diocese and especially of this city are doing their utmost to redeem their promise of financial assistance. Sister Superior told me that she was quite satisfied and felt that they were now on a firmer basis. I saw Fr. Hughes yesterday. He says the hospital projects are growing apace and expects great good to come from Vilna Mission.

I would be grateful if you would assure Sr. McNally that she may come to me in any difficulty she may have regarding her work, financially or otherwise, and I will do all in my power to help the Sisters in the lowly but noble work for souls. I will be glad to have your approval of the above outlined programme for the winter months. Please also be good enough to let me know if you feel that the Sisters are not satisfied in any way and I shall certainly do all that I can to make them happy and contented at their work. Any suggestions of any nature will be gladly received.

On November 26, 1925, Fr. Daly wrote to encourage the Sisters and to give them confidence in their apostolate:

On my return from Halifax, I found your two letters awaiting me. Just a few words to tell you how pleased I am with your good dispositions. I am sure God is giving you many graces; your cheerfulness in the face of difficulties is a proof of it.

I recommend to you my ten days' retreat which will begin on Friday and end on the beautiful feast of the Immaculate Conception. See that you prepare well for this great feast of our Blessed Mother. Renew to her on that day your consecration. If it is at all possible, this may be done after a Mass in your little chapel.

My visit to the Sisters in Halifax was a pleasant one. They are doing good work there, and are living in a true state of evangelical poverty. Little by little they will build up their foundation. Asking God to bless you.

The Sisters now had guidelines and had gained approval for their correspondence course. At the end of November, Sr. McNally sent the usual report of their activities to Mother Lidwina and to Fr. McGuigan, also director of religious education.

Report of the Sisters of Service, Edmonton mission, November 1925

We made 131 visits to Ross flats and found 21 Catholic children attending public schools. We started a catechism class on November 22, at 4.30 p.m. for 5 Ruthenians, 6 Greek Orthodox Russians, 1 Belgian, 3 Italians, and 8 English-speaking children, making a total attendance of 23. For the present, we are using a private house.

On November 15, we took charge of a class in the Polish Church. Miss Ryder has one class of 18 children, and I have 15 to prepare for First Communion. All these children except eight Germans are Ruthenian-Poles - if such an expression may be used. Some of these children attended our class in Sacred Heart School last winter.

We still have a small class in St. Alphonsus school at 2.30 p.m. on Sundays. At 7.00 p.m., we have a small class of three German children that we are preparing for First Communion at Christmas if possible.

We have made 36 other visits in the city. On Sunday last, I took 3 classes and Miss Woods a class in St. Alphonsus School.

Fr. Daly outlines missionary endeavours

On November 5, 1925, Fr. Daly wrote to the Edmonton Sisters:

My dear Sisters,

Our missionary endeavour counts but three years of existence and already our houses extend from Edmonton to Halifax. They are, if you will, but humble missions, but I see in them great promise for the future. We have, I believe, a contribution to make to Mother Church in her great endeavour of saving souls. Through our schools, hospitals, catechetical work and immigration work, we come into contact with the most abandoned souls in the country.

This, dear Sisters, is a great privilege, for we are sharing in the Master's work for which He came into this world and laid down His life on the Cross. "To save one soul", said St. Augustine, "is to predestine your own." This spiritual outlook must always be present to you in your various works. We must endeavour to educate, nurse, and care for people committed to our care, but always with one end in view, and that is, to reach their souls.

As you know, the growth of the Institute has brought with it a financial strain. I am trying my little best to help you, and I confess that at times the burden is too heavy to carry. But I am confident. We are working for God, and God will come to our help at the time we least expect it and when the hours are darkest. I mention this fact to ask each local Superior to do all she possibly can to make each mission self-supporting. Let her devise ways and means, if possible, to raise funds to carry on the work of her house. Even, I hope, that with time each house will be able to supply some little support to the Motherhouse. Poverty, you know, is, at times, very ingenious in finding ways of raising funds.

As to the interior administration of the community, I would desire that everything should pass through the hands of Reverend Mother. She has, I know, all your confidence, and the past is there to prove to each and every one of you that she has been to our little Institute a real Mother. One can appreciate the sacrifices that she has made in giving these last years to our infant Institute.

It is a matter of great consolation to see this growth of the Institute and the good will and zeal of its members. I cannot thank God enough for it. Every day after Mass I pray for each and every one of you, and ask God for every Sister the grace of perseverance. In return, I ask of you a little prayer that God may enable me to continue, as long as it is His wish and will to devote myself to this missionary undertaking.

First Christmas in Edmonton, 1925

Fr. Daly sensing that the Sisters might be experiencing loneliness around Christmas time, wrote to them in mid-December to wish true joy and peace and to remind that all at the Motherhouse were praying for them. The Sisters' first Christmas in Edmonton was happy, accepting an invitation from the Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception from Saint John, NB, who lived next door. The two communities enjoyed a good rapport between the Sisters of Charity and the Sisters with each offering overflow accommodation to visiting Sisters. Right after Christmas, Fr. Daly wrote of coming year:

As Mother wrote to you, you will have help about the middle of January. I hope to be in Edmonton about the middle of February. In the meantime, there is one matter that I would like you to take up with Father McGuigan, and that is the correspondence course in catechism for Catholics in outlying districts. I am assured that we have here an important contribution to make. My idea would be to write a circular letter to the parish priests of the country asking them for addresses of people who live far from the Church and with whom they seldom come into contact. I just want to draw your attention to this fact so that when I come out West, you will have the ground a little prepared for discussion.

8

REMAILING OF CATHOLIC LITERATURE BEGINS

During the years, successive Sisters in catechetical correspondence work used their imagination and ingenuity to devise a variety of ways to enrich the lessons and to assist rural families.

When sending out the correspondence lessons, Sr. Meade recognized a need to communicate among the families. To do this, she decided to issue a monthly news bulletin with contributions from families. The families were asked to send news items of family events of births, anniversaries, weddings, First Communions, Baptisms and visits as well as deaths, illnesses, accidents and disappointments. An excellent response followed when these news items were published in the bulletin and families were asked to support one another with prayers.

During visiting families around Stettler in the fall of 1925, the Sisters in Edmonton first noticed the scarcity of Catholic magazines and papers in rural homes. Later that fall, a mother, 20 miles from a church at Stettler, reinforced the Sister's observation when she wrote: "I wish we had something more to read about our religion." From their experience in visiting families, they knew most rural people were too poor to subscribe for Catholic reading matter. Realizing the great influence the written word could have on the minds and hearts of people, they decided to ask friends and city parishioners for Catholic literature and planned to remail it to those correspondence families in Alberta.

Brother Rogation of the Christian Brothers in Edmonton responded, bringing the Sisters a large supply of Catholic papers, magazines and pamphlets. He also suggested that they write to the postal authorities in Ottawa to ask for a cheaper remailing postal rate. The Sisters followed his suggestion and obtained a special rate of 2 ounces for 1 cent.

Through a letter, the Sisters advised families that it was important to read Catholic papers and magazines for the Catholic viewpoint on issues of the day. The Sisters invited the families to subscribe for Catholic papers free of charge by returning the following form.

I DESIRE TO RECEIVE CATHOLIC READING MATTER FROM YOU. IF POSSIBLE,
PLEASE SEND IT IN
NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
Language if possible _____

There was a great response to this invitation. Within a year, the Sisters extended this service to families in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Northern Ontario and over the border to the states of Washington and Idaho. The Sisters' mailing amounted to more than 1,500 Catholic papers and magazines monthly. These papers were also often passed on from one family to another. In order to provide enough Catholic literature for remailing, the Sisters made an appeal through their community magazine of *The Field at Home* and through Catholic papers of *The Catholic Register*, the *Western Catholic*, *Saint Peter's Bote* and the *British Columbia Catholic*. The response was excellent.

Help from Volunteers

With the excellent response, Catholic literature came from across Canada and the Sisters had

to call for volunteer help to cope with the increased mail. Volunteers came from social visitor, who returned on a regular basis in the afternoon or evening to help fold lessons, remail Catholic literature, judge contests and type general letters. The Sisters came to depend on the volunteers. Some of the helpers of that early period were four high school boys, who once a month folded lessons and tests. Three girls from St. Alphonsus Senior Sodality of the Blessed Virgin, came regularly to do office work as well as Mrs. O'Dea and Mrs. McCarthy. The Catholic Business Girls' Club from Rosary Hall continued to assist with remailing of Catholic literature, and some high school students from St. Alphonsus school also came to lend a hand.

The value of a Catholic paper to rural settlers is well explained in Fr. Daly's book, *Catholic Problems in Western Canada*:

The Catholic paper is an important means of bringing an isolated settler into the larger life of the Church. Reading such a paper can break down the walls of parochialism, provincialism and even nationalism. The value of a Catholic paper to persons in sparsely settled areas as were the Western Prairies in the twenties, cannot be over-estimated. In such areas, the visits of a priest and the teachings of the Gospel are intermittent. Also many Catholics are among people of different faiths. In such areas, therefore, a Catholic paper can be a source of 'light, heat and power.'

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

With no stable means of financial support, the Sisters at the correspondence school depended on their many benefactors. The CWL had initiated fund-raising through the purple bags. Other financial support came from bishops, rural pastors, the Catholic Church Extension Society, Knights of Columbus, and generous farm families who sent garden produce, poultry, eggs and other foodstuffs. It was suggested that families donate \$5 to cover the cost of the correspondence lessons.

The first steady support came from Senator Frank O'Connor, the Catholic benefactor and owner of the Laura Secord chocolates of Toronto. In May 1927, he began a monthly donation of \$100 a month to the correspondence school through the Catholic Church Extension Society until the Senator's death in 1939. The Society also became a good dependable friend and benefactor of the Sisters. Besides providing financial aid, it also sent some furnishings for the Sisters' chapel.

In October 1924, Fr. Daly established *The Field at Home*, the community's quarterly magazine and was well aware of the influence of a magazine going regularly into a home. The purpose of *The Field at Home* was to make a drive for vocations, to keep friends, benefactors and the general public informed of the missionary activities of the Sisters of Service, and to make a strong appeal for funds. These funds were especially needed to cover the cost of correspondence work and its various phases.

In an April 1927 article under the title of *Romance of Mail*, Fr. Daly used the magazine to promote the essence of the Sisters' correspondence work:

In every civilized country, the mail-bag is vested with an intangible sacredness. Within the boundaries of Canada, the glamour of royalty accompanies the mail-bag on its incessant march across the continent "from sea to sea". Always and everywhere an invisible royal guard seems to surround the mail courier. Into our cities and most remote hamlets, along the prairie trail, into the snows of our icy North he/she goes unprotected and inviolable carrying that precious bag which will ultimately bring the Good News of the Gospel to many families.

Who can analyze the contents of a mail-bag? Within the narrow confines of its canvas walls, are gathered all the interests of humanity - the long-expected lover's letter, the message from an absent one, the unwelcome bill pressing payment, the solicitations of trade, the stocks and bonds of the busy mart, government correspondence, diplomatic exchanges. The whole range of human interests are found in her majesty's mail-bag. Should there not, therefore, be here a message from the King of Kings? If her Majesty's Mail has become the vehicle through which the social, educational, commercial and political interests of the world are now actively promoted, why should not the Church make use of it to bring her saving doctrine to those scattered children who live on the fringe of the country, out of touch with an organized parish? The greatest tragedy of the Home Mission Field is undoubtedly the Catholic child, born of Catholic parents, baptized in the Faith but left without Catholic instruction, a prey to all de-Christianizing influences of his/her environment. We might say with the prophet Jeremias, "The little ones have asked for bread and there was none to break it unto them" (Lamentations IV:4).

It is in order "to break this bread" that the Sisters of Service in Edmonton have inaugurated a Catechetical Correspondence Course for the benefit of our great Home

Mission Field. Through it, they are reaching hundreds of children scattered over the Prairie and in the valleys of British Columbia. Following a simple and systematic course of lessons, they are teaching them religion by mail. The purpose of their endeavour is to keep alive the spark of Faith in the souls of these unprivileged ones, and to fan it into a burning flame. We consider this work as one of the most valuable services our Sisters are giving to the Church in the Home Mission Field."

Dime Savers introduced

In the first issue, Fr. Daly introduced a fund-raising method through "the Dime Saver" with the accompanying slogan of "Gather up the fragments that remain lest they be lost" (Jn. 6:12). Under the appeal of *Our Silent Beggar*, the Dime Saver was a thin pocket-sized cardboard folder consisting of thirty slots for enclosing dimes. Printed below it were the words: "Those who fill a Dime-Saver are entitled to receive our Quarterly illustrated Magazine which will keep them posted on the progress of our work."

This method of appeal appealed to the popularity of Dime Stores, such as Woolworth's. Fr. Daly noted that dime stores taught customers to spend money without feeling it. By December 21, 1925, a total of 9,321 dimes had been received toward the goal of 100,000 dimes. The names of those who sent in their folders were printed regularly on the monthly benefactors' page in the magazine. In July 1930, a total of 4,750 dimes were received from members of the Children of Mary and Sodality of the Little Flower at the Redemptorist parish of St. Patrick's in Quebec City. In the fall of 1934, the Captain of Young Missionaries of Christ the King in Quebec asked for the dime savers for their members. As an incentive to the members, the Sisters promised prizes for the first three folders to be returned. The prize winners were Bertha Arteau, Quebec; Edward, Robert and John Meagher, Montreal and Lillian Sunderland, Quebec. This successful and popular fund-raising continued until the late 1960s.

In the second issue of *The Field at Home*, published on January 1925, Fr. Daly described as the magazine "a begging sheet" and made no apologies for doing so saying that our Church is a "begging Church." It asked, even begs for "crumbs" to assist its missionaries. He also reminded the readers that the works of the Church are for the most part, built and rest on the "little sacrifices of the many," as was the Basilica of St. John the Baptist in St. John's, Newfoundland, built by poor fishermen or the great cathedrals of Europe, built by the poor.

Letters of Appreciation from parents

Parents appreciated the early efforts in correspondence work in 1926:

Hanna, Alberta

Dear SOS,

I feel that your lessons fill a long-felt need on the prairies where so many are so far from the Church, especially our home. I am a convert, so there are many things in the advanced lessons that I am not sure of myself. I study the lessons with the children and then ask them the questions and write in their answers myself

Mrs. M.

Stony Plain, Alberta

We find the lessons very interesting. We have answered the questions. It is very kind of you to help us.

Mr. K. and Johnny
Stony

Taking a much-needed rest in Camp Morton, Sr. McNally wrote a progress report to Toronto Archbishop McNeil of Toronto on March 4, 1926:

Your Grace:

As you see by the above address, I am in Camp Morton, Manitoba. Fr. Daly sent me here for a rest. I really welcome this change very much. I expect to be here for about two weeks, maybe a little longer. I must say that in spite of any drawbacks it may have, I like the Edmonton Mission best of all. [At this time, Camp Morton, Manitoba, was in a very primitive condition]

The correspondence course is in full swing now. Some think it wonderful; and others, useless. However, it won't do any harm, and on the whole I think it will do much good. On Sunday last, we had a shower and received \$25.65 in cash and a quantity of groceries and linens. It was a great help.

We have about 150 names of families to send papers to, and 150 families for lessons; these average around 475 children taking lessons. Of course, some won't bother their heads about answering. In about a month or more, we shall be able to tell just how many we shall have. Occasionally, we get small donations of stamps from some of these.

I left the Sisters fairly well. Sister Rodgers suffers frequently from sick headaches, and Sister Heaney is not very strong. Sister Fallon went to Vilna where she has a heavy school of about fifty odd children. I believe they are going to build a new school of two rooms or more next year. I think the yearly salary is \$1050.00, so it would be a great help. It is, I think, a Russian settlement. The hospital appears to be a success and everyone speaks highly of the work done there by our Sisters. The Sisters here are all well; they are kept very busy. Last week, I was discouraged; today, I am highly amused. I wonder how many more years it will take for things to iron themselves out!

Humbly asking your Grace's blessing and hoping that you are feeling well, I remain,
Your humble and obedient servant,
Sister McNally

Starting a garden

On her return to Edmonton, Sr. McNally started a garden on a large stretch of untilled land beside the house to cut expenses. After seeing Sister digging in the hard soil, an Irishman offered with a horse and soon put the soil in good condition. The resultant harvest was excellent. Through hard work, the Sisters had the best garden with vegetables of potatoes, beets, turnips, carrots, corn, peas, beans, tomatoes and cucumbers to supply not only themselves but also the Redemptorists. The garden tradition begun by these pioneer Sisters, continued for many years.

SISTERS ATTACKED IN ORANGE SENTINEL

Archbishop O'Leary advised the Sisters not go to any parish or mission without an invitation from the pastor. "Be very careful to avoid proselytizing in any way." This advice reinforced the boundaries outlined in the Novitiate that the Sisters instruct only Catholic children in their Faith.

In March 1925 under the title of "Our Point of View," *The Orange Sentinel*, the publication of the Orange Lodge, accused the Sisters of engaging in systematic proselytizing. The article as printed follows:

The Sisters of Service have started operations in the Canadian West, according to an announcement in the Canadian Register of September 18th. Morton, Manitoba, has been selected by the Canadian hierarchy as the starting point for the first band of lady proselytizers who are under temporary vows of "poverty chastity and obedience". They are nuns who go forth as teachers and nurses without the usual garb of the nunnery. Archbishop McNeil received the vows of the first six Sisters at the Sisters of Service Institute, Toronto, on August 2nd, [1924] and three of them - two teachers and a nurse - have gone to Morton, Manitoba. "The two teachers are taking the public school of the district and the nursing sister will give her services to the sick.

The Register of September 18th, published a picture of the three ungarbed nuns who go to Morton, together with the following particulars over the name of Father George Daly, C.Ss.R., who is looking after this branch of Romanist propaganda work: On August 7th, the first band left the Mother-House for the harvest fields. Sister Wymbs, a nurse, and Sr. Donnelly, a teacher, have gone to Morton, Man., Sister Guest, a teacher, will follow in a few weeks. On their arrival at Winnipeg, the Sisters met with a warm welcome from His Grace, the Archbishop, in whose Archdiocese they have come to labour.

Morton is a settlement on the shores of Lake Winnipeg. The population is composed of Poles, Germans, Ruthenians and Icelanders. The two teachers are taking the two public schools of the district. While they will devote themselves to the instruction and education of the children, the nursing Sister will give her services to the sick. This evidently means that the two teachers will draw salaries as public school teachers from the public funds of Manitoba while they do the proselytizing and propaganda work for which they have been trained at the Sisters of Service Mother-House in Toronto. They are all under solemn vows for a year and must do the bidding of the Roman Catholic hierarchy even if they do get paid by the taxpayers of Manitoba.

The purposes of the Sisters of Service and the reason they do not wear the nunnery garb, although they assume the vows of a nun, were fully explained in a confidential pamphlet issued by the Catholic Women's League a couple of years ago and reproduced in full in *The Sentinel* at that time. The following extracts will suffice at present to show that the Sisters of Service are given special training and are under solemn vows to work their way into the schools and the homes of unsuspecting people with the object of doing propaganda work for the Roman Catholic Church:

To protect and strengthen the faith, especially of the foreign-born in the out-lying districts of Western Canada, where there are no resident priests; to counteract by their presence and their work in the school and home the influence of aggressive and unscrupulous proselytizers: these are the two principal objects of this new community. These Sisters will, therefore, be obliged to live in small groups, scattered here and there on the prairies.

To such a life of sacrifice, religion alone can give its inspiring motive and assure its permanence. The Sisters of Service will, therefore, form a religious Sisterhood. Their spiritual training and direction, their mode of life and government, will be in conformity with the usual rites and practices laid down by the Church for the religious orders of women. After a year's novitiate, they will make temporary vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. These vows they will renew annually; after a certain number of years of probation, they will pronounce their perpetual vows.

To allow them to go about their work more freely and not appear obtrusive to the great non-Catholic population with which they are to mingle, and which they may be called frequently to help, the absence of a distinctly religious garb will be another of the particular features of the Sisters of Service. Christian modesty will be their "habit" and their distinctive "veil."

With the inauguration of the Sisters of Service under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Women's League, the Roman Catholic Church is entering upon a new extension movement. The young women who have had a year's training are sent out under vows to win the Western settlers back to the Church. They are trained especially to mix with Protestants and work their way into the Public Schools and homes with the supreme object of advancing the interests of the church. They are expected to carry on a persistent propaganda wherever they go. They are under solemn vows to do so. No matter who pays them, their first allegiance is to the Roman System.

Those who meet these young ladies will find that they are gentle, modest innocent-looking creatures. They have been given a course of training for the express purpose of creating that impression upon unsuspecting Protestants and new citizens who were probably Roman Catholics at one time in Europe.

If the Roman Catholic Church wants to do home-mission work, no Protestant will attempt to prevent any legitimate enterprise of that kind. But the "Sisters of Service" policy is an attempt to capture the West by stealth and guile and is taking an unfair advantage of new citizens. Many foreigners became fed up with Romanism in Europe. They are now free and in this country, they have a right to expect that their religious freedom will be protected. If the school teacher is under a vow to teach Roman Catholic dogma to their children and win them back to the Roman Church, the parents, who pay the taxes, have a right to know it.

The "Sisters of Service" movement is an application of the false philosophy of Jesuitism to the home mission field. It is boldly asserted in the pamphlet quoted above that the "Sisters of Service" is a "religious sisterhood" and their temporary vows are the same as those taken by cloistered nuns.

The absence of a distinctly religious garb is a glaring attempt to deceive because it is admitted that the ordinary civilian dress will enable these oath-bound propagandists "to go about more freely and not appear obtrusive to the great non-Catholic population with which they are to mingle, and which they may be called very frequently to help". It is added that their devoted and hidden career, although known but to a few, will be a benefit to all." Their "hidden" career, and the mission and tactics, ought to be made known to every citizen in the West and in the downtown districts in other districts of Canada among whom they intend to operate.

If the Roman Catholic Church desires to carry on mission work, she should be expected to do so openly like the Protestant Churches. More than that, the mission work of the Roman Church ought to be financed by the voluntary offerings of Roman Catholics. The Roman Church should pay her own expenses. To place her propagandists on the payroll of the Public Schools, as is evidently being done in Manitoba, is an outrage that should not be tolerated. Taxpayers in Manitoba and especially those in the school districts concerned, should all know that those three new-

arrivals are oath-bound emissaries of the Church of Rome.

They are under "direction" of their ecclesiastical superiors. They are to serve their church. They are under vows of "poverty" as well as "obedience", and any salaries or donations they receive must be handed over to the church treasury. The Roman system has really established a mission in Morton, Manitoba, and arrangements have been made so that the taxpayers of that province will more than pay all expenses incurred. Will the Roman system get away with it? The people of Manitoba must answer."

Fr. Daly wrote a rebuttal to the editor H.C. Hocken in the April 1925 issue of *The Field at Home*:

The editor of the *Orange Sentinel* has of late has given much of his attention to the Sisters of Service. His violent attacks on our organization have prompted an interesting exchange of correspondence in the columns of the Toronto Globe. As usual, Mr. Hocken's attack is a travesty of truth and a misrepresentation of facts. But, that our small and humble Institute should be the object of his attention; is not that a proof of our contribution to the Church and its welfare out West? "Continue, Mr. Hocken. Every knock of yours is a boost for us!"

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CHANGES AND ACTIVITIES AT THE EDMONTON MISSION, 1926

In April 1926 on the advice of both Frs. Daly and McGuigan, the Sisters under Sr. McNally's signature sent a circular letter to some rural pastors in Alberta, offering to teach catechism in the summer months and providing guidelines:

Reverend and dear Father:

The Sisters of Service, on the invitation of His Grace, the Archbishop of Edmonton, came to Edmonton in January of 1925. Since their arrival here, they have been engaged, under the direction of the ecclesiastical authorities, in survey work, particularly in the New Canadian districts of an area.

As the teaching of catechism, especially in the outlying districts of the country, is one of the principal works of our Institute, two Sisters will now be available for this work.

During their stay on a mission, they would like to live in the district with a respectable family of your choice. They are prepared to teach catechism to Catholic children, and prepare them for the sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist, show a few boys how to serve Mass and introduce a Correspondence Course in catechism to those who live far from the mission; also place Catholic papers in the homes of Catholic settlers.

No specific salary is asked for this work; we leave this to the generosity of the people.

Our whole desire is to be of help to your Reverence in spreading Catholic knowledge and influence in that portion of the Lord's Vineyard confided to your care. We realize fully that it will take a little time before the results of our work will become appreciable. Trusting in the Lord, however, we are ready to spend ourselves for souls so dear to Him.

As our present number will not allow us to undertake much at this time, may we ask your Reverence to send in the enclosed application at your earliest convenience if you desire our services. The enclosed letter of the Archbishop will speak for itself.

Asking your blessing, we beg to remain in J.M.J.

Your humble and devoted servant

The Sisters of Service

per Sr. McNally

Due to the good response to these circular letters, the Sisters were able to visit five areas during their second venture to rural Alberta. Sr. McNally wrote a brief account of their activities:

Last year new ground was broken in our missionary work in the West, ground which, if properly cultivated, will give promise of a fruitful harvest. We refer to the work of catechizing in the country districts, in both Alberta and Saskatchewan, a work which is possible only in summer; that is, between seeding time and the harvest season. This summer, we have again taken up this valuable work and are now convinced that the good achieved is far beyond our wildest hopes.

This summer, we visited five places in the Province of Alberta; namely, Spruce Grove, Warrickville, Kitscoty, Lloydminster and Hastings Lake. As a rule, we were met at the station by the priest of the district and often by many of the people. Our reception, both by priest and people, is always sincere and whole-hearted, calculated to make us grateful for our vocation, and more than reward us for the sacrifice of leaving our eastern homes for the "great open spaces."

Class begins at 9.30 a.m. and ends at 5.30 p.m. It consists of assisting at Holy Mass, teaching catechism, singing hymns, lunch on the lawn, games, etc. Class closes with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. There are, however, some places where we

cannot have Mass and Benediction. The classes average from fifteen to twenty-eight students and the attendance is regular. This entails great sacrifices. Roads are usually very rough and muddy and many children live from ten to twenty miles from the church or from where classes are being held.

Neither rain nor mud have deterred the children from coming. At 9.00 a.m. they begin to assemble; some come on horseback, others in democrats and more on foot. We were really touched to see two little lads of six and eight years walk three miles through the rain and mud, and another family drive over forty miles.

Reviewing the scenes of our work during the past summer, vividly recalls to our minds the Gospel story of Christ feeding the multitude. And, indeed, is not our work Christlike? Are we not literally feeding Christ's little ones of the Prairies the Word of Life? The Hand of Providence seems to have led us here, for in this land of vast distances and rolling prairie where the people are so scattered, it is impossible for the priest single-handed to give instruction in Christian Doctrine to all the members of his flock. We have become, as it were, God's ambassadors, to help prepare the children for God's coming to them in First Communion and Confirmation. Truly our vocation is a beautiful and precious one!

On July 9, 1926, Sr. Florence Regan joined the Sisters at the Edmonton mission, succeeding Sr. McNally as Superior of this mission. Sr. McNally, who had laid a good foundation for the correspondence work, was called to help Sr. Wymbs start a new Alberta hospital mission at Edson.

Sr. Regan wrote an account of her early days in Edmonton:

In July 1926, I was sent to Edmonton Catechetical Mission. There was no revenue for this house except that contributed by the Catholic Women's League of Edmonton. Thanks to the League, we were never in need! In August, the League President, Mrs. Duggan, phoned to ask if we would attend a banquet at the MacDonald Hotel in September in honour of Archbishop O'Leary for the celebration of his Silver Jubilee. She said she would like us to give a talk after the banquet to explain our work. Sr. McNally asked me to give this talk. I, therefore, made myself thoroughly acquainted with the Catechetical Work and prepared a paper to read at the banquet.

On September 19, Srs. Regan and Heaney attended a Solemn Pontifical High Mass at St. Joseph's Cathedral and accompanied Mrs. Duggan to the MacDonald Hotel, where they were seated at the head table near the Archbishop O'Leary at the CWL banquet. Sr. Regan addressed 350 CWL members, noting that the Sisters were fulfilling one of the aims of their Institute by reaching out to rural families to help them to know and preserve the rich heritage of their Catholic faith. Sr. Regan read a few of the many letters from recipients of correspondence lessons: From Marwayne, Alberta: "We have six children; only three of them have made their First Communion. We are very anxious for them to know more about their religion." From Salmon Arm BC: "A few lines in appreciation of the good work you have done for our children. Good Catholic training is what we need in this far-away place. ... We need to be fortified in our religion. We can attend Mass only about five or six times a year. We are 17 1/2 miles away. All the long winter, we cannot go at all. The children look forward to their lessons from you." Sr. Regan concluded, remarking: "You can see from what I have said what our work is like, the work which we ask our Catholic Women's League to help us carry on in our Edmonton Mission. We have no definite income; funds are urgently needed to finance our undertaking. St. Augustine said that whoever is the means of saving a single soul has already secured his own salvation. With your help, we hope to save many souls by means of our "Catechism by Mail"; for in this

way, we shall teach God's children in isolated parts to know, love and serve Him in this life, so that they may be happy forever with Him in the life to come."

Activities increase in the fall

On September 21, 1926, Fr. Arthur Coughlan visited the Sisters, who were delighted to welcome him and to gain news of the Sisters in Toronto. Fr. Coughlan saw first-hand the Sisters' progress, especially with their correspondence work and read some of the students' letters.

Early in October, the Sisters re-opened their Sunday school classes at St. Alphonsus church and at Ross Flats. Srs. Regan and Heaney brought 24 children from the Ross Flats to attend the Forty Hours Devotion at St. Joseph's Cathedral. On October 30, they organized a successful Halloween party in St. Alphonsus parish hall for their combined classes of Ross Flats and St. Alphonsus. Anna Donnelly helped out by operating the lantern machine, loaned by the parish.

In late November 1926, Sister Regan welcomed Sr. Eveleen Donnelly to the Edmonton mission. Fr. Daly made a short visit on November 25, and blessed a statue of Our Lady of Grace. As on all his visits, he not only imparted his blessing, but encouraged the Sisters and enkindled their zeal.

The Edmonton Sisters were involved in the flurry of activity and excitement that preceded the opening and blessing of the community's two Alberta hospitals of Our Lady's Hospital in Vilna on November 18, 1925 and St. John's Hospital in Edson on December 8, 1926.

After these hospitals were opened, the correspondence school in Edmonton served as a hospitality house for the Sisters from Vilna and Edson. Later, the community's teachers also stayed at the house when attending summer school while the Edmonton Sisters were away teaching catechism. Sisters from the hospitals were also welcome to make their annual retreats and annual renewal of their vows at Edmonton.

The Purple Bags had been so successful during Lent of 1926 that Mrs. Duggan decided to use them in Advent of that year and asked Sr. Regan to write a rhyme to accompany these bags. Here is Sister's first attempt:

Will you lay by this Advent time a cent a day
To help our mission cause upon its way?
'Twill many blessings to you bring
At Christmas from our Infant King
Do send it in without delay
And win his smile on Christmas Day

On December 13, 1926, due to a defective flue in the gas line, both Sr. Regan and Sr. Donnelly were overcome by gas fumes. They were rushed by ambulance to the Misericordia Hospital. Sr. Regan made a quick recovery and was able to return home within a few days. She discovered that some loose bricks had blocked the chimney which had prevented the fumes from escaping. While the chimney was being repaired, there was no heat in the house so Sister wore her winter cape and continued working at the lessons.

On December 21, a total of 31 purple bags arrived from the various CWL subdivisions, amounting to \$350. This added to the coffers for Christmas needs. A large box of holy pictures also arrived from the CWL of Viking, Alberta, just in time to include a picture in each Christmas

letter. The news came from the hospital that Sr. Donnelly was now out of danger.

Alone on the mission, Sr. Regan attended two Shepherd Masses, arriving home at 2 a.m. On Christmas morning after breakfast, although the roads were icy, Sister went to the hospital to bring Sr. Donnelly home. Their trip back by taxi was hazardous, but both were delighted to be together again. The Redemptorists had sent Christmas dinner, a chicken, ice-cream and cake.

Upon Sr. Donnelly's homecoming, the Sisters opened the Christmas mail. After supper, they opened letters and parcels from friends, relatives, Sisters in other missions and Mothers Lidwina and Othilia as well as from Fr. Daly. On December 28, the Sisters enjoyed a festive supper with their neighbours, the Sisters of Charity of Saint John.

Every Sunday winter afternoons, the two Sisters went to the Ross Flats. Fr. Leo Nelligan had rented a small house as a classroom for the Sisters to teach the children. The Sisters completed the year by enlisting the help of some senior boys to prepare a Christmas tree and party for early January.

PROGRESS AND ACTIVITIES IN EDMONTON, 1927

A happy surprise started the year of 1927. On arriving home on that very cold New Year's Eve, the Sisters were greatly cheered to find a large basket on their veranda. It contained a complete festive dinner - turkey and trimmings, fresh eggs, a Christmas cake, jelly with whipped cream and even a small bottle of French wine.

The party for 25 children at Ross Flats was a happy event. Fr. Nelligan arrived laden with gifts for each child and with boxes and boxes of candy. Most of these "good things" had come through the generosity of Mrs. Fergus MacDonald of Vancouver, who had sent not only toys for but also warm knitted items of clothing. The Redemptorist Fathers had donated a goodly supply of ice cream. The Sisters added a wrapped religious token. The arrival of Santa Claus plus games and fun helped to make a very successful party.

The erection of the Stations of the Cross in their little chapel by Fr. Hyacinth, OFM made the chapel more complete. A donation sent for the chapel enabled the Sisters to obtain much-needed curtains and a rug.

As a means of keeping people informed, especially those who were sponsoring their outreach efforts, the Sisters gave many reports during the early stages of their correspondence work. These reports showed the support and collaboration with the Sisters. In a letter to families of correspondence students, Sr. Regan explained the value of religious articles of holy pictures, medals and rosaries and the support of the CWL.

We have received a steady stream of these articles. We enclose them with catechism lessons. These articles can become potent preachers in the homes of some New Canadians. Why? Many New Canadians do not understand our language, but they can get messages of faith from the religious articles. Who knows what the little silent messengers, aided by the grace of God, may accomplish in the way of conserving the Faith in the hearts and homes of New Canadians. Families who have no opportunity or no money to buy such religious articles are delighted to receive them.

Our mailing of Catholic magazines and papers is flourishing. Actually, we receive copies of every Catholic Magazine and Catholic Paper that was ever heard of in this part of the country. Besides those we receive from the Catholic Women's League here in Edmonton, and from other friends in this city, we receive many from all parts of Canada - Halifax to Vancouver. We hope to continue receiving this Catholic literature. This month we had such a good supply that we were able to send out 794 Catholic magazines and 704 Catholic papers. We also sent out some excellent Catholic magazines for children who fairly "devour" them and ask for more.

We wish to give special thanks to those members of the League who went to much trouble to send us many lovely articles of clothing for a new baby. The mother who received these was very delighted and grateful. Because she is a woman of great piety, I know she will not forget in her prayers those who helped her in this need.

On February 17, 1927, Fr. Daly wrote to Sr. Regan: "I am glad to see that your bank account is keeping on the right side. I believe that before long, the Catholic Church Extension Society will finance your lessons."

On Easter Sunday through Fr. Daly, the Sisters received with a surprise gift of a mimeograph and addressograph machine. Both were donations in response to appeals made in *The Field at Home* magazine. The mimeograph served to duplicate lessons and circular letters and the addressograph speeded up the addressing of wrappers for remailing Catholic literature.

The president of the Catholic Girls' Club of Edmonton, wishing to spur the interest of more girls in the correspondence work, asked Sr. Regan to address one of their meetings, where she invited members to share in this apostolic work. Two girls came one night to address wrappers for remailing and do mimeograph work. No matter how cold or stormy the weather, they remained faithful to their weekly for years. A variety of assistance from others in the correspondence work was not only a great financial help and time saver for the Sisters but also set a pattern for future correspondence activities.

Yearly Report of the Sisters of Service, April 1926-April 1927

At the request of the CWL, Sr. Regan gave a cumulative report of the Sisters' activities from April 1926 to April 1927. This report showed a steady increase in the correspondence work. Mrs. Duggan sent this report to the *Western Catholic Reporter*. A condensed version follows:

The work in our little mission, which is still in the experimental stage, is steadily increasing. The following figures show that our principal work - giving spiritual help to isolated rural families - is bringing good results:

Catechism Lessons corrected	1685
typed	2409
sent out	2819

Although our Mission House is in the city, we are reaching out from it in all directions, to bring the teaching of Christ to many rural families. Our lessons may be the only means that many of these scattered families have to learn what they must know in order to become practical Catholics.

Although most of our students are in Alberta; we also reach out to many in British Columbia; recently we have enrolled some from Saskatchewan.

Last summer in Alberta, our Sisters went out teaching catechism at - Spruce Grove, Deville, Lloydminster, Kitscoty and Leighton. They prepared many children in those places and adjacent districts for First Communion and Confirmation. The children love this method of instruction especially when it is given in the open air. They are also quick to learn some of the favourite hymns of the Church. During the winter months, we have continued teaching these children through the mail. It is very encouraging to note their progress and improvement. We expect to go out and continue teaching catechism again this summer.

During Advent 1927, we sent out a letter to all families giving suggestions about preparing for Christmas. Our Lenten letter called attention to Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday explaining the meaning of each of these days as a means of helping our students spend them well.

In response to an appeal in the *Western Catholic*, we have again received a generous supply of holy pictures, medals and leaflets. We have made good use of these by sending them out with the lessons.

Each month brings some interesting letters from families or pupils. Sometimes it is a letter from a little friend of one of our pupils asking if she, also, may receive lessons from us. Sometimes it is from a Mother or Father thanking us for what we are doing for their children, and enclosing a donation to help us. Sometimes it is from some of our converts who are entering the Church. A short time ago, we received a letter from a Mother who is not a Catholic. She asked if she, herself, might take lessons. We sent

lessons to her and hope with God's Grace that she may be blessed with the gift of Faith.

In response to many inquiries, we have written letters about our work. Some of these letters have been sent as far away as Sunny California.

For several months after we commenced remailing Catholic literature, we were handicapped for lack of sufficient papers and magazines - but those days have passed. Now, we receive literature in such quantities that we need many more hands willing to help in our remailing effort. The Catholic Business Girls' Club, Edmonton, has responded generously to our call for help and its members have been busy all this past week. We hope that we shall continue to receive large quantities of literature and also have assistance in sending it out.

One of our winter projects was responding to those who asked for clothing. Through some kind benefactors, we have been able to distribute much warm clothing, overshoes, rubbers and boots to the needy. Also, through the kindness of several C.W.L. benefactors, we were able to send a complete set of baby clothes to a poor mother.

Three catechism classes are taught on Sundays, one of which was under the able direction of Miss Bertha Brennan, to whom we are much indebted.

The Purple Bag Campaign initiated at the beginning of Advent by Mrs. Duggan has already brought us \$415.19 and Purple Bags are still coming in. The monthly donations from various sub-divisions totalled \$432.12. This brings the grand total for the year to \$847.31.

In conclusion, I wish to thank all the CWL members of the SOS committee, who have helped us so generously during the past year. My God bless and reward you all

The above report is respectfully submitted.

Signed on behalf of this committee,
Margaret Duggan, Diocesan President

In addition to office helpers, some teachers and parent catechists continued to cooperate with the Sisters in teaching religion to the children of St. Alphonsus parish, who attend public schools. In addition to the weekend classes at Ross Flats, the Sisters were asked by Msgr. Carleton to teach catechism to long-term child patients at the University Hospital, particularly tuberculosis patients who were being cared for in a special wing of the hospital. The Sisters continued this apostolate until the late 1950s. At times, they instructed some lay teachers to help with this teaching.

Monsignor Day Contacted

By the spring of 1927, the Sisters decided that the experimental stage of religion by correspondence was over. It was time to make arrangements with Monsignor Victor Day of Helena, Montana, to purchase his lessons. Due to a scarcity of money, the Sisters hoped to procure the lessons at the lowest possible rate. In order to make sure that Msgr. Day understood their great need, the Sisters appealed to Archbishop McNeil to write Msgr. Day on their behalf. The Sisters did not receive the monsignor's reply to Archbishop McNeil about the cost of the lessons and the order of the printed courses was delayed until the fall. Other difficulties arose with the Canada Customs Department which further delayed the reception of the courses.

Fr. Daly wrote Msgr. Day on July 27, 1927:

Some time ago the Archbishop of Toronto communicated with you regarding your Religious Correspondence Courses. In answer, I believe, you offered special prices to the Sisters of Service in the West. May I ask you what these prices were? We are contemplating a drive in the fall to extend our work so this will necessitate a greater

number of lessons to be bought from Your Reverence. We are now preparing this campaign.

As this work is for our poorest missions out West, I know you will let us off easy. With kindest wishes to your dear self.

Further delays occurred when Msgr. Day answered Fr. Daly's letter on August 9, 1927:

In reply to your inquiry of July 27th which I found on my return from the consecration of Bishop Finnegan, permit me to quote you a paragraph from my letter to the Most Reverend Archbishop McNeil of Toronto, Canada

We are willing to make Your Grace a confidential proposition that we have never made to any one before. We are willing to let you have the correspondence courses at prices at which we could not pack them and print them at lots of less than a thousand in the United States. To be specific, we offer you the 55 cent course on the First Communion at 48 cents; the one on the Apostles' Creed at 75 cents instead of one dollar; and the \$1.25 course on the Sacraments at 80 cents laid down in Toronto. These prices are meant for orders of not less than two hundred of one or more kinds.

Trusting these prices will suit you.

Grateful to Msgr. Day, the Sisters accepted his generous offer and hastened to send the first order. With an expectation of a longer list of pupils that fall, they were especially eager to obtain the lessons as soon as possible.

It is a revelation to compare the cost of correspondence courses in the 1920s with those of today (the 1990s). In 1927, the cost of Msgr. Day's complete First Communion course of 13 lessons, including question sheets, was 55 cents and the postage for each lesson was 2 cents. These lessons in the 1920s were simple in style with no colour and few outline pictures. They were far less attractive than those used today. The difference in price, however, is significant. Today, the cost of an attractively designed First Communion textbook is \$8.65, and the course of twenty beautifully illustrated question sheets that accompany the text is \$5.35. The postage on each lesson may vary from 67 to 86 cents.

The Apostles' Creed of 18 lessons, including question sheets in the 1920s was \$1.00; the postage was usually 2 cents a lesson. Today, it is \$11.85 for the text and \$5.35 for the accompanying twenty lessons. The postage is similar to that of the First Communion Lessons. Two other courses used at that time were The Sacraments and the Sacramentals of 18 lessons and the 10 Commandments and Precepts of the Church with eight lessons. Msgr. Day gave the Sisters of Service the exclusive right to print and use these lessons in Canada.

Today (1995), parents pay a stipend of \$15 per family, regardless of how many children are taking courses. In the 1920s, the Sisters were very much aware of the hardships of the immigrant farmers who were trying to get established on new land. Cutting down trees, breaking the land, picking stones and cultivating the soil under great difficulties were colossal tasks especially when money was scarce. The Sisters, therefore, did not charge any fee for the lessons or for the service of checking the lessons. Any contributions were voluntary. The Sisters were always grateful for garden produce or milk and dairy products that were sometimes given to them in lieu of money. The parents were very generous in bringing these donations when, on rare occasions, they came to the city.

The Sisters were greatly frustrated to learn that the first shipment of Msgr. Day's lessons was held up at the Canadian Customs Department. They discovered that although catechisms were

allowed into Canada duty free from the United States; the correspondence catechisms in loose leaf form, having separate question sheets were considered taxable. After much discussion with the Revenue Officials at the Customs Office in Ottawa and verbal explanations by Fr. Daly, free entry of the lessons was finally allowed.

The Sisters received reassuring news that the lessons were serving a need in British Columbia. This is evident from a letter received from Fr. A.L. McIntyre from Nelson, dated, May 26, 1927:

I hope you will pardon me for my seeming neglect of the good Sisters of Service. I have been unusually busy getting ready for Confirmation, making my Easter duty visits and many other legitimate labours; something had to suffer.

Bishop Kidd of Calgary has been over my Missions, and he confirmed quite a number of children and some adults. I am very pleased to say that those who followed the Correspondence Catechism Course answered very well in the work they had covered. I am delighted with the course and under existing conditions, it is without doubt, a Godsend to the poor isolated children and their parents and a wonderful help and consolation to the priest.

I thank God for this course of Religion by Mail; bless good Fr. Daly for his zeal and vision, and my gratitude and good wishes for the Sisters of Service - God bless them. I hope soon to see you on this side of the Rockies. Come as soon as possible; we really need you and will surely welcome you to the Mountains.

I hereby enclose a further list of names of children who need the catechism course. Please take them under your care and look for more later from other missionaries and myself. Many thanks for past favours and best wishes for the future.

Yours gratefully in Xto.,

A.L. McIntyre

P.S. I enclose two names of prospective converts. Please drop them a line.

On June 11, 1927, Sr. Frances Church and Mother Othilia, who replaced Mother Lidwina as Superior and Novice Mistress, visited the Edmonton mission after travelling to Victoria and Vancouver. While in Vancouver, they met Bishop Thomas Casey, who was eager for the Sisters in the Vancouver archdiocese. During her stay in Edmonton, Mother Othilia encouraged the Sisters and gave two days of greatly-appreciated spiritual talks.

Summer activities, 1927

In the spring of 1927, Fr. Daly informed Srs. Rodgers and Regan that Archbishop Mathieu of Regina has asked for two Sisters to teach catechism in the summer in rural Saskatchewan and also take charge of a girls' camp at Lebreton, just a few girls, about fifteen. He asked Sr. Regan, "Could you and Sr. Rodgers be ready to set out July 7th?"

Sr. Regan learned that the Christian Brothers had been conducting Camp Mathieu for boys for a few years and this year it had been decided to keep the camp open for another two weeks, a "first" for girls. Sister also discovered other information about the girls' camp. When Monsignor Marois announced about the girls' camp from the pulpit of Holy Rosary cathedral in Regina, he urged parents to send their girls under the care of the Sisters of Service. The Sisters would occupy the Monsignor's cottage and a few tents would house the children.

The following account of the Saskatchewan summer adventures was written by Sr. Regan:

July 7, 1927 was the day set for our departure from Edmonton. What were we to do on this Summer Tour? Teach Catechism, of course, - that is, most of the time. Our

mandate was: "Go into the by-ways and seek out the little ones who were not so fortunate as to attend a Catholic day school or Sunday school, and who on account of existing circumstances received very little instruction in their religion.

After hurried preparations, we said "au revoir" to our Edmonton Mission on the evening of the 7th and noon of the next day found us in the city of Saskatoon boarding the train for Buchanan, Saskatchewan, our first stopping-off place. At 8.04 that evening, we reached Buchanan where we were welcomed by many of our prospective pupils and by the kind friend who gave us the hospitality of her home during our stay. The following morning, there being no Catholic hall in the place, we started classes in the Doukabour Hall, which had been rented for our work.

We had 23 pupils all eager to learn. Three of the boys living out on farms, six miles distant, walked to and from class each day. Although these boys were over twelve years of age, they had not yet made their First communion, and were very eager to take advantage of the extra instruction we gave them. The children in this place were almost all Ruthenian and Polish. As is usual with children, they loved to sing. We taught them many hymns and one of the boys brought his violin to class each day and accompanied the singing very well. In fact, the music added much to the singing.

We visited the parents of all the children and distributed holy pictures and medals. On the last day of our stay, we had a picnic which all enjoyed; they also enjoyed having their pictures taken. Sad were the farewells on both sides on the evening that our train steamed out of the station and the little ones waved good-bye. But it was not really "good-bye", for during the coming winter we would continue to teach these children Catechism through the mail.

We next spent a few days in Canora. Here one of our pupils was a young lady studying the Catholic religion who hopes soon to be received into the Church. We are at her service to give her additional instruction.

As we were now to take charge of a girls' camp on Lake Katepwa, near Lebreton for a couple of weeks, we set out for Camp Mathieu. What a surprise when children arrived by the dozen. On completing registration, we had 70 instead of the expected 15! There were enough tents, however; twelve of them were erected. The next two weeks were memorable. Each morning we had prayers in common, then went to the large outdoor pavilion for breakfast. Sister and I supervised all the children's meals before having our own. Soon after breakfast, we had tent inspection and each day gave a prize - an ice cream cone each - to the occupants of the neatest tent. The girls took great interest in this and sometimes it was difficult to determine the winner.

During the day there were activities as bathing, swimming, boating, hiking, tennis and other games, treasure hunts, etc. Some evenings we sat by the Lake and had a sing-song. On a few evenings we had a camp-fire and on one occasion some people drove from Regina to join us at the camp-fire, among them, Judge and Mrs. Zimmer. Some of the girls added to the singing of the latest songs by playing their ukuleles. On that occasion there were 90 people present and all had a wonderful time. The Judge and his wife were especially enthusiastic about their visit to the camp. We were very grateful to two Christian Brothers who remained at camp and helped us in many ways. After the camp closed, we were given an extra week at the cottage to recover our breath before continuing Vacation School work.

When Camp days were over we went to [Ketchikan](#), a small village near the end of a branch line. But this was not our destination; we had to continue fifteen miles further into the country. We now enjoyed the novelty of a ride in a "democrat", drawn by a span of horses. It was well after dark that evening when we arrived at the home of a German family, where we were to stay for the next week. These people were about 25 miles from a Catholic Church.

The children from the farms around walked several miles to class each day, brought lunch and made a day of it. We taught out in the open air; the mosquitoes did their best to make us uncomfortable - but the children did not complain, so how could we? Here we found children from twelve to sixteen years of age who had never been in a church, and, of course, had not yet received their First Communion. They were very willing to learn. They had excellent dispositions.

Incidentally, the boys thoroughly enjoyed their game of baseball at recess each day. May God reward the kindness of the good people who made it possible for us to give instruction to those children, who although they had not much of this world's goods, made us feel that they were glad to give us accommodation, so that we could teach their children catechism. These children, of course, will continue instruction through our lessons by mail.

Sturgis was the next place visited where we had 28 pupils. Lastly, we went to Stenen where we found many Ukrainian and Polish children to whom we gave preliminary instruction and will continue to instruct them by mail.

In some areas, sick people asked that we visit them; we did so. Among these was a prospective convert, a young lady who has been an invalid since childhood. Although she has little chance of recovery, this young lady has a bright and happy outlook on life. Soon, please, God, she will have the grace and joy of Baptism.

We left Stenen on August 20th, spent Sunday in Melville in order to assist at Mass, and after forty-six days "along the highways and byways" of rural Saskatchewan, reached Edmonton on August 22nd. We were glad to be home again, but more glad that we had been privileged to spend the summer helping to instruct some little ones in isolated places. Now we shall prepare for our fall term of teaching "Catechism by Mail."

On July 28, 1927, Sr. Regan received a heartening letter from Fr. Daly, who had been watching their progress with keen interest:

I received your two letters and I am delighted with all the good news they contain. You are certainly doing God's work and I am sure both of you can see with your own eyes the immense field that lies open to our labours. Indeed we are only scratching the soil here and there, in a field where the harvest is so plentiful and the labourers so few.

Your experience at Camp Mathieu will be very valuable, and, I feel sure, as you well say in your letter, that it will help to make the Sisters of Service better known.

Let us all continue to pray with fervour and perseverance for God's blessing on our Institute. It is taking on a rapid growth, but as you know, the higher the tree grows and the more it expands its branches, the deeper the roots must go into the soil. It is the hidden interior life which God alone knows and can estimate. I recommend to you both in a particular manner the retreat of our dear Sisters commencing on August 9th. I will be out to see you sometime in September. I hope then to build you a nice little chapel and a good roomy office.

I wrote yesterday to Monsignor Day about the special prices he had offered us some time ago for his catechetical lessons, for in September, the Sister in the office here will mail to all missionaries in the West a copy of our magazine, the catechetical number, accompanying it with a letter inviting them to send addresses of children who are deprived of the benefit of Christian Doctrine. I hope by that time to send you another Sister to assist you in your work.

On August 16, 1927, Fr. George Fee, CSsR, of Yorkton, Saskatchewan wrote to the Sisters while they were at Sturgis:

Dear Sisters:

As your great work in my poor missions is coming to a close, I wish to thank you sincerely for the good work you have done. I am sure you will go back to Edmonton with your hearts filled with gratitude to God.

I am very sorry that I could not make things more convenient for you, and especially that I did not give you Mass and Communion oftener.

Saturday, August 20th, the time that Fr. Daly, C.Ss.R, appointed for your return home, has arrived. You may, therefore, return home any time now.

Out of a feeling of personal gratitude for your work, I will make you a donation when the opportunity arrives. God bless you.

Under Fr. Daly's name, the Sisters sent out an informative letter to the Western rural pastors in September 1927, explaining catechism by mail:

Reverend and dear Father:

Among the missionary activities of the S.O.S. is one which, we are sure, will interest you. For over a year, the Sisters have been conducting a correspondence course in Catechism for children who live in the outlying districts of our Western Mission Field and have not the opportunity of receiving the benefit of religious instruction.

From their house in Edmonton, the Sisters send out to hundreds of children simple lessons in catechism. These are accompanied by a series of questions which the children answer by letter and which the Sisters check. The course followed is that of Msgr. Day, V.G., of Helena, Montana specially composed for the purpose. At the approach of the great feasts of the Liturgical Year, special letters are sent out to the pupils explaining the mysteries celebrated by the Church. Catholic literature is also mailed to the parents.

The experience of the past year proves that a large number of the children become highly interested. This is evidenced by their letters. The parents also reap a great religious benefit from this correspondence as they are the ones to whom the children go for explanation of their lessons. It recalls to their minds the lessons of their youth.

We are perfectly aware of the weakness and insufficiency of this means for the thorough instruction of our Catholic children, but in the present circumstances, it is a help to the family. It establishes and keeps for the time being a contact with the Church, her teaching and her authority.

If this apostolic activity of our Sisters appeals to you, and if you would find it useful for the "lambs" of your scattered flock, the only thing we ask you to do is to send to the Sisters in Edmonton, the names and addresses of Catholics who live far from the Church and whose children are in need of catechetical instruction. The Sisters will immediately correspond with them and try to get them interested in their catechetical correspondence course.

Hoping that this little effort of ours will interest you and be of some help to the souls committed to your pastoral care, I remain,

Yours fraternally,
G. Daly, C.Ss.R.

On October 29, 1927, in acknowledging a letter from Sr. Regan, who reported that the invitation letter to western pastors yielded an increased enrolment for correspondence lessons, Fr. Daly replied, offering a few suggestions to add interest to the correspondence work:

Just a line to acknowledge your letter of recent date. The roster of your catechetical pupils is certainly growing by leaps and bounds.

I believe, my dear child, that you have in hand now, one of the most important works of

the S.O.S. Often pray to the Holy Spirit to enlighten you in this endeavour. We hope to send you Sr. Smith in the latter part of November. She will be of great help to you, I know.

Sometime before Advent, I suggest that it would be a good idea to get out a little letter to the children explaining the meaning of this sacred time and suggesting some little devotion or prayer. You could also do the same before the Feast of Christmas explaining the mystery of the Crib; also of the Epiphany and of the Holy Name for the Feast of the Circumcision.

Another suggestion I wish to make is a competition between your children. This you can work out with Sisters Smith and Donnelly and see what could be done.

Re. the \$100.00 from the Church Extension, you can continue to place it under "special" as in your last financial report.

We are moving today into our new novitiate; this means a great step forward in the establishment. Pray to God for His blessing on our new home."

The Sisters followed the suggestions and began the practice of sending letters throughout the year to explain the various feasts of the Church. These letters which added interest to the lessons continued as well as the contests for the juniors and seniors as a helpful supplement to the lessons. The following letter, dated November 20th, 1927, is typical of those to explain the liturgies of the Church year and to suggest some practical ways to prepare for and to celebrate them:

Dear Parents and children:

You know that we always prepare for a special event. For a birthday party, everything must be made ready for the party and during the time we are preparing for the party, we are looking forward to it.

Now, Christmas Day is a great "Party Day"; it is the birthday of the Infant Jesus, and He is the King of Heaven! This is why we are so happy, receive presents and many goodies on Christmas Day. What about our preparation for this great feast? Surely we must prepare our souls so that they will be pleasing to the Infant Jesus on His birthday!

Advent is the time that we prepare for Christmas. The word "Advent" means "coming". Advent always begins four weeks before Christmas. This year, it starts on the 27th of this month (November). The Advent Season represents the time the people looked forward to the coming of the Saviour, Jesus Christ. They spoke of Him as the "Desired of Nations". They knew that He was to be the Saviour of the world promised by God, and that through Him the gates of Heaven would be re-opened. You remember that Heaven had been closed against us by the sin of our First Parents.

If we wish to be truly happy at Christmas, we make some preparation during Advent for the coming of the Infant Jesus on Christmas morning. For example - say an extra Hail Mary each day, or the little prayer, "My Jesus Mercy," rise the very moment Mother calls in the morning; try to make someone around you happy; do a kind act each day - in fact - any little good work that you think will be pleasing to God.

Both junior and senior students were especially interested in the contests which consisted in colouring outlines of Scripture pictures, and answering puzzles and quizzes. The returns were so numerous that the Sisters called for help in deciding the winners and awarding the prizes. They were grateful to the Girls of the Business Club for coming to their rescue and taking charge of judging and deciding the winners.

Visits by Fr. Murray and Apostolic Delegate

Fr. Gerald Murray, CSsR, the newly-appointed Provincial Superior of the Redemptorists, made

a visit on November 1 and returned the following day to celebrate three masses in the Sisters' chapel on All Souls Day.

Apostolic Delegate Andrea Cassulo arrived to visit Archbishop O'Leary, who accompanied his guest to the Sisters of Service on November 4. During a special interview with the apostolic delegate, the Sisters demonstrated their correspondence method of sending Christ's message to children who were not able to attend a Catholic school. His Excellency was greatly impressed, especially on hearing that 500 new names of prairie children had been added during the past month. He examined some of the lessons and questions, also the card index record. The Archbishop told the Apostolic Delegate that the Sisters were the only community engaged in this particular kind of work. The cardinal's secretary remarked that what we were doing was "truly American!" Monsignor Blair of Catholic extension society also was part of the tour.

The Sisters decided to tell the children that the Apostolic Delegate had sent a special blessing to each of them. On November 12, 1927, a general letter was sent:

Dear Children;

His Excellency, the Apostolic Delegate to Canada, was in Edmonton this week. He is Most Reverend Andrea Cassulo, whom our Holy Father, the Pope, has sent out to Canada to learn all about our great country so that he may assist our Holy Father in the government of the Catholic Church in Canada.

While he was here, we showed him our lessons in catechism, and explained to him how Catechism is taught through the mail. He was very much interested and pleased. He gave his blessing upon our work.

He also said that he wished to give his blessing to each one of our Catechism pupils, individually. So we promised to send a letter that you have received the Blessing of His Excellency, the Apostolic Delegate. Now, as a token of thanks, would you like to say one Hail Mary for him.

SISTERS OF SERVICE

Here is one of the responses to this request from a little girl at Tod Creek, Alberta:

Dear Sisters:

I am sending my answers to lesson four and hope they will be better than last time. These are some of the things I am going to try to do this Advent to please the Infant Jesus: Say at least an extra Hail Mary and "My Jesus Mercy" every day.

I'm also going to work harder at my studies and at home, and try hard to learn my part for our Christmas Concert, all for the Infant Jesus. I will try to make other people happy too by doing one kind act each day and more if I can.

I have just read the letter saying that His Excellency, the Apostolic Delegate, was in Edmonton last week, I was very happy to receive his blessing, and I assure you that as soon as I read the letter, I said a Hail Mary for him.

Sister, I look forward to receiving lesson five soon and I hope to get better results in this lesson I am sending.

Yours sincerely,
Mary Evans

In mid-December 1927, Sr. Monica Meade of the Montreal hostel was appointed as Superior, replacing Sr. Regan, who returned to Toronto to become the community's first Sister General.

INITIATIVES AND GROWTH IN EDMONTON, 1928

The year started ominously when the city gas main broke on January 2. All gas was shut off and residents were asked to turn off the main switch and to wait and listen for the city siren for the signal to turn on the gas switch. The Sisters used their ingenuity by getting some hot water for hot water bags by means of an electric toaster. These bags plus some comforters kept them from freezing. Added to this difficulty was the accidental spilling of a bottle of water on the kitchen floor which turned it into a first class skating rink. Work was at a standstill as the Sisters used all their energy in trying to keep from freezing.

News Bulletin

Each succeeding Sister at the catechetical correspondence school used her talents and initiative to add something new to make the correspondence service more alive and meaningful. In 1928, one of Sr. Meade's contributions was initiating a monthly news bulletin or magazine as a means of forming and promoting greater unity among the correspondence families. Sister used this bulletin to keep families informed on Church events, and to explain and encourage the recitation of the rosary and other prayers. She also published original poems sent in by the students and encouraged them to send news stories of the families. There was also a column for questions and answers. This magazine was mimeographed by the Sisters and a copy sent to each family. The number of appreciative letters sent to the editor was a proof of the popularity of this little news bulletin.

CWL Praised in Report

In the spring of 1928, the CWL asked Sr. Monica Meade to present a report about the correspondence work the annual CWL meeting on April 21, 1928. Sr. Meade praised the CWL members and expressed appreciation for the continued generous support and collaboration, not only with finances, but also with contributions of Catholic literature, provisions, office assistance and transportation.

Report of the Sisters of Service: April 1, 1927 – March 31, 1928

On the walls of our little convent here, we have a large map of Canada, and on this map stretching from the valleys of British Columbia to about 100 miles east of Winnipeg, we have little coloured stick-pins, each pin representing a place where we are teaching children by our system of "Catechism by Mail." People often ask what the Sisters of Service are doing in Edmonton. When we tell them we are instructing children through the mail, some look politely interested, even a little skeptical; they likely wonder why we are not doing something - in their view - more useful.

I would like to bring these people to our convent, have them stand in front of this map and say to them in the memorable words of Lord Salisbury, "LOOK AT BIG MAPS. Look at this great West of ours; think of the number of children living on these prairies, who year by year grow up knowing so little of their religion that it means little to them. It is to these children that we, in our humble way, are trying to bring the truths of our Holy Faith."

We are now teaching between 1,200 and 1,300 of these children regularly. Lessons in catechism are sent out to them with a set of questions which they answer and return to us for correction. During the past year, we sent out 3,225 of these lessons, and 2,833 were returned to us for correction.

Before special feast days such as Easter and Christmas, we send out general letters to

help families to celebrate these days. This last year, we sent out 2524 general letters accompanied by appropriate holy pictures. We also wrote 480 personal letters to answer questions or give advice when necessary.

In order to add and sustain interest, we have organized competitions for which we give prizes. These contests are very popular; we usually have several hundred entrants. Our latest effort to increase interest is a little monthly newsletter which we print on the mimeograph and send to all families. This newsletter is only in its second month; already many letters from parents and children testify that it is greatly appreciated. Another feature of our work is the mailing of Catholic literature to families in rural areas. During this past year, we sent out 5,107 Catholic magazines and 4,489 Catholic papers. We consider this a very important aspect of our work.

During the months of July and August of last year, Sisters F. Regan and Rodgers, were invited to go out on a catechetical tour in Saskatchewan. They visited for several days at: Buchanan, Canora, Ketchen, Sturgis and Stenen. These Sisters spent almost all day teaching the children their catechism and instructing the people. The same two Sisters also spent three weeks at Lebret taking charge of a girls' summer camp.

Perhaps a word concerning our financial standing may not be out of place here. Some may wonder how we spend the money which is so kindly donated to us by the members of the C.W.L. All have a right to know. The average cost of the catechism lessons we send out amounts to between \$700.00 and \$800.00 a year. This amount will steadily increase as we open up new fields for the lessons. The cost of postage per month is usually between \$25.00 and \$30.00 and the cost of preparing and mailing our monthly Newsletter is \$8.50. There are also many other incidental expenses connected with the work such as the purchase of holy pictures, prizes, etc.

The results of our work, except in a few cases, are hidden, but we feel assured that the good accomplished is more far-reaching than we shall ever know. In the name of all the parents and children we are teaching, therefore, we wish to thank all you members of the Catholic Women's League for your great cooperation in our work. Were it not for your untiring assistance, we should have found it very hard to carry on to the extent we have been doing. You may not fully realize the value of your efforts in helping us with our work. I assure you that those who have been involved intimately; who have read the many letters received from parents do know the full extent of the good you are doing.

We are grateful for the total amount of \$583.61 sent to us by the Edmonton sub-division of the Catholic Women's League from May 1927 to March 1928. Only recently, we also received the proceeds of last Sunday's tag day, \$135.65.

These figures are eloquent and need no comment, so I shall now conclude with once more extending to each of you our most sincere and heartfelt thanks. If our Blessed Lord has promised an eternal reward to those who give a cup of cold water in His name, how much more will His approval be merited by those who have made it possible for so many of His little ones to be brought to a knowledge and love of His Holy Name? We are sure that your reward will be exceeding great.

Sr. Monica Meade

On April 11, 1928, Sr. Meade continued the practice of informing Archbishop McNeil of the progress of the correspondence work:

Your Grace:

Father Daly has been with us for the last week and he thought you would be interested to hear a little of what we are doing out here. On the wall in front of me as I write, there is a large map of Canada and all over the four Western Provinces and parts of Western Ontario as well, we have stuck pins. Each of these pins indicates a place where we are

teaching "Catechism by Mail." There are in all about 150 pins. These pins stretch right across from the valleys of British Columbia to about 100 miles east of Winnipeg. We are now teaching about 1,200 children and quite a few adults. Last month, we corrected 569 lessons sent in by the children and mailed 1117 Catholic Magazines and Newspapers our students and other families on our mailing list.

Also, last month, we sent out Circular Letters to families explaining the meaning of Lent. We asked them to write back to us telling about their understanding of Lent, and how they would suggest making this season a holy one. We received nearly 200 letters in reply and some are still coming in.

The archbishop responded with the suggestion that Sr. Meade contribute to the Catholic Students Mission Crusade magazine (CSMC). In a letter dated May 27, 1928, Sr. Meade replied that she would like to see a copy of the Students' Crusade Magazine before making a commitment to it:

Your Grace:

I feel that I owe you an apology for my long delay in answering your kind letter of some weeks ago.

Concerning the paper published by the Students' Mission Crusade, I would be very glad to contribute to it, and I think that it would be a good means of fostering interest in the Home Missions. I would, however, like to see the nature of their publication before sending in any contribution. I talked the matter over with Fr. Daly, and he has, no doubt, spoken to you about it by this time.

We receive a large variety of magazines and papers for distribution. In my experience, the papers such as China, the Canadian and American Messengers and Columbia are most popular. A very large percentage of families on our mailing list are of foreign extraction. In order to interest them, we need something simple. Because quite a few of the older generation speak little English, they would greatly appreciate receiving publications in German, Italian, Polish and Ukrainian. The non-Catholic sects are very zealous in distributing such publications. We should like to do likewise.

Our little "News Bulletin" which I print on the mimeograph, and distribute monthly has met with a hearty response. I feel that, in time, it could become a great factor for good.

I wonder if you have read of the latest activity of the Church of England in the Mission Field! They have sent several parties of Missioners who are to travel through the rural districts of British Columbia and Alberta. Their mode of transit is the automobile, and they will be working among our people during the next four months. They too, have organized a system of "Catechism by Mail" somewhat similar to ours, but to date, I am unable to get correct information about it. Their revenue, I believe comes direct from England. They have certainly managed to collect a very large sum.

With many thanks for your kind continued interest in our work.

Very respectfully,
Sr. M.L. Meade

Religious Vacation Schools in Manitoba, 1928

In 1928 when the Edmonton Sisters received a request from rural Manitoba, Sr. Catherine Donnelly, who was teaching in Vilna, accepted the request for a month of teaching religion. In April 1929 issue of *The Field at Home*, she wrote a report of the summer tour in rural Manitoba:

It came, seemingly by accident, the opportunity of spending a month at an interesting

place in Manitoba. A week in Minnedosa was first. One hospitable family offered me a home while there. A Catholic woman in town gave generously of her time every day to help teach the smaller children. By means of a car loaned by the priest who visits these missions, we were able to get around to all the Catholic families and all Ukrainian and Polish children were brought into the classes. After a couple of days, the children were quite enthusiastic.

One must cover the ground rapidly when there is only a week to prepare twenty-four children for Confession and Confirmation. We had sessions before noon, afternoon and evening, and one or two daily trips with the car packed full of children. We sometimes gave lessons in the country where we parked in some delightful spot and discovered that the beauties of nature are powerful with children and that Catechism lessons are more meaningful when given among the flowers and trees. During recesses we all picked flowers and berries.

At the end of the week, I went to Neepawa, a town eighteen miles east. There was a trip to Rivers for Mass on Sunday through an interesting variety of scenery; then work began at Neepawa on Monday morning. For the first few days, few attended the classes. It required repeated visits to some of the homes to get some children to start, and there was little encouragement from some parents. Finally, when they did start, they enjoyed the singing and were warmly welcomed by the other children; soon there was a splendid voluntary attendance.

The small but beautiful church at Neepawa is remarkably well taken care of. Among the English-speaking members, there is a great spirit of helpfulness and hospitality where all Catholics were made to feel welcome. Fourteen miles east is the village of Arden, we took an afternoon to motor there and saw the Catholic families. We arranged with one among them to instruct children as much as possible, and then have all the Catholics come to the church on Confirmation Sunday.

The tiny church at Russell is more recently built. ... It was a similar experience there in getting around to the homes and working up an interest among the children, and five days only to get so much done. It was a hot week, too, just preceding August 12 when the Archbishop was due to administer Confirmation. What a boon the car was that week!

This class at Russell became quite large; there were Polish, Ukrainians and several Indians. Besides, there was a number of adults and two converts for instruction, also a high school boy and a Negro boxer.

Those were rather strenuous days but keenly interesting. The children had no catechisms so it was necessary to spend as much time as possible in class. Some had had no instruction whatever. The Sign of the Cross, the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments were quite new to them. Sessions from nine till twelve, and from one-thirty till four and evenings given to adults made the day's program; there was excellent attendance on the part of all who were preparing for the Sacraments. On Sunday there were a dozen children for First Communion and twenty-one for Confirmation.

A week later, His Grace, Archbishop Sinnott, visited Neepawa and Minnedosa. In the meantime, the teaching had been splendidly kept up by the generous women who had consented to take charge of the children. Bible students began to work zealously to get the Ukrainian children away from the Catholic Church and did manage to get two children into their house and to keep them away from the Confirmation classes. Their efforts with the others were unsuccessful. When Sunday came, there was a remarkable demonstration of Catholic Faith and devotion.

Certain things I saw that month left a deep impression. What power there is when Catholics unite in a worthy cause! What possibilities there are in children, no matter of what nationality! They respond to sympathetic encouragement in a very marvellous way. There must be hundreds of Catholic children in every Western province who get little of

no religious training.

Surrounded by the rank growth of weeds, I saw some exquisite cultivated flowers. It was the most glorious thing I saw: unselfishness, intelligence, culture and true piety. Among the many Catholic children of the East whom I have known well, I can truly say I have never seen any with a greater share of these charming qualities than had some children I taught this summer in Manitoba. The West is full of such flowers!

Altogether, it was a delightful vacation for me, a holiday of thrilling adventure, full of inspiration - something worth remembering always.

During Sr. Donnelly's catechetical tour, Mother Othilia visited the Edmonton Sisters for the last time as their Superior. During the past six years at the request of Archbishop McNeil, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto loaned Mother Lidwina (1922-1926) and Mother Othilia (1926-1928) to guide the first steps of the Sisters of Service. Archbishop McNeil, the ecclesiastical Superior, had decided the Sisters of Service to administer themselves. Under a decree, issued on May 19, 1928, Sr. Florence Regan was appointed as Sister General. Two councillors were also appointed for a three-year term.

The positive happenings through 1928 exceeded the shadows or negative events. During the summer, several renovations were made to the house: The attic, hitherto unfinished, was completed; a window added and transformed into a much-needed storeroom. The cellar floor was cemented, cupboards were made for laundry supplies, and a wringer was added to the washtub. Until then, all clothing including sheets, had been wrung out by hand, a colossal task for little Sister Mary Bridget Burke, who had patiently and heroically performed this task without complaint.

Anne Donnelly, president of the Business Girls' Club, remained, not only a faithful collaborator in the work, but also, an enthusiastic promoter. Through her enthusiasm, she obtained other helpers to cooperate with the Sisters. In June, the CWL held another successful shower. This stocked the pantry shelves and gave the Sisters a good start in the fall.

Another happy event of 1928 was the visit of Archbishop Henry O'Leary of Edmonton and his brother, Bishop Louis O'Leary of Charlottetown. The latter was keenly interested in all aspects of the correspondence work and took notes for reference.

In the late spring of 1928, Archbishop O'Leary of Edmonton visited the Toronto novitiate, speaking in glowing terms of the beauties and glories of Alberta and suggesting that the novices pray to be sent there. He quipped: "When people in Alberta went to heaven, they had to be kept in special cages. Why? Because otherwise they would dash back to Alberta!" Before leaving, he said his great wish was that the novitiate would soon be filled to capacity. He promised to take the first thousand recruits and place them "pronto."

Fully aware that the CWL had pledged to support the Sisters' endeavours and wishing to keep the members reminded of this fact, Fr. Daly wrote to Archbishop O'Leary on June 15, 1928.

Enclosed you will find an article which I thought you would like to see. I was hoping to meet you in Toronto, but missed you by a day or so. I hope I shall have this pleasure in Calgary at the CWL Convention.

In the meantime, may I ask you to drop a word into the ear of the CWL President, Mrs. Duggan, about the prospective new National Convener for the SOS. I hope that the executive will see fit to appoint Mrs. Heenan, wife of the Honourable Peter Heenan. She is an active CWL member of Ottawa. Her personality and aggressiveness would be an

asset in her role as SOS Convener. Also, I feel sure that this lady would accept this position. At all event, I will talk the matter over with you at the Convention and tell you of my plans.

You will be glad to hear that next Sunday the Sisters of Service are getting on their own feet. Sister Florence Regan will be Sr. General, Sr. Guest, Mistress of Novices; Srs. Schenck and Egan, councillors. So you see, the work is progressing. I will also have a memorandum on Immigration to submit to Your Grace.

Sr. Meade launches YMCK

In researching the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade (CSMC) to fulfill a promise to Archbishop McNeil, Sr. Meade decided to start a similar organization among the correspondence students. The Catholic Students' Mission Crusade was well explained in the Catholic publication of *America* on July 6, 1928:

Of all the movements inaugurated of late to help the mission fields of the Church, there is none more promising, we believe, than the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade. This movement among our educated youth is bound to influence them. Bishop Bechman of Lincoln, Nebraska, outlined at the last convention in Washington the ideal that dominates the Crusade.

It is not a collecting agency. Its aim is educational, to train the minds and hearts of the Catholic Youth to the Church's great mission vocation, her mission methods and her many mission needs, to inspire them to steady and fervent prayer for all missionaries, and especially for their own flesh and blood who are toiling in the mission field. This movement was not handed down from above, but organized from below, got its inspiration and its driving power from Catholic youth itself and has carried on and grown through the spontaneous energy of Catholic youth."

In October 1928, Sr. Meade formed the Society of Young Missionaries of Christ the King (YMCK) patterned after the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade, which was flourishing in many Catholic schools at that time. In the 1920s, many rural families were isolated due to poor connecting roads. It was difficult, if not impossible, for children to belong to such organizations as Brownies, Girl Guides or Scouts which were available to city children. Sr. Meade reasoned that a special club and a distinctive badge for the correspondence students would be a means of satisfying this desire. Besides giving them a sense of belonging through membership; a badge would identify them as members. The enthusiastic demand for application forms and badges was a sign of the future success of this club. An article by Sr. Meade in July 1929 issue of *The Field at Home* explained the YMCK:

... Last October, the Society of the Young Missionaries of Christ the King was established with its headquarters at the Sisters of Service in Edmonton. The object of this society is to instill into the minds of our Catholic youth, boys and girls scattered throughout the Western Provinces, the real Catholic spirit of loyalty to Christ the King, and Holy Mother Church. Its rules are few and simple and specially adapted to conditions existing in the West.

Wherever possible, centres will be formed and a captain chosen. The captain may be either a boy or girl. Under the leadership of this appointed or elected captain, the children will meet together to study their religion or engage in other activities. In the West, several flourishing centres have already been formed where some Young Missionaries have pledged their loyalty to Christ, their King. These Young Missionaries wear a distinctive badge, and have their own hymn which is sung at meetings.

As the Knights of old fought for their king and country, so we, too, will gather under the banner of our King, Christ, and pledge to Him our service and our loyalty.

We will always and at all times be proud of our Faith and strong upholders of the Catholic Church, and as missionaries are sent to bring the Word of God to those who know it not, so we, too, will be carriers of the Word of God wherever we go. To do this, we must know our religion, so as to be able to help and inspire others with love and respect for our Holy Faith.

A Young Missionary must be pure in thought, word and action, so as to be a living example of what a young Catholic should be:

1. The patrons of our Society shall be Christ the King His Blessed Mother, St. Gabriel and the Little Flower.

2. A Young Missionary will make the following little offering on rising:

My God, I offer you this day,
All I shall think or do or say,
Uniting it with what was done
On earth, by Jesus Christ, your Son.

Before going to bed, the Young Missionary will say three Hail Mary's to the Immaculate Mother to ask her to keep all Young Missionaries pure and spotless for her Divine Son.

3. A Young Missionary will try to learn all possible about our Holy Religion so as to be able to help others.

4. A Young Missionary will try to bring others to the love and knowledge of our Faith, especially those Catholics who are not practising their religion.

5. A Young Missionary should never use or listen to foul or bad language. If others use it, show by your manner that you do not approve, and they will very soon stop using it in your presence.

6. A young Missionary should never lose an opportunity of going to Mass and Holy Communion.

7. A Young Missionary must be a loyal and true member of the Church on every occasion.

Our motto: "All for Thee, O Christ the King." ...

The Young Missionaries were encouraged to try to attract other Catholic children to take catechism lessons. In a few months through their efforts, almost 100 new names were added to the correspondence list.

Support of the Catholic Church Extension Society

During the years since founding in 1908 to support of the Home Missions, this society provided funds to build hundreds of mission chapels and survival allowance supported hundreds of missionary priests and Sisters. For the Sisters of Service, the society launched an appeal to Eastern Canadians for funds through the *Catholic Register* in July and October 1924. The society reminded readers it was the duty of those who enjoy fully the blessings of the Church to come to the assistance of those, particularly immigrants, who are deprived of them.

Furthermore, as Canadian citizens, they should be aware that the preservation of the religion of the immigrant is our best contribution to Canadian citizenship.

On April 4, 1929, as a means of retaining the interest of the Catholic Church Extension Society in the Sisters' correspondence work, Fr. Daly sent a report to each board members of president Monsignor J.J. Blair; Peterborough Bishop. Michael O'Brien and Hamilton Bishop J.T. McNally.

Report of the Catechetical Correspondence course, April 1928-1929

The Sisters of Service are now in touch with almost 2,000 children of 16 different nationalities.

The figures for the year are:

Lessons corrected	3579
Lessons sent	3240
Letters written	491
Magazines remailed	7147
Papers remailed	2619
Circular letters	1628
Bulletins, monthly	2787
New families added	153

A copy of an article written for *The Field at Home* by Sr. Monica Meade, who was in charge of the catechetical work during the past year:

In reality, we are touching only the fringe of this immense field. There is no limit to its growth and expansion. As the work expands, our financial resources will have to grow likewise. The opening of the Edmonton Hostel has deprived our Catechetical work of the revenue that came to it from the C.W.L. of the Archdiocese of Edmonton. The only assured revenue on which we can now depend is the monthly cheque of Mr. Frank O'Connor, Toronto. We are wondering if Extension Society could supplement our meagre budget a little.

As the catechetical work during the summer is carried on by weekly courses given here and there personally by the Sisters, the need of a Ford car is becoming imperative. I may mention that the Protestant Churches have now nine caravans at work in the outlying districts of our Western Provinces and naturally come into close contact with a great number of our people. The report of this work appeared in the *Toronto Globe* of March 26, 1929. Suffice to quote these words of the report: We find the new-comers from Europe eager to learn.

An excerpt of an article in *The Globe and Mail* published on March 26, 1929:

Nine caravans covering an average of 2,000 miles each, travelled through the northern parts of the Prairie Provinces last summer. Their object was the starting of Sunday Schools among the settlements of New Canadians, where the children were receiving no religious training. This work was described by Miss Dorothy Scott, the speaker at the meeting of the Protestant Women's Federation held at the Heliconian Club, yesterday. (March 24, 1929).

Miss Scott explained that the caravans work in connection with the "Sunday School by Post" begun by Bishop Lloyd in 1907. The movement has grown until now 20,000 people through the West are receiving literature and papers which enable them to carry on their own schools where there is no church, sometimes in schoolhouses and sometimes in the homes. Prizes are awarded for faithful study.

The caravans, each manned by two girls, a driver and a teacher, go through the country holding meetings and doing personal visiting to enroll members in the Sunday School by Post.

The interesting gypsy life led by the caravan workers was described by the speaker, who also told of a few of the pioneers she had met in her journeying last summer. One woman had been saving for seven years to buy an oilcloth for her table; a little girl had never seen a picture of Jesus. She said she had found the new-comers from Europe very eager to learn.

CONTINUED GROWTH IN EDMONTON, 1929

From 1926 until 1930, the Canadian government agencies welcomed immigrants, mostly from Central Europe as they came to Western Canada. A CPR progress report of February 1929 stated: "Immigration to Canada during the first eight months of 1928 totalled 138,598 which was an increase of 11%. In addition, 25,801 Canadians returned to the United States. This migration to Canada was the greatest since 1913 when Canada had welcomed 402,432 immigrants."

Early in 1929, it was evident that changes in Edmonton were in the offing. Archbishop O'Leary was concerned that many young working women arriving in Edmonton were now among the new immigrants from Europe. He knew that some unscrupulous employers were exploiting these girls with unfair wages. Protection, assistance and support were needed. Because there was no government or other agency set up to assist these immigrants, the archbishop turned to with Fr. Daly, who approached CWL president Margaret Duggan. The CWL responded with a promised of support of the women's hostel, which opened May 1929. Sr. Meade was destined to be the Superior of the new residence/hostel.

Sr. Alice Walsh appointed to Correspondence School

The news of two appointments cheered the Edmonton Sisters. Sr. Alice Walsh, a teacher, arrived with Sr. Teresa Chisholm, the new Superior, on February 22. Sister General Florence Regan accompanied the Sisters as part of her first official Visitation to the community's missions. Sr. Walsh soon had a good grasp of this apostolate and wrote in the July 1929 issue *The Field at Home*:

Saturday, in our Catechetical Centre, Edmonton, is dedicated, among other things, to the remailing of Catholic papers and magazines to our Brothers and Sisters in the Faith scattered over the vast territories of our Western Provinces.

There is a big difference between mailing a religious magazine and remailing it. The former is a cold matter of dollars and addresses. The latter is brimful of romance and human interest.

As soon as the lessons are corrected and indexed on Friday, the Sisters wend their way to the east side of the cellar where lies a trunk in which reposes the paper, brown, green and otherwise. Back to the office they go, cut it into strips, and arrange in piles to be addressed.

On Saturday morning, two Sisters enter the office prepared to "fire a barrage" of Catholic periodicals for Christ the King. The first step in this process is to descend fifteen steps to the "magazine room." This room with its fascinating variety of magazines, is in my view, the most interesting one in the house.

As a matter of fact, the magazine room, so-called, is a cellar, properly called, but in these days when skimmed milk masquerades as cream; when an undertaker becomes a mortician, and a barber a tonsorial artist, why cannot a basement become a magazine room, particularly when there are magazines in it! But this is a digression.

Now we see the two ascending the stairs loaded with Catholic literature. Back at the office desk, Sr. Chisholm takes the first slip and reads the name, "Mrs. X ... Oh, she likes stories she can read aloud to the family. We'll send her a Canadian Messenger, an Ave Maria and a Far East. Mr. Z ... German, Oh Sister, isn't it fortunate we have all those German magazines; he will enjoy them so much! Mr. M ... a note after his name reads "likes serious reading". We'll include a Columbia and a Commonweal in his bundle.

Now, Mrs. K ... convert. Thus we have a personal interest in every family to whom we mail literature, and we try as far as possible to send to them matter most suited to their needs.

The bundles are addressed and stamped. There is a ring at the door and two husky young lads from St. Alphonsus School come in on tip-toe, if you please. Soon the boys have the mailbags overflowing with bundles on their wagon, and are off to the post office. From here the bundles will wing their way o'er miles of space to bring joy and comfort to the lonely settler. Who can tell in how many souls the Light of Faith is kept burning by this contact with the Church? May God bless all the friends who contribute to this work! The good they accomplish is untold.

Summer Religious Vacation Schools held in three provinces

The correspondence teachers looked forward to meeting some of their pupils during the summer days. In fact, in time, they began to consider their fall and winter correction work as an extension of their summer teaching. In summer, they hoped to sow the seed of interest in Jesus. This seed was watered and nurtured later through catechism by mail, and where possible, by activities in Sunday schools and study clubs. Summer schools served to awaken the children's interest and curiosity about God's love for them and the desire to know more about their religion.

The Sisters kept in mind Archbishop O'Leary's directive to always consult the pastors concerning summer work in their parishes and missions. Also as a means of planning the summer program, the Sisters sent a special general letter to the rural pastors asking if they would like to have Sisters for summer work and which dates and alternate dates they preferred. Through this information, the Sisters arranged a schedule by the end of May.

For the summer of 1929, catechetical schools were planned for Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The two teaching Sisters in Edmonton were joined by Sr. Madge Barton, who had been preparing for teaching, was paired with Sr. Chisholm to teach children around the Clyde missions under Fr. Patrick Sullivan.

The accounts written by the Sisters in each province provided a glimpse into pioneer life of the early settlers was like in the late 1920s. Sr. Barton recounted her first summer of travelling of teaching in the religious vacation schools in *The Field at Home* in the October 1929 issue:

... To know something of our great Canadian West, one must travel over its open spaces and meet its people - the hardy homesteaders, the backbone of the West. Such a privilege was ours during this summer of 1929. Leaving Edmonton July 26, Sr. Teresa Chisholm, and I, Sr. Madge Barton, started along the northern trail and were soon among the rolling hills of Alberta. On our way, we passed many Indian pilgrims returning from their annual pilgrimage to Lac Ste Anne.

Our first town, Tawatinaw, lay in a valley. There was one grain elevator and very few dwellings in sight. We were soon to learn that the farms lay in diverse directions, three, five, seven, ten miles apart. Our first need was to get acquainted with the people. But how to do this with only "shank's mare" was a problem. As on similar occasions throughout the summer, Providence provided.

One bright willing fourteen year old girl, Alberta, of a good French-Canadian family, volunteered to take us around with a horse and buggy. She was an ideal chauffeur who knew all the Catholic families around the countryside. I don't know what we would have done without her. Some people live at great distances. We travel three, five, and eight miles over round-about bumpy and narrow trails; we were mighty grateful for her help!

How capable she was! We marvelled at her great wealth of information in country matters. Over rough winding trails we rattled along in the buggy, visiting Bohemian, Ukrainian, Polish, Flemish, French-Canadian and Irish settlers. Most families received us kindly, but some seemed rather dubious. They thought we were on a begging expedition, 'Oh, Sisters, my children don't know any catechism and I am not able to teach them,' was the cry of one poor mother of eight. With a little immediate assistance and a promise of further help through our Religion by Correspondence, we left her consoled.

Far up on a hill overlooking a chain of lakes dwelt a Flemish family, six miles from church several miles from neighbours. Theirs was a sad case. The mother had died quite suddenly, leaving the father and six children, the eldest only eleven. Living in such an isolated place, they found it difficult to get anyone to help them with their housework; consequently, the father was obliged to come in from his hard work of clearing land in order to prepare the meals. We took the time to visit the father out in the fields and we were glad we did. Despite all difficulties, the Faith was still strong in this home.

After each day's visiting, we were glad to get "home" to our little sacristy room behind the altar of the old log church. Here we had two "shakedown" beds. There were no locks on the doors. We hung our rosaries over the door latches and put our trust in God. It was great to have a quiet place to say our prayers.

After a few days of visiting these scattered homes, we prepared to teach the children at the church and to prepare them for the sacraments. Because they lived at such great distances from the church, we hardly dared to hope that many children would attend our classes. We were rewarded beyond all expectation by the large numbers that did come. Twenty-five arrived the first day - some on horseback, some in wagons; many walked several miles. It was a privilege and a pleasure to teach these children. Their minds were very receptive to religious instruction. They were easily influenced for good. Their loving devotion to our Lord and His Blessed Mother was shown by their interest in bringing beautiful flowers to decorate the little shrine which we had erected.

In the next district we visited, the people were even more scattered. Haying was in progress so that the older children were needed at home to help. Nevertheless, they took turns in coming to catechism for instruction. These children were eager to learn and asked many questions. Most people in this district were Ukrainians. We admired the courage and pluck of these new Canadians whose first days had been exceptionally difficult as they endeavoured to carve homes for themselves out of the wilderness. That they had succeeded was evident from the good farms they now possessed.

As usual, we closed our instructions here with the children receiving First Holy Communion, being received as Children of Mary, and also being enrolled in the Scapular of our Blessed Mother. While decorating the church on the evening previous to the "great day", we secured the assistance of a "strong-armed" bachelor who told us he had not been to church for over twenty years. Our conversation with him apparently availed nothing. We thanked him for his gracious help and gave him a miraculous medal trusting to our Lady to obtain the rest. This is one of many sad cases - a man who retired to the backwoods when no priest was available and now seems to have no use for religion. His kindness to us and to others are signs of hope!

Our next "one-store" town did not have even a church. An entertainment hall made of logs, the common property of all was the scene of the monthly Mass. Some of the children there had never seen the inside of a church. The light of Faith thank God, was in no way extinguished. Our hearts went out to these dear ones. While trying to give some help in spiritual matters to these good people, we learned many valuable lessons from them ourselves. ...

Summer Schools in Saskatchewan, 1929

In the 1920s, the Redemptorist Fathers of St. Gerard's parish in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, provided pastoral care of some of the poorest, scattered missions in that province. In the spring of 1929, Fr. George Fee, CSsR, of the Yorkton Redemptorist community wrote to Fr. Daly, enclosing a schedule for the two Sisters assigned for summer school work in the Yorkton missions. One marvels at the detailed planning contained in this schedule:

Here is the plan I have laid out for the Sisters. They should arrive in Theodore, Saskatchewan, by Canadian Pacific Railway, on Friday, July 5th. They will be met by Mr. MacDonald, Lawyer. On Saturday, July 6, I will drive them out to Gladwin, a very neglected district where we have just built a new church. On Sunday, July 7, I will say Mass in this new Church for the first time. The Sisters will teach in Gladwin and Theodore until July 13. Then they go west again 50 miles to Dafoe by C.P.R. and into the country to the south named Copeland. I will say Mass there on July 14 and will remain with them until the 17th.

On the 18th, we go to Buchanan. I will say Mass there on the 21st. On the 22nd, we go to Rockford. They will teach there until July 27th, when they go to Ormside, north of Stenen. They will have Mass in Sturgis and Ormside on July 28th. On August 4, Norquay; August 11, Stornoway; August 17th, Willowbrook; August 24th, Lanigan. I have arranged to have Mass for them Mass in almost every place. We might have to change this plan if we drop the Northern missions, but there will be plenty of work for them. I will do my best to assist the Sisters

I was thinking of getting a supply of new catechisms. I have tried out Fr. Kelly's of St. Michael's College and find it about the best. His Junior No. 2 Catechism has quite sufficient matter and is very easy for the children to understand."

Srs. Alice Walsh of Edmonton and Gertrude Walsh, a teacher from the Camp Morton mission, were assigned to the Saskatchewan summer schools. Sr. Alice Walsh wrote two accounts for the October 1929 issue of *The Field at Home*:

Always it had fascinated me, the thought of going out on a catechetical tour in our western provinces. Then one day it happened. Word came from headquarters that I should join Sr. Gertrude Walsh (no relation) at Regina, Saskatchewan. From there we were to set out for the northeastern part of the diocese to teach Christian Doctrine to our brethren in some of the very isolated districts. Burning with zeal and good intentions, we greeted each other on July 5, resolved to do or die.

As a fitting beginning to our labours, a real deluge fell from the heavens, and though it did succeed in dampening our attire, it did not have a like effect on our spirits. We started by car for the scene of our first labours, Gladwin, a settlement twenty-five years old, and only now getting a church.

The journey there was not lacking in thrills. The condition of the roads can perhaps be better imagined than described. After losing our way several times, a predicament we were later to become so accustomed to, as to look upon it with indifference, we reached a little three-roomed log house, our headquarters for the following week. Our host welcomed us warmly. After dinner, we set out for the school, a distance of two and one-half miles. Our coming had been heralded by the pastor the last time he had said Mass there a month before so there were a few children awaiting us.

We had an attendance of twenty-eight children. They came in the morning, brought their lunch and stayed until late in the afternoon. We distributed catechisms, prayer beads and medals. As is our custom, we sent in their names to our Sisters in Edmonton who will continue teaching them Christian Doctrine by mail.

Here, also, we were successful in organizing a "Young Missionaries of Christ the King" circle. This society was initiated and fostered by our Sisters in Edmonton, and has for its main object the teaching of catechism to the small children by some of the older members. It was arranged that they would meet on the first Sunday of every month in the school. Two of the older girls were chosen to instruct the younger ones and to assist them in answering their Correspondence Lessons.

We closed the week with a picnic for the children. Then we took the trail again.

Lost again! We looked at each other in dismay. The mere fact of being lost did not disturb us - but the fact of being lost in such a place, on a broiling hot morning, did. No house, no creature in sight!

Sister decided to drive back a few miles, but as she attempted to turn on the narrow trail, the cantankerous car went over a slight embankment. Push as we would, we could not budge it. To add to our difficulties, the self-starter would not work, nor could we turn the crank.

Though we hated to admit it, we needed a strong man, and needed him badly. Calling to mind the words of Scripture, "Ask and you shall receive" - we sat on the car's running board and with intense fervour said the Rosary, hoping that our Blessed Mother would obtain for us what we so needed. She did.

No sooner had we finished praying, than we beheld approaching us, not three yards away, a kindly farmer leading a horse. We did not tell him that he was a gift from heaven though the warmth of our welcome almost overwhelmed him.

Apparently, he was amused at our plight, but being Scottish, his heart was kind and in a very few minutes we were on the road again. Then, wishing us goodbye, and good luck, our friend departed. May God bless him!

At the next place, we were happy to find the good effects of our catechetical correspondence course. The children, twenty-one in number, had been taking lessons from Edmonton during the past year and we were glad to see that they possessed some knowledge of their Faith. This was due, in large measure, to their parents who were dutiful enough to see that their children completed their work in good time.

Poor little ones! They may have memorized the Commandments and a few other facts, but their knowledge of their religion is necessarily limited and narrow. The Mass means very little to them. They have seen the Holy Sacrifice offered once or twice only on a kitchen table in one of their poor homes. It does not impress them deeply. Few, if any of them, have ever been in a church. It seems that a miracle is needed to keep the spark of Faith alive under such conditions.

The six weeks sped on. During that time, we taught in nine districts. We contacted two hundred children altogether. Almost before we realized it, the day came for us to go home. And what thoughts did we bring home with us? They were many. This summer, we have been face-to-face with real facts. We have seen conditions exactly as they are, and we know that they are deplorable. We have met children of sixteen who have not yet made their First Communion, and who have no idea of what the Mass means. We have lived right in with the people, and have, therefore, a very clear knowledge of their sufferings and their difficulties. We have seen our noble priests suffering almost unbelievable hardships, labouring to do the work of three men in the vast mission field. The thoughts we brought home with us are these: the Church in Western Canada needs more men and women willing to devote themselves entirely to the spreading of God's Kingdom on earth, more prayers, more interest and sympathy from Catholics in happier surroundings, and - more money.

Also in the October 1929 issue of *The Field at Home*, Sr. Gertrude Walsh wrote this account of their experiences in Northern Saskatchewan:

Amid a downpour of rain, over muddy roads and with difficulty in finding the school where we were to teach Catechism, our tour began. Our prospects were none too encouraging. When we finally discovered the school, how our spirits rose to be met by children who, despite the rain, had driven seven miles in an open democrat! Surely God will bless them for their sacrifice.

This district had been badly neglected, but through the generosity of a kind and interested friend, the people had been able to erect a church where the first Mass had been said in early summer. The children came regularly to all the lessons and were delighted to learn something about their Faith of which they knew very little.

We visited nine such districts. The children, for the most part, had never seen Sisters. At one place we were reminded of the Indians when Canada was first discovered. As we drove up to the little church, some of the children hid behind trees and peeped out at us. When they saw that we were ordinary human beings, they came and made friends. The children of all these districts have signed up for the correspondence course and thus we shall be able to keep in touch with them.

The dear good people, although they had not much to give, always welcomed us into their homes. Most of the houses where we stayed had only three rooms. We were, however, always given their best and always made to feel at home. At one place, the family had many trials such as loss of cattle, crop failure and sickness. Although they had only a bedroom and kitchen, we were invited to stay there. We were given the bedroom while they, a family of six, slept on a bed in the kitchen. This house was made of logs, with a thatched roof and mud floor.

On the night of our arrival, a storm came up. We were awakened by the rain pouring through the kitchen roof. We invited the family into our room, but were told that their bed was keeping dry. We were just remarking how fortunate it was that our roof did not leak, when Sister just escaped a shower bath by three or four inches. At the same instant, we noticed our umbrella and after opening it over our heads, we felt secure.

On relating our experiences to a few people, we have been asked how we could endure some of the hardships. Our only answer is "The grace of God". He is like a loving Father watching over us and ever ready, in all our difficulties, to extend a helping hand. How thankful we are to Him for giving us a vocation which enables us to teach these poor neglected children a little about our religion.

Religious Vacation Schools in Manitoba, 1929

The appeal from Manitoba for two Sisters for summer rural teaching was answered by Sr. Catherine Donnelly who was teaching in a two-room school in Vilna, Alberta and by Sr. Frances Church, Superior at the Winnipeg hostel. In the previous summer, Sr. Donnelly wrote an account in the October 1929 issue of *The Field at Home*:

On July 14, 1929, we [Srs. Catherine Donnelly and Frances Church], reached Roblin and next day went on to the Duck Mountains, twenty miles north of there.

This hilly country is occupied by people of French and Indian descent. There was a resident parish priest a few years ago. St. Clare's Church, only a shell - was never finished - and must be unfit for use in winter. The priest's house is in fairly good condition. We remained there for a week and gave the children religious instruction and practice in hymn-singing. The parents appreciated our efforts, but although we sent messages with everybody and had sessions in three different places each day - in the church and two of the schools - we found it impossible to get all the children gathered

together.

There are fifty or more children of school age attending St. Clare's Church. There is, however, every evidence of irregular attendance at school, and the consequent backwardness of the children makes teaching of catechism difficult.

We explained and tried to introduce the correspondence course of catechism sent out by the Sisters of Service at Edmonton. We sent in the children's names and the first letter from Edmonton will come in September. It remains to be seen what response there will be. The three schools of the parish are taught by non-Catholic teachers. On our way to the place, we met a little French-Canadian of nine who directed us to the road we should take. To our question, 'Are you a Catholic?' he replied, 'Well, no, not much; just a little bit.'

On our way south again, at Roblin, we searched for Catholic people. This search required quite a bit of driving through the country. The few families we found, have no way to get to church. Roblin has no church and the nearest one is impossible to reach except for one or two with cars. So the people have given up going to Mass, and the three or four children of school age get no religious teaching except from the Salvation Army located in that town, or from some other non-Catholic institution.

From Roblin we came south to Russell, where, last year, we instructed some children for Confirmation. The majority of these have attended church well during the year. One family, of which three of the boys were confirmed last year, has been a disappointment. These boys have at times attended a non-Catholic Sunday school.

At all the other villages and towns on our way, we saw the Catholic children and called on the families - at Birtle, Shoal Lake, Minnedosa, Neepawa and Rivers. The children of Minnedosa and Neepawa show a great willingness to cooperate. The Polish and Ukrainian children deserve a great deal of credit for their progress in every way during the past year. At Neepawa especially the other Catholic children are setting them an excellent example and helping them in many ways.

The last place on this trip was Rivers. There is a little church in the town and the priest goes there once a month. A Ukrainian priest visits his people a few times in the year but the children don't know him very well, and are not interested in their church. They are getting along well at school. A few of them are quite brilliant. They have Canadian ideas and have been attending the Protestant Sunday schools. In every case, these children said they were Catholics but were attending the Sunday schools because they had nowhere else to go. They seemed quite interested in the correspondence course of religious instruction when we explained it to them. Whether they will persevere in it beyond a few lessons remains to be seen. What strikes one as sad is that so many Catholic children in the Western provinces are situated as they are, with no way to turn for instruction about God except to the Protestant churches.

We arrived home from our first trip August 1, 1929, and after four days, started for Deloraine, with the district around Boissevain as our field of labour. Boissevain, though an old settlement of Manitoba, is new as a Catholic community. It is in the south-west corner of Manitoba, where land is good but rain none too plentiful any year. Since the Great War, changes have taken place on the farms in this locality. A Belgian came here ten years ago and after a time secured a farm. Others of the same nationality followed. Here and there in the community, a farm could be rented. Relatives came out from Belgium to those already making progress here, and gradually there has developed a scattered community of about twenty Belgian families. More continue to come. They are very thrifty, successful farmers and there is every indication that as the years go by, the percentage of Belgians in the district will gradually increase.

We drove to the homes and paid a little visit to each house. The men always spoke

some English, but only a few of the women spoke English and a few spoke French. The families are invariably young couples with small children, fewer than a dozen have started to school. With only one or two exceptions they showed gratefulness for our interest in them. They also showed a desire to have a church at Boissevain, to be erected in about the centre of the settlement.

At present, the priest from Deloraine, twenty-five miles west, says Mass now and then at a small farm-house. This does not provide sufficient accommodation for a rapidly-growing Catholic congregation. We asked several of the people why they didn't build a church; their replies showed that for them it would be a colossal undertaking. Belgians, with no capital to invest, find Canada only a war-free country where their hard labour will count, mostly, in building up a little home.

Here is a golden opportunity for some charitable person to donate the money for a sorely-needed church. Boissevain is coldly unreligious. It has a population almost entirely Protestant, but the Belgians around will someday retire to this town or start up business in it. It would be well to have a well-built Catholic church in this town. Anti-Catholic feeling, hopefully, might then lessen. It is the growing generation that is likely to suffer most. There are good teachers in the country schools, but of course, they belong to other religions. The children have never even been inside a Catholic Church.

Our third and last assignment for this summer was to teach a small class at Killarney, forty miles east of Deloraine. We returned to the latter place every night. We could find only three Catholic families in Killarney. One of them was a German-Polish family. The father had already arranged to take his three boys to St. John, North Dakota, and leave them there for a week for instructions. This he did, so our class consisted of only five little girls. We spent the afternoons with them for about a week and found them willing and bright and a pleasure to teach. Their parents will take them to the Deloraine Church next Sunday to receive First Holy Communion.

Leaflet about correspondence school to be given at ports

The Sisters meeting immigrants at the ports of Halifax, Quebec and Montreal, assisted their arrival in Canada and also gave them names and addresses of Catholic organizations in the West for use when they reached their destination. Sr. Agnes Black at the port of Quebec thought that it would be a good idea for the Western settlers to be informed about where they could get instruction for their children if their new homes were far from a church. On June 27, 1929, Sr. Black suggested to the Edmonton house that a leaflet be printed to outline the work of the catechetical school to appeal to mothers, who are far from a church and school. She suggested that the leaflet or folder be easily small enough to be placed in a purse, noting: "We meet many large families going West where they hope to settle. If we had such a leaflet to give the mother, she could put it away in her bag; then on some future day, she would find it, read it and write to the Sisters."

Sr. Meade, newly-appointed as Superior of the Edmonton residence, was asked to compose this leaflet.

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CATECHETICAL TEACHING AND RISING CORRESPONDENCE ENROLMENT, 1930

Sr. Catherine Donnelly joined the Edmonton Sisters to help in correcting the lessons. In February 1930, Sr. Donnelly, a teacher with two decades of experience, also organized night classes in English for young immigrant women at the hostel. These classes were faithfully attended by 23 young women.

Toronto Archbishop McNeil continued his interest in the religious correspondence school, asking for a report on the number of children enrolled in courses. On May 2, 1930, Sr. Chisholm sent an update that the registration totaled approximately 750 families with an average of four to each family and the number of students amounted 3,000. "We also send reading matter to these families. We have another list of between 300-400 families to whom we send literature, but who do not require lessons."

From their summer religion tours, the Sisters found that many of the Western farmers were settlers and did not feel justified in charging any fee for lessons. If they had done so, they might have deprived some needy families of the lessons.

Continuing to be financial supporters, the CWL members of St. Alphonsus parish usually under the sponsorship of Mrs. James Hague organized teas and grocery showers from 3-9 pm. These showers often netted approximately \$30 in cash and \$20 in provisions. At these showers, the Sisters displayed samples of their lessons, contests and completed lessons.

On September 16, 1930, Fr. Daly wrote Edmonton Archbishop O'Leary to learn his views of the progress and contribution of the Sisters' ministry after the first five years:

You are now acquainted with the work that the Sisters of Service are doing for the benefit of isolated Catholic children through their Catechetical Correspondence Course. Over two thousand children are receiving by mail, instruction in Christian Doctrine. Through a monthly bulletin the parents and children are also kept in touch with the Church, its feast and fast days and days of abstinence, etc.

Wishing to extend to many more the benefits of this work, would it be asking too much for a letter from Your Grace commending this effort of ours? An episcopal recommendation would give it more weight and secure a greater co-operation from the missionary priests of your diocese whom we wish to help in their efforts for the salvation of souls committed to their care. We are fully convinced that a great leakage among the growing generation obtains through ignorance of Christian Doctrine. The only way of reaching thousands of our children in the great West is by mail. This contact may be weak, but it is a contact, and may prove in many cases to be a 'saving contact.'

On September 22, 1930, Archbishop O'Leary replied with great enthusiasm:

Dear Fr. Daly:

It is with great pleasure that I recommend the work of the Sisters of Service in my own diocese as well as all over Canada. They are doing excellent work in the missionary hospitals, in the rural schools, in the Hostels for immigrant girls, and in the correspondence courses in catechism. This latter is now instructing practically 3,000 children scattered over the prairies of three provinces. These children could be reached otherwise only with difficulty. The courses serve not only to keep their Faith alive, but

also to lead them to a knowledge and love of our holy religion.

Truly, the Sisters of Service have supplied a long-felt need. The only drawback is that they are so few. When you undertook the foundation of these good Sisters, I told you that I should be glad to have one hundred of them for my own diocese. This is as true today as it was then. I feel sure that if our good Catholics understood the need there is for these Sisters, they would support them most generously.

Summer Schools in Rocky Mountain territory, 1930

In the late spring of 1930, the Sisters at Edmonton accepted a request from Fr. Louis, OMI for two Sisters to teach catechism to children in mining camps in the Alberta foothills, known as the Coal Branch. On June 16, 1930, Srs. Chisholm was paired with Sr. Barton, awaiting her first teaching assignment at Camp Morton. In three letters, Sr. Barton wrote accounts of teaching catechism to children in mining camps along the Canadian National Railways (CPR) branch line in the Rockies to the Toronto Motherhouse.

Mile 33, Robb, Alberta

July 10, 1930

Here we are in the first Camp! We arrived here at 4.00 p.m. yesterday and descended the hill from the railway station by many stages carrying our heavy baggage to the cook-house in the valley. Fr. McLean, Pastor of Edson with missions in the foothills at Robb, Coal Valley, including Sterco and Foothills, usually says Mass here at Robb every three months. ...

We left our baggage and trudged up the hill. There we found a small cabin with a man standing at attention on each side of the doorway with a rifle in his hand. There was a line of men entering the office and another coming out. Had there been a robbery and was this an interrogation? The men didn't look fearful - (We did) - but even cheerful, as well they might for we learned later that this was payday. When this session was over, we got the key and were asked to return later for some clean sheets. Back down the hill we went to get our baggage. ...

It was a one-room "shack" dingy as could be - dust, cobwebs, flies, beetles, ants, mosquitoes, and grimy windows on all sides. There was a table, an old organ, stove, two beds, a chair and a stool and a stack of grey blankets, a broom, dustpan, two wash basins and a pail. We put the blankets out over the fence to air; then cleaned up as best we could. On returning for the sheets, we were told that the mine superintendent, Mr. Onions, was expected that evening and because there was no other place to sleep, he might need "our" cabin. This cabin suddenly became important to us. We prayed that Mr. Onions wouldn't come.

We were really tired. By 10.00 p.m., we took a chance, prepared for bed, first nailing up some bedspreads over the windows for privacy - and remained undisturbed. That night each of us rose at intervals to add more blankets. By morning we each had a pile on our bed; it was freezing cold! We never did learn whether or not Mr. Onions came!

We were rudely awakened early by a loud continuous gong. It was a call for the nightshift miners to come to breakfast. We decided to count the men going in to the cook-house for breakfast so that we could keep count when they were all out and the coast was clear for us to go. Soon the men were coming and going at the same time so we lost count. We made a good guess and when we entered the cook-house, there were only a few still eating.

The cook's helper, Walter, whom we dubbed "Sir Walter", a student from Edmonton, not of our Faith, but with empathy for us, came to welcome us. He had helped us the previous night when very embarrassed, we had climbed over a bench to sit at a long table and eat dinner with the miners, 75 of them. I must say, they were very respectful.

Needless to add, we are the "curiosity of the place." Last night, our "Sir Walter" suggested that because dinner was served at 5.30 p.m., we should come at six and eat with the kitchen staff - five men and one Polish woman who speaks no English. This plan worked well. I should add that we eat at the Camp because there is nowhere else to eat; this Camp is company-owned. It sells goods at the cook-house only at certain times.

Back to breakfast - our "Sir Walter" brought each of us a large enamel plate with three eggs and two large pieces of bacon. He apologized for the large serving saying that the cook must have forgotten that we were not working men. Would you believe it? We had already helped ourselves to prunes and crackers; then demolished all the eggs plus toast. Sr. C. ate her bacon and mine, too! That tells you how hungry we were. We drank coffee from a huge pewter mug which needed both hands to hold it. Enough about our food. Suffice it to say, we had lots of it and were always hungry for it at meal-time.

Our first task was to locate the Catholic families. Through questioning the cook staff, we were able to find an Italian family with three small children a mile distant. We had a pleasant visit with them. They told us how to find two more Catholic families. This morning we visited these families each a mile distant but in different directions. They were happy to see us and gave us some interesting information about life in this Camp.

Seven children came for instruction at 1.00 p.m. We have made a little shrine to Our Lady of Perpetual help with some lovely wild mountain flowers. Our vases are two tobacco cans and an old tin cup. We placed the picture on an Anglican Bible. By the way, this "cabin" which has the name of "First Aid Station" is used for the Anglican and United Church Sunday Schools. There are several hymn books and prayer books around. Our little shrine added a Catholic touch. I taught the children the Immaculate Mary Hymn which they love to sing. We kept them until 4.00 p.m. They will return tomorrow at 10.00 a.m.

The poor children have been to Holy Communion only twice; two of them are 11 years old and two are 13; the rest are younger. It is a year since they were at Mass. They know little catechism, but are eager to learn. We had a good visit with the Italian family again after supper. They told us there are only three Catholic families in this Camp plus about twelve Catholic single men, miners. The three Catholic families were glad to see us and told us about their life at the Camp.

All the people here seem to be cut off from civilization and religion. Having such a small class makes our teaching here easier than usual. The seven children are very attentive and eager to learn so we are giving them our best. What else can we give? Perhaps our dear Lord will accept our mortifications as a token of our love and service. We hope so!

Last night, we dined with the manager and surveyor of the mine (not because we wanted to) - Masons, too! They were very gentlemanly. After supper, they gave us a tour of the mine, explained its operation and pointed out the coal seam - all very interesting and informative. They said they were going fishing and would try to have some fish for us for Friday. How thoughtful! They did catch some; we enjoyed it. We had class again this morning and afternoon. Before class, we went down to a mountain stream, one quarter mile distant to wash our clothes. We left them among some bushes to dry; hope no one finds them.

There is only one pump for the whole community, but the water is good. All the houses are in the valley surrounded by hills, beyond which are the majestic Rockies. There are no roads for car or horse so the only way one can get from Edson is by rail twice a week. People here prize their gardens as jewels; they worked hard to provide suitable soil bringing it in "from away". They usually build a fence to protect their precious produce.

We heard from the people about the high cost of food and meals here. With this in mind, we went gallantly but with great apprehension to the manager to ask how much we owed for our food and lodging. We had no money and wondered if our host would accept an I.O.U. The manager was pleasant; he said, "I do not charge ministers or "suchlike". What a relief! He even said he thought we should travel free by train! We thanked him profusely. God bless him! We shall now go to Coalspur and wait there an hour for the train to Coal valley. Fr. McLean will board the train at Mile 33, so we shall get further directions then.

Mountain Park,
July 29, 1930

Here we are in Mountain Park, the highest town in Canada - 6,000 feet above sea-level. There is no place for us to stay except a room at the Hotel. Father Louis, O.M.I., thought it better for us not to eat there and said if we did not mind missionary life, we could have our meals with him and his nephew. How I wish I could describe it! The American bum in the big rock candy mountains has not one thing on us - even to the "Mulligan stew". The very first evening, Father said, "Well Sisters, I wonder how you will like my Mulligan stew?" then went to the next and only other room and brought out a huge kettle full. It is real camp style with no surplus dishes. A combination that Father got in a second hand store serves as a table when it is not in use as a chair. Our host is afraid we will not live long unless we eat heartily, so he gets everything he can for us and an extra quart of milk a day.

There are all kinds of children here at different levels of understanding so that it is a problem to combine them into classes. Here is how we gather the children - 25 them - for instruction: Father walks ahead round the town playing his flute; Sr. C. and I follow and as we walk along, children come running and take our hands so that soon we both have a string of children all holding hands until we reach the church - real "Pied Piper" style. The difference is, of course, that we are leading the children to their "Heavenly Kingdom" - not to their doom.

Father is a wonderful catechist and a great missionary, much loved and respected by all the people. The train engineer will even stop his train on a steep grade to give Father a lift as he trudges along the railway tracks. We are learning much from him - such as little simple hymns which tell the story of our Faith and how to use the picture chart of Fr. Lacombe. He gives a general instruction to all each day which is an inspiration to us. Father seems quite pleased with what we are doing. I hope and pray that we have done some good. Father is also saying Mass every day. He keeps the Blessed Sacrament in Church while we are here. This is certainly a great privilege; a change from being like heathens for so long!

Cadomin,
August 11, 1930

We are still "in the bush and on the road" as Fr. Louis says. There are all kinds of people in this town but none able to accommodate us. We have a room over the drug store and get our meals at the Black Beetle Hotel where the miners eat.

The children attended well. They are greatly in need of instruction. It was encouraging to see their enthusiasm, especially at the prospect of getting prizes. They wanted to know if we gave traps for prizes! They also seem keen to take lessons by correspondence. We hope they will persevere.

Our hours are now numbered on this Branch Line, and as I sit on a high plateau surrounded by mountains, I think of how privileged I am to have been here. I have gained a great deal spiritually, mentally and physically. Spiritually, principally because of

the contact with this Great Oblate Missionary, Fr. Louis. I really had no notion of what mission life was really like until I came here. Now, I am more aware of its fullness and I shall never forget it. Yesterday, an old lady said to us: "If God is as good and kind as Fr. Louis; then I think we shall be saved."

Father Louis, like Fr. Daly, has great dreams. Over eight years ago, he had visions of three chapels in this district. Now, after lots of hard work, his dreams are realized. The chapels exist; debt free, too! He has another dream now and that is to see the SOS established in this "Branch." - He is very practical and systematic. He certainly knows how to look after the welfare of Sisters re seeing that they have good accommodation and privacy - a great blessing. Other hard things are rendered easy when all is well arrange

On our last evening at Mountain Park, one of my great desires was fulfilled - to climb a mountain - . Sister Chisholm and I climbed Mount Harris with two young guides. It was glorious! We saw exquisite wild mountain flowers and unusual vegetation. We continued past the vegetation line and scrambled over shale until we reached the very top. The sun was just setting over the encircling snow-capped peaks. From the summit, what a magnificent never-to-be-forgotten view! The camp far below was but a tiny speck!

We are grateful to God for good weather and the many blessings on our trip, especially for the cooperation and kindness of the people and for the joy of mountain beauty! We now hope and pray that during the winter months, all our summer mountain pupils will continue their instructions by mail from our correspondence centre in Edmonton

Sr. Chisholm related her accounts to the Toronto Motherhouse.

Coal Valley, Alberta,
July 17, 1930

I suppose by this time you must think that the mountain goats have eaten us up! It is vice versa; we have such enormous appetites, we could almost eat one of them. We expect to be here for two weeks and shall try to cover Sterco and Foothills from here. We had the privilege of attending Mass yesterday and today. This will be the last of our "worship" until we get up the other branch line. By the way, I think I am getting light-headed here - and I don't mean blonde!

What a difference here at Coal Valley! Our hostess, Mrs. Duceau, is a second Mrs. O'Connor (Rochester, AB). She is really too good to us. It was difficult to use her delicate "egg-shell" China cups after the miners' heavy ones; we were afraid of biting a piece out of one. This is called the French Camp, managed by Mr. Barrie. You likely know him; he supplies the Edson Sisters with coal. There is no church here but a very nice hall which is veritably transformed into a church on Sunday. Although there is no organ, the people sing High Mass beautifully. What these good people find hard is having Mass only once a month. They are praying to have it more often and also to have a French priest.

These parents are solicitous about their children's spiritual welfare and teach religion themselves. Nearly all send their children out to a Convent School where they learn their prayers and catechism in French. Actually, we are not needed in this settlement. There are, however, some English-speaking families within a radius of two miles whom we visited. Some rarely attend Mass. About twenty children are now coming to the hall for instruction and are very attentive.

The weather, although rainy today, varies greatly from stifling hot at noon to bitter cold at night. Two nights ago, we were cold in bed, Sr. B. seeing a huge overcoat on a hook, put it over us. After a while I said I felt something kind of hard and heavy. Using a

flashlight, Sr. B. discovered a heavy pistol in one of the pockets. Was it loaded? Gingerly and fearfully she replaced the coat. Better accept a little cold rather than take a chance of sudden death!

We are eager to teach at a Russian settlement where we have visited ten families a few miles distant. In fact, we hope to get the school there to teach for three days starting Saturday. The man who seems to have the authority (and is the Protestant Sunday school teacher) said he will consider the matter. - Likely this damp weather does not agree with him. In any event, the people will let us teach in their homes if necessary. Then we shall go to Foothills for three days. All the people have received us graciously and we have many invitations to dine with them. We are always ashamed of our great appetites. ... Well, we did get the use of the school and the children attended well.

Visitors to the Edmonton school in the 1930s

During the 1930s, priests and teachers from inside and outside the Edmonton archdiocese continued to show an interest in the teaching system. Fr. Neuellerberg, a volunteer missionary priest from Belgium, called on the Sisters in December 1933 to inquire about receiving lessons for his future assignment in mission territory at Stewart, north of Prince Rupert on the British Columbia coast. Another visitor, Fr. Foucauld, OMI, from the Survivance Printers, Regina, said he might be able to help the endeavour by obtaining a cheaper rate for the purchase of the large amount of paper. In achieving the cheaper rate, the Sisters stretched their missionary dollars.

In the early 1930s, Fr. James Leonard SFM of the China Missions spent one morning with the Sisters, assessing the methods of work and expressed the hope of adapting them to the needs of his own missions. Also at this time, Fr. Joseph Kreciszewski of Sifton, Manitoba accompanied by Fr. Rocheski, pastor of a Polish church in Winnipeg, visited the Edmonton catechetical house to obtain ideas for a correspondence school of religion for the isolated Polish people in Manitoba. During the mid-1930s, Fr. Cuthbert OFM of the North Edmonton Franciscan monastery observed methods of operation at the Edmonton school. Many priests called at intervals to see the progress of their correspondence parishioners by checking the individual student-file cards.

Early in each New Year, Edmonton Archbishop O'Leary visited, bringing his greetings, blessing and encouragement for the coming year. He continued this practice until 1936 when ill health forced him to take a rest in Victoria. His successor, Archbishop John Hugh MacDonald continued this practice of making an annual visitation.

16

CATECHETICAL TEACHING INCREASED ACROSS CANADA, 1931

In the early 1930s before television was invented and radios were scarce, the daily and weekly newspapers were godsend. While travelling on a train to Vancouver in 1931, Sr. Chisholm of the Edmonton catechetical mission witnessed an incident that impressed her. While the train was swaying as it wound its way through a sparsely-settled district of British Columbia then descended into a valley just round a curve, she became aware of a poor wayside home in an open field. A mother with three children was watching from their front door and a farmer was working in the field near the track. Suddenly, from the observation car, a newspaper shot through the air and landed near the farmer's feet. As the train swayed closer, she saw the smile of pleasure on the man's face and the friendly wave of thanks. Uphill again chugged the train and from a high vantage point, she looked down to see the father, mother and children deeply engrossed in the newspaper. This kind deed reminded Sr. Chisholm of the joy that periodicals bring to people on lonely homesteads.

On her return to Edmonton, Sr. Chisholm reported the incident and suggested that the remaining effort be increased. The Sisters decided to interest others, especially the community's hostels/residences, to adopt a family to whom Catholic literature would be sent. The editor of *The Field at Home* magazine and some Catholic papers were enlisted to ask readers to adopt the plan of adopting a rural family to send Catholic literature. In its edition of October 5, 1938, *The Western Catholic Reporter* did so.

Young Missionaries of Christ the King initiated

In 1930, Sr. Monica Meade was transferred to Toronto to become assistant editor of *The Field at Home* and decided to start a section for young readers of the magazine by using the same title of Young Missionaries of Christ the King (YMCK). Retaining the same motto of "All for Thee O Christ the King," she also selected the same official coloured badge and official song, played to the tune of "Oh My Darling Clementine."

Theme song of Young Missionaries of Christ

We are Catholics, loyal Canadians,
Followers true of Christ the King,
And as fervent missionaries
Many hearts to Him we'll bring.

Chorus

Hearts and voices gladly blending
Long and loudly let us sing:
This our motto; this our watchword,
All for Thee, O Christ the King!

Ever loyal, ever faithful
To our King we'll always be,
Always keeping His Commandments
And His Precepts faithfully.

Always mindful of our calling,
We'll strive the Holy Faith to spread,
Daily proving by example
'Tis the Truth by which we're led.

Faith our armour; Truth our Breastplate
 And our Shield great Purity;
 With these Weapons ever ready,
 We will win the Victory.

Christ, our Leader will protect us
 In our daily combats here;
 In His strength we can do all things
 If we only persevere

In the January 1931 issue of *The Field at Home*, Sr. Meade urged young people to form a Young Missionaries of Christ the King Circle in either their school or parish. As part of the group, each members pledged to pray the Morning Offering and three Hail Marys as well as performing a kind act each day. In response to Sr. Meade's requests for helping each other and the Western Canadian missions, members wrote of their collection of Catholic books and magazines for a library and their planning of events such as teas, candy sales and entertainment to raise funds to add books to a library or to help Western missionaries. Sr. Meade also urged joining the remailing project through a family-to-family and collecting old stamps for the sale of cancelled stamps. The Edmonton Sisters at Edmonton saved their cancelled stamps for mission aid of the Redemptorist Fathers.

From 1931 to 1940, active crusade units were formed in Joggins, NS, River Hebert and Saint John, N.B., Montreal, Quebec City, Hamilton, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Mountain Park and Vilna, Alberta. An active group under Captain Margaret Deakin of Quebec City collected and donated \$75 for stamps for the correspondence school. Other groups sent used clothing for the missions, new stamps, used stamps, Catholic books and magazines for the missions, dime-savers and a doll collection. A knitting club sent mittens, scarves, and toques. Another unit formed a "Go Getters Stamp Club" through which all members pledged themselves to collect one cent stamps for mailing Catholic magazines. The Sisters were grateful for these varied contributions of the young members and also encouraged by their eager enthusiasm and interest in the missions of the West.

Religious instruction in BC

Two years after the hostel/residence in Vancouver was opened, the Vancouver Sisters joined in teaching catechism during the summer months in rural areas of British Columbia although they were teaching catechism in surrounding areas of the city. At the priest's request, the Sisters enrolled students in the religion correspondence courses.

In the spring of 1931 at the request of Fr. Lapin, pastor of Mission City, Sr. Frances Church, superior in Vancouver, drove 15 miles to Deroche for 10 days to prepare 17 children for First Communion. In addition, each Saturday after the 7 a.m. mass, she taught catechism at Durieu, Agassiz, Chilliwack and Deroche.

First catechetical tour in British Columbia, 1931

In the summer of 1931, Sr. Church accompanied by Sr. Patricia McConway of the Edmonton correspondence school undertook the community's first catechetical tour in British Columbia. Sr. McConway's account was published in the July 1931 issue of *The Field at Home*:

... About 12:45, we arrived at Mission, drove through the town and up the hill to the Indian Mission of the Oblate Fathers, from which the place gets its name. Our work, however, did not lie here, but in one of the outlying districts where a class of thirteen awaited us to be prepared for First Communion, and this, in less than a week.

As the car drove into the Mission, Father L. McIntyre came forward to welcome us. He showed great interest in our community, its aim, our habit, our equipment, and especially in our correspondence course carried on in Edmonton. Greetings over, Father took us to the convent for dinner. Here we met six Sisters of St. Anne who couldn't have been kinder to us. They asked us many questions about our work and in turn told us all about their work at Mission. We had a guided tour of the place. We started in a classroom where we ran the gauntlet of one hundred pairs of black Indian eyes. On we went to the extensive orchards fragrant with delicate snowy bloom of pear and apple blossom. The intention of the Mission, it seems, is to care for the Indian youth from babyhood to the age of eighteen with free board and tuition. I smiled as I thought to myself how popular such free boarding schools would be in my native Scotland.

About 2:30 p.m., Father McIntyre drove us out to Deroche, where Sr. Church was to teach. On the way, we had to cross Nicomas Island - a miniature Holland - in the middle of the Fraser, walled in with mud dykes to keep the water out. But oh! the pasturage it provides! I never saw grass more green, or so many Jersey cows in one herd. At one house, Father stopped and asked us to go in. To reach there, we had to cross a deep ditch forded only by a plank. We crossed O.K., but on our return, through lack of foresight, I got on the plank with Sr. Church and when it was relieved of her weight, it tipped into the air and I almost drowned.

Arrived at Deroche, we taught at the Church where because Father has fifteen missions to serve, the people have Mass only once every three months. The poor people were delighted to see us. They deserve great credit for the way they care for their little church. It consisted of a green frame building with a red roof nestled at the foot of the mountain; a picture in itself. The inside was as clean as a new pin. Seeing fresh flowers and lights at the shrines told us something of the peoples' devotion. The children, mostly Indians, were called in and Sr. Church asked me to record their names.

Recalling a Polish Sunday School where I had once taught, I wondered how I would manage the spelling. Can you imagine my amazement as I heard the familiar McIntyre, MacDougall, etc. Before we had finished visiting around the settlement, we had found almost every Scottish name from Angus and Flora MacDonald to Bruce and Bonnie Prince Charlie. I concluded that the Flowers of Edinburgh must have been transplanted into that Indian Reserve. How Sr. Church laughed! ...

Catechetical Van

During the tour, the Sisters often wished they could stay overnight in some place close to the people, but accommodation in such areas was impossible. Fr. Daly solved the dilemma with the order of a travelling van. Built on a Chevrolet truck chassis by the Wilson Motors Body Company of Canada, the van cost an estimated \$1,700. Efforts were made to meet the demands of mission life in isolated areas. It was equipped to serve as the living quarters of the Sisters where they would eat, sleep and teach as they drove from homestead to homestead in Western Canada.

Ready for a blessing on October 3, 1931, a grey van sat the entrance of St. Michael's Cathedral in Toronto with the inscription in large letters of:

SISTERS OF SERVICE
I HAVE COME TO SERVE
SAINT GEORGE

Toronto Archbishop McNeil of Toronto chose the feast of St. Therese, patroness of missions, for the blessing of the van and the Pontifical Mass for the Canadian Catholic Students' Mission

Crusade Convention. Following mass, the archbishop came to the door of the cathedral and blessed the van in the name of Holy Mother Church, bidding it start forth on its missionary career. The van was also exhibited on the grounds of St. Michael's College, where the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade rally was held on the next day. A Toronto newspaper published a photograph of the van with the caption, which read: "Motor van of S.O.S. is covered wagon of gospel. Sisters will instruct the widely-scattered homesteaders under new conditions use of motor van to be important factor."

It was decided that the van would be driven first on Vancouver Island. In due time, it was hoped, that similar vans would be equipped to serve in other western provinces. On the following day, a young priest from St. Francis Xavier Mission Seminary in Scarborough, Ontario, came to celebrate mass in the Motherhouse chapel prior to his departure to China. While showing the van, the Sisters mentioned the immediate problem of getting the van to Vancouver. Later that day, the Sisters received a telephone call from the seminary with volunteers to drive the van to Vancouver. Before setting out across Canada, the two Scarboro missionaries, bound for China, planned their route by carefully choosing the roads most suitable for van travel. On October 18, they began their journey, first driving from Toronto to London; then across the border to Detroit on to Chicago, then across to Winnipeg. From Winnipeg, they drove to Calgary, back to the U.S., where the roads were better until eventually reaching Vancouver, just two days before boarding the ship for the Orient. On arrival in Vancouver, the drivers reported that their mileage on this trip was 3,199 miles, and the total cost of oil and gas was \$61.74. The Sisters will always remember these first drivers of the mission van.

First trip of St. George Van

In May 1932, Srs. Church and Margaret Murphy of the Edmonton correspondence school, were assigned to go to Vancouver Island with the van, named St. George after Fr. Daly. When Sr. Church first saw the huge van, which just about filled their garage, her first reaction was, "I'm not sure that I want to drive it." One day she decided to test drive it around the block and lost all fear of it. Sr. Church wrote of the tour in July 1932 issue of *The Field at Home*.

... We left Vancouver for Nanaimo on the "Princess Elaine." The boat left at 10:00 a.m. We drove to the docks and found ourselves among many trucks unloading and loading their wares and wondered where to drive the Van. A kind policeman came to our rescue with the question, "Can I help?" He rode on our running board to see that we met with no mishap. On arrival at the boat, our kind policeman suggested that one of the dock workers drive the Van on board.

The boat started and we sat in the beautiful sunshine. Isn't the water peaceful today? It hardly seems possible that the world is in such chaos! The water, however, serves its Master and the world serves itself!

After a two-hour sail, we arrived at Nanaimo. "Shall I have one of the boys take the van off for you?" enquired one of the officers. We gratefully accepted this kind offer.

After lunch, we started on our seventy-mile trip south to Victoria. We had to decide whether to go by the Malahat Drive or take the ferry. The ferry had just left when we arrived so the decision was made for us. Over the mountains we went. "You pray to St. Christopher and I'll get the gas tank filled and water in the radiator. Then we'll trust in God." At the gas station, we saw a sign, "Last gas station before 13,000 feet ascent." We start - up, - up, - up. The view is gorgeous, the Bay 'way beneath, looks like a tiny picture from this height. Rock particles, blue, yellow, red and green are like opals shining in the sun.

On and up we go, then down until, rather dirty and a little tired, we reach Victoria. Bishop Murray, C.Ss.R. and the Sisters of St. Anne at St. Anne's Academy give us a

hearty welcome. We spend the night there and next day set off northwards for Ladysmith and arrive there around six o'clock. As we approach the little church, we hear the bell for Benediction and are glad to attend to ask God's blessing on our work and to thank Him for a safe trip. The next day we go to Granby and spend the morning visiting the people.

Granby, or Cassidy, the true name of this place, has a beautiful church built of fir wood that was well finished inside. Paint is badly needed but because each year seems to be the last for the mines, and when these close, people will have to leave; there is therefore, no incentive for painting. We drove to Wellington - three miles distant - to collect some children and we found them ready to jump into the Van. Good St. Christopher is really busy these days, but I really think he likes it!

We returned to Granby for our first catechism lesson. We told the children right away that we hoped to prepare them for their First Holy Communion when Jesus would come into their hearts. It was a joy to see their eager faces, and difficult to believe that children who had been in school all day could be so attentive and seem hungry for every word. We took them into the Church to tell them who was in the tabernacle and explained how much Jesus loved them. Then we taught them the "Our Father" and "Hail Mary". We also told them about the "Apostles' Creed" that we would explain later.

The Bishop came the next afternoon and the children were very happy to see him. "Yes, they can say some prayers. Now, altogether - that's beautiful! - Now what are we going to do on Saturday?"

"Receive Holy Communion."

"Whom do we receive," etc.

All goes well and His Excellency is delighted with the children, and so are we. Being able to prepare our own meals at our convenience saved us much time. Although Tonight we sleep in the Van. It's pretty cold but it will be warm enough inside. ...

After the Sisters returned to Vancouver for a few days, they headed for Princeton via the United States. Sr. Church recounted the further adventures in *The Field at Home*:

... Well, here we are at Princeton, B.C., sleeping, as it were, beneath the stars, with plenty of running water only it does not come from taps marked "hot" or "cold". Our airy rooms are the pebbly beach and sandy soil as we camp beside the Similkameen River, the Van fitting snugly between two chicken runs. We are close to the railway line so at night we do not suffer from monotony. A train arrives each morning at two-thirty and shunts and does all other noisy things a train is apt to do. Soon the sun begins to show and the roosters to crow for the nights are very short at this time of year.

In the morning, we visit the people, but the houses are so far apart and in such hilly places that we cannot accomplish much at a time.

The tiny church, if it can be so called, is a small building within a row of small houses with nothing to distinguish it from others but a cross on top. At first sight, one could hardly believe it could be a church. It would be impossible to camp anywhere near it. This is why we teach in the Van and as it has rained every day since we arrived, teaching has not been easy. When out on this kind of work, we must recognize God's goodness in everything, otherwise our efforts would be to no purpose and we would find little to teach the children. True, they might memorize words from the catechism, but they need an atmosphere to go with this that will preach God to them. We try to create this atmosphere.

We, therefore, formed a Y.M.C.K. Club for these children which we hope will be a means of uniting them and of increasing their interest in their Faith. The pastor kindly consented to let the members have a room at his house for their meetings, where they planned to meet every Wednesday evening. We made them a banner and appointed a

captain and two lieutenants. These officers are supposed to encourage all members to attend Mass and Y.M.C.K. meetings.

The children were very friendly and interested as the following incident shows. One little girl came to us and with evident sincerity shining in her eyes said, "Sisters, I hope you will stay here until I die." As she is but nine years old, in the ordinary course of events we should have to remain here for many years.

The little ones did their best to prepare for First Communion. On Sunday before Mass, we drove around to pick up those who lived at a distance. Besides the First Communicants, there were two small boys of five and seven to receive the Sacrament of Baptism. It was a great day for rejoicing for the Catholic community and a great encouragement for ourselves.

The little church seemed full that morning when the twenty-two for First Communion were assembled. It was a joy to see the fervour of these little ones. One might think that after preparing several groups of children, this would become commonplace, but it does not. Each child is different, each in his/her own little heart receives special light from God, and this shines in their eyes. They try so hard to do everything right. Some wee ones are a little nervous after the Host has been placed on their tongues. They truly believe it is Jesus and are so full of awe and reverence that they hardly know what to do. Sometimes they turn to us with such appeal in their eyes as if to say, "Help me to carry Jesus in my heart." A little smile of encouragement and all is well. It is a great joy to us to realize that our Lord is using us as instruments in spreading His Kingdom in the hearts of His little ones!

Published in *The Field at Home* in October 1932, a letter of Fr. Aelred Carlyle, pastor of Princeton showed his appreciation of the Sisters' efforts in his parish:

The two Sisters have spent five weeks with us this summer. They arrived with their Van and parked it by the Similkameen River, in the midst of a little colony of Catholic families. The children soon came to see them and spent most of the days with the Sisters. I had thirty names on my catechism roll when the Sisters came, and they left me with a good solid band of forty-two grouped in a Club of Young Missionaries of Christ the King.

The children have not only been taught their catechism, but many have made their First Communion. The Sisters have also taught them to sing in church; they have mastered the Benediction hymns and I have now the beginning of a good junior choir. Altogether, I cannot be grateful enough for this visit, and I sincerely wish we could have two Sisters here permanently.

17

CATECHETICAL TOURS AND FUND-RAISING, 1932

In the summer of 1932, Srs, Edith Wayland and Alice Walsh began a catechetical tour throughout rural Alberta. From 1932 until 1940, the Sisters taught religion and prepared students for the sacraments at Barrhead with missions of Bashan, Calahou; Camrose and Clandonald; Westlock, Clyde, Colenton, Dapp, Casartelli, Jarvie, Duffield and missions of Dunvegan, Gibbons and Coronado; Grand Prairire with missions of Holden and Lac la Nonne, McLeod Valley, Mayerthorpe and Romeo Lake (Fr. M. O'Connor); New Sarepta (Fr. Doyle) with missions of Kelly's Ranch, Maple Hill; Prince George, B.C; Spruce Grove and Stony Plain (Fr. Keenan); Stettler and missions (Fr. Battle); Tofield (Fr. John Naphin, CSsR); Winfield (Msgr. Nelligan) and Winterburn.

From Ituna, Saskatchewan, Fr. Daniel Ehman, CSsR wrote an article about the value of the correspondence instruction in the April 1932 edition of *The Field at Home*:

It is a hot afternoon in June at the little village of Ituna, Saskatchewan. The children have just been released from school and many of them rush over to the "Polish Church" where the "Father" is going to teach catechism. These children, without a priest for a long time, are hungry for God and for knowledge of Him. They come eagerly each afternoon after school to hear the "Father" tell stories about Jesus.

I was teaching these children one day when a man appeared and asked to speak to me. 'I have three children,' he said, 'who have not yet made their First Communion. Having heard that you are instructing the children in English, I brought them with me. I live twenty miles from the church but I am staying two days in town, could you prepare them? They know their prayers and I have taught them as best I could from an old catechism.'

'Where are the children?' I asked. The man withdrew and soon returned with his children. The first was sixteen, the second, fourteen and the third, twelve. 'I shall do my best,' I promised. The oldest girl was in grade eleven. After long hours with them, during the next two days, I considered them sufficiently prepared to receive their God. We sent them home with God in their hearts and a little catechism in their pockets. Their addresses were sent to the Sisters of Service Correspondence School at Edmonton, Alberta, for religious correspondence lessons.

One month later, I was able to pay this family a visit in their own home - pleasant enough - about six miles from the nearest highway. I marveled at the difficulty and at the perseverance of the children getting an education. The oldest girl was studying French and other subjects by correspondence. 'Have the Sisters written to you?' I asked. 'Oh yes, Father,' they replied eagerly and produced a large catechism explaining the Apostles' Creed. Besides this, they showed me the Catechism Lessons sent by the Sisters. These lessons were printed on four sheets of book size explaining in a simple but attractive way some fundamental truths of our Holy Faith together with part of the Life of Christ. There was a picture of Our Lord, too. With this lesson came a set of questions twelve or fifteen in number which examined the child on the content of the given lesson leaving sufficient space for written answers. After studying the lessons, the child must try to answer the questions as well as possible, and then return these answers to the Sisters who correct them; then return the corrected answers together with the next lesson.

This proves very interesting to the children as the following example will show. I had sent only the oldest girl's name to the Sisters. Thus the Sisters sent only one lesson and

one set of questions to this family. Other children in the family wanted to take part in the lessons too, so they went to the great trouble of copying by hand the whole set of questions and answered them in their own way.

Anyone who has watched a small child write, especially in a rural district in a lower grade, will appreciate just how much hard labour it meant for these children to copy out and fill in about six pages of unfamiliar words and sentences. It made me realize how much good the Sisters were doing through their correspondence work. I was so deeply touched by the devotion of these children that I sent their names to the Sisters to save the children from the huge task of copying the questions each time.

But, even more, this correspondence benefits not only those who receive it, but others also. The children told us that their next door neighbours - about a mile and a half away - would like to receive the catechism lessons too. I went over to see them and found a Ruthenian Catholic father and a Baptist mother who was instructing her five children from the Little Catholic Catechism that I had given their neighbours. The three oldest children 16, 14, and 13 were not even baptized and none of them had seen the inside of a Catholic church. I packed the whole family into my old car and took them home with me, leaving the husband to keep house for himself for a few days. It was really pitiful to hear them saying to each other on the way to our village, "Now, we will see what a church looks like."

We quartered our new friends with some Catholic families in our village and I instructed them morning, noon and night for several days. At the end of that time, the three oldest children were baptized as well as their mother (conditionally) and all except the youngest - age four - received Holy Communion. After this, I took them back to their poor little home safe and sound in body and now 'children of God and heirs of Heaven.' Of course, I sent their names to the Sisters. Their Catechism Course will help to consolidate the instructions I was able to give them.

O great is the work that the Sisters of Service are doing everywhere in the West. But their greatest work at present, it seems to me, is their catechetical instruction given to over 6000 children. They are now following up their work, wherever they can, by personal contact. This will be helped, to a great extent, by the advent of their new motor vans.

May their numbers be increased many times over, and may the day come when zealous priests can be spared to gather in the rich harvest of souls that the Sisters are now planting and watering. Hopefully, these priests will know several languages, roam the prairies, Knight Errants of Christ, baptizing confessing communicating, and - with Rome's permission - confirming, too, the "little ones" of Christ, lost upon the boundless prairies, or hidden away in the sheltering woodlands of the West.

In November 1932, the Edmonton Sisters at Edmonton appealed to parents for financial support of the correspondence lessons:

Dear Parents:

We have, as you know, been instructing your children in the Truths of our Holy Faith. From your many letters, we know that you value this contribution. We assure you that the love of Mother Church and love of the souls of your dear children are the sole motives that have inspired our work. We have never asked you for anything in return for this service given freely to your children. Instructing by correspondence over 5,000 children from all parts of the West is a heavy cost. Our stamp bill alone each month is \$60.00. Add to this the printing of lessons, stationery and our living expenses and you will realize why the cost is very high.

Because the crops have been particularly blessed by God this year, we hope that you

will consider contributing a little towards our work. We suggest the value of a few bushels of wheat or of a day's salary. We would be very grateful for any help you can give to assist in defraying our expenses that are growing each year.

Having said this, we hasten to add that if for any reason you are unable to assist us at this time, do please continue with the lessons. The souls of your dear children are more important than any monetary consideration, therefore, above all, please cooperate fully with us and encourage your children to be faithful in studying their lessons and in saying their prayers. If you know of any other Catholic children in your area who would like to receive our lessons, please send us their names.

If we can be of assistance in giving you any religious information, please write us. We pray that God will bless you and your family in all your needs.

Yours devotedly in Christ,
Sisters of Service

CATECHETICAL TOURS IN MANITOBA, NORTHERN ONTARIO, 1933

As the financial woes of The Depression deepened, Fr. Daly urged the readers of *The Field at Home* to make final bequests to SOS mission fund and to use an annuity plan. Both financial supports were explained in the April and July issues of the magazine.

Meanwhile in the summer of 1933, the Sisters in the correspondence school set aside their marking pencils and journeyed into the rural areas to meet some students during the religious vacation schools. The full version of Sr. Mary Fitzgerald's account was published in the January 1934 issue of *The Field at Home*:

Our little convent home is about to close for the summer months. We have completed our preparations which included stripping the walls of all destructible decorations. The whole house has an aspect of loneliness and gloom. The sanctuary lamp in the chapel is out which shows that our Eucharistic Lord has already left for the summer. This is further proof that it is time to "journey."

Our first stopping place was W(Winnipeg), where we were met at the train by three kind parish ladies who brought us by many byways to a little cottage opposite the Church. There, after serving lunch to us, they left us to ourselves.

The next morning dawned bright and warm. Soon we heard young voices calling, 'Sister, here is the church key; when does catechism start?' Their bright faces were aglow with eagerness and enthusiasm. If one did not already have a share of the same, it would be impossible not to be imbued with their happy spirit.

We spent ten happy peaceful days here instructing the little ones in the truths of religion. We also had the joy of seeing them receive the Bread of Life for the first time - an event which we hope will ever be for them a golden memory.

There was no church at our next station so we taught catechism in the schoolhouse, three-quarters of a mile from where we stayed. The schoolhouse was on the top of a high hill, and the road leading to it lay through thick bush. Just before we set out the first morning, a girl gave us the alarming news that coyotes were in that bush; she had seen one on the path. On hearing this and knowing our city origin, a tall lad took the opportunity to exaggerate a few bear stories. These tales were rather disconcerting especially as we were armed only with our lunch pails and instruction books.

We centred our attention on the bears. Remembering that bears are afraid of fire, we thought of adding some old newspapers and matches to our traveling kit. On second thought, we decided to trust to Divine Providence. We saw neither bears nor coyotes but we did see a few rabbits, ground-hogs and gophers - a good substitute for the former.

The children came from distances of four, five and seven miles, mostly on horseback. The weather was cool and it rained almost every day. Our first concern was to make a fire to dry the children's clothing which was often soaked through. Their spirits, however, were not even dampened. They attended classes regularly.

On First Communion morning as we looked with sinking hearts at the dismal grey skies, and the constant downpour of rain, our first thought was, "There will be no First Communion today!" The people told us that even if the rain stopped, the roads would be too bad for Father to travel. But, 'Hope springs eternal.' By nine o'clock, wagon after wagon had arrived with loads of older children, mothers, fathers and tiny brothers and sisters. We were to have the privilege of Mass and Communion at the home of our

hostess.

While mothers and children remained indoors enjoying a friendly visit, the men and boys stayed out on the porch: first, because there was no room in the house; second, that they might catch the first glimpse should the priest happen to come. Nine-thirty! And no sign of Father. Ten o'clock - still no sign. By ten-thirty, all hope of his coming was abandoned. Because all were fasting, the immediate thing to do was feed the hungry. This we did as speedily as possible. But food, even when one is hungry, is a poor substitute for disappointment. All returned home knowing that First Communion had to be postponed to a later date. This was the first time on our summer tours that we had not been able to be present for a First Communion celebration.

That same day, because roads were impassable for cars, we set out in a democrat for M, a distance of fourteen miles. This journey took four hours.

From there we went to C, where we had a class of forty, eighteen of whom made their First Communion. After Mass, which lasted until quarter to one, we had a jolly picnic. It was half-past one before the children were able to break their fast. You can imagine how much they enjoyed their lunch! That day happened to be a day of abstinence. Some ladies forgetting this, had brought along some delicious meat sandwiches; these were put under cover quickly. No one missed them, however, because there was an abundance of other good things. Parents and children were unanimous in declaring they had a very enjoyable day.

At another village, we had four children from one family who had not yet been baptized. It was our hope to prepare the two oldest for Baptism and First Communion - the two younger ones were attending for company. The two oldest worked hard and looked forward to being baptized then joining the class for their First Communion. What was our surprise and disappointment to learn that the children's mother, who had not been married in the church, would not give her consent to the Baptism. Her reason was that when they came of age, they could choose their own religion. The poor children were heart-broken and we were disappointed. There was nothing we could do about it except pray that the seed sown might some day blossom into a living Faith in the hearts of these little ones. The following morning, these disappointed ones came early to the Church and sat on the side opposite the First Communicants; if they could not be part of the ceremony, they would, at least, be present and share in the happiness of their companions.

The days passed quickly and before we realized it, we were homeward bound. It was with real regret that we said good-bye to our little friends. The memory of them will be helpful during the winter months. We shall be able to visualize them as we keep in touch marking their papers and sending religious literature to the families.

The wonderful zeal of the pastor of this district was an inspiration to us. His vast parish has sixteen missions. He has 187 no home of his own. Spending most of his time on the road, he often suffers from cold and hunger as he quietly and humbly serves in the Master's Vineyard. We can say with grateful hearts, 'Thank God for our noble priests!'

New trailer van used in Manitoba

The St. George's Van had been a great asset to the two Sisters teaching catechism in the hinterland of British Columbia during the summer of 1932. After their summer experience, the Sisters suggested that it would be more feasible for visiting families if a trailer was hitched onto an ordinary car and could be detached for sleeping and living quarters and use the car for visiting families. This idea was implemented in the second catechetical van, which was a generous gift of the Catholic Women's League of the Redemptorist parish of St. Peter's in Saint John, NB.

With the coming of spring, the trailer van, containing beds and a practical kitchenette and detachable from the car, was destined for the catechetical tour of Manitoba. Named St. Peter after the donors, the van left Toronto on June 9, 1933, bound for Camp Morton, Manitoba, the community's first rural teaching mission, an hour's drive north of Winnipeg on Lake Winnipeg. During the school year, the Sisters of this mission travelled to the surrounding districts to teach catechism on Saturdays and often on Sundays. In the summer of 1933, they had planned to travel to more isolated places to teach catechism. The Sisters were grateful for this trailer-van but somewhat fearful at the prospect of driving it.

In a letter to Father Daly, Archbishop Arthur Alfred Sinnott of Winnipeg, wrote: "I am delighted to hear that the Catechetical Van is on its way. I am sure it will enable the Sisters to do better work - if that is possible - in the instruction of children for miles around Camp Morton. I thank you very cordially for sending the Van to this diocese."

On Sunday, June 18, 1933 following the Corpus Christi procession, Archbishop Sinnott blessed this new van outside St. Edward's church in Winnipeg. The next day it was attached to a new Dodge car and driven to Camp Morton, the centre of that summer's catechism operations.

In July 1933, Sr. Margaret Guest, the community's Mistress of Novices, left Toronto for Camp Morton, where she had taught from 1924 until 1928. She looked forward to seeing some of her former students and to joining Srs. Alice Walsh and Madge Barton in the first adventures with the St. Peter van. The full version of Sr. Guest's account was published in the October 1933 issue of *The Field at Home*:

On Sunday evening, July 16, 1933, the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, we, Srs. Barton, Walsh and I decided to prepare our new St. Peter's Van for the summer's catechetical work. Until then, it had been resting quietly in the spacious yard at our Camp Morton Convent, Manitoba, open for inspection by anyone who was interested in viewing it.

With the kind assistance of Fr. Joseph Kreciszewski, the pastor of Camp Morton, everything was put in readiness for an early morning's start. Then followed a lively discussion on what time to set out. Sister Walsh suggested 5:00 a.m., reasoning that at such an early hour, traffic along the road would be almost nil, and in case of an accident, we would be spared the humiliation of spectators. Sister Barton thought 6:00 a.m. would be best, while I considered that 7:00 a.m. would be the ideal time. Eventually, Fr. Kreciszewski closed the discussion by agreeing with me!

Accordingly, we rose at 5:30 a.m. - I shudder when I think of the unearthly hour we should have had to rise if Sr. Walsh had gained her point. We received Holy Communion, had breakfast; then saw to it that our faithful guard-dog, a black retriever, Shadow, was comfortably housed for the summer. Then came the bustle of starting. Anxious queries and reminders were heard from various points of activity. 'How many knives and forks should we take?'

'Do you think we should take a broom?' 'Don't forget the corkscrew.' 'Where is that can-opener?' 'How many collars should we take?' 'Do you think we need three or four pillows?' etc., etc., ad infinitum.

At last we were actually on the road. Sr. Barton, the driver, was apprehensive about crossing the rickety wooden bridge that connected Camp Morton with the main road. We said extra special prayers to our good friends - St. Peter, St. Christopher and St. Joseph. The bridge did hold. From that time on, Sr. Walsh, with map in hand, became the "navigator", and Sr. Guest, the "general adviser".

All went well as far as we were concerned, although the same might not be said of two

old ladies we met along the way. [A House-Trailer in the thirties was a startling object] They were driving a wagon and when they sighted "St. Peter" coming towards them, they were so astounded that they drove into the ditch to leave the path clear. There they sat - one facing north, the other south - looking as though they had heard the sound of Gabriel's trumpet. Further on, we saw a man cutting wood by the roadside. At sight of the trailer, he halted, his axe in mid-air and stood gazing at us as though petrified until we passed from view.

At Gimli, too, the people seemed amazed at our novel caravan; we did not stay there long, but hastened to Matlock, our first catechetical objective. We reached this village about 9:00 a.m., and after some searching, found a suitable place for parking in a spacious farmyard. We then started on the expansion of St. Peter. Some kind neighbours came to assist us. By 11:00 a.m., the Van had been transformed into a comfortable wee house and we were all settled for our week's work. Curiosity had attracted a number of boys and these volunteered to cut down some trees to make a clearing in which we might teach. We accepted their offer. When we returned, a little later, to inspect our open-air classroom, we were amazed to find they had cut down eleven large trees.

It was decided that Sr. Barton should go to Foley, a settlement some twelve miles distant to prepare a class for First Communion. ...

That afternoon, I conducted our first catechism class. In the open space lately occupied by the eleven trees, the children squatted around me on convenient logs and stones. My first task was to discover how much they knew. That God made them and that they would go to Heaven if they were good seemed to be the full extent of their religious knowledge. I taught them how to make the Sign of the Cross and told them the stories of Creation and Redemption. The sun was hot and numerous mosquitoes accompanied my instructions with their distinctive "buzz" orchestra, a kind of music I have not yet learned to appreciate. I was not sorry to dismiss the class when Sr. Walsh returned at 4:30 p.m.

That night, Sr. (Walsh) and I scoured the neighbourhood (on foot) in search of pupils. This expedition was successful but there were a few disappointments. At one place a woman told us she had a boy of 14, but she didn't think he would want to study catechism. On our return home, we met the lad himself and told him about our catechism class. 'Oh, I'm not interested in religion,' was his response. We used every argument we could think of to try to change his attitude but with no apparent result. Sr. Walsh, nothing daunted, kept saying, 'We'll get him yet.'

In another one-room cottage, we found a family of should-be Catholics - father, mother and four children. The mother was rocking a baby and the father, a very gruff-looking man who spoke no English, was watching us suspiciously from a corner. We asked if the three older children could come to catechism. The father, plainly hostile, finally consented to allow them to come for one day, which they did. Cases like these will be given special attention by our Sisters when they return for fall teaching.

Across the road from us, a farmer kept 27 cows. We had not noticed them particularly on our first evening but at 4:00 a.m. the next morning, the rattling of milk pails and the clanging of cow-bells reminded us forcibly of our four-footed neighbours. However, we refused to allow such trifles to disturb our slumber for long and were soon fast asleep again. At seven o'clock we were rudely awakened by warm breath on our faces. Two curious cows had somehow managed to get their heads through the van windows, and while one had its head a few inches from my face, the other was bestowing the same attention on Sr. Walsh. We extricated ourselves from this embarrassing position. Though we like cows, we prefer them to keep at a respectful distance. Thereafter, we found it advisable to get dressed early and say our prayers outside so as not to be at

home for our morning visitors.

That day about 30 children arrived for catechism. Our kind neighbours offered to let us teach in their houses, an offer which we gladly accepted; this was certainly a great improvement over the sun-parched, mosquito-haunted open classroom of the previous afternoon.

In the evening, the weather was so stiflingly hot that we lay out on rugs on the ground as long as possible. Heavy clouds hung low on the horizon. At eleven p.m. we prepared for a storm by putting up the Van curtains and leaving a lantern and matches within easy reach. At two a.m., we were awakened by rumblings of thunder. At 2:30 a.m., the storm broke in all its fury. Vivid flashes of lightning rent the sky, followed by heavy crashes of thunder; the rain came down in torrents. We lighted the lantern and put up the wooden doors provided for this emergency. Sr. Walsh then settled down to sleep. For me, sleep was out of the question. This night's experience taught us that the van, when erected, should be supported at each corner by blocks of wood.

At intervals, I sprinkled Sister generously with holy water, not forgetting myself, of course.

'Why are you staying up?' Sister enquired presently. 'So I can get out quickly if anything happens to the Van.' However, in spite of my fears, nothing did happen. By dawn, the storm had passed and nature once more wore a smiling face.

Our catechism classes were held twice a day - Sr. Walsh instructing in the morning and I in the afternoon. After a day or two, Sr. Walsh had taught the class to sing a few hymns. One afternoon during my class, they all enquired eagerly, 'When are we going to sing?' Singing not being one of my strong points, I temporized with, 'What hymns did Sister teach you?' They were not slow in giving me the list and then waited expectantly for me to start the music. Realizing that it was up to me to do something, I said. 'I'm afraid I don't know these hymns; suppose you try singing them yourselves.' They did so, evidently with much enjoyment.

My great ambition was to teach them the 'Our Father' before leaving, so I had them say it by heart several times every afternoon. One day, Sr. Walsh said to me, 'What are you doing to those children; they want to pray all the time!' 'When they come to me from you, they want to sing all the time.' Then we had a good laugh. 'Between us,' commented Sister, 'they should know how to sing and pray.'

One day an old Ukrainian woman came to our class and listened reverently to our prayers. Afterwards, she told us in broken English that she had two grown-up boys and she would like a book to teach them about their religion. We gladly supplied her with a catechism and some Catholic literature.

During our stay at Matlock, we were the recipients of much kindness and consideration both from the children and their parents, and especially from the family by whose home we had erected our 'house.' We were loath to leave here after ten days, but with a promise to renew the work here at regular intervals in the fall, we planned to set out for Inwood, about 25 miles distant. First, Sr. Walsh drove to Foley to pick up Sr. Barton who had been staying there with a family while she prepared a class for First Communion. The three of us were needed for Inwood where we expected to meet and teach 120 children who have had little or no instruction in their religion.

The experiences on this summer trip were so different from the usual that Sr. Alice Walsh decided to write her version of the October 1933 issue of *The Field at Home*:

Next to the person who says, "Oh you're taking your umbrella, I shan't need mine." is the annoying one who predicts all kinds of dire happenings when something new is attempted.

Now, there is 'St. Peter,' the Van, you know - . Seemingly, all we had to do was couple it to the car and pull it around the countryside where we were to teach. If we had been attempting a flight to the North Pole in a home-made airplane, we could not have been regarded with more pessimistic faces than we were when we started out for Matlock with the Van. Pessimism never helped any cause yet. As the small thin Sister said to the medium-sized Sister, "Even if we are headed for death, we must not show it on our countenances."

After the first ten days about which the tall thin Sister has already written, we were to move to a district about 25 miles further west. Prudence being one of our virtues, we carefully enquired which of the many roads was the best to take with our two thousand pound appendage. The information that one Sister received was so much at variance with what each of the other two had received that we decided to leave the Van behind, and go on a journey of exploration.

Experience is what you get when you are looking for something else. When we chose to follow the most direct route, we proved the truth of that statement. Stones, wobbly bridges, broken culverts, and huge stones. Stones and more stones - until we were dizzy! Then the inevitable happened - a flat tire! That would not have been serious except for one thing - we had forgotten to bring along our perfectly good spare. It was safely lodged in the Van about 15 miles back. To have been wrecked in the Sahara would not have been more appalling (so it seemed to us) than to be where we were in the midst of wild bush country with nothing to read, and - still worse - nothing to eat.

After a half-hour's wait, a youth emerged from the bush and blandly asked if we were in trouble. As we had removed the punctured tire and the car was sitting on a jack, we felt he was rather lacking in imagination, but we didn't tell him so. He said he knew a man who lived a mile away, who had a car. He might be home, and in the latter event would be able to patch the tire.

He departed with the tire - the cause of all our misery - on his back; we, with spirits far below par, settled ourselves in the most comfortable position possible for a long and tiresome wait. One of us - the tall thin Sister - did have a volume of G.K. Chesterton with her, but as reading G.K.C. didn't seem to be the most appealing under the circumstances, we tucked it away for a future happier day.

Time dragged on. Like St. Paul, we suffered hunger and thirst, though perhaps not so patiently. The medium-sized suddenly remembered that she had some sandwiches in a paper bag. With eager anticipation, we watched her unfold the precious package. Two lettuce sandwiches appeared. The lettuce, surely had passed the prime of life - it was wilted and the bread petrified (probably from fright). Noticing the suspicious and penetrating glances directed at the collation, the medium-sized Sister, divulged that it was a week old. The tall thin Sister and the small thin Sister mutually agreed - for the first time - that they had not yet reached the point of starvation where they could eat hardware. So the middle-sized Sister ate the two sandwiches herself, every bit.

At 6:00 p.m., after two hours' wait, just when we were thinking that we should have to spend the night beneath the stars, the young man, like Sir Lochinvar, appeared out of the west rolling the wheel before him. With our assistance, he replaced it on the car and we were off. In a short time we surprised ourselves by arriving at the town of Inwood.

While parked at the local gas station, discussing whether we should continue or return to the Van, we heard - in this land of strangers - "Well, for the love of Mike, the Sisters of Service!" We looked into the amused and kindly face of Mr. O'Connor, the station agent, and a Knight of Columbus. Mrs. O'Connor then put in an appearance to add to her husband's entreaty that we spend the night with them. Very soon, three dusty missionaries were comfortably settled in the hospitable home of this lovely Catholic family. 'Twas then that we resumed the cheerful expressions that we had lost en route.

The next morning, escorted, or rather led by our kind host in his car, we made our way to the little mission church, where Mass is said about twice a year by a priest from the city. There we met the nearest neighbours and planned to bring the Van the following day by a longer but safer route.

The van, up and put in order, we were ready for business. The spot selected was ideal, near the mission church, surrounded by trees and with a friendly family across the way. In a short time, groups of shock-headed boys and shy little girls came running down the road. If the girls were shy, the boys decidedly were not. Within fifteen minutes of their arrival, they had, in a burst of Samsonian ardor, uprooted four young trees from the churchyard, stripped the covering off the Van chains and emptied the water tanks. To prevent ourselves from becoming nervous wrecks, we rang the bell and ushered them into the Church. As they filed past us, we could not help but wonder how many of them would be able to keep the Faith against the tremendous odds they have to face.

This district around Inwood is typical of hundreds in the West. Far from Church and priest, the children have grown up completely deprived of that inspiring religious atmosphere that children need.

It is to these little ones that we travel every summer. As we talk to them about holy things, - of their souls, and of the commandments; they look at us with surprised and interested eyes. It is all so new to them, and we fear lest the tears in our hearts might show in our eyes with the sadness and pity of it. ...

From an article in the October 1933 issue of *The Field at Home*, Sr. Margaret Guest recounted an interesting experience at Winnipeg Beach. When she and Sr. Alice Walsh arrived at the school, they found a car with a large red sign on it which read: "JESUS SAVES." An elderly man and a younger one were already in the schoolroom. At the Sisters' approach, they both went to the back of the room and calmly seated themselves. The Sisters proceeded to sing with great fervor the hymn of "Faith of our Fathers" and then said the prayers as usual. After that, Sr. Guest read and explained the lesson for the day and Sr. Walsh took her class outside and the two men stayed for Sr. Guest's catechism lesson. At recess, they retreated to their car which was filled with club bags of literature and pictures etc. They then departed. Sr. Guest added: "The children told us that these men came to school last Friday even though they had been told by the School Secretary not to come. They are certainly persistent if not importunate. While admiring the zeal and perseverance of these men for trying to promote what they believe, we cannot but hope that some Catholics would show a similar zeal in trying to strengthen the Faith of the many Catholic children in isolated places."

Religious Vacation Schools in Northern Ontario

In the spring of 1933, Fr. Daly came to the novitiate with a request from Fr. Carey of Port Arthur for two Sisters to teach catechism in Northern Ontario. After a discussion with Sister General Florence Regan and Novice Mistress Margaret Guest, Sr. Pauline Coates, assistant to the Novice Mistress, was assigned to go to Northern Ontario with novice Ruth Mill. In this edited version, Sr. Coates recalled that catechetical tour in 1987 during an oral history interview with Sr. Adua Zampese at Niagara Retirement Manor in St. Catharines, Ontario:

We [Srs. Pauline Coates and Ruth Mill] went to Port Arthur and stayed there with the Sisters of St. Joseph overnight. The following morning, the pastor Fr Carey, picked us up and took us to our first mission. On the way North, Father asked us if we had to stay together because he had a little group of Indian children further north that he would like one of us to teach. I looked questioningly at Sr. Mill. She assured me that she could manage alone. I said to Father, 'Are you sure that Sr. Mill will be well looked after?' Father replied, 'She'll get all the help she needs; you.'

I went by train. As the train rattled along, it got darker and darker. My destination was way, way north on a one track line. Just as I was thinking to myself, "I wonder how much further it is!" the train stopped and the conductor announced, "End of the line!" It was very dark; there was only one big light. I could not see the man who had come to meet me but I heard him say, 'Are you the Sister?' 'Yes,' I replied. He took me by the hand and said, 'Now, we have to go for a little ride on a jigger. [It is a small vehicle operated manually by one who services the railway tracks] Fearfully, I said, 'Where am I going?' He reassured me, 'Don't be afraid; you're all right. I climbed up on the front seat. I felt a woman's hand; she whispered, 'Don't be afraid, Sister, I am Mrs. LaCasse and this is my husband; we are going to take care of you.'

I don't know how many miles we went on this jigger. It was dark, dark, dark, dark. Finally, we arrived at their home. I found myself in a large room - like a hall with bunks all around. There were also little rooms that held only one bunk. "Open the door of that little room", Mrs. LaCasse said, 'This is where you'll sleep. We'll put a curtain over your door; don't get up until I bring you some hot water in the morning.' I slept well. On bringing the hot water, my hostess said, 'When you have dressed, just come out and we'll introduce you.'

After dressing, I stepped out from behind the curtain thinking, 'Here goes!' I looked out at a long table where eight Fire Rangers were eating breakfast. They expected to see a nun in a black robe and veil; they seemed pleasantly surprised to see me, a young woman at that time with blonde hair, no hat and dressed in a neat tailored grey uniform. We were soon good friends. After breakfast, Mr. LaCasse called, 'OK, Sister, it's time to go to school.' We mounted the jigger again and off we went. I don't know how many miles we travelled, but it seemed far to me. Then we walked through the bush to a one-room school. 'The children should be here," said Mr. LaCasse. There were fourteen waiting for us.

As he sped away, Mr. LaCasse called back, 'We'll come for you at four o'clock.' I had my lunch with me and ate with the children. I really loved those children. They were all ages but none of them knew much about their religion but were willing to learn.

One day Mrs. LaCasse said, 'I think more children should be coming. 'Are you afraid to go with me into the bush?' I assured her that I was not. She said she'd be back at 4 p.m. and we could go together. We did walk through the bush to visit the homes, and found some of them very comfortable and homey. The parents' chief concern was, 'Would the children be able to make their First Communion?' I replied, 'Definitely, they would, in about nine or ten days.' In fact, Father had said that if they were not prepared now, he did not know when they would have another opportunity. I taught basic lessons and we had games at recesses.

One day Father phoned and named the date for First Communion to be held in the classroom. I said to Mrs. LaCasse, 'If I'd known that I would have a First Communion class, I would have brought some veils and ribbon.' She suggested some lovely fine window netting that she had on hand. It served us well; we cut it up into as many squares as needed and on First Communion morning, we rose early to pick daisies to make wreathes.

I shall never forget the ceremony. The little girls were sweet in their white veils and wreathes. Boys and girls sang hymns that I had taught them. The parents were delighted. I loved those children; they were so genuinely good; entirely unspoiled and holy. Regretfully, I had to say good-bye telling the children that I had to return now to teach other boys and girls.

Then I said good-bye to my kind hosts and to all the Fire Rangers. Incidentally, I learned that Mrs. LaCasse was from Port Arthur and was the only woman taking care of the Fire Rangers. May God bless her! When I reached the station, I almost wept. There

on a tree plank sat all the children waiting to see me off! I shall never forget those children and I often wonder what happened to them! I do hope that our correspondence Lessons from Edmonton helped them to learn more about our Lord, His Church and His teachings.

I re-joined Sr. Mill and learned that she, too, had had a fantastic time.

Fr. Carey towed us from place to place in his trailer. He would leave the two of us parked in a church yard. During our first night in the trailer, there was a loud harsh sound. 'Snoring,' I said. 'Don't make a sound!' We got up early and went outside to explore. Along came a big dog wagging his tail. He seemed to know we were talking about him. We often laughed about that.

It was an interesting tour. We were away from the hustle and bustle of city and town life. We spent the summer being towed from place to place, accepted what came our way and made the best of it. It was hard work but we had lots of fun and enjoyed it."

CARIBOO AND OTHER CATECHETICAL TOURS ACROSS CANADA, 1934

Before the summer tours began, Toronto Archbishop McNeil, one of the co-founders of the Sister of Service, died on May 25, 1934. His early initiative and support gave the community the necessary impetus throughout Canada. At his own request, successive superiors at the Edmonton correspondence school sent him yearly reports of the students and of the mission's progress. In turn, he had sent encouragement, advice, catechisms and other materials to assist the school.

In the July 1934 issue of *The Field of Home*, Fr. Daly paid a moving tribute to Archbishop McNeil whom he described as the Father and Friend of the Sisters of Service without whose guidance and influence the community would not be in existence. He noted the archbishop's care and affection for the Sisters and their personal letters. Fr. Daly wrote: "His great love for Church and Canada had given him a vision of what he hoped the Institute's foundation and development would mean in time to Canada. It was the Archbishop's Catholicism and enlightened patriotism that had caused him to sponsor and help this modern religious movement which at its birth was a departure from the traditional path of religious. History had proved that the Archbishop was right in this apostolic venture."

During the summer months of 1934, every possible Sister across Canada went on catechetical tours. Sr. Frances Church, who had visited Princeton, B.C. and its environs in 1932 with the St. George's Van, returned to that district in the summer of 1934 with Sr. McConway from the Edmonton correspondence school. Sr. Church wrote as follows:

We were very fortunate in our Princeton-Blackburn work. Everyone was so kind that I cannot find words to express it. In both places the people had prepared a little cottage for us. Some kind donor had loaned it and the generous ladies had put in necessary furniture. Although these people were very poor, they provided all the food we needed. When we were not invited out for a meal, we were able to do our own cooking.

We had the same children at Princeton as we had had two years before. The intervening years had made the children more eager to see us and to want to learn more about our religion. We organized a good children's choir. The children learned to sing for Benediction, including a Latin hymn to Our Lady, also the "Adoremus" and "Laudate". We were fortunate this time in gaining the interest of three ladies who have promised to carry on teaching the little ones. One of them, a convert of two years, will play the organ for the children's choir.

In addition, we have prepared eight girls as aspirants for the Children of Mary. The priest received them into Our Lady's Sodality on the Sunday after we left. In the evenings, one little girl learned to tat and do some fancy sewing and crocheting. After we leave, the group plans to have work parties on Wednesday evenings. We hope these enthusiastic children will persevere and that our efforts will be lasting.

On our previous trip to Blackburn, we had time to visit only the parents. This time we were able to teach the children for a week. We lived at the teacher's cottage where we held our classes. We seem to be "on top of the world. At least, it feels that way. I should have liked to stay here longer, but hopefully, this will come in time.

At W. the children were very eager to learn about God. Even some children of other Faiths were interested in our work. In our class, was a bright fifteen-year old boy who had been taking correspondence lessons from an Anglican correspondence school. His mother was an atheist. Through the good influence of his sister, he attended our

catechism lessons and now gives every sign of becoming an exemplary Catholic.

On September 2, we had our final First Communion ceremony. After Mass the children presented each of us with a stick of gum, a chocolate bar and twenty-five cents, tokens of appreciation and gratitude from the dear children.

An excerpt from Sr. McConway's account:

In the first territory where we settled, our work took an unusual turn. The priest asked us to take a census of the district. This may sound like a statement of prosaic fact, but actually it was to us an invitation that for several reasons brought great joy. It enabled us to get out into the very heart of the bush, to visit little hidden homes, meet people and share meals with them as we listened to their hopes for the future. Before setting out on our visits, however, we taught from nine in the morning until three-thirty. Then with our horse and buggy, we visited until eight-thirty.

From a total of seventy-nine homes visited, we discovered that only seven were English-speaking. The rest were New Canadians, who had not yet learned the language of their adopted country. It was a delight to find that most of the families had been met by our Sisters at the ports. We had little difficulty in finding a place in their hearts. I felt the strength of our work when we promised to link the little ones with our correspondence course. Our experiences seemed like a triple contact, the one strengthening the other and stretching from one generation to the next.

God certainly consoled us in our wee corner and blessed the good prayers that were following us. During our trip, we had twenty-three Baptisms, several marriages revalidated and instructed over two hundred children.

At our next mission, we stayed ten days and prepared twenty-five children for First Communion. We had to smile when we looked at the confessional in the poor little church. It consisted of a prie-dieu and a nail keg with a board on top of it. For First Communion Sunday, we almost stripped the bush of its poplar trees and "furnished" the whole place until it looked like a veritable woodland sanctuary. The effect was beautiful and amazed no one more than ourselves.

The Cariboo Tour of Srs. Donnelly and Faye,

While Srs. Church and McConway toured the Princeton-Blackburn territory, Srs. Irene Faye of the Vancouver residence and Sr. Catherine Donnelly of the Edmonton catechetical house were assigned to a request from Fr. A. L. McIntyre to teach children in the vast Cariboo area. In many places, it would be necessary for the Sisters to sleep in the car and perhaps cook their own meals. The car was adapted for sleeping so that the front seat could be let down to provide a bed.

Settlers raised cattle and horses in the 300-square miles (483-square kilometres) territory of mountainous territory with dense woods. To obtain the best possible results, Fr. McIntyre had arranged the Sisters' itinerary. Accounts of the tour by Srs. Faye and Donnelly were published in the July and October 1934 issues of *The Field at Home*:

There is a great spirit of hospitality among the mountain people of the Cariboo Country. We have met with much kindness all along the way. The roads over which we traveled were very narrow and most irregular. They were also very high, right on the edge of the Fraser Canyon and close in to the foot of the mountain. Because these roads were in good condition, there was no real travel danger.

Our first stop was at Lytton, about 180 miles northeast of Vancouver where the Thompson and Fraser Rivers converge. From this vantage point we could see the blue-

green waters of the Thompson disappear into the murky torrent of the Fraser. While there, we visited a lady whom Sr. Donnelly had met as she travelled West by train. This lady welcomed us warmly and gave us several jars of fruit. Later, we visited her daughter who keeps a bakeshop. For fifteen cents, we got enough buns and cakes to last a week.

While getting gas at a garage, we discovered that our server was a good Italian Catholic. When he learned what sort of work we were doing, he gave us fifty cents. Then he added, 'I think I must be going to die soon because I seem to be getting kinder every day!'.

On the way to Clinton, we stopped beside a clearing to have our lunch. A lady from a nearby house told us we were welcome. After some conversation with her, we discovered that she had been baptized a Catholic. Her mother was Catholic but her father was a staunch Protestant. When the family came West, they were associated with the Protestant side of the family who did not approve of Catholics. She had married a non-Catholic, but had been married by a priest. She had no Catholic friends and no one to encourage her to attend Church so she had not been to Mass for a long time. As we were leaving, she gave us a quarter and asked us to light some candles in a church for her. We promised to pray for her, gave her a Rosary and proceeded on our way.

Sr. Faye wrote a letter to the Toronto Motherhouse that was published in the October 1934 issue of *The Field at Home*:

Big Bar Creek, B.C.,
May 21, 1934

We arrived here about supper time and decided to sleep in the car. Mrs. K., a neighbour, said she would be glad to give us our meals. Delicious meals they were, too - home-made bread and butter, fresh eggs, cream and chicken etc.

The people are so widely-scattered here that it was necessary to divide our time and spend one week on the mountain; the other by the creek about 12 miles distant. The children are very bright and learn quickly. I asked one girl if she knew any hymns. She answered, "I don't know what you mean." This is true. Neither grown-ups nor children had ever heard of a hymn. We found that they love to sing and taught them "O Lord I Am Not Worthy", "Mary Dearest Mother", and "Holy God We Praise Thy Name". They were very happy to learn these hymns and sang them well.

We stayed a week on the mountain and then descended two thousand feet to the Creek and parked the car under two immense cottonwood trees. The cotton was falling just like snow. There are mountains all round us, also many cowboys and ranches.

Father left us names of some people we should visit. One is a young woman who lives three miles over the mountain from here. Since it was impossible to take the car, we had to go on horseback. I have never ridden a horse before but I was determined to do my best. A nice quiet horse was picked for me. We got along beautifully until the horse started to trot and then I seemed to be going up when he was coming down. When I got off the horse, my knees were shaking enough to play a tune. Violet, whom we visited, promised to come to Mass on Sunday and to bring her baby to be baptized. On our return trip, I was more used to the horse so didn't bounce so much, but I'll stick to the Essex whenever possible.

One day while telling little Betty, age five, how poor Jesus was and how much

He loved the poor. With a worried look on her face, she asked me, 'Well, does Jesus like me, I have two ten cents?'

Father said Mass on Thursday morning and just as he was putting the vestments away, Violet arrived. She had missed a wagon ride with her cousin and had to come on horseback with her two month old baby. We admired her courage.

If you want to see true hospitality, come to the Cariboo! The people are extremely good to us and do all possible to make us as comfortable as can be under the circumstances.

Sr. Donnelly wrote a series of letters to the Toronto Motherhouse that were published in the October 1934 issue of *The Field at Home*:

Springhouse, BC

June 1, 1934.

We visited the most distant family in the Pea Vine Valley, south of the Fraser River Banks, and took with us two girls to help them prepare for their First Holy Communion. On our way back, we picked up more children until the car overflowed. After depositing them at the school, we returned for another group. We taught the children for two hours; then took two carloads part way home again. We then returned to our camp for our Supper at 7:00 p.m. We had not had a spare moment to eat since ten that morning. The road to the Pea Vine was a typical mountain road, dropping suddenly, then climbing by switch-back trails along narrow stretches of road cut out of the rock high on the edge of a precipice. Slow careful driving was necessary which puts the passengers in the back seat to sleep and wakens them suddenly when one drives over a rock. At the end of that day, we had scarcely enough energy left to prepare our car-bed for the night.

The rain fell heavily during the night. We tried to forget the fact that we must open our eyes to a drenched world. There was only some old canvass covering our belongings under the trees. Then, a welcome voice at our window called to us, "We have come to make a shelter for you. You don't need to get up until it is ready." These "Good Samaritans" cut poles for props under some Jackpine trees and improvised a roof of some binder-canvass and branches. Then under this, they dug a hole in the ground for a fire, chopped some wood and started a fire. I drove our car alongside this shelter; our kind friends departed and left us to our devotions and breakfast.

Being short of gas, we decided to go to the nearest centre, William's Lake. We passed the clay road and the slippery road safely and felt sure the worst was over. Suddenly, the car leaped a ditch, nosed up a bank and over. One front wheel got caught on a high gnarled pine root and jammed; the other front wheel and a hind wheel were left suspended and spinning in the air.

Sister Faye went over to a nearby cabin to ask for help and the kind old man who lived there hurried to our rescue. We chopped the root away from behind the front wheel, brought pine boughs to put under the suspended back wheel, made several attempts to move but failed. It was getting late and raining hard so Sr. Faye set off walking to town to find a garage. Our kind assistant had been very ill so I wanted him to give up and go in out of the rain. Instead, he went for a shovel. I did the digging and made a hole under the front wheel into which it finally dropped. Then the back wheel dropped on to gunny sacks which the old gentleman had packed under it. I backed the car down into the ditch. Although

we did not expect to get the car back on to the road, we did, Thank God!

I caught up with Sr. Faye just as she stepped out of the garage. No damage showed on the car. After filling the tank with gas, we got the chains tightened, checked the battery, had supper with a friend, then headed back on the home trail. This time, we kept to the middle of the road all the way back. As we approached our tree shelter, we saw there was nothing left but the canvas roof and the hole in the ground. Mrs. I, our hostess, was running towards us from her house.

'We have fixed up the milkhouse for you,' she said. 'We cleaned it out and packed up the cracks with moss and there's a stove and a fire.' Blessed news! We made for our new home with haste. I sat and gazed at the glowing stove, making myself sure it was not a dream. It was such a beautiful stove; the most delightfully handsome one I ever saw. The end and front doors were all smashed and wired up. A flat piece of rust served for the top where you put in the wood. It had only three legs and was white with age; it has certainly seen much "Cariboo" life. Its red pipes are decorated with holes and rusty frilled edges.

As the rain poured down outside, I hugged that gift of loveliness and comfort, and blessed the warm hearts of its owners. Some red coals popped out of the holes in the broken front door and lay glowing with hospitality and welcome on the little iron platform. Our host then brought in a sheepskin and laid it on the clay floor before the fire. I drove the car in front of the door so that we could step from our "parlour" to our bedroom without getting more than a sprinkling.

The rain continued to pelt down the next day. The family were obliged to mend the roof of their own house. The mother came to ask us if her children might stay with us while they repaired their leaky roof. Six of them came and sat crowded together on two little boxes perilously near the stove in our tiny cabin which is only 8' X 8'.

The rain delayed our classes but we hope to get caught up by Saturday. For First Communion, I have a class of fourteen who have had very little schooling. It seems a shame that they have no opportunity of learning about their religion for First Communion. The little we can do this year is to provide a foundation to build on and hopefully, our lessons by correspondence will be helpful.

St. Joseph's Mission,
June 14, 1934

Here we are at the Oblate Mission, taking a day's rest. The Sisters welcomed us as though we were their own. It is very lovely here and reminds me of our own Novitiate. The children answer the Mass in common and sing hymns. It is so wonderful to be near the Blessed Sacrament again!

We arrived at our next mission, Meldrum Creek where we learned that most of the people were leaving the next day for "the Stampede". We had, therefore, only one night for instruction. Father asked us to try to get the children ready for Confession; he would say Mass the next morning at seven and hear Confessions at six-thirty. There was only an hour and a half to teach them and I scarcely knew where to begin. I left it to the Holy Spirit and started to talk. I went from one thing to another and did not stop talking the whole time. All were very interested, even the oldest who was about twenty-five years old. In the morning, Father said that eight-year old Irvine should make his First Communion. This little lad has a million-dollar smile and his happiness seemed complete.

Then we returned to the Mission and received another hearty welcome from the Sisters. In a way, we shall be sorry to leave here, but we are glad to be on the

road again doing our work. There is so very much to be done and so very little time to do it!

Gravelle Ferry,
June 19, 1934

We are now at Gravelle Ferry, not far from Quesnel. We came up here to instruct a family. Fr. McIntyre came along too. Father had never been able to reach here before because of the bad roads. It is not very good now, but if it keeps fine, we should be able to get out a week from today. The Ferryman and his family live here and he operates the Government Ferry across the Quesnel River. Every day we cross the ferry and then walk half a mile to the house. In this land of deer and moose, the surroundings are beautiful. A few miles farther north are cariboo and bears. This morning across the river from us, we spotted three beautiful white-tail deer.

The day after we arrived, Father said Mass; then left promising to return in a week. It soon began to rain. Our new friends, the father and oldest son, arrived in the afternoon with a camp stove, some wood and canvas to put up an improvised tent for us. Not only that, they also brought us fresh vegetables, milk, eggs and wild strawberries.

There were six children in the family for instruction. They were very attentive and eager to learn. Even though they had never sung together, they were eager to learn the three hymns that we taught them. They tried very hard and we were just as pleased as if they had been the greatest singers in the Cariboo. Everything was beautiful on First Communion Day so that it was a great day of Joy for all present.

From this place, we went to Quesnel, where Father McIntyre wished us to visit some people. We then returned to the Mission where we were again heartily welcomed by the Sisters. While there, we had the privilege of meeting Fr. Thomas, a pioneer of the Cariboo, who has been serving this region for the past thirty-seven years. He used to look after both the Whites and the Indians but for the past three years since Fr. McIntyre came, Fr. Thomas gives his whole attention to the Indians. Everyone around here knows, loves and respects him. He is very approachable and has a good word to say to and about everybody.

Vancouver,
July 19, 1934

We arrived here Monday night quite safely. The Cariboo experience was certainly worth while. We travelled over 2,200 miles and gas was 42 1/2 cents most of the time.

After our visit to Quesnel, we went southward to Canein Lake, Forest Grove, Hawkin's Lake and Bradley Creek. At this latter place there is a dense forest which reaches to the rear of the school. In this forest the children often see an old bear fattening up on berries.

Before this summer's experience we were unaware that there existed in Canada a parish as large as the Cariboo and Fraser Plateau. This vast territory comprises thousands of square miles of mountains and valleys most of which are heavily wooded.

We have found child characters that are quite as interesting and promising as any that are mentioned in stories by the best Canadian authors. How fortunate that they have an understanding guardian of their souls in the person of Fr. McIntyre who is ever on the alert to inspire to full growth the best that is in them. Father is truly an artist missionary. We have seen him in action, a rare privilege.

We have also noticed that non-Catholics look forward to his coming and eagerly seek his blessing. During his three years of constant traveling and organizing, this Shepherd of the Mountains has "removed the stumps" - a truly colossal task. He has thrown himself heart, soul and brain into his work and hazarded all he had.

Fr. McIntyre wrote of his gratitude to the Sisters during that summer of 1934:

Clinton, B.C.,
July 15, 1934

Dear Sisters:

With genuine regret do I say good-bye, and God bless you. I am very glad indeed to have met you and known you long enough to be able to say in all truth and sincerity that the Lord must be pleased with your zealous, intelligent efforts to save souls for him. I am sure I am, and, even now would ask you to put yourselves on order for my district for next year. Later on, I will write good Fr. Daly to whose kindness and missionary zeal we are indebted for your efficient and willing services this season.

I very much regret one thing, and that is my inability to do much for you in a financial way for reasons well known to you as to me. It is unfortunate, perhaps, that the work of co-operating with Almighty God in the salvation of souls requires the material aid of filthy lucre; but as things are now, they look for it in garages, filling stations and stores.

The enclosed small cheque is to help you on your way home. If you don't happen to need it on the road, kindly give it to Sr. Church, who may be able to find a corner where it can be put to work. It goes with a good heart in which there is deep appreciation of your kindness and assistance in the work assigned me by the Archbishop.

In conclusion, let me assure you of a place daily in my Mass and prayers, and may I ask a wee memento in your devotions when you chance to think of the wandering shepherd in the valleys between the hills. May God bless you always.

Sincerely and gratefully in Christ,
A.L. McIntyre

The Sisters at the Vancouver residence began to reach out to the city's Chinese children, who were receiving religious instruction from the Grey Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of Pembroke, Ontario. A means of transportation was needed to convey the scattered children to the Mission School. On September 5, 1934, Fr. Sharkey, SFM, wrote to Fr. Daly:

Dear Fr. Daly,

I am writing to ask a little favour from you or perhaps I should say, a big favour. It is in regard to the Van that was given to your Sisters here in the West some years ago. When visiting the Hostel here a short time ago, I happened to ask about it. Sister Superior told me it had not been used for a couple of years and was lying idle in the garage. I had heard that this Van was not very practical for the interior of the province and was wondering if you intended to sell it.

We have, as you know, Father, a Kindergarten School for Chinese here in the East end of Vancouver. They are little tots and many live a long distance from our mission and must be collected every morning by the Sisters. The continual rainy weather during the greater part of the year, makes this job a very difficult one. Then, too, there are

numerous children that we could get for both the Kindergarten and Sunday School if they did not live so far away. If you were thinking of disposing of the Van, it certainly would be a blessing to us. We are too poor to pay very much for it, but we would do what we could.

The Van would indeed put our school on the map, and would certainly play no small part in the organization of our difficult work here. You have always been most interested in our work; you have often helped it by a kindly word. I am sure you will forgive the presumption I take in writing this letter. Will be anxious to hear from you. God bless you. Say a little prayer for us.

On September 10, 1934, Fr. Daly replied to Fr. Sharkey's request:

I have just received your letter concerning the Sisters of Service' Van which is now in Vancouver.

We are willing to assist you by all means in your wonderful work. Here is my proposition. Make use of the Van during the year for the purpose you outline in your letter. The Van will remain the property of the Sisters of Service and during the months of June, July and August we shall probably be using it again. The one thing I would ask you to do would be to cover it by sufficient insurance for damage. Naturally, I shall expect that the driver would take good care of it and when not in use it would be under some protection. Let me know if this is agreeable to you. If so, I shall instruct Sr. Church to let you have the use of the Van for the winter season and this will be our willing contribution to your work.

I would also like you to show my letter to His Grace, the Archbishop, so that he may give his approbation to this deal.

Fr. Sharkey replied to Fr. Daly:

I received your very kind letter and cannot express fully how thankful I am to you. You have always been a great friend of our work, and this latest favour only adds to our already great big debt of gratitude to you.

The conditions laid down in your letter re the Van are perfectly satisfactory to me. Insurance has been placed on the Van, a reliable and careful driver hired, and the proper housing of the Van has been seen to. The Archbishop has been shown your letter and he appreciates very much your great kindness.

The Van is already assisting us greatly in our work and will be of increasing value during the winter months. God bless you, Fr. Daly, for your kindness and be assured that we will pray for you and your work always. I had the great consolation just lately of baptizing about thirteen new converts - both children and adults. These are the "first fruits". Please say a little prayer that they may persevere.

This continued use of the van helped to keep it serviceable for both rural and city work.

Religious Vacation Schools in Alberta

During this summer of 1934, two Sisters from the Edmonton correspondence house travelled through parts of Alberta to teach catechism. From Entwistle on July 10, 1934, they sent the following account of their experiences to the Toronto Motherhouse:

We are staying at the little rectory by the church which has just been completed with rough lumber. Fr. Sullivan took our car out through the muskeg to round up seven girls who have not made their First Communion. The only way we can prepare them is to have them stay with us. Teaching all day and cooking for ten really keeps us busy.

Thank God, all is going well.

We have one large front room where the girls sleep at night on camp beds or in sleeping bags. In the morning, they "clear the deck" then set up two benches from the church for their breakfast table. Because there has been so much rain and some of the girls are coughing, Father asked us to have classes indoors. After breakfast, therefore, there is another clean-up and we start class in this room.

We were happily drinking rain water until one day we discovered the girls washing their faces in the rain barrel!"

Sunnybrook, Alta.,
July 14, 1934

We are now at Sunnybrook, on the Calgary highway, sixty miles south of Edmonton. The whole parish is extensive and this particular settlement has mixed nationalities with Hungarians predominating. Many of the families here have been to church but a few times since they settled here. We get the impression that there is sufficient work in this area for a resident priest but at present, this is not possible.

Some people wish to go to Confession but because of a language difficulty are unable to do so; we shall try to get some German-English and Hungarian-English books for them.

All the children speak English but know very little about their religion. Because some adults do not speak English, we take two children - German and Hungarian speaking - with us when we visit families. Having been met by our Sisters at either the port of Halifax or Quebec, several German and Hungarian mothers recognized us as Sisters and greeted us warmly.

All those whom we visit seem very much at home with us and tell us their difficulties - spiritual and temporal. The main spiritual ones are first, that because they cannot speak English they are not able to keep in touch with their religion or go to Confession; second, they do try to come to church on the "Mass Sundays" but very often when roads are bad, Father cannot get through and they have to return home again and again, cold, hungry and disappointed. This causes a gradual weakening of Faith in some of the people and they decide to stay at home and pray. It is easy to understand how they feel and we feel very sad about the situation.

We marvel at the deep Faith of these New Canadians who despite their difficulties continue to be hopeful. This causes us to wonder what we would do if we were in their place.

The people tell us that there is a Hungarian Lutheran minister here who holds services at the scheduled Mass time. Some seem to think that he does this so that people may decide to attend his church rather than go home disappointed. In fact, some persons, evidently discouraged and disappointed when the priest is unable to come, do attend his church rather than return home without attending any service. The minister gives out attractive non-Catholic literature. This literature adds to the confusion. We can see the need for our sending a goodly supply of Catholic reading matter preferably in the language of the people.

So far, we have found thirteen children who have never been baptized and we expect to find many more before we leave here. We are staying with a family who live four miles from the church and each morning we set out in our "one-hoss shay". "Jimmy" our saddle-horse is not used to pulling a vehicle and if he runs all the way, we can reach the church in an hour. He prefers however, to go from one side of the road to the other and when he finds a smooth place for his feet, he stays on it and lets us have the benefit of all the puddles, hills and hollows along the road. We also use Jimmie for visiting families. He serves us very well; in fact, he is becoming quite a missionary.

We have forty children in our class and twelve of these are making their First Communion on Saturday morning. We are grateful for your prayers and ask you to please double them so that we may be able to do some little good for souls in this and other similar areas so rich in opportunities for missionary work.

Published in the January 1935 issue of *The Field at Home*, a mother living on a homestead, about 250 miles north of Edmonton, illustrated the value of the remailing service:

Chard, Mile 210, N.A. Railway
Lac La Biche, Alta.,
December 1934

Dear Sisters:

Having found your address in the Edmonton Journal this fall, we were wondering if your Society sends out Catholic literature.

We have been making our living up here since 1923. We have two children, a boy of 13 years whom we managed to send to school for four years to the Convent at Lac la Biche until our funds would not permit our doing so any longer. We also have a baby boy born a year ago.

Our missionary from Fort McMurray is able to visit us only two or three times a year. Our nearest neighbours, whom we seldom see, live 15 miles away. We have no radio or Victrola, so you may imagine we are very much alone. This is sad, especially for the boy.

If your service includes sending out literature, we would all be grateful to receive it. Either French or English would be welcome although French would be best for the boy; but if you send out only English papers, this would do for all of us. I am of French-Canadian parents, born in the United States but have had only English schooling. My husband is a French Swiss and can read both languages.

We subscribe to the *Sunday Visitor* from the States, which I like very much. We read it over and over. My husband gets the *Journal*, *Free Press* and *Prairie Farmer*. A kind friend sent me a subscription to *Chatelaine*. This sums up all our reading matter and entertainment the year round.

Some reading for the boy would be especially appreciated, particularly religious matter. We do sincerely try to teach him and we say our prayers together every night, morning and on Sundays, but we fear that he may be apt to think that the religious teaching he received at the Convent was more like fairy tales for children. He is a good gentle boy, big and tall and works like a man. As he does not see other children or go to church often, he is very much alone.

Thanking you and hoping to hear from you soon, I am,

Sincerely yours,
Mrs. J.B.C.

In response to this appeal, the Sisters immediately sent literature and catechism lessons. On receipt of these, the mother replied:

Thank you very much for your nice letters, books, literature and catechism lessons. I never expected an answer so soon and with such a lot of interesting things. We received our mail early this morning and I just had time to read over your letter and look quickly at the literature before breakfast. I was all excited about it and so was my boy. After he had read your letter, he said it was too bad we did not know and write sooner.

My husband is away tie-cutting and will not be back for another week. We will wait for him to see the lessons before sending the answers in. My boy would like to send them back tight away, but I want my husband to go over them, too. They are very interesting

and instructive.

I wonder if you can imagine what your religious material will mean to us all, to my boy and to me! The boy goes out working with his Dad and I am always alone with my thoughts all day, nearly the year round. I have not seen a woman since last summer. I really need some reading material so that I will have something to think about while I am busy doing all kinds of housework. I like religious reading because we are ignorant about religious matters and need to learn so much.

I want to tell you that the same week that I wrote to you, I had also written to a Mr. W. S. Douglas, 74th Avenue, Edmonton, to tell him that I could no longer distribute his religious literature around here - Gospels and Sunday school papers from the United Church. I told him we were Catholics and would rather distribute some of our own literature. Since last winter, he has been sending parcels of this nature once in a while. I did not wish to hurt him because he really wished to be kind. I did not, however, like it and burned some of it right away.

I was glad of the opportunity to write and tell him he might as well send the literature to some other district where it would be more appreciated. I do not know how or from whom he got our address. This is just to tell you that I am glad that there are some Catholic Associations doing as much and more than the United Church is doing. I shall send some of your leaflets, "Catholic Facts" to an interested Protestant friend of mine.

I shall write next week to Miss McMahon. Thank you ever so much for giving me her address, and for all your kindness. I shall write again when I return the books.

We shall pray God to bless you and all your dear Sisters for all the good you are doing.

Sincerely yours,
Mrs. J.B.C.

Catechetical Tour in Manitoba

After the school year ended, the teaching Sisters at Camp Morton travelled throughout the months of July and August. In the October 1934 issue of *The Field at Home*, Sr. Margaret Guest wrote of the religious vacation schools conducted by Srs. Alice Walsh and Agnes Dwyer:

"Have you made your First Holy Communion?"

"Have you ever received Holy Communion?"

"Have you been Baptized?"

The only answer from the fifteen-year-old boy to whom these questions were addressed was an expression of absolute bewilderment. He glanced towards his Father, who could speak only enough English to assure us that they were Catholics. The boy was expected to interpret, but the language of religion was unknown to him. An older brother was sent for. Yes, he understood. He had received the Body and Blood of Jesus, not in Canada but in the Old Country. There was no Church here like the one at home. True, there was a Scottish church three miles away, but it was not like their own, and rather than attend it, they decided to leave the church out of their lives. Thus, this younger brother had been denied all the rights of his Catholic birth.

Each day we drove six miles to meet this boy to bring him to the centre for instruction. Did he make his First Communion? No! Three days were all that were left of the allotted time and that was not sufficient to prepare this lad to receive his God, but we intend to provide further instruction through our correspondence course of religion.

To give an account of our two months spent in teaching religion is practically impossible. Each hour of each day was filled with opportunity. "Souls! souls! souls!" seemed to be ringing through the air. Were there difficulties? Oh, yes, minor ones, a bumpy road, broken springs, mosquitoes, etc. In each case the reward was so great

and so immediate that the difficulties were quickly forgotten. Is it a difficult task, after teaching all day, to drive twenty-five miles for a second lesson? No! not when one finds twenty persons who will sit on the bank of a river until 10:00 p.m., tormented by mosquitoes, yet eagerly listening to that oft-repeated story. No, it is not difficult.

In each district to which we are sent, there are always the faithful ones, the "ninety-nine" who await our coming with pleasure. There are others, too, those who know their children need instruction but do not, and sometimes are not able to make the necessary effort to send them. Our objective was and continues to be to try to reach the weaker members of the flock.

As soon as we reached a new district, we questioned the children who came to our first class. "Are there more Catholic families here than are present in this small group?" The answer invariably was "Yes, but the children are not coming for instruction." Some lived too far away. Others were too busy, etc. We brushed these excuses aside and decided that one of us would stay and teach those who had come, while the other taking one child as a guide would set out in search of the absent ones. In one district, the number of pupils was increased from eight to thirty-two; in another, from thirteen to fifty.

Sometimes we asked ourselves, "Is this method worthwhile? Should we spend one precious day and gallons of gas searching the byways, or should we both stay and "feed the hungry ninety-nine?" It was in times such as these that we thought with gratitude of our kind friends who so generously contribute to our Catechetical Fund.

In one district, we were told about a little ten-year old girl living seven miles from our teaching centre who had not yet made her First Communion. To go out for her and a few others would mean driving twenty-four miles daily. By leaving at six-thirty a.m., we could have the group together by nine o'clock. We decided we would do this. The next question was would her mother allow her to come for instruction so that she could prepare for Holy Communion? The answer was a happy "Yes." We discovered that "Helen" had not yet been baptized. Now, we are glad to relate, that Helen has been baptized and received her First Communion.

In each district where we did follow the procedure of going after the "distant ones", we can truly say, "Yes, it was worthwhile." The expense of running two cars was a burden, but without these cars, we know that more than fifty per cent of the children we taught this summer would have received no instruction. We know that it was through the Catechetical Fund generously provided by the Church Extension Society of Toronto that we were enabled to use these cars. If the contributors could only know and could only see the results of their efforts and sacrifices, they would certainly be well repaid.

Looking back over these two months, we realize the privilege that has been ours. The ones to whom we were able to bring some knowledge of God, the example of the missionary priest, the zeal and charity of so many Catholic families toward their less fortunate neighbours, the kindness and hospitality of the people among whom we worked and the sincerity and earnestness of the children themselves, all contributed toward making these two months the most pleasant of the whole year.

Catechetical tour of Northern Ontario

In 1934, Fr. Emmett Regan of Fort William requested Sisters to conduct religious vacation schools in Northern Ontario. Srs. Carolyn Albury wrote an account in the October 1934 issue of *The Field at Home*:

... It is taken for granted that on a catechetical tour, we teach catechism and visit the people. In the space of six days we try to make a "grand survey" of the whole catechism and endeavour to induce the pupils to memorize a few prayers and other essentials, teach some hymns in preparation for a procession in honour of the Blessed Virgin, try to

inspire a love of prayer, teach the children how to genuflect, make the Sign of the Cross, how to get in and out of a seat, to walk circumspectly in a procession, and prepare them for First Communion and Confirmation.

We would that the students could absorb all the above as a vacuum cleaner absorbs dust. Alas! only some of it sinks in. Knowing so well our own limitations and the vagaries of the child mind, we make a novena to the Holy Spirit, begging that when the Bishop comes to examine them, they will not "freeze" or stand like the Lady of Shalott as if a curse had come upon them.

What value can be placed upon these catechetical tours? First, we feel assured that they receive the blessing of the Master who spent so many of His days on earth along the dusty roads of Palestine and whose informal methods of instruction we, in our little way, try to imitate. Second, children enjoy attending these summer classes for there is a certain novelty in them. They are a pleasant little break in the summer routine of hay-making.

We have discovered that in order to gain the children's interest, it is essential at our first meeting with the children to have an enthusiastic approach. Unless we can secure their interest on the first day, our later efforts to induce them to study are often futile. We consider that the personal contact with the children, who will later take the catechism by mail, forms a bond of union between the Sister and pupil. This bond will make correspondence teaching during the winter more effective and valuable to both student and pupil.

Tours differ. In a few districts it is possible to have every modern convenience for instruction as well as for living. Other districts have very primitive conditions. Always, we endeavour to adapt ourselves to circumstances. The more primitive these conditions are, the more adaptable we try to be.

This year, our field of labour lay in Northern Ontario. We lived in a Van ingeniously designed and built by the zealous missionary priest, Fr. J. Emmett Regan of Fort William. As for personal hardships, there were none. The van contained everything from a shower to electric lights. For teaching, we had a movie picture camera, blackboards and charts. Nothing was lacking in a material way to make our tour a success. The interest and co-operation of the city parish to which the district is attached was evidenced by the presence of many parishioners at the Friday evening processions in honour of our Blessed Mother.

We cannot praise too highly the zeal and foresight of the missionary priest, Fr. Regan, who spared no effort to promote the success of the tour. In one district the children were so widely-scattered that transportation daily in one van was impossible. A truly Christian family volunteered to accommodate ten children. Other families also followed suit and the transportation problem was solved.

Among the children in our last district was eight-year-old Dolores who was preparing for her First Communion. Dolores was very attentive to all the instructions and took especially to heart the necessity of saying a short Act of Contrition before going to sleep each night.

On the evening before First Communion, Father brought Dolores' little brother, six-year-old Mickey, to stay overnight ... to be present at the ceremony. That night, Dolores, feeling strongly her responsibility as elder sister, had Mickey kneel beside her before going to bed and repeat all the prayers she had learned during the week.

The little lad was quite tractable for awhile. He repeated after his sister the "Our Father", the "Hail Mary", and the "Glory be to the Father." Then came the Act of Contrition" and here, Mickey balked.

'I don't want to say any more prayers,' he protested.

'Oh, but you MUST say this one,' insisted Dolores.

'No, I said nuff.' Mickey was very determined.

'Oh, but Mickey, you don't understand. You see, if you say this prayer, God will forgive you all your sins and your soul will be beautiful.'

And Mickey, who hadn't the faintest notion of what sin is and didn't even know he possessed a soul, was not proof against the earnestness in his sister's voice and said the Act of Contrition. Surely, Dolores will get the blessing of those who instruct others to righteousness!

Usually, during our summer teaching, we feel favoured if we can attend Mass on Sundays. What made this tour so memorable was the great privilege of daily Mass and Benediction for the children. Some of that summer's students had never been in a church before, had no religious training and never in their lives had so much as raised their hearts to God for they knew Him not. Therefore, to provide an opportunity for us to instruct these children on the need for reverence in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, Father decided to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in the Church. In order to give us time to prepare the children for this privilege, Father waited for the first two days. It was truly touching to see, later in the week, these children walk reverently into Church, make a genuflection, say a little ejaculation and kneel in their pew with an expression which showed that the Divine Presence really meant something to them.

The total number of children we taught was two hundred and four. They varied in age from seven to eighteen and in knowledge just as widely. Some students knew and practised their Faith well; others, who lived far in the bush, had never previously attended religious instruction. These were puzzled to know who had made them. Why they were in this world was to them a great mystery.

The day began with Mass at 8:30 a.m., and ended with Benediction at 4:45 p.m. On Fridays, the children brought their supper as well as their lunch because most of them lived too far to return for the evening procession in honour of our Blessed Mother. Parents and friends were invited to this Marian celebration. Many a parent's heart was touched at the sight of their little white-veiled girls and sturdy boys singing the praises of God and of Mary. We trust that our Heavenly Mother will inspire them to keep the Faith burning in their hearts by helping them to have the courage to lead a truly Catholic life. One Friday, as we were returning to the Church after our own supper, faint sounds of music caught our attention. "What can that be?" questioned Father, slowing the car to a crawling pace. The sweet sound of childish voices floated to our listening ears:

Jesus, Thou art coming,
Holy as Thou art,
Thou the God Who made me
To my loving heart.

We drew up near the Church and shut off the engine. There on the church steps, our youngsters were gathered, singing the hymns we had taught them: "Holy God We Praise Thy Name", "Hail Holy Queen", "Immaculate Mary" followed each other. Unaware of an audience, the children sang with all their hearts, while we listened silently.

Presently, Father spoke in a voice just above a whisper, "Do you know when I listen and remember that only a week ago, the children didn't even know what a hymn meant, I could weep for joy!" We, too, were touched almost to tears; but as there was yet much practical work to be done such as last minute touches to preparing arches and banners for the procession, we decided this was not the time to indulge in sentiment.

The crowning event of each week was the celebration of First Holy Communion usually on Saturday when the little ones received their God. This joyous time passed all too quickly. Mass over, the tabernacle empty, the children left for home, some too far distant to attend even the monthly Mass and instruction.

Will the tiny mustard seed of Faith sown in their little hearts bring forth good fruit, or will

it be choked by the thorns of bad example, or blown away by the winds of indifference? We cannot tell; but we do know that the Good Shepherd often leaves the ninety-nine in the Fold and goes in search of lost sheep. We, therefore, leave these wandering lambs in His loving care, knowing that He will care for them and continue to seek them if they should stray.

Catechetical tours of Nova Scotia

Sr. Barton revised an account written by Sr. Leona Rose in the October 1934 issue of *The Field at Home* about the summer tours in Nova Scotia:

... We crossed the harbour on the ferry to Dartmouth, well-packed and then after a delightful drive of two hours, we arrived at Ship Harbour. ... Next morning, we were awakened by a new kind of alarm clock: the cows bawled, the roosters crowed and the Sisters arose ready for what the day might bring.

Sunday morning after Mass Father announced that we would be going to Little Harbour. ... We thought we were ready but the kind ladies told us we would freeze going over there and urged us to put on their boys' coats under our capes, which we did. ...

In Little Harbour, there isn't a store to be found, just houses, trees, rocks, chickens and a few cows. Even though many berry bushes had been wiped out by fire two weeks before our arrival, there were still many left weighed down with beautiful berries. Passing wood piles, fish racks, lobster traps and rocks galore, we finally arrived at Mrs. K's home; our home while teaching in this area. After supper, we visited the families to ask the parents to send their children to school for nine-thirty the following morning.

We rose early on Monday morning but not before the children. An army of little ones was waiting for us at the school. We divided the class into seniors with me and juniors with Sr. Chisholm. The latter claimed that she acquired a few more gray hairs from trying to answer the numerous questions asked. We had two classes in the morning with a fifteen-minute recreation break; one class in the afternoon. We followed this timetable during our two weeks' stay.

In our spare time, we visited families. We had to climb fences to reach some houses. Also, we had a few scares in our encounters with snakes. A few times we were able to go down to the shore, sit on a big stone and say the Rosary. We never grew tired of watching the tide come in. Once we walked out when the tide was out and sat on a huge rock to plan things. To our dismay, we found the tide had surrounded us. Fortunately, some boys came to our rescue and by means of boards helped us reach dry land.

On Sunday morning, all the adults met in the schoolhouse where we led the prayers, read the Gospel for the day and gave a short instruction. All were very attentive. They asked us if we would give evening instructions to them in the schoolhouse during the following week, which we did. The men sat on one side and the women on the other. When more than the usual number attended, the men would sit on the floor. It was very inspiring to see these fishermen and their wives so very attentive. In fact, all you could hear was their deep breathing. On the second last evening, in the goodness of their hearts, the men took up a collection for us. We were touched by this practical expression of the gratitude of these poor people and, though a little embarrassed, we gratefully accepted their gift.

We had only one complaint and that was mosquitoes; they surely did enjoy themselves at our expense. The people were as kind as could be and couldn't do enough to show their appreciation. The fishermen brought in all kinds of fish for us to see - dog-fish, a very dangerous type of fish that would attack anything; cat-fish, a terror to divers; a five-foot blue fish and some eels. One evening, we rowed over to a wharf just being loaded with the day's catch of cod-fish and watched with interest some fish-workers prepare

them for market. Though we were well looked after at Mrs K's, many women, wishing to help out, brought us canned fruit, fresh bread and other foods.

Most families were poor but wanted to dress their children well for their First Communion. Fortunately, their pay cheques for fighting the bush fire came through just two days before Sunday. This gave some of them a chance to get some clothing. Mothers were all busy either making dresses or making things over preparing for Sunday. Even the boys got interested in the clean-up; they borrowed our shoe-polish to shine their shoes and all had their hair cut for the occasion.

The weather was perfect. It rained only once. This was on our last teaching day. On that day we remained in school during recess and had indoor games. It cleared in the afternoon. This gave us hope that the Lord would grant our prayer for a sunny Sunday.

We attempted to teach some hymns but it was evident that the children were not used to singing. All did their best and sang with their whole heart. I'm sure the Lord was pleased with their efforts.

Although Mass was not until 10:00 a.m. Sunday Morning, everyone was up at six, the little tots as well as the bigger ones. By eight o'clock we were all down at the wharf getting into the boats, twenty-three in one and twelve in the other. After some pictures were taken and a few handshakes given, we said good-bye to Little Harbour and were on our way. The water was calm so that in an hour and a half we were back at Ship Harbour again climbing the ladder to land. This time, we had mustered more courage and helped the little ones.

Before Mass, we were kept busy helping the First Communicants to make their final preparation for Confession. This had its amusing side for two little boys wanted to go in together. One wanted to go in with Father. Mass started at 10:45 a.m. and all went well. We filed out of the Church at 11:45 and marched down to the wharf where all enjoyed the lunch that Sister and I had prepared for them - sandwiches, cake and fudge.

At that time, in the thirties, fasting from midnight before receiving Communion was current practice. The fishermen by the sea were hardy courageous people and "could take it". Fasting until noon, for the little ones, however, was a new experience. It's a wonder some did not faint on the way! Perhaps the excitement of the day sustained them.

Thirty-five had come over by boat; fifteen of these ranging from six to nineteen years, made their First Communion; a two-month old baby and one adult were baptized. Father was pleased. He congratulated the children, the parents and us, too.

Lunch over, the visitors scrambled back into the boats; someone took more pictures and there were more "Good-byes" with promises to write and to continue going to Mass even at the cost of waiting so long for breakfast. Then we were left alone on the wharf waving good-bye.

During the 1936-1940 period, the Edmonton catechetical house was undergoing growing pains. The staff was increased to five Sisters. A new office was built as an extension to the house. In order to enlarge the tiny upstairs chapel and provide a sacristy, a wall had to be removed between two rooms. Chapel lights were needed as well as new office desks, shelves, tables, a typewriter, filing cabinet and linoleum. To save expense, the Sisters themselves painted the cupboards, walls and tables, but still needed much financial help to complete the above necessary changes.

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CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL OPENED IN REGINA, 1934

A month before the Sisters of Service were established officially in August 1922, Archbishop O.E. Mathieu of Regina wrote to Fr. Daly, expressing hope for Sisters to establish a mission in the archdiocese. In February 1925, he visited the Toronto Motherhouse and gave a medal to each Sister as a souvenir of his visit and again urging for Sisters in the Regina archdiocese. When he learned of the Sisters' missions in Manitoba and Alberta, he wrote to Fr. Daly on March 18, 1925:

Last night I went to the Cathedral basement. - How I wish you could have been there! - The hall was filled with many enthusiastic spectators to see a play by some actors whom one would take for professionals.

The Honourable Dr. Uhrich brought me for you the latest number of the Orange Sentinel in which the editor denounces you and your dear Sisters. There is even a paragraph where our dear Archbishop of Edmonton is censured. It is an honour to be attacked by such a nasty newspaper as that one.

You must give us a few of your sisters. They are already in two Western Dioceses and they are not in the one in which you have lived and worked. I am sure that certain people will say that it is my fault. According to them, that is original sin.

First religious summer school in Saskatchewan, 1925

Although it was not possible to comply with the archbishop's request in May 1925, Fr. Dufresne of Eston, Saskatchewan, with Archbishop Mathieu's blessing, wrote to Fr. Daly asking for two Sisters to teach catechism in his mission territory for the months of July and August. Entries from the Motherhouse annals of May 5 and June 25, 1925 outlined to the Sisters' trip to Eston:

We are overjoyed at the realization of one of Fr. Daly's dearest dreams; Father has just been asked by Fr. J.A Dufresne of Eston, Saskatchewan, of the Archdiocese of Regina, to send two Sisters for eight weeks - the months of July-August, 1925 - to a number of places with Eston as the centre of operations. This development fired the Sisters with greater zeal.

Sisters Carmel Egan and Stafford left Toronto on June 25, 1925 for Regina. For several days preceding their departure, they had been collecting teaching materials and objects of piety of all kinds so that by the time they actually left us they were walking repositories of Catholic goods. We all shared in helping them pack. They left a little before 10.00 p.m. on the night train for Regina. We wish them God-speed and a safe return.\

From Regina, they set out for Eston and travelled from mission to mission for eight weeks, catechizing the children, preparing them for First Communion, teaching some altar boys how to serve Mass and how to prepare the altar for Mass. The people at Plato, Eston and Dinsmore welcomed the Sisters whole-heartedly. They showed by their kindness and generosity how much they appreciated the Sisters' stay among them.

The editor of the *Northwest Review* published a letter dated on August 14, 1925 from Fr. Dufresne:

Dear Sir:

Early last winter, I was given charge of a number of missions, my territory comprising all the district traversed by the Elrose Branch of the C.N.R. - a distance of seventy-five

miles. In such a large scattered thinly-populated district, it is naturally impossible to be everywhere at once or at any one place very often. Two of my missions are served once a month, another has to wait for a fifth Sunday. At such places, it may well be imagined that extraordinary zeal on the part of the people would be necessary to preserve the Faith and to hand it on to their children.

Ever since I heard of the Sisters of Service, I have realized the pressing necessity of their work in districts just as I have just mentioned. I have been in almost every corner of this expansive Archdiocese, organizing and conducting missions during the past fifteen years, so I know something about the actual condition of the country.

Consequently, I got in touch with Fr. Daly last June with the result that Sisters Stafford and Egan were sent out here the first week in July. They went first to Plato which has the largest Catholic population. There they taught catechism to thirty-seven children for two weeks. The classes were held in the church and the Sisters were well taken care of by the hospitable parishioners. From there they went to Dinsmore, sixty miles further up the line, and taught a class of twenty children for another two weeks. They are now in Eston where they have a class of fifteen children. At all these places, the children were prepared for First Communion. It can be realized how impossible it would be for a priest to attend to this work.

At all these places, the people who have spoken to me of the work of the Sisters, are at one in their expression of appreciation and they all want to have them back again. Speaking for myself, I would say that unless the Sisters can be kept in the district, their work, I am afraid, will not produce the results that I hope for. An agency such as this that will keep in touch with the children is, in my opinion, a very real need. It is my aim to establish in one of the centres a home for children from surrounding districts who are attending school, where they would receive proper training and religious instruction. For work like this, these Sisters are specially fitted.

Father Daly, who was unable to come here, as he had intended, and see the work of the Sisters for himself, wrote me as follows: 'May I ask you a favour? Give me your sincere impression of the value of the work of the Sisters. This is the first experiment, and naturally, we are wishing to do our best to help the Church. I would like to have your candid opinion and open criticism of its value.'

To which I replied, in part, as follows: I am so pleased with the work that Sisters Egan and Stafford have done in my district that I am more than ever determined to have them in the Diocese of Regina. I want to be a second Father Daly to them. Having worked in the Diocese of Regina since 1908, and in all four corners of this Diocese, I think I know the needs of the Church, and one of our crying needs is the presence of the Sisters of Service to look after our girls and boys scattered through the districts where the parish priest can visit only once a month. You know, besides, that all these children are attending neutral schools, daily mixing with children of different religions.

I am asking you to publish this appreciation of the work of the Sisters, because, being an eye-witness to their work, I think my testimony is of some importance. As Fr. Daly said, this is the first experiment, and in such a case, first-hand information is what counts.

J.A. Dufresne, Parish Priest

On a fourth occasion, Archbishop Mathieu requested the Sisters of Service in a letter to Fr. Daly on December 2, 1925:

It is evident that we will lose our Premier [Charles E. Dunning]. He is going to Ottawa. It is a disaster for us. We had a long conversation before he left. We had a Bishops' meeting here two weeks ago. The Premier asked if he could come and greet the

Bishops. He spent one hour with them. He wanted, he said, to see them especially to make them realize all the recognition due to me for my part in preserving peace in the province. - The Bishops seemed to like him very much. I did only what God sent me to do. Rather, it is He who did it for me. He encourages me to go to see Him soon in heaven. Keep this to yourself. You know it already!

Give me some of your Sisters - they can do much good here.

Following the tour of Srs. Carmel Egan and Stafford in 1925, other Sisters conducted catechetical tours in 1926 and 1929.

On October 26, 1929, Archbishop Mathieu died after 17 years in the newly-created Regina archdiocese. Monsignor James Charles McGuigan, Vicar General of Edmonton, was appointed as Archbishop of Regina on January 31, 1930. At 35, he was youngest Canadian archbishop. In the Edmonton archdiocese, he had assisted the Sisters as Vicar General and rector of the diocesan seminary.

During the Depression, Saskatchewan was the hardest hit area in Canada. This economic depression was accompanied by a prolonged drought of 10 years and its effects of soil-drifting, hail, early frost, rust, grasshoppers, other insect pests and a low price for grain.

The newly-appointed Archbishop McGuigan, aware of the conditions, faced an enormous challenge of alleviating the destitution of his flock both from the Depression and the crop failures. Monsignor Frank Gerein in *History of the Archdiocese of Regina* outlined the problems:

Heavy, indeed, was the charge which he [Archbishop McGuigan] assumed at Regina, for crop failures and depression had dried up almost every source of revenue and created unparalleled destitution and hardship among his faithful flock. In addition, the diocesan debt which the rapid expansion of the diocese had necessitated amounted to a crushing \$1,114,000, an encumbrance that would accumulate at an astounding \$45,000 to \$50,000 per year. Furthermore, not a single good crop was to lighten the burden during the five years of his encumbency.

Of influence to Archbishop McGuigan was Bishop E.V. O'Hara of Great Falls, Montana, the prime-mover in promoting the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) in the U.S. Facing a challenge to his apostolic zeal and organizing ability in the scattered missions of Montana, he studied the summer bible schools conducted by the Lutherans in Montana. This study helped him to develop a plan for Religious Vacation Schools (RVS) in 1921 as part of the CCD movement.

Archbishop McGuigan, burden by the overwhelming diocesan debt, sought advice. Bishop O'Hara urged him to concentrate first on every aspect of the religious needs of his diocese, especially on the needs in the rural areas. Archbishop McGuigan followed this advice as is evident from his farewell address published in the pastoral letters in 1935:

Another work very dear to our heart during the brief years of our stay among you was the shepherding of the lambs of the flock of Christ, our dearly beloved little children. As the official teacher of religious Truth in this Archdiocese, we have from the first day we came among you insisted 'in season and out of season' on the necessity of religious instruction for all our children who through the grace and charity of Holy Baptism are heirs to the Faith and to Eternal Life. The impetus given this phase of pastoral work has borne the most abundant fruit.

Archbishop McGuigan was heartened by the spiritual results obtained through the Religious Vacation Schools. This movement had sparked a new interest on the part of priests, teachers, pupils and laity. In addition to being Vicar General in Edmonton, he had been appointed as director of religious education. In that position, he evaluated the work of the correspondence school of the Sisters of Service. Aware of its potential, therefore, he decided that Regina needed a correspondence school and religious vacation schools. Knowing that Archbishop Mathieu had already asked three times for Sisters of Service, he reminded Fr. Daly of the long-standing request. On April 22, 1931, Archbishop McGuigan wrote to Fr. Daly, asking for the Sisters of Service. Fr. Daly replied on May 1, 1931: "I will surely bear in mind your kind invitation to the Sisters of Service to locate in your beautiful Archdiocese. I know perfectly well the tremendous amount of work that could be done within the limits of your jurisdiction."

Encouraged by Bishop O'Hara, Archbishop McGuigan organized diocesan religious vacation schools in 1932 for rural children, who were not attending Catholic schools. These schools consisted of a three-week catechism course in 27 communities under the supervision of priests, seminarians, Sisters and lay men and women. Following the Montana model, the catechists filled out a form at the end of summer school, recording the children's names, ages, grades, attendance record, names of parents and pastors and the location of the post offices. These forms were returned to the Chancery office.

The catechists were directed by a Council of Religious Instruction, a committee of five priests appointed by the Archbishop to include Frs. P.F. Hughes, J. Bois, G. Mulligan, T. Forrest and F. Gerein. These priests had studied the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine and were eager to promote it. In a pastoral letter of May 15, 1932, Archbishop McGuigan also directed under Canon 711 to establish CCD in every parish and mission in the diocese. To start in this work, Archbishop McGuigan invited Marian Marks, a field worker from Washington to begin organizing the CCD.

Also in the pastoral letter, the archbishop announced the immediate annual awarding of two sets of prizes of \$25, \$15, and \$10 to the pupils who were most successful in an annual diocesan examination, set by the Council of Religious Instruction and later by the Sisters of Service. Devised to increase the students' interest and arouse new interest of parents, priests and catechists, the prizes for the first group (Grades VI to VIII) were called the Archbishop of Regina Prizes and for the second group, the high school students, the Pius XI Prizes for Religious Knowledge.

Early in his episcopate, the archbishop delegated Monsignor A.J. Janssen to reorganize the Catholic Women's League (CWL) with the aim of having every Catholic woman in Saskatchewan as a member. This CWL more than fulfilled the archbishop's confidence by becoming the chief fundraisers in every parish and engaging in a variety of social, educational, and charitable interests of the Church. They also took the lead in organizing the Religious Vacation Schools. In summer vacation work, CWL members visited families, set up dormitories, provided food, cooked meals, supervised children and acted as catechists. They also helped to form adult religious study clubs and worked with Federated Catholic Charities in the diocese.

Archbishop McGuigan was convinced that the diocese needed its own periodical to relate not only its problems, but also its successes. In March 1934, a letter addressed to all the clergy and faithful of the archdiocese explained the proposed periodical to be called the *Salve Regina Quarterly*. The sound of *Salve Regina* suggested "Save Regina." One of its aims was to call on

individuals rather than dioceses to contribute towards Regina's debt. Generous contributions came from across Canada through the efforts of Dr. Cahill, an expert in financial affairs on loan from Archbishop Sinnott of Winnipeg and of Msgr. Gerein, professor at Regina Cleri Seminary. The Archbishop went on a begging tour to Central Canada, speaking at rallies and in churches, soliciting funds from more affluent Catholics.

On April 22, 1931, Archbishop McGuigan sent another reminder to Fr. Daly about the Sisters of Service. On July 20, 1932, after the successful summer vacation school, he wrote again to Fr. Daly:

The Religious Vacation schools of Regina are a tremendous success and show us how many little ones dear to the Heart of Christ need attention in Saskatchewan. The response is enthusiastic; the spirit wonderful; the results astounding! It shows me more than anything else could, the need of Sisters like your Sisters of Service to save the day in many districts.

Now, dear Father Daly, I want you to think of Saskatchewan. It is the most "foreign", the most "Catholic" and the most "neglected" portion of Christ's Vineyard in Canada. If you could only see the possibilities - I know you do - of the great Church that will be if we save the children, you would send your Sisters without delay.

Yorkton needs them badly. We need - we must have - your next Van. I am the poorest Bishop in the world but I send you the few dollars I received at Maria last week for your next Van. And oh! when I think of the great North Country where thousands are going, I know that the possibilities are tremendous. Come and complete the line that joins Vancouver and Victoria to St. John and Halifax by establishing your Sisters in Regina Diocese. I am going south today - to a country where thousands have been lost for want of attention.

Fr. Daly replied on July 29, 1932: "As to the sending of Sisters to Saskatchewan, we will do so when it is at all possible. We are suffering from lack of help in the various missions, for some of our Sisters have broken down under the strain. Anyway, we will talk this matter over when I see you in the fall. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate your kind donation to our work. This is really the case of the poor helping the poor, for I know your own painful situation. Yet I am convinced that before long, you will creep out of the darkness and will reap the benefit of your present day anxieties and labours."

The archbishop answered by return mail on August 2, 1932 with more pressing reasons for the Sisters to come to Regina without delay.

My dear Father Daly:

I have your letter of July 29, 1932, and thank you for the kind consideration you give Saskatchewan. No part of Canada needs attention half as badly as this Province and you simply must get your Sisters to work here as soon as possible. There is no doubt whatsoever but that Saskatchewan is the most Catholic Province of Western Canada with the greatest possibilities. If we can adopt uniform policies in all the dioceses of this Province, there should be a great Church here in a few years. If, however, things are left to drag along for another twenty years in any part of the Province, thousands upon thousands of souls will be lost to the Faith. Your dear Sisters, who have been founded precisely for this work, must come to the rescue as soon as possible.

Despite Archbishop McGuigan's appeal, a mission in Regina was established in September 1934. The 1934 opening of a religious correspondence school in Regina was a significant

milestone. Until that time, the Edmonton house sent correspondence lessons to students of Western Canada, Northern Ontario and parts of the United States. The increased enrolment of students with the Edmonton school necessitated the establishment in September 1934 of the Regina school to provide lessons to students in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Northern Ontario.

Sisters arrive in Regina

On September 5, 1934, Sr. Madge Barton, who had been teaching in a one-room rural school in Camp Morton, Manitoba, for the past four years met Sr. Eva Chartrand, Superior at the Winnipeg house. The two Sisters travelled by train, arriving at the CPR station in Regina at 6:45 p.m. They were welcomed at the station by Fr. P.F. Hughes, rector of Holy Rosary cathedral, and Fr. Gerald Mulligan, director of religious education. The priests drove the Sisters to their new home at 2220 Cameron Street but had the wrong key for the front door. Instead, the Sisters stayed overnight with the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions of the Sacred Heart Academy.

Later, Srs. Barton and Chartrand went to the house, opened by Fr. Michael Francis Daly, assistant pastor of Holy Rosary Cathedral. Vacant for two months, the house had been owned and occupied by the Sisters of St. Louis but found that Srs. Clement and Mechtilde of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, who lived next door, had set the breakfast table and put some provisions in the refrigerator.

On the following morning after Mass at the Holy Rosary cathedral, the Sisters toured the house, noting essential repairs of the cracks in the walls and the plaster falling from the ceiling in the kitchen. Fr. Hughes received an estimate of \$25 for the plastering, which was reduced to \$20. Fr. Hughes invited the Sisters to dinner at the rectory, where they met two Sisters of Our Lady of the Cross, who cooked for the clergy at the rectory and provided housekeeping for the seminarians at the Regina Cleri seminary.

Later, Kathleen Donnelly drove the Sisters to the painters' supply house, where Mr. Jean, the manager and friend of Fr. Daly's, sold paint and kalsomine at a good price. Later that day, the Sisters shopped at Eaton's and Simpson's and met Mrs. Drake, the diocesan president of the CWL, who gave them a ride home. This was a fortuitous meeting for Mrs. Drake became one of the Sisters' most faithful friends and a great helper when funds were low. On that evening, Sister General Florence Regan with Srs. Mary Ann Paradis and Edith Wayland arrived by train from Edmonton. All got busy helping to prepare the house for the official opening of the correspondence school on the next day. Sr. Chartrand prepared the chapel for mass while Sr. Wayland prepared the table for breakfast.

Official Opening of the Correspondence School

The solemn opening of the correspondence school took place on September 8, the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin and was named as Our Lady of Nativity mission. Fr. Hughes celebrated the Mass and officially welcomed the Sisters to the Regina archdiocese, mentioning that it was fitting that the Sisters be located in the cathedral parish where Fr. Daly had been rector (1915-1918). During those years, Fr. Daly toured the province and wrote his book, *Catholic Problems in Western Canada*. He hoped that the Sisters would have some of the vision that animated Fr. Daly in his missionary work. "He is still remembered and loved," said Fr. Hughes, "by many of the present parishioners." He concluded by asking the Blessed Mother to take this new foundation under her maternal care and protection and through the Sisters' efforts, obtain many graces and blessings for the prairie children of Saskatchewan.

The guests at the opening included Mother Soline and a Sister companion from Our Lady of the

Missions, Sacred Heart Academy; Sr. Mary Benjamin and a Sister companion of the Sisters of Our Lady of the Cross; Sisters Clement and Mechtilde of the Sisters of the Precious Blood and 20 women from the parish.

On the following day, Sr. Wayland made a list of items for repairs while Sister General visited the Sisters of Charity of Saint John at Rosary Hall on Scarth Street, almost opposite the Blessed Sacrament Church, the oldest Catholic church in Regina.

Fr. Celestine Joseph, OFM, superior and rector of the Regina Cleri seminary, Vicar General of Religious and confessor to the Sisters, came to hear confessions. He cordially extended an invitation to visit the seminary chapel at the corner of McIntyre and 13th Avenue and became a great advisor and friend-in-need to the Sisters in the years that followed.

While Srs. Chartrand, Wayland and Paradis checked the inventory of household goods that the Sisters of St. Louis had generously left for them, Srs. Regan and Barton went to open a deposit account at Eaton's and Simpson's. On September 12, 1934, Srs. Regan, Chartrand and Wayland left on the morning train for Winnipeg leaving Srs. Barton and Paradis to face the challenge of the new mission. Renovations were needed to prepare an office for the correspondence work. After the plasterer and the plumber had finished their work, the Sisters got busy cleaning and scrubbing, painting, kalsomining, and papering some walls. Then they discovered and harvested potatoes in their garden.

Correspondence work begins

When the main chores were completed, Srs. Barton and Paradis proceeded to the next step of obtaining the names of prospective students for correspondence work. They visited the chancery office, located at that time in the west end of the cathedral and met Fr. James Cahill, the archdiocese's chancellor, who handed them the religion vacation school files of that summer. The two Sisters were overwhelmed that these files contained the names of 5,000 children of 1,200 families. This indicated that correspondence work would begin on a large scale. The large number was due to the efficient teaching in the religious vacation schools by many Sisters of various congregations and other catechists. At the close of the vacation schools, the catechists had completed numerous forms containing parents' addresses and children's names, ages, grades and other pertinent information. In addition, the Edmonton correspondence school transferred students from Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Northern Ontario. Henceforth, the Edmonton school confined its students, living in Alberta, British Columbia and the North-West Territories.

Initial correspondence work in Regina differed from Edmonton

These lists of well-documented prospective students provided a different beginning to correspondence work in Regina 1934 from the experimental approach of Edmonton in 1925. In the latter, the Sisters had not only to go in search of families, but also to try to find suitable lessons to send. This was a very slow process.

The procedure in Regina was simply to send an enrolment form to every family inviting them to enroll their children. Archbishop McGuigan had already paved the way for parents to accept this correspondence form of teaching. He had urged the necessity of continuing by correspondence the Catholic instructions their children had begun during their vacation school. Then the program followed by the Regina Sisters was similar to that initiated and developed by the Edmonton Sisters.

Instructing student teachers

Although the official mandate in Archbishop McGuigan's formal request for Sisters stated that the Sisters should "conduct correspondence lessons of religious instruction to the scattered children of

Saskatchewan,” they soon discovered other pressing needs calling for their attention. Some were directly related to their mandate. On their second visit to the chancery office, Fr. James Carlin, SJ of Campion College asked the Sisters to assist by instructing a weekly course in the methods of teaching catechism as part of his class to the student teachers at the Regina Normal School. Sr. Barton replied they would consult Sr. General about the added task.

Request to assist St. Martha's Guild

That same afternoon, the Sisters went to the Holy Rosary study room, located in the basement of the Cathedral, to meet the CWL immigration committee and members of St. Martha's Guild, a group of young working girls, who were living away from home. After welcoming the Sisters, the CWL convener expressed the hope that the Sisters would help these girls, whom the CWL members had been befriending in their homes. Fr. Rae, the past chaplain, and Fr. Hughes, the present chaplain also expressed their pleasure at the Sisters' arrival. Sr. Barton replied that the Sisters would try to assist the girls and invited them to visit 2220 Cameron St. on their free days and on Sundays. She hoped that later some activities might be planned for them.

A third Sister arrived

The Regina Sisters looked forward to the arrival of Sr. Teresa Chisholm, formerly the Superior of the Edmonton correspondence school. They counted on her expertise to set up the office and plan a routine for the operation of the school. Sr. Chisholm arrived in a snowstorm on September 22 with lots of baggage, including a supply of lessons, many plants and Peter, a big grey cat. Fr. Seiferling with Srs. Barton and Paradis met Sr. Chisholm at the CPR station.

The parishioners of the cathedral parish were kind in welcoming the Sisters. A brother of Redemptorist Fr. John Martin called to take the Sisters in his car to a play presented by the students' drama club at Our Lady of the Missions Academy. That same afternoon, while the Sisters were absent, Fr. James Carlin, SJ and Mrs. Hay, a Normal School instructor, left a note, inquiring if the Sisters would teach the weekly class at the Normal School.

With Sr. Chisholm's efficient help, the correspondence office was put in order and the addressograph for making address plates for remailing magazines was set up. Filing cards for families were prepared as well as for the students who had returned the application forms.

Since the Sisters decided to teach the student teachers, the first class was held on October 1 at the Sisters' house. Fr. Carlin introduced the 18 students for Sr. Barton's first talk of methods of teaching religion. Arrangements were made to continue this class on Monday evenings and for Fr. Carlin to teach Apologetics on Thursdays. Classes were moved to a committee room in the Holy Rosary cathedral basement.

The Redemptorist priests of St. Joseph's parish in Moose Jaw invited the Sisters for a visit to that city on Saturday, November 3. The Redemptorists wished the Sisters to teach in the mission of Mortlach and to develop interest among some rural families in the correspondence program. On November 2, the three Sisters left on the evening train for Moose Jaw and were stayed that night with the Sisters of Providence at their hospital.

After the 6:30 a.m. Mass the next day, Fr. Oscar Dietz, CSsR drove the three Sisters to the mission at Mortlach, a distance of 25 miles (40 kms), where he celebrated mass in the front room of the Searle family. To prepare for the mass, the Sisters held choir practice with the adults and 15 children. Sr. Chisholm answered the Latin responses during the mass. Afterwards, Fr. Dietz and the Sisters stayed for the noon-time dinner with this pioneer family before returning to Moose Jaw.

In the afternoon, the Sisters attended a play, entitled Patsy, which was performed by St. Joseph's senior dramatic club and held in St. Joseph's parish hall. After supper and a very satisfying day, the Sisters called on the McCullough family to bring news of Sr. Mary Fitzgerald, the sister of Mrs. McCullough. The family took the Sisters to catch the night train for Regina.

Preparations for Christmas plays

Sr. Chisholm, proficient in the art of drama, suggested the idea of presenting a Christmas play to the members of the St. Martha Guild. A nativity play, entitled Wonder Night, was selected and the girls decided that the best time for practices was between 10-11 p.m. three times a week. Miss Noble, a junior CWL member and a musician, helped with the music. Sr. Chisholm also assigned a comedy, Martha's Christmas Present, to the members of St. Martha's Guild at the Grey Nun's Hospital. The girls conducted most of their own practices due to a good director among the group.

Searching for costumes for the play took much time. The Sisters were indebted to several persons for help and encouragement: Fr. Boekenfuhr, OMI, pastor of St. Mary's parish, gave permission to take odd pieces from St. Mary's drama stock cupboard. Fr. O'Donnel, seminary professor, seminarians and Frs. Carlin, Carl Smith and Ralph Adams helped to sort out the stage props at the CYC. Hall, which was behind Blessed Sacrament church. Fr. Keohan of Blessed Sacrament church gave permission to use his scenery as props, curtains, foot-lights and other items. The Sisters arranged for a double stage to accommodate the Campion College orchestra under the music direction of Fr. M. McNeill, S.J. What the Sisters could not get "gratis," they were able to rent from Mr. Barnes of the largest dramatic distributing supplier in Saskatchewan.

During December, the Sisters enjoyed two special treats, attending a three-act play, entitled Campion, presented by the drama club at Campion College and a production of The Rosary by the Sacred Heart Academy girls at the CYC hall on Scarth Street.

Christmas 1934

For Christmas decorations in the Cameron Street house, the Sisters discovered a crib and a variety of Christmas items left by the Sisters of St. Louis. Sr. Paradis arranged the crib with some evergreens in the chapel and added little Christmas touches throughout the house. Generous gifts were received, including hampers of delicacies from Police Chief Bruton and his wife as well as from Mr. and Mrs. F. Clarke and the St. Martha's Guild. A large turkey came from the rectory, a chicken from Mrs. Hay, \$5 from Archbishop McGuigan and a variety of Christmas goodies from some parishioners.

Midnight Mass was a glorious colourful ceremony. It began with a long dignified procession of many altar boys, seminarians, some seminary professors and Knights of Columbus in full uniform. The choir was magnificent and the sermon by Archbishop McGuigan included his announcement of an appointment from His Holiness, Pope Pius XI to replace the late Archbishop Neil McNeil and become Archbishop of Toronto. This news, an unexpected bombshell, stunned the congregation.

Soon after Archbishop McGuigan moved to Toronto, he wrote Superior General Florence Regan on March 20, 1935 that there was much need for catechetical instruction in Toronto just as in the wide stretches of the Western Canada. Sr. Regan assured the archbishop that she would do her best to assign Sisters. From 1936, Sisters conducted religious vacation schools in the Toronto archdiocese.

On Christmas Day; the temperature plunged to -45 degrees Fahrenheit a number of pipes froze in the Sisters' house. The Sisters took turns, applying hot cloths to thaw these pipes. The house was cold! Added to this unexpected difficulty, a young woman telephoned from the train station to

enquire about accommodation, thinking that the Sisters' house was a hostel. The Sisters invited her to come. In the kitchen, the house's warmest room, the Sisters served lunch, listened to her story into the late afternoon and assisted her in finding a suitable place to stay.

Plays performed by St. Martha Guild members

Just after Christmas, full attention was given to final preparations for the concert. Sr. Paradis worked on costumes, Sr. Barton took the choir practices and Sr. Chisholm polished the acting. The dress rehearsal on the night of December 30 was a disaster with temperatures of -40 degrees Fahrenheit. One ray of hope was the optimism of Miss Noble, the volunteer pianist and a model of patience, who predicted that the "tangles" would be unravelled and all would be well.

On New Year's Day, the Sisters and cast planned the program, made copies of it and asked Mrs. Duggan to take charge of the tickets at the door. The night of January 3, 1935 was an exceptionally busy time when the players were painted, "mustached" and disguised. A main feature of the Annunciation scene was an interpretation of the Christmas gospel of 2,000 years ago and was sung in carols. Not only did the singers look lovely, they also sang well. The comedic play, Martha's Christmas Present, was presented by St. Martha's Guild members at the Grey Nun's Hospital with an assist by Sr. Chisholm evoked many laughs. The Campion Orchestra was grand, a great addition to the concert and to the whole evening. CWL members served refreshments on stage to the orchestra, the players and Frs. M. McNeill and Carlin. There was a good attendance including seminarians. On January 6, performances were held for the young people in the afternoon and in the evening for adults. Both presentations were well done, receiving many favourable comments.

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FULL CORRESPONDENCE OPERATIONS IN REGINA, 1935-1936

During the Christmas season, the lessons began to pile up although the Sisters tried to catch up. News about the correspondence school was spreading with the Sisters deluged with new names. Some CWL members, notably Mrs. Duggan and Mrs. Molloy, came to assist. Since the office was very cold, they worked in the refectory. Not being used to the house, Mrs. Molloy made a wrong turn when going down the hall and fell to the foot of the cellar stairs. What a shock and scare to all! Though upset, she was not hurt. After a hot drink, she insisted on returning home alone. The Sisters resolved to place a protective gate made for the head of the cellar stairs.

In the course of correcting the lessons, Sr. Chisholm came upon a note attached to a student's lesson which read, "I enjoy the lessons I get from you and I also like those that I receive from "the other Sisters." Curious about "the other Sisters," the Sisters made enquiries, discovering the Anglican Sisters of St. John the Divine.

Srs. Barton and Chisholm decided to visit the Anglican Sisters at their convent on Toronto Street and were welcomed by a novice, Aquila, and a girl assistant. The novice showed them the small office from where they prepared to send out lessons to over 4,000 students. These Sisters had been teaching "Religion by Post" in Regina since 1922 and had been obtaining names of students through their summer vacation schools. The teachers of their vacation schools were dedicated lay volunteers, who travelled by van throughout the prairie provinces.

The Sisters discovered that Greek or Roman Catholic children were on their list since the Anglicans were not aware of a Catholic correspondence school in operation in Regina. However, they agreed to refer all Roman and Greek Catholic children to the Sisters' correspondence school as well as those already on the list. The Anglicans had sent out the lessons in good faith, believing they would do no harm, and hopefully to keep the children good Christians. The Sisters thanked them for their kindness and concern.

The Sisters considered the Anglican lessons as very colourful and attractive. Using a different system, the Anglicans, regardless of whether the lessons were returned for correction, mailed the next lessons to each family on a certain day every month. Whereas, the Sisters sent a new lesson only to those who had completed and returned their lessons.

When Sr. Amelia, the superior, returned, the Sisters were given a tour of the house. In the tiny chapel with a red light burning in the sanctuary, there were statues of the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph, St. Francis, St. Anthony and St. Therese, more statutes than the Sisters had. After a delicious lunch with friendly conversation, the Sisters invited the Anglican Sisters to call on them.

A week later, Sr. Amelia, Novice Aquila and Miss West, a volunteer, called on the feast of St. Paul, bringing a list of Roman Catholic families and 275 children. About the names of Greek Catholics, the Sisters explained about the various rites in the Catholic Church and Sr. Barton promised to send a booklet, *Rites in the Catholic Church*. After learning about the Catholic lessons and the Sisters of Service's method of conducting the correspondence course, the Anglican Sisters visited the chapel in the lower front room. The visitors were very friendly and wished to cooperate. Later that month, the Anglican Sisters gratefully acknowledged the booklet and mailed the names of the Greek Catholics.

At the Sisters' house on February 2, 1935, Sr. Chisholm renewed her vows to Fr. Celestine and the

Sisters attended the CWL's diocesan convention. CWL chaplain Fr. Carlin urged the members to support the Sisters in the new venture. CWL president Mrs. Hay called on Sr. Barton to explain the operation of the correspondence school and of the required assistance. Some members had already helped the Sisters and continued to do so most generously during future years.

Despite the low temperatures of -45 to -50 degrees Fahrenheit, Sr. Barton and Fr. Carlin attracted a good attendance of Normal School students to the weekly courses.

Two days later, the Sisters received the good news that Sr. Alice Walsh, a teacher from Camp Morton, who had also served at the Edmonton correspondence school, was appointed to the staff in February. With a gift for writing, Sr. Walsh accepted the task of editing the children's page in the *Salve Regina Quarterly*. Fr. Hughes had also asked the Sisters to prepare the annual archdiocesan catechetical examinations for the children in the junior, intermediate and senior levels. Sr. Walsh's experience at the Edmonton correspondence school helped with the examinations.

The departure brought a number of visitors to Regina, including Fr. Augustine Forner, OMI, pastor at Camp Morton and a good friend of the Sisters as well as Redemptorist Frs. Leo Sexsmith and Joseph Owens of Moose Jaw. Visitors received an outline of the operations of the correspondence school and the Sisters obtained the names of more students from missions. Another caller, Fr. Corneau, OMI of the Muscowpetang Reserve offered names of prospective students and spoke of a play which written by some on the reserve and produced under his direction. He invited the Sisters to this play in the CYC Hall, which successfully was presented on May 16 after which some members of the play called on the Sisters.

Following the departure of Archbishop McGuigan on March 16, 1934, Msgr. Janssen was appointed Vicar Capitular to continue the administration of the diocese until a new bishop was appointed.

Speakers for St. Martha's Guild

The Sisters set aside time for the members of St. Martha's Guild to come on their days' off and arranged for speakers on Thursday evenings. A home nursing class was conducted under the direction of Mrs. Tanner, supervisor of health at the Catholic Schools. Another speaker, Fr. Yandeau, chaplain of the Grey Nuns Hospital, where some of the girls were employed, spoke of the responsibilities of girls as Catholics. Fr. Beechy, pastor of Minton, gave a talk contrasting the lives of women in our own society with the women of ancient Rome.

To a gathering of members of St. Martha's Guild and the CWL on March 21, 1935, Fr. MacNeil gave a dramatic and moving account of a miraculous cure at Lourdes of his shattered arm sustained as a young soldier in the First World War. After the cure, he promised to become a priest. Following the talk, he played and sang a rendition of the hymn, Ave Maria, which he had composed in thanksgiving to Our Lady of Lourdes.

A second trip to Moose Jaw, 1935

In mid-March, Fr. Sexsmith, rector of the Redemptorist community at St. Joseph's parish, Moose Jaw, invited the Sisters to address the students of the Normal School about the correspondence work and to solicit help with the correspondence work. On March 18, Srs. Barton and Sr. Margaret O'Reilly, a visitor from Camp Morton, took the noon train and arrived to visit a friend of Sr. O'Reilly's at Providence Hospital and to pay their respects to the St. Louis Sisters at St. Louis College, giving news of their former convent in Regina.

Mrs. Thorn brought the Sisters to her house, where the students, who were unable to attend the night meeting, gathered to hear about the correspondence work. After supper with the Thorns, the

Sisters went to St. Joseph's Hall where Sr. Barton explained the correspondence work to a group of 50 students and other interested persons, including Redemptorist Frs. Sexsmith, Dietz and Owens. When the chairman pressed Sr. O'Reilly for some off-the-cuff sidelights about mission life at Camp Morton, she related an amusing incident, where a clever horse outwitted unsuspecting and inexperienced Sisters. After a lunch, the Sisters caught the night train home.

In May 1935, Fr. Cahill, chancellor of the archdiocese began preparations for the summer religious vacation schools following the pattern initiated by Archbishop McGuigan of a three weeks' course in either the Apostles Creed, the Sacraments, the Commandments or First Communion preparation. Under supervision of priests, seminarians, Sisters and lay men and women, the summer schools continued to be held in 27 regional centres until the mid-1960s.

For the first three years, the CWL had accepted the task of preparing the project books through their various sub-divisions. In 1935, Fr. Cahill asked the Sisters to supervise this work and Mrs. Mooney pledged the assistance of CWL members. The preparation of the kits for teachers and workbooks for 3,000 students required many hours of concentrated work. A Sister went from parish to parish to direct the making of the teachers' kits and students' project books. The Sisters' call for volunteers was answered by the junior members of the CWL at the parishes of Holy Rosary, St. Mary's, and the Little Flower as well as from the high school girls of Sacred Heart Academy. The vacation school books were completed and stored in the chancery office, where they were sold. The chancery office also purchased materials for the kits and workbooks from the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) office in Los Angeles.

When the work at the Sisters' residence on Cameron Street increased, Sr. Mary Regan was appointed to the correspondence school and arrived on May 6. Sr. Regan, an experienced typist and office efficiency expert, set up a filing system and generally established an efficient office procedure and attended to the business correspondence.

Correspondence School report from Oct. 1934 to May 30, 1935

The report of the first year's activities in Regina was:

Lessons corrected	12,101
Personal Letters	937
Magazines Remaild	234
Circulars of Information sent	2,364

Archbishop Monahan appointed

Before the summer religious schools, a long-expected announcement came from Rome in mid-June that Most Reverend Peter Joseph Monahan, former Bishop of Calgary, had been appointed as Archbishop of Regina and was installed on September 25, 1935. Inheriting the archdiocese's grave economic situation, he followed the financial course charted by his predecessor and gradually restored the diocese to solvency. Within four years, he erected 27 new churches and chapels, launched the Catholic Youth Crusade which within three years was actively established in 70 parishes and established the Pontifical Association of the Holy Childhood.

Visit of Sister General

On June 12, 1935, the Sisters received a telegram from Toronto, announcing the arrival of Sister General Florence Regan on the evening train. All tidied up the house with cleaning and painting to prepare for the four-day visit.

After Sunday Benediction on June 15, Sr. Regan was invited to give a talk to young girls about the

mission work of the Sisters throughout Canada in the hopes of interesting future vocations. At the public meeting in parish hall of Holy Rosary cathedral, Sr. Regan presented an outline of various missionary activities of the Sisters. After her talk, Sr. Regan met CWL members, recognizing some from the summer camp at Lebret in 1926. In the audience, Celestine Reinhardt of Lajord was working in the city and decided that this was the type of life the Lord was calling her. Soon after Sr. Regan's visit, Celestine wrote to the Toronto Motherhouse, entering the novitiate in 1936. Sixty years later, Sr. Reinhardt celebrated her Diamond Jubilee as a Sister of Service with Sisters, relatives and friends in Regina. A dedicated, much-loved teacher and catechist, she continued to keep in touch with many former students through her "mail ministry."

At the time of Sr. Regan's visit, the farm lands were parched like barren lands. The Sisters and others had been praying to St. Anthony to intercede for the blessing of rain. Their prayers were answered with a prolonged heavy downpour on June 15, 1935.

Saskatchewan Religious Vacation Schools, 1935

The summer schools started at the beginning of July. The chancery office gave three days' notice for the Sisters to prepare for the Redemptorist request at the parish of St. Gerard's of Yorkton. On July 6, Frs. Howard and John Martin called with their car for Srs. Barton, Paradis, Mary Regan and Walsh and their baggage of large charts, project books, teaching supplies and personal effects. Arriving in Yorkton in time for supper at the rectory, the Sisters stayed overnight at the boarding school of the Ukrainian St. Joseph's College.

After mass on Sunday, the four Sisters set out for their various assignments. For the first week, Sisters Mary Regan and Alice Walsh remained in Yorkton to instruct 68 children. Meanwhile, Srs. Barton and Paradis proceeded to Canora, where they spent a week visiting families and teaching 13 children. During the week, they prepared four children for their First Communion. On First Communion Day, the Sisters, children and all parishioners of this little parish were overjoyed to find that the men of the parish had erected an archway of flowers over the gateway to the church grounds. It was no small task. This expression of Faith added to the joy and beauty of that happy day. Following First Communion Day at Canora, the two Sisters taught 31 children, mostly outdoors at Mikado, where Sr. Paradis was delighted with the children's quick and enthusiastic response to her choir practices.

Most of the people in the Yorkton Redemptorist missions were poor, especially in 1935 when Saskatchewan was hit by drought and invaded by grasshoppers. The Sisters were impressed by the cheerfulness and faith of these people. They gladly welcomed the Sisters into their homes. Though they had little variety of food stuff, they shared what they had with the Sisters. The Sisters also taught that summer in Verigin, Stornaway, Rock Dell, Parkerview, Copeland, Sheho and Donwell. After a month of separate catechetical schools, the two pairs of Sisters met and compared notes in Parkerview on August 10.

After six weeks of teaching, Srs. Barton and Paradis returned Regina on August 17 and Srs. Walsh and Regan the following night at 10:30 p.m. Nothing Srs. Walsh and Regan could do, would rouse the sleeping pair and open the door. So they found a way of getting through a window. It was an eerie way of ending what at times had been an exciting six weeks' non-stop teaching tour.

Sr. Alice Walsh related their 1935 summer experiences in an article of the January 1936 edition of *The Field at Home*:

Sympathetic souls sigh, gaze pityingly at us and exclaim, "Oh, Sisters, what a hard life you lead! Do you really have to go out in that wild country to teach catechism?" And they heave

another big sigh of commiseration. Generally, we are too rushed to give a detailed explanation that we have chosen this life freely, that we enjoy it immensely and that we should find any other vocation or avocation, stifling, so we tacitly admit to what we are not, to wit, martyrs, by assuming a proper-to-the-occasion air.

What our good kind friends forget or overlook is that the dear Lord said He would give a hundredfold, even in this life, and that this stupendous gift is shared by the Sisters of Service as well as by all other workers - "religious or lay" - in His Vineyard. We have no hesitation in saying that the "bush country" is wild and that there are hardships; but even speaking from a merely natural standpoint, these things fade into insignificance beside the compensations.

After ten months of listening to typewriters, telephones, doorbells, and all the other inopportune sounds that indicate that we are civilized and citizens of this most glorious 20th century, the mere thought of going out to the country "where only Nature's music breaks the silences of God", among people who are unconcerned as to whether their friends' grandfathers were railway presidents or pirates, and who are natural, kindly and sincere, is exhilarating.

When the expected letter arrives from the Chancery Office, telling us to be ready to leave within a week, there is a scramble to stow away our valuables and to collect our personal belongings. There are the usual decisions regarding what we shall take and what we shall leave. The baggage assumes alarming proportions; we begin to fear lest the good Fathers, when they come for us, may be forced to remind us that we are going for only a few weeks. But the Fathers when they do come, are kind and patient and act as if eight bags and four bundles are just what they expected we would have. They proceed to stow them away in the car with a skill that eases our worried minds.

When travelling from village to village, why take so much baggage which might hinder one's movements? From experience, we know full well the great value of pictures especially when teaching new concepts. Much of our baggage consists of large rolls of coloured illustrations on the Old and New Testaments, Parables, the Church, the Rosary and Pictorials on the Sacraments. The pictures are 22" x 33" with usually 20 pictures in a roll. Because we usually separate to teach at different places, each has her own supply.

An old Chinese proverb says, "One picture is worth a thousand words." What was true in China thousands of years ago, is just as true today. We, therefore consider pictures a necessity for teaching. New Canadian adults and little children, for the most part, know little English. The language of pictures, like the language of music is universal; therefore, even though New Canadians cannot understand us, they can get the message of a picture without an interpreter.

And then we are off. We bid farewell to Regina. Six weeks of roughing it in the Redemptorist Missions around Yorkton lie before us and we are going to make the most of them. Six weeks of talking and laughing and singing with children we have learned to know and love through the Correspondence classes; six weeks of golden summery days; of long buggy rides across the prairie; of sweet clover perfumed air; of new surroundings, new people, new customs.

Perhaps this eager anticipation of all these natural joys may be a bit shocking to some pious reader (if such there be, go mark them well) who may think, with reason, that the great privilege that is ours, of instructing these young people unto righteousness, so enwrap our imagination that there would be no room for seeing the colour and warmth and joy of life. Teaching Christian Doctrine is as much a part of our daily existence as is breathing in the ozone-freighted air; that is why we are what we are. So when we chronicle all the things that really should not matter, and really do not matter, we are not overlooking the only important phase of the tour. We are simply taking it for granted and we expect our friends to do likewise.

One evening, Mr. and Mrs. G___ called for us after supper. We had promised to spend

one night at their home nine miles out on the prairie. Father K____, the young missionary priest of the district, accompanied us. The evening ride was for us a novelty but for a missionary priest, it was just another means of conveyance. He, like his Master, the Good Shepherd, was going to seek out an erring member of his flock, who lay stricken with paralysis in an isolated farm house, impossible to reach by car, but which, with a little detour, we could pass on the way to our destination.

Just as the evening sun sent its golden streamers across the evening sky, we set out in the decrepit old democrat, on our errand of mercy and pleasure combined.

Mr. G____, a Hungarian, sturdy and loquacious, drove the team and expounded his theories on government reform. Kindly Father K____, seated beside him, listened half abstractedly adding a remark from time to time. Jimmie, the young son of the family, lay asleep at their feet, oblivious alike of the bumps of the road and the beauties of the night. In the rear on a seat made for two, sat Mrs. G____, with the youngest member of her family on her lap. By her side, swaying with every motion of the unsteady vehicle, were Sisters Walsh and Mary Regan with attention divided between her stories of life "in the Old Country" and the desire to absorb all the delights of this beautiful night.

We seemed to be alone on the prairie. North, South, East and West stretched the fields of grain - grain that in other years might have brought a glow of pride and satisfaction to the heart of a farmer, but now brought only a shrug of defeat. The crop had been spoiled by rust. All the weeks of ploughing and seeding, the weeks of hope when the grain was filling, were to go for naught this year. We refrained from calling Mrs. G's attention to the cold ungrateful land and let her continue her tale of the Count in the Old Country who liked to drive out with his four horses and his wife, the Countess. Our minds wandered a bit, too, to the hardy explorers who, perhaps, trod this very ground that we now traversed ...

Suddenly we were aroused from our reverie by the distant barking of dogs. We gazed eagerly into the gathering twilight and discovered through the shadows, chimney smoke ascending skywards. We supposed this must be the sick man's house.

The question of Father's reception was a worrisome one. The sick man had not been to church for years and was now a helpless invalid, bereft of even the power of speech. His wife had joined an Evangelical Church with the watchword in front of her house "Jesus Saves All". The sons of the family, too busy with making a living, to "bother" about religion professed no creed. A good reception was doubtful!

We reached the gate which was opened by a young man, browned by the hot prairie sun. He darted a curious look at us as he bade us enter the yard.

Father with Mr. G..... as interpreter, went into the house. The young man climbed into the front seat to hold the horses and to converse with Mrs. G..... in Hungarian. Sr. Regan shivered with the cool evening breeze and predicted it would be dark before we reached our destination. Then we sat, waited and wondered what was happening within the tottering old log house with the thatched roof. After some time, Father and Mr. G..... returned talking earnestly. Father had been well received and was to call again the next day. We were asked to visit the sick man. His wife greeted us at the door with a warm embrace and led us through the hot stuffy kitchen to the little sickroom. The invalid gazed at us with strange staring eyes. What a great affliction is his - cut off from his family and friends, able neither to speak nor write. We whispered an ejaculation as we approached him. 'Mother of the Afflicted and Health of the Sick, pray for him.'

But the weeping woman at the foot of the bed is even more miserable. Between her tears, she told of her days of heavy toil in the fields, of the nightly homecoming to an uncared for house and a sick man, of the chores that keep her busy far into the night, and how, completely exhausted, she goes to bed knowing that the next day will bring with it the same unrelenting labour. 'I have such misery', she sobbed. A great wave of pity for her seized us. To be in such affliction and to have cut herself off from the best source of strength and

comfort she could possibly have - the Catholic Church - was the saddest thing of all! We uttered a few words of sympathy - how ineffective they sounded - and went out into the cool fragrant air with a curious stinging in our eyes.

We continued our journey. We had been travelling for two hours and night had definitely settled upon us. Overhead, the vast expanse of sky was studded with glittering stars; the large orange moon low-slung in the heavens, looked blandly at our little democrat, making slow progress across the plains. The horses were tired and seemed to be drowsing between the shafts. Father in the front seat was becoming restless. "How much farther is it?" he queries with ill-disguised anxiety. 'Two more miles and we reach my section,' replied Mr. G..... The unearthly quiet that seemed to pervade all is shattered by the "tlot, tlot" of a lively horse. 'That's my boy, Joe,' announced Mr. G..... with unfeigned pride, "He's been out looking for the young stock." Joe, going our way, passed us in a cloud of dust and vanished into the night. He would get home in time to report that a priest and two Sisters were on the way to the house.

Dark forms silhouetted against the sky proved to be Mr. G's cattle; the house therefore, couldn't be far distant. We turned east to meet the rays of a lamp shining through the surrounding gloom. Suddenly we realized we were chilled and stiff and were grateful to have reached the end of the road.

A smiling young woman in overalls greeted us at the door of the little thatched house. We entered the comfortable kitchen and approached the gracious warmth of a wood fire with our hands held out to absorb the heat. Through the open door of the next room we could see a long, low table set for a meal. What a welcome sight that was! A slim young daughter of the house, in a crisp gingham dress, was carrying in the coffee. The rest of the travelling party came in and in a few moments, we were all seated around the hospitable board.

After the meal, the young sons of the family came to be introduced and to offer a limp boyish hand to be shaken. While the older ones remained with us, the shier ones retreated to the granary - a haven free from company and boring conversation. Chairs were pushed back against the wall and reminiscences were in order.

We were told of the processions in the "Old Country", of the hymns they sang to "Holy Mary" (laboriously translated into English for our benefit), of the early days of settlement in this district, of the 22-mile drive in winter to have the baby baptized, of the slowness of the oxen (the power behind the plough in those days); then of the dream of a good crop, when they would be able to buy a car, and take the children to town to see "a church like in the Old Country." But alas! For the dreamer, the good crop had not as yet materialized and these good pious people look at us and say, "It is because of our sins we have no crop. - We recall the story that begins, "Two men went into the temple to pray."

When the feeling of sadness became too pronounced to suit the heir-apparent, he brought out the rusty old gramophone. We were treated to a variety of Hungarian dance tunes and heart-rending cowboy tunes which in their proper setting - and where is that but just where we were? - possess a distinct charm. We enjoyed ourselves immensely, but it was getting late and we decided it was time to retire for we had to rise early in the morning, First Communion Day. A nine-mile ride to church lay before us.

Like all good things, the tour came to an end. The six glorious weeks that we had anticipated so joyfully and enjoyed so thoroughly had passed into eternity. We were gathered round the supper table in Regina with the same dishes and the same familiar faces before us. Sr. Paradis absent-mindedly asked, "Pass the cream, please." Sr. Regan hands her the pitcher of skimmed milk with the gentle reminder, "You're not in the country now, Sister!" True, we are not in the country. We are at home with the same former interests. How delightfully restful they are! A comfortable feeling of contentment steals over us. Life has resumed the even tenor of its way.

Sr. Barton also recounted the summer religious vacation schools:

We had many and varied experiences. We travelled in all sorts of conveyances - buggies, hayricks, democrats, wagons etc., and many times we used shank's mare. - At one particular place, attacked by two fierce dogs, we thought we might die as martyrs before our short week was over. Once we were chased by a turkey but we were able to outrun this gobbler. During that same week, we had a few adventures with balky and frisky horses, and as a grand finale, we encountered a raging mad bull, roaring and stamping! We were almost paralyzed with fright. Once again we were saved, this time by two knightly errants in the form of two young boys who came to our rescue.

Sister Paradis organized some very fine junior choirs. At three places, we held choir practices several times in the week for a senior choir. The choristers enjoyed singing. They did well; we hope they will continue their practices.

We visited many families, mostly in the evenings, and, incidentally, learned to discuss the crops in a fairly intelligent way. It was really a pleasure to talk to the farm people. They are very frank and sincere. They certainly toil hard from sunrise to sunset. We can learn many lessons in industry from them. The people everywhere received us well and seemed most grateful for our interest in their children. All four of us benefited a great deal from the tour both spiritually and physically.

Altogether, we instructed 316 children, taught in twelve missions spending a week in each place. We were blessed with fine weather so that the attendance was excellent.

On November, 21, 1935, Fr. Daly, eager to obtain ecclesiastical approval from Rome for the Sisters of Service, wrote to Archbishops O'Leary of Edmonton and Monahan of Regina:

Religion by correspondence is available to rural pastors of the following dioceses:

From the Regina school to Pastors in Dioceses of

Regina, SK	65
Prince Albert, SK	44
Saskatoon, SK	23
Gravelbourg, SK	27
Winnipeg, MB	41
St. Boniface, MB	49
Sault Ste. Marie	30
Hearst, ON	19
Total	298

Your Excellency:

Enclosed you will find a report of the Institute of the Sisters of Service. My purpose in submitting this report to you is to obtain from you a letter of approval and recommendation of its work. This letter will be of great value to me in the near future when I propose to submit to the Holy See the Rule of this Community for approval, as requested in the Act of Canonical Erection.

For the past fourteen years, I have been associated with this missionary endeavour, and my only ambition is to leave it well established religiously and financially so that the contribution of the Sisters of Service to Canada's Mission Field, may with God's blessing, grow with the years. Their work and their efforts, are, it is true, rather limited by the number of Sisters in the Field. Yet, I am confident that this work and these efforts speak for themselves. The numerous demands from our Bishops for foundations in various parts of

our Dominion are an encouraging endorsement of their apostolic endeavour and give promise of its future development.

The Financial Report is a copy of the Balance Sheet taken from our books at the end of our last fiscal year, June, 1935, and certified by our Auditor. Providence has been kind to our work and I have no fear whatever as to the future. Being essentially a "missionary venture in Canada", the Institute depends largely on the contributions of the faithful at large. This report, therefore, stands as an account of our stewardship of the past fourteen years.

A letter of approval and commendation would have great weight in helping us to obtain from the Holy See the first approval of our Rule, thus giving greater stability to the Community. I hope that in asking this favour from Your Excellency, I am not trespassing on your kindness.

Archbishop Monaghan replied on December 4, 1935:

Dear Fr. Daly:

I gladly avail myself of the opportunity of assuring you and all concerned of the high esteem in which I, myself, and all the clergy of the Archdiocese hold the Sisters of Service. This very enviable position is the result of the deportment of the religious themselves and the wonderful work they have been doing for the Church and for Canada.

The task they undertook was daring and new in our land. The results have been surprising. They launched out in a field until then untilled and in which the lack of labourers was sadly lamented by all who had eyes to see the inroads made by non-Catholic organizations. God alone knows the number of immigrants who have been saved to the Church through the activities of these Sisters at the Canadian ports.

Likewise, the Catechetical Correspondence Courses equally new in Canada, has grown to such a point that today these humble little Sisters reach 15,000 children in various parts of Canada and bring them the saving teachings of our Faith. This work alone warrants the unstinted admiration of every priest of God. Not until the judgement on the last day will we have an idea of the souls kept in the Church exclusively through the labours of the Sisters of Service.

Again, the idea of building small Catholic hospitals in small Catholic rural centres, where the older communities would not venture has been a source of great consolation and admiration for many of us because we know the number of indifferent Catholics and even of fallen-away Catholics that have been reclaimed through the ministration of these Sisters in Catholic hospitals.

I have followed the progress of the Sisters of Service during the past fourteen years. I saw the humble beginnings in Ontario, the gradual development in Eastern Canada; then the venturing out into the Western Provinces. I have seen with my own eyes what has been done in Alberta. Now since my coming to Regina, I thank God that the Sisters of Service are in the Cathedral City doing here and throughout the Archdiocese constructive work that no other community would have attempted.

To illustrate this statement, may I point to the fact that these Sisters are in contact with no less than seven thousand children of the Archdiocese through their Correspondence Course.

Marian Crusade initiated

In 1935 as a means of following this directive of fostering devotion to the Blessed Mother, the Sisters at Regina initiated a Marian Club to also bind their scattered correspondence students into a sense of belonging. Archbishop Monahan fully approved this proposed club in November 1935 and agreed to suggested name the Marian Crusade. Fr. Daly gave his blessing and immediately contributed 1,000 beautiful copies of pictures of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. A question and answer

sheet was updated in 1939 to answer student questions about the crusade.

Remailing continues

When the remailing had grown, the drought and the Depression had also increased. In December 1935, the Sisters in Regina applied to the local postmaster for use of the news dealers' rate. In response to their application, Regina Postmaster Leo LaBelle, Regina Postmaster asked for a complete list of the papers and magazines in the remailing plan. The Sisters submitted the names of six newspapers of *Catholic Reporter*, *Catholic Register*, *Northwest Review*, *Western Catholic*, *St. Peter's Bote*, *Prairie Messenger* and 15 magazines of *Canadian Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, *The Lamp*, *Annals of St. Joseph*, *Annals of St. Anne*, *Annals of the Propagation of the Faith*, *China Mission*, *The Eikon*, *American Sacred Heart Messenger*, *Salve Regina*, *Columbia*, *Commonweal*, *Ave Maria*, *Messenger of Our Lady of the Missions*, *Catholic Digest*, *Liguorian* and *America*. The Sisters were granted the news dealers' rate of four ounces for one cent, a contrast to today's rate of 84 cents in 1992.

An inquiry from the Knights of Columbus, Brandon

On December 3, 1935, Urban S. Hughes, chairman of the Knights of Columbus committee on catechetical schools of Brandon, Manitoba, wrote to the Regina correspondence school for information:

At a recent meeting of the Brandon Council Knights of Columbus, I was appointed chairman of a committee to ascertain ways and means to follow up the course of studies in our Summer Catechetical School, with a supplementary correspondence course for the 26 children who have attended our school for the last two summers.

I have been given to understand that this work is in your particular field of endeavour, and that you have developed it to a highly efficient standard, and further, as this follow-up is badly needed if we are to reap any benefit from our efforts to teach Christian Doctrine to these children, who are from districts where they have no religious advantages or opportunities, I would like to know if your order could undertake the sending of this correspondence course to these children, and what donation would be necessary from us.

As any information I secure must be placed before the local council, I would appreciate an early reply. I will be thankful for any particulars you may send relative to your course, and any suggestions you may make.

On December 9, 1935, Sr. Barton answered this letter, enclosing a circular which explains our method of procedure in sending out the lessons and forms to distribute to the various families in need of our course. On receipt of this form from each family, we shall send out the first lesson to them. Although there is no fee for the lessons, parents receive an annual appeal to assist if they are able.

Early Benefactors in Regina

Members of the CWL were among the Sisters' most faithful friends and supporters in Regina. In June 1936, CWL members held their 16th national convention in the Crystal Ballroom of the Saskatchewan Hotel in Regina. On this occasion Archbishop Monahan welcomed the delegates from across Canada and commended them very highly for their inestimable contribution to the moral and physical well-being of all Canadians, especially New Canadians. The archbishop said that their interest and concern for immigrants to Canada had impelled them to champion and support the work of the Sisters of Service. Diocesan President Mrs. J. Berry of Regina had asked the Sisters to give a report of their correspondence school work in Regina. Sr. Madge Barton gave in the requested report on June 21 on the first day of the convention:

In conclusion, on behalf of the Sisters of Service in Regina, I express our deep and sincere gratitude to all Members of the Regina Catholic Women's League for your support and the various ways you have assisted us during the past two years. We are especially grateful to you Members of the Junior Catholic Women's League from Holy Rosary, St. Mary's, Little Flower and Sacred Heart parishes for your generous, faithful, and devoted office assistance during the winter months. In fact, your assistance has become indispensable to us.

We thank all the Regina Catholic League Members. We also take this occasion to thank all other League Members across Canada for your contributions of Catholic literature, and religious articles that we are glad to distribute to rural families. We thank you also for many cartons of warm clothing. We were able to send these to many needy rural families, by free freight courtesy of the Canadian Pacific Railway. We ask God to bless each and every member of the League and to continue to inspire, direct and assist you all in your important National Endeavour.

Later Sr. Barton, the founding superior of the Regina mission, also acknowledged other benefactors:

First and foremost was Archbishop Monahan, who not only took time to visit and encourage the Sisters but started a fund for a new building for them, and who during the 1930s when the grasshoppers had taken over the farms saw to it that the Sisters got a share of garden produce which the farmers of Manitoba generously donated to the people of Saskatchewan. At that time the priests of Saskatchewan went with trucks to pick up this produce which they then distributed freely to those in need.

Other special friends at that time were: Fr. Celestine Joseph OFM, director of Regina Cleri Seminary, who found time to be the spiritual director and advisor of the Sisters and gave them inspirational conferences. Other clerical friends included Msgr. Peter Hughes, rector of Holy Rosary, Fr. G. Mulligan, director of religious education, who gave helpful talks on methods of teaching religion; Fr. Robert Mitchell, OFM, who gave conferences to the Sisters on retreat days and the Jesuit priests from Campion College for some yearly retreats.

The Hon. Dr. Uhrich, Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan, an ardent Catholic, gave periodic contributions towards the correspondence work. Miss Marie Loretta Smith, the Archbishop's secretary, a devoted friend remembered the Sisters generously in her will. Mrs. F. Drake, CWL member and head of the Drake Coal Co. allowed the Sisters to obtain much coal on credit when their cash was nil. Other CWL members, especially Mrs. T. Molloy and Mrs. E.B. Duggan, assisted the Sisters in office work in the early days. Mr. Burns Sr., competent artisan who, for a pittance, helped to renovate the Sisters' house in 1934 when it was in need of repair.

The Fred Hill family and the Kramer family were also generous benefactors. The McCashin's who owned a dry-cleaning business, My Wardrobe, gave free service for clothing and vestments. The Sisters will never forget Chief Bruton, chief of Regina Police department, who every summer asked his officers to keep an eye on the Sisters' residence while the Sisters were away in the country teaching catechism. These officers were as alert and faithful as any sentry ever could be. They continued this faithful service from 1935 until the late 1960's. The Sisters will also long remember Mrs. Bruton for her weekly treats of home-made baking. Among the many farmers from the rural areas, who shared their harvest of vegetables and fresh meat with the Sisters, none were more faithful or generous in the fall than the Joseph Reinhardt family, parents of Sr. Celestine Reinhardt.

Before the universal health care in Canada, Dr. Trudelle, a friend of Fr. Daly, provided medical care free of charge care of the Sisters' health and made house calls. Another friend of Fr. Daly, Dr. McCusker, a noted eye, ear, nose and throat specialist, gave free treatments, as well as generous donations.

Some priests who came frequently to say Mass in the Sisters' chapel were: Frs. Halpin and

Phelan, professors from the Regina Cleri seminary; Frs. McKenna and M.F. Daley of Holy Rosary Cathedral; Fr. J.A. Morrisette, and his priest nephew, both from Radville and a noted missionary, Fr. Jacob Wilhelm. Numerous rural and city pastors gave cooperation, encouragement and assistance. These are some of the many benefactors of the difficult 1930s.

Reports, 1936

In the correspondence school, there was much incidental office work of folding lessons and tests, stamping names on wrappers with the addressograph for remailing, and stamping the correspondence address on envelopes in order to save the cost of printing. The members of the Junior CWL of Regina volunteered to do this work. Throughout the year, a group of generous members from the parishes of Holy Rosary, Little Flower, and St. Mary's came faithfully every Monday and Thursday evenings for two hours. Under the direction of Mary Malone, their accomplishments in 1936 were listed:

Lessons double-stamped and assembled	36,000
Folding circulars, notices, etc	9,560
Cutting and folding projects	3,100
Folding Test Papers	2,550
Monthly Letters and Contests folded	13,450
Folding Question Sheets for Lessons	2,600
Cutting Project Pictures	500
Preparing Magazines for remailing	5,436
Slip-sheeting Contests and Test Papers	19,845
Folding new Senior Lessons	2,600
Special Letters folded	1,000
Cutting Forms and Instruction Sheets	2,800
Numbering Lessons on Addressograph	12,000
Envelopes Stamped	9,000
Preparation of Vacation School Pictures	25,000

Members of all groups also engaged in "Remailing Bees," whereby they spent evenings in a blitz of wrapping magazines for the addressograph. Figures are eloquent testimony of work accomplished. This work enabled the Sisters to spend more time to correct the numerous lessons that arrived daily. They were grateful that these devoted CWL helpers remained faithful collaborators for many years. Other volunteers in the correspondence work included student nurses from the Grey Nuns hospital; students from Sacred Heart Academy and Holy Rosary school, who helped out on Saturdays.

In October 1936, Archbishop Monahan sent a letter to each family to add his word of appeal. After congratulating the parents and their children for having availed themselves of "the wonderful means of learning something of your faith through the great work of the Sisters of Service," he called their attention to some specific expenses. "The seven Sisters have to keep a home, pay taxes, insurance, fuel and all other expenses necessary to live. Four thousand envelopes with lessons and letters were sent out each month. You understand that paper, envelopes and stamps must be purchased. It may surprise you to learn that the stamps used throughout the year cost more than \$500." He asked the parents to be as generous as their means would allow and suggested that when they came to Regina to make it a point to visit the Sisters. In closing, he wrote: "Assuring you that I am most interested in the religious instruction of your children and that no sacrifice is too great to provide it for them."

By the fall of 1936, the Regina staff had increased to seven. Sr. Alice Walsh outlined about the work in the correspondence school in this edited version. The full version was published in the April 1937

issue of *The Field at Home*:

As school teachers, we usually considered the correction of children's papers to be a tedious, even penitential exercise. Since we have become members of the Regina Catechetical House, all aversion to papers has been cast aside together with the g'og'raphy, hist'ry and 'rithmetic of past days. The manuscripts which now come to hand have a more charming, shall we say, "personality"? We consider it a blessed privilege to be allowed to anchor our feet under the brown leather-topped table and make use of what theology we know, to guide the little ones of our country along the "Path of Righteousness."

The larger the bundle the postman leaves, the more we rejoice. Responses to our letters are indications of good will on the part of our children and this is just what we are seeking. What delightful lessons and letters they send us, showing in many instances, intense labour on the part of some youthful correspondents who have not as yet mastered the mechanics of penmanship. Often before we begin to correct, we shake the crumbs of cookies from the papers; at other times, tobacco. (the letter has been in Daddy's pocket on its way to the post office.) Or again, in harvest time, grain kernels.

It is not unusual to find a hole burnt in the middle of a lesson, caused, no doubt, by the dropping of a match while lighting a light. At times, the papers are so grimy, one wonders where on earth they could have been before reaching us! It doesn't do to be too squeamish in this work. When one considers the real mortification it often is, for some little youngster to sit long enough to write out the answers, one should not let her fastidiousness prevent her from handling the results of his/her efforts.

Nearly every lesson is accompanied by a letter - a voluntary labour of love. More than one ripple of laughter breaks the quiet of the office when these unintentionally amusing little messages are read. The little girl who wrote, "My birthday is Monday, but youse don't need to send me a present if youse don't want to", received the present in spite of her disinterestedness. The fifteen-year-old lad, who in apologizing for his delay in returning his answers because he was threshing, finished his note with, "I am now five feet eight inches tall," and to further impress us with this fact, put in brackets at the head of his lesson: "Metro, 5 Ft. 8 in."

In this instance, a reply in the form of a letter of congratulations was in order. The pious youth ending his letter with, "May God and His Blessed Mother and all the angels and saints descend upon you all" caused the Sister who read it to gasp in consternation at the thought of such an eventuality. Despite the fact that answering these letters entails much extra work on our part, we encourage them and enjoy them. They help to form a personal bond between pupils and teachers.

The written answers to the lessons often reveal the unexpected. One child wrote that the three qualities of the body are: abdomen, throat and head; another maintained that they are: skin, bones and brains. One little girl innocently told us that the creatures higher than men are "the birds what are flying". We were also informed that God appeared in bodily form, not to the Patriarch, but to Abraham Lincoln. Other scraps of information gleaned were "The Holy Ghost is the third Person because He comes third when we bless ourselves. One child wrote the words of the Sign of the Cross as, "In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost came in". We learned that our Lord taught the twelve "impossibles" for three years and Mary and Joseph took a "flee" into Egypt. There is no end to these innocent mistakes of the children, which are readily corrected by the vigilant examiners. What is important is that the children are learning their Faith and becoming more interested in it through their constant contact with us.

But if the children are privileged to write to us, how much more privileged are we to be able to correspond with such awe-inspiring little people? Truly, they are awe-inspiring when we consider them in the light of our Holy Faith. Pretty and not so pretty, healthy and sickly, clever and dull - they all carry within their tender young souls the Blessed Trinity.. Surely we

are never nearer to God than when we are dealing with His children, who have so lately left His Hand.

Many pupils' letters bring us joy; a few actual meetings with "should-be" pupils bring sadness. We had been sent to teach in a district in rural Saskatchewan which had been out of contact with the Church for many years. Our first task was to find the Catholic families and then to invite the children to attend the catechism classes. Because we were received with much apathy on the part of many of the parents we had many a heartache during those days.

Tony's plight hurt the most. With high hopes of having this fourteen-year-old boy - an only child - attend our classes, we had called at his home, a pretty little bungalow. His mother met us at the door. She told us that her son was baptized, but did not know much about the Church. Then to our amazement said it was up to him to decide whether or not to attend Catechism. As the boy was not at home and finding it of no avail to reason with his mother, we left, intending to call again the next night.

A little later that evening as we were making more calls, we noticed a young lad on a bicycle. It was Tony. We told him about the instructions we were giving and invited him to attend. He was most polite and also most decided. "No", he replied, "I really don't bother about religion; thank you. I do not care to go." No urging on our part could persuade him to come, even for one class. With sad hearts, we left the boy standing there in the road. What could we do? We, and the Church we represent had never entered into his life after his Baptism; fourteen years of neglect had told their tale.

Had this boy been receiving Catechism lessons by mail from his eighth year, he would doubtless have been pleased to meet sisters and eager to attend the classes! It is worthy of note that children are delighted to receive letters and naturally grow to love those who are willing to correspond with them.

After interchanging a few letters, we usually begin to be addressed as, "My dear, darling Sisters or some equally affectionate title. Even little non-Catholics have asked to be allowed to receive letters, wishing, no doubt, to have the pleasure of having a letter addressed to themselves. No child who had been receiving the lessons would ever, like Tony, refuse to attend Catechism class because he was "not interested."

There is no difficulty in starting a correspondence with children. If, at first, the lessons do not appeal to them, they respond readily to a little kindness. An example comes to mind: an organization in one of our large cities asked us to correspond with a certain family who had moved six months earlier to the northern part of the province.

We immediately wrote to the family explaining our work and at the same time enclosing a lesson for the children. After a few months, we received a letter on a little scrap of paper from one of the children telling us that they lived so far from any settlement that they were unable to attend school; also, that they lived miles away from a post office and seldom went there. Furthermore, as they did not get any mail, they would not go there just to receive lessons. Then they added that they had no paper and no money to buy stamps and would we please leave them alone.

There was no hesitation on our part on what we should do. Nowhere could we find more abandoned souls - those for whom we are always seeking. By return mail, we sent them a long letter telling them of various incidents that we thought would interest and amuse them. We also sent paper, pencils, stamped envelopes and as it was near Christmas, a cardboard crib and a present of a rosary for each member of the family. We said that we expected an answer soon.

In less than three weeks (good time considering the mail service there) we received a well-written letter of gratitude and the answers to the catechism lesson. The children have continued to correspond with us since that time; we, of course, supplying the stamps and writing material. We wonder, if the thought ever dawns on them that no matter how far they

may travel in Canada, they are still within the loving arms of Holy Mother Church?

Occasionally the question is asked, "Do you think the lessons do the children any good? Maybe they copy." One who asks this question has missed the primary motive behind this work. Our first aim is to keep the spark of Faith in families out of contact with the Church. As long as the family continues to correspond with us, we feel that the link which binds them to the church still holds. Even unknown to themselves, their Faith is being strengthened. If the parents are really interested in their children's education, they will make it their concern to see that their children know the lessons well before they begin to answer the questions.

Time and time again we have sent out circulars to parents and children advising them how to proceed in this work. If the children are left to themselves, some, but not all, will copy the answers from the lesson sheet; even so, their time is not lost. Because we send out a test after each lesson and do not hesitate to return a lesson uncorrected which does not please us, with the request that it be done again, the pupils realize that they must study if they wish to get ahead.

Of course, we readily admit that the written answers are not a sure gauge of a child's knowledge. Mere memorization is not enough; there must be assimilation. How can we judge who is gaining more from the course; the few who send in the refreshingly clean and perfectly correct answer sheets, or the many who favour us with grimy pages dotted with many mistakes? Perhaps the latter group are carrying out in their humble way all the suggested prayers and other devotions which we recommend from time to time. If the children are doing their best, we know that God will do the rest, for isn't it the effort that counts?

Guidelines for correspondence teachers:

To finance the religious correspondence schools, the Sisters could not ask families to pay for their lessons. Fr. Daly stipulated that it was important that parents realize their financial obligations but correspondence courses continue whether the parents cannot or do not send financial help. The Sisters followed this principle from 1925 until the mid-1960s. Fr. Daly also outlined catechists the following guidelines in a letter on December 8, 1941.

First, to all catechists whose apostolate calls you to work among children through the schools, summer vacation tours and the catechetical correspondence course, you will be in constant touch with children. It is a great privilege to be allowed to influence the soul of a child and to leave upon it the imprint of your own soul. During the plastic age of infancy and youth, that soul is like clay in the hands of a potter. You can shape it to the image and likeness of God. The hard hand of time may mar your work; some lineaments will survive and may prove to be saving factors in later life. The memories of childhood follow us into old age.

Your Catechetical Correspondence Work is becoming widely known and highly appreciated, particularly by bishops, priests and catechists. After years of experimenting, we have attained a certain degree of success. The commendations we have received from various parts of Canada and the United States from those who are in a position to judge, should be gratifying to you sisters who are appointed to this silent and obscure apostolate.

Let also your corrected lessons carry with them a personal touch - a word of praise or if necessary, a veiled reproach. Let the children feel that you take a personal interest in them. This will mean so much to those poor little ones who live, as you know, in outposts leading a rather drab existence. I leave this to your own kind discerning heart.

EDMONTON CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, 1935-1936

Correspondence school outlined on radio broadcast

While delivering a series of Lenten sermons at St. Joseph's Cathedral, Edmonton, Fr. Handly, CSP, took time to visit the Edmonton correspondence school in April 1935. Keenly interested and impressed by this method of instruction, he devoted one of his radio talks about the Sister's work. An excerpt was published in July 1935 edition of *The Field at Home*:

During this series of radio talks, I have read to you letters from homes far removed from church facilities where the problem of the children's religious training threatens, at times, to be tragic. Last Saturday, I paid a visit to the Sisters of Service at their home on 85th Street. They permitted me to read many other similar letters. Here are a few phrases that particularly touched me:

... 'I am helping my sister answer her questions because she can neither read nor write. She remembers for a long time even though she does not fully understand the questions and answers. She is fourteen years old. We could not send her to school because her nerves are too weak.'

... 'I wish to tell you how grateful I am for the wonderful opportunity for my children to get religious instruction by mail. I always tried to keep them up in their catechism but with a family of nine, my time is necessarily limited. Our earlier efforts were becoming spasmodic. With your help, they are all eager to commence again. We would be very grateful to get library books that you are offering. My oldest boy has tuberculosis in his ankle. He has been on crutches for two years with his leg in a plaster cast. Because he cannot join in sports, he dearly loves to read. We have not been able to send him for an operation, but he is slowly improving.'

... 'We are twelve miles from church and seldom are able to get to Mass during winter. At Church, there is only one catechism class and it is for beginners. It is hard to get advanced work for older children. I would so like them to know something about their religion.'

... 'I wonder if you will give us a second chance and send us all the catechism lessons from September to March. After my older children worked out the first lesson, my youngsters got hold of the lessons, scribbled all over them, and practically destroyed them. Four of my children go to school; four are with me at home. When I say I am busy, I am putting it mildly.'

... 'You have been so good to send me pamphlets of religious dates and seasons. Now I wish to enroll my three children in your catechism classes for a second time. They have learned their first catechism with me and have made their First Holy Communion, but they may have been too young to appreciate the necessity of religious training. Also, I was out of the house most of the time looking after our fox ranch and came back tired, too tired to look after that part of a mother's duty. Now they wish for the lessons themselves and I shall be at home more and shall see that they study.'

... 'We have great difficulty in getting to Holy Mass, practically not at all in the winter. In summer, we get to Mass sometimes. Once you sent us a circular asking for a contribution to pay postage on your correspondence classes. We are having an awful uphill pull ourselves and have no cash on hand just now. But when we get our first lessons, we shall try to send a small contribution and be glad to send it. What a wonderful name you have - Sisters of Service.'

... 'We live so far from a church, it is hard to get my little ones taught their faith. If you have any any prayer books or rosary beads, I would be glad to get them. We have not one book or beads in the house, not even a holy picture, and times are so hard it is impossible to buy

these things just now, but if you could manage to send me some prayer books, I would send you a little every week. I have six children two to six years of age and we have not much to live on; sometimes not enough to eat. Please write to me soon again as it is the only way I have to hear about my faith and it makes me so glad and happy to hear from you, dear Sister.' ...

The primary objective of the Sisters' correspondence with the isolated is catechetical education. They distribute weekly or monthly, according to mail facilities, a three-year course which keeps the home students busy for nine months each year. This course is prepared by Monsignor Victor Day of Helena, Montana. It is far more agreeable to children than the dry-as-dust methods of the old-fashioned catechism.

A notable demand from lonely homes is for Catholic books and papers. I well remember how eagerly we watched and waited for something to read when I was a boy. Some friends remail to the Sisters Catholic periodicals, chiefly weekly papers, which the Sisters pass on to their numerous clients. They have one or two hundred books for the correspondents enlisted in a Library Club, the Sisters use these truly pitiable resources to the best possible advantage. With characteristic energy, they supplement their tiny store of printed material with an eight-page magazine which they write, illustrate and print with a humble mimeograph. It is gaily fascinating. Somehow the blithe courage of the poverty-stricken Sisters gets into the mimeographed pages and they shine like a day in May. The recipients joyfully welcome their arrival, and prize especially the lists of feast and fast days. They cannot get this information in church as other Catholics can.

During the summer, these Sisters go to country parishes and mission stations, where there is no church, to conduct summer schools of one or two weeks' duration. Priests enthusiastically testify to the almost miraculous results. Both children and adults are drawn into a hearty love for the laws and ceremonies of Holy Church. In a few days children are singing church hymns for the first time in their lives, scouring the woods and meadows for flowers to decorate the altar, organizing pageants which will remain bright memories to be cherished in all the coming years. During the summer school religion becomes humanly delectable. It is associated with the loveliest emotions of the human heart, and from this time on the personal enjoyment of God's company may be said to have begun. ...

As the quotations from letters which I read to you demonstrate, religion is strongest outside the cities. The more simple life is, the nearer it is to God. The Church would be mortally wounded if it lost its rural membership. It would be losing its purest, most vital blood.

The work of the Sisters of Service is essential to the preservation of the Catholic religion in North America. Therefore, no matter how poor they are in worldly resources, rich in the courage of Christ, they invite every Catholic child in the West to write for the Correspondence Course which will keep the Catholic religion alive in our own native land.

In his radio address, Fr. Handly mentioned that the Sisters in Edmonton were besieged with inquiries about the correspondence work. After a visit to the Edmonton correspondence school, Fr. Neuellenberg, a missionary from Belgium, decided that this method was needed for his new mission in Stewart, B.C. north of Prince Rupert. He arranged with the Sisters for the lessons for the scattered children of his parish.

Religion by Correspondence is available to rural pastors of the following dioceses,

Fall 1935:

Edmonton	88
Calgary	41
Grouard	20
Vancouver	37
Victoria	10

Prince Rupert	7
Yukon	5
Total	208

At Christmas 1937, the Sisters in Edmonton and Regina wrote thank you letters to those remailing:

Dear Friends:

We are grateful to you for the Catholic magazines that you have sent to us during this past year; we appreciate this help very much for without it we should not be able to spread this literature among our poor isolated Catholic friends in the country.

Our principal work here, as you may know, is to teach the truths of our Holy Faith to the children living out on the Prairie who are not in regular contact with the Church and there are thousands of them. Besides instructing children by mail; we, on request, also send senior lessons to adults, and would-be-converts, who are too isolated to receive regular instruction from a priest. The response is excellent. As much as our funds will allow, we remail the Catholic literature sent to us. We also send out monthly letters containing junior and senior contests for the children, and give prizes for the best submissions. We answer the many personal letters and inquiries that we receive and also try to interest people in procuring Catholic pamphlets.

We send out all lessons gratis; once a year we send out an appeal to all families on our program and they help us if they are able. This year on account of one of the heaviest crop failures in history, the majority are unable to assist us.

Please continue to send us Catholic literature. Catholic magazines are always acceptable. Catholic newspapers should preferably be fairly recent. Because we are so hard pressed this year, we make bold also to ask you, if possible to help us with a donation of money or stamps that we may continue wielding our pen to send God's messages throughout the West. We ask this in the name of our poor isolated Catholics. We hope that at this Holy Season of charity [Christmas. 1937] you, and other interested friends will assist us. We shall also be grateful for your prayers.

That our Infant Saviour will bless you and yours, and reward you for your past generous help to our missionary endeavours, is the fervent wish and prayer of,

The Sisters of Service

On behalf of an ill Archbishop O'Leary, Vicar General, Msgr. Leo Nelligan replied to Fr. Daly's letter about obtaining ecclesiastical approval from Rome on January 1, 1936:

Dear Father Daly:

The Archbishop has instructed me to acknowledge receipt of your report giving the present status of the Institute of the Sisters of Service, and to assure you how gratified he was to note the marvellous growth and development of this missionary endeavour during the fourteen years of its history. He feels that the vigour with which it has established itself throughout the length and breadth of Canada, together with its remarkably sound financial status, are the surest guarantee of its continued growth and expansion in the future.

He commends most highly the work of the Sisters of Service in the Archdiocese of Edmonton. The Girls' Hostel established here in 1929, has provided a proper environment for hundreds of girls who otherwise would have been exposed to the numerous dangers of the age; while the catechetical work which goes back to 1925, has saved the faith of thousands of children scattered here and there throughout the Archdiocese

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STUDENTS AND SEMINARIANS AID FINANCES, 1935-1960s

The contributions from the various appeals of dime folders, annuities, wills and birthday pledges printed in *The Field at Home* were allotted to the religious correspondence schools as well as to the various works of the Sisters across Canada. The correspondence school allotment was not sufficient to cover its continuing high cost. In January 1935, Fr. Daly had developed a brochure entitled "Wings over Canada." This appeal was aimed at procuring financial help solely for the correspondence work. This brochure, sent out in Lent of 1935, signified that stamps were Wings to carry God's message to families in outlying areas of Canada:

STAMPS ARE THE WINGS
that carry the saving message of our Faith to
THOUSANDS AND THOUSANDS OF CHILDREN
scattered throughout Western Canada
The "SISTERS OF SERVICE" teach
CATECHISM "BY MAIL"
to those abandoned Lambs of Christ's Flock
and send to their parents Catholic
papers and magazines
Surely you would not refuse
ONE DOLLAR'S WORTH OF CANADIAN STAMPS
to carry on this worthy missionary endeavour
"Wings are needed to carry our message-
Your STAMPS will be those WINGS"

"SISTERS OF SERVICE"

From that time, Fr. Daly referred to this brochure, saying "Send us stamps for our Catechetical Correspondence Course and become "the winged escorts" of the Church in Canada's mission field. In a later brochure "A Winged Escort," Fr. Daly outlined three ways that donors might help the correspondence work:

* To instruct one child by mail for First Communion	\$1
* To enroll one child for the entire seven-year catechetical correspondence	\$5
* To instruct an entire family in their Catholic Faith	\$10

This brochure also contained these consoling words: "They that instruct many to justice shall shine as stars for all eternity (Daniel 13:30)." "They that explain Divine Wisdom to others shall have life everlasting (Eccl. 26:31)." Fr. Daly invited readers of *The Field at Home* to evaluate the power and importance of a postage stamp. The postage stamp appeal of Wings Over Canada caught the imagination of many groups and individuals. One early response to this appeal was from Andrea Cassulo, Archbishop of Leontopolis, the Apostolic Delegate, who sent the following encouraging letter, accompanying it with a substantial cheque: "You will find herewith enclosed my humble offering for the message of the King of Kings. I hope and pray that our dear and faithful people of Canada may give a great support to your precious and holy apostolate."

Generous support was received from this direct appeal. The Lenten Stamp Appeal of 1935 brought in \$569.33. Following that appeal, the Stamp Clubs were organized in parishes, seminaries, YMCK Clubs [Young Missionaries of Christ the King], sodalities, mission clubs of the Sisters' hostels/residences, and by students in schools, colleges and clubs in every province of Canada. These clubs continued to contribute thousands of stamps throughout succeeding years. It is significant to note that whereas in the 1920s, \$25 bought enough stamps to mail 2,000 lessons. In 1990s, it would provide stamps for fewer than 50 lessons.

To obtain financial help in 1935, the Regina Sisters on the advice of Fr. Daly and in consultation of Archbishop Monahan, decided to send out an annual appeal:

Dear Parents:

One year ago we came to Regina for the purpose of instructing your children in the Catholic Religion. It is the love of Mother Church and of your dear children which alone have prompted our work. As you know, our services and lessons have been and are given freely to all who wish to take them. We have now over 7,000 pupils so you can realize that our costs are heavy.

We ask you now to please help us a little. We realize that many of you are heavily burdened in these hard times, but surely you will not refuse just a little help for the sake of your dear children. Be assured that God and His Blessed Mother under whose guidance we place our work, will reward you for your sacrifice. We hasten to assure you that with God's help, we shall continue to send lessons to you whether or not you are able to help us.

We ask you, also, dear Parents, to co-operate with us in this religious work by seeing that your children are faithful to their prayers and to the lessons which we mail to them. We are always glad to answer your personal letters and to give you any religious information you may seek, so write to us freely. May our Blessed Mother of Perpetual Help assist you and yours.

May God bless you,
Sisters of Service

P.S. Some suggestions for answering our call for help:

1. By your prayers.
2. By money donations.
3. By donations of stamps.
4. By garden or dairy product

Donations of students and seminarians

In November 1941, the seminarians under the leadership of Desmond Dorion at the Grand Seminary of Montreal pledged themselves to help the religion by mail campaign and formed the Sisters of Service Stamp Club.

On January 4, 1944, Fr. Desmond Dorion celebrated Mass in the chapel of the Sisters of Service. After breakfast, he spent much time in the office examining the correspondence materials. The numerous letters from parents and students attracted his attention. He believed that seminarians in Eastern Canada would be interested in these letters and suggested that the Sisters send some copies to them. As a priest in the archdiocese of Regina, Fr. Dorion continued his interest and support of the work of the Regina correspondence school until his death on January 23, 1981.

Other seminaries follow Montreal's example

The publication of the Dorion letter sparked interest in zealous seminarians. By April 1943, the

Seminary of Philosophy of Montreal; St. Paul's seminary of Ottawa and St. Peter's seminary of London also contributed stamps. The amount of \$352.79 was contributed by these clubs by March 15, 1943. The Grand Seminary, Montreal collected \$176.28; St. Paul's Seminary, Ottawa, \$81.07; Seminary of Philosophy, Montreal, \$57.72; St. Peter's Seminary, London, Ontario \$37.72.

Student donations

Letters received from students in various parts of Canada show the ingenuity in obtaining funds and the earnest missionary enthusiasm evident in these messages will be an inspiration to many:

... We, the pupils of the Grades 1V and V classes of Holy Angels' Convent, Sydney, are happy to send you the enclosed stamps to help spread the Reign of Christ in the Mission Fields. We shall continue to assist you throughout the school year. Best wishes from Grades IV and V

... Enclosed you will find \$5 to help your catechetical work in Western Canada. St. Dunstan's College, Charlottetown

... We, the children of the 3rd course, Sacred Heart School, Montreal, offer you the enclosed stamps we saved during Holy Week. We like our Religion Course, so we are glad to think that some children on the farms and far away on the coast will also get some catechisms and other pious magazines. Please pray that we will always remain good Catholic girls. Joy Bellcourt

... Just before Easter, we received your S.O.S. appeal for stamps to carry Christ to the mission fields of Canada. To raise money, we raffled a box of chocolates and we are happy to be able to send you 428 one cent stamps. May God bless your work for souls. Please remember us in your prayers. St. Joseph's Academy, North Bay, Ont.

... Here is a money order for \$3, raised by the pupils during Lent. This money for stamps was unselfishly contributed to the "mite box" by both boys and girls. The pupils who read your magazine realize your need for money for upkeep of your wonderful work of "Religion by Mail." Pupils of Grades VII & VII, St. Thomas School, Sudbury, Ont.

... We have heard of your need of assistance to carry on the Correspondence Courses in Religion and we wish to assist. We enclose a money order for \$10, the proceeds of a Bingo and part of our concert money. Please remember us in your prayers and with all our hearts we shall ask God to bless your excellent work which is bringing Christianity to those who haven't the advantage of a Catholic education. St. Mary's School, North Bay, Ont.

... Enclosed is a money order for \$25, a contribution to the missions from the students of St. Jerome's College, Kitchener, Ont.

... The C.C.S.M.C. of Notre Dame Convent, Miscouche, PEI, are sending the enclosed \$5 to aid in your mission work

... We are doing the best we can to help you carry on your mission work sum of \$2 which has been raised by the students of St. Aloysius School, Sudbury, Ont. We hope to send you larger donations in future. (They did!)

... At our last mission meeting, a member of our C.C.S.M.C. Mount Saint Vincent, Halifax voted the sum of \$5.00 to help you in teaching Catechism by Mail. We hope that you can buy a few stamps with this and that thereby we can become sharers in your apostolate.

... In 1944, the Sisters also received \$5 from the Sacred Heart School, Halifax; \$1 from St. Mary's School, Owen Sound, Ont; and \$7 from the C.C.S.M.C., St. Andrew's West.

... We are happy to be able to send you \$20, \$5 for a seven year's course in catechism; \$13 for First Communion courses; and \$2 in stamps. This money was collected by Grades 1, 5, 6B and 8. We are observing Vocation Week at present. Thursday will be for the "Home Missions" and we shall remember particularly the Sisters of Service who are doing so much for the children of the West. We hope that there may be at least one chosen from among us. Your Little Friends at St. Michael's Academy, Chatham, NB

... The enclosed 513 one-cent stamps are sent to you as the result of an appeal made to the children to help along your noble work. We are amply repaid in knowing that they will carry the

Word of God to help children learn their catechism. Loretto High School, Toronto

... At our March meeting, our Mission Unit voted to instruct an entire family in their Catholic Faith. Please find enclosed a cheque for \$10. St. Patrick's Boys' High School, Halifax

... Enclosed is an offering of \$5 in postage stamps. These were obtained as proceeds from an Irish play entitled, The Gifts of St. Patrick which was sponsored by our Sodality. St. Joseph's School of Nursing, Guelph, Ont.

... In answer to your appeal for stamps as wings for religious correspondence, we are enclosing \$5 - part of our Lenten savings. We think you are doing a wonderful work, spreading our Faith among the children not so fortunate as we are. We liked the "Wings Over Canada" Poster for advertising. It is a work of art. I wish we could send you more money but we try to help so many missionaries. St. Stanislaus School, Fort William, Ont.

... Enclosed please find \$10, part of which was collected by means of a bingo. We hope it will aid you in your wonderful work of teaching our religion to those children who are not so fortunate as we in having a Catholic School to attend. Grade VII, St. Patrick's School, Fort William, Ont.

... We, the members of the Apostolic Committee of St. Paul's Academy, have heard a great deal about your missionary accomplishments in the West. We wish you to accept this small sum of \$10 for the education of a family in the Catholic Faith. St. Paul's Academy, Westmount, Westmount, Que.

... In response to the Stamp Appeal, a generous contribution of \$10 came from Our Lady's Jewels of St. Xavier School, a primary school in Junction City, Kansas, USA.

The total contributions from C.C.S.M.C. units and schools from September 1943 to June 1, 1944, was \$693.28. The above schools did continue contributions through the years especially from their Lenten "mite boxes."

Loyola high school, Montreal

In April 1944, the Sisters at the Montreal residence received a surprise visit from the executive of the Loyola high school Sodality to present a cheque for \$250 for Sisters correspondence work in Western Canada. Every student at Loyola high school had contributed one good unused stamp every day in Lent. Forty stamps from 600 boys amounted to 24,000 stamps. Another 1,000 stamps were in the way of good-will offerings. This successful Stamp Drive under the dynamic leadership of the Sodality Moderator, Fr. Douglas E. Daly, SJ was the biggest missionary project that the Loyola students had ever undertaken. In presenting the cheque, the students expressed the wish that their offering would "help in bringing God closer to little children and little children closer to God." The Sisters estimated that 25,000 stamps would mail 25,000 lessons in religion and reassured them that "God alone knows how many little hearts would be brought closer to a knowledge of our Creator and Redeemer through this Lenten project of the Loyola students!" The Loyola boys continued to collect stamps in succeeding Lents.

In July 1966, Fr. Donald Pare, SJ, guidance counsellor at Brebeuf high school, Toronto, wrote an article for *The Field at Home*. Fr. Pare noted he raised money for the Sisters' Western mission work as a high student at Loyola high school in Montreal. "It certainly was the beginning - because I decided then that I was going to be a Jesuit. I never changed. ... I think I can say in all honesty that we do get our vocations by becoming involved in an apostolate."

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NEW FUNDING AND CHANGES IN EDMONTON, 1936-1938

With the founding in 1929 of a much-needed residence for immigrant women in Edmonton, the CWL had pledged to support this new residence. Consequently, the CWL members were unable to assist the correspondence school as generously as in the past. This loss of funds forced the Sisters to devise a new way of obtaining necessary financial help.

In 1936 after some months of deliberation, the Sisters at the Edmonton correspondence school decided to try sending out raffle tickets as a means of meeting their overhead expenses. With Archbishop O'Leary's permission and the necessary authorization from city hall, the first tickets were sent in February, 1936. Although the preparation and mailing of the tickets caused extra work, the returns of about \$1,000 justified the efforts. Most parents and children bought the tickets for the raffle. After a few experiments, the raffle continued almost every year by both Edmonton and Regina schools for 30 years until the mid-1960s and became known as the Annual Charity Draw.

Teaching Catechism in an Edmonton hospital

Occasionally, a parent of a correspondence student from rural Alberta asked the Sisters to visit their child, who was undergoing treatment at an Edmonton hospital. Sr. Mary Corke wrote of her experiences in article, published in the April 1937 edition of *The Field at Home*.

Edmonton Archbishop MacDonald helps with funding

Early in 1937, Bishop John Hugh MacDonald of Victoria, a native of Nova Scotia, was appointed as the successor to an ailing Archbishop O'Leary. On March 11, he was formally installed as archbishop of Edmonton. The Sisters in Edmonton were concerned about the new archbishop's support of the correspondence school. In October 1937, the Sisters asked Archbishop MacDonald's advice about sending an appeal for funds. He responded in an October 3 letter: "Your catechetical work is well known and widely appreciated by the Catholics of the Archdiocese. In the summer, we find you going through the country as zealous missionaries teaching the little children their catechism and preparing them for First Communion and Confirmation. Through the mail, you reach out to the little lambs of Christ's scattered flock throughout the land, often living far from church and its beneficial influence, and bring to them the consoling message of our religion. This work is most deserving and we willingly recommend to the faithful to second your generous efforts by sending you financial help to carry on. Your services, we know, are given gratuitously to our people, and in return, we are confident that this appeal of yours for this missionary work in the Archdiocese will meet with a generous response."

The archbishop showed further interest in the correspondence work by suggesting to Mrs. C. Dearing, president of the Edmonton CWL, to ask the Sisters to write a financial appeal. She forwarded the appeal letter for donations from the CWL across Canada.

The Sisters also received donations of vegetables from home gardens or dairy produce and received a variety of produce as noted in the annals of the Edmonton Sisters: September 1937 - Mrs. Dea brought 4 wild ducks. These will help us celebrate Our Lady's Birthday on September 8. October - Fr. Casartelli arrived from Dapp with a carload of vegetables. Fr. Rupert O'Neill of Villeneuve called with groceries from Mrs. O'Connor of Calihoo. Fr. Casartelli brought 7 bags of potatoes plus \$10 from Jarvie. Mr. and Mrs. Smith of Leduc brought vegetables and butter from Leduc. Mr. and Mrs. Close from Gibbons called to ask what was most needed. The Sisters suggested eggs, butter and meat. Mr. and Mrs. Toth and Mr. and Mrs. Felt from Bashaw brought 20

dozen eggs, 20 pounds of butter, 3 dressed chickens and 1 quart of whipping cream. December - Brother David of C.Ss.R (Redemptorists) brought 3 dressed chickens. Fr. Sullivan of Gibbons encouraged the ladies of his parish to hold a shower with the resultant gift of a generous supply of provisions including meat, nuts oranges and vegetables. The Sisters added a note - "All one could wish for at Christmas."

When Srs. Agnes Hearn and Rita Hurley regularly taught catechism on the weekends at New Sarepta, Maple Hill and Kelly's Ranch, they returned loaded with vegetables and eggs. Some families sent produce by express. The net result of such generous contributions was an over-supply of food produce and a lack of cash. To correct this imbalance, the Sisters turned to the barter system, asking various firms to accept produce in lieu of cash. In many cases, they did. In the 1930s, eggs usually sold for 20 cents a dozen, butter for 25 cents a pound and meat at 30 cents a pound.

The Sisters also received large and small cash donations, including the monthly contribution of \$100 from Senator Frank O'Connor, the founder of the Laura Secord candy company. The CWL members continued sending contributions, often through their Purple Bags program. Rural pastors also shared their meagre cash with the Sisters through donations, including \$ 5 each from Fr. Peter Sullivan and Fr. Hickey of Vilna and \$10 from Fr. Casartelli of Jarvie.

Fr. James Fuller, Redemptorist Provincial Superior, sent \$50 with the words of "God bless you for the splendid work you are doing for our children in the North. You help so many children in our parishes that I feel I should contribute something to the cause, besides appreciation." Meanwhile, the Redemptorists of St. Alphonsus parish, across the street from the correspondence school, donated \$100 towards printing the lessons. Redemptorist Frs. Mangan sent a cheque for the Sisters teaching at the new mission of Tofield. The Sisters returned from that mission with Redemptorist Fr. John Naphin with a large supply of vegetables.

In addition to the archbishop's letter to the families, the Sisters asked the families to send letters and promise of prayers to the archbishop. The response was excellent. The Sisters bound the responses of the families into a book and presented it to the archbishop, who called on the Sisters on January 9, 1939 to deliver his thanks in person.

Funding from the U.S.

In facing the possibility of an increased students from the United States, enrolled in the correspondence lessons, Sr. Mary Fitzgerald wrote specific U.S. clergy for funds. The response of \$96 to their appeal was more than expected. The U.S. connection with the Edmonton correspondence school was reflected in a letter from the state of Washington and was published in the October 1937 issue of *The Field at Home*.

The death of Archbishop O'Leary

On March 6, 1938, Archbishop O'Leary died at the age of 58 of a heart attack in Victoria, BC, where he had been convalescing. His funeral was held in Edmonton on March 11, 1938. Many beautiful tributes were paid to this zealous western missionary. The Sisters were greatly saddened by the news of Archbishop O'Leary as he had been a kind, generous and true father, constantly supporting their work and encouraging them in all their endeavours. He had shown his keen interest and confidence in the community, telling Fr. Daly during the infant days of the Institute that he would take the first 500 Sisters. Although in 1938, he had more Sisters of Service in his archdiocese than any other bishop, he continued to ask that the Sisters open another school or hospital.

The Sisters wanted their correspondence families to become acquainted with the new archbishop,

who accepted the Sisters' invitation to continue sending greetings to their many scattered families. For Christmas 1938, he wrote the correspondence students: "There is nothing that the Church fears more than ignorance on the part of her people. Those who do not know their religion well may be tempted to believe some of the false stories that are told about us; they cannot understand how the Church can be right if these stories are true. Those who are well trained know what to believe and what to reject. I am sure that you must all be busy helping your parents with the work at home, and getting your lessons ready for school. Those who are living on farms have a chance to learn many things every day that will help later on to make happy homes for themselves. I hope that you are all doing well at school, and I hope that you will keep up your love of study all through your life. Those who keep up at least some good reading are the ones who will be the most help to their country. They will be leaders without even wanting to be so."

For the Annual Charity Draw during the second week of December, the Sisters sent a letter to all families, announcing the raffle winners and thanking all the ticket sellers. One of the prize winners wrote:

Viking, Alberta
Dec. 24, 1941

Dear Sr. Regan:

Oh what a Christmas present it was when I received your letter telling me that I am the winner of the first prize. A bicycle, a brand new bicycle, and I am the winner. Oh, thank you, thank you, and give my thanks to the one who drew my ticket. I have said a prayer for all of you. May God bless you all. May you, too, have as merry a Christmas as I am having. Please send the bicycle soon so that I can try it out. You see, Sister, I have to go to the hospital after New Year's for an appendix operation so please remember me in your prayers and I will remember you in mine.

Will you please check your list; I have not received my lesson.

Yours sincerely
James Ruzicki

On receiving the bicycle, James wrote on January 10, 1942: "Please forgive me for not writing before this to let you know that I got my bike and like it very much. A bicycle is just what I wanted for Christmas, and now I have it. A bike, all my own. Thank you, thank you. I am praying for you that God will bless you in all your work. I also pray that all the boys and girls who wanted to win just as much as I did, but did not, will win some other time. Oh what a time we have had bicycle riding, skating and sliding. Now we are all back at school. I expect to go for my operation at the Viking Hospital as soon as I fully recover from the effects of chicken-pox. Please remember me in your prayers as I remember you and all the Sisters."

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CATHOLIC LITERATURE REMAILING CAMPAIGN, 1937-1966

In the fall of 1937, Regina Archbishop Monahan was aware of the value of the remailing project and was concerned that this work was so time-consuming that the Sisters could not keep up with the correction of lessons. Under his suggestion, the Sisters sent a letter to a number of pastors in Eastern Canada:

Reverend and dear Father:

At the suggestion of His Excellency, Most Reverend P.J. Monahan, Archbishop of Regina, we take the liberty of proposing an idea as a form of Catholic Action which, if you deem it wise, might be accepted by your Sodality or any other organization in your parish.

As you are aware, we have hundreds of Catholic families scattered over the province, who live far from a Church. Many of these are too poor to subscribe to a Catholic paper; others have discontinued on account of lack of means.

During the past three years, we have corresponded with thousands of families through our Religious Correspondence Course. We found that many of these families eagerly desire and would welcome Catholic literature.

To the extent of our own means, we are sending out Catholic papers and magazines, but this falls far short of answering all the calls. Would it be possible for the members of your Sodality, Holy Name Society or some other Parish organization to adopt a particular family and forward some Catholic literature once a week. The cost would be only one or two cents per week; the work, the mere addressing of a paper. We assure you that a great good would come from this campaign which would bring happiness to a poor lonely isolated prairie family to know that far away, someone in your city was interested in them.

In the name of the Babe of Bethlehem, who made Himself poor for us, could we not do something for His poor children? For any of your organizations who would help in this way we enclose a form. Please have them complete this and return it to us. With sincerest best wishes and humbly asking your prayers on our missionary endeavours.

NAME OF PASTOR _____

NAME OF PARISH _____

ADDRESS _____

PARISH ORGANIZATION _____

We wish to have the names of _____ (state number) families desirous of receiving Catholic periodicals weekly. (If not possible to send weekly, please state period of time).

N.B. We are in touch with people of various nationalities. If you should have periodicals in languages other than English, please write the number of families to whom you could send Catholic literature in the following languages:

French _____ German _____ Polish _____ Ukrainian _____

Hungarian _____

Other languages _____

SISTERS OF SERVICE
2220 Cameron Street
Regina, Sask.

At Christmas 1937, the Sisters in Edmonton and Regina wrote thank you letters to those remailing:

Dear Friends:

We are grateful to you for the Catholic magazines that you have sent to us during this past year; we appreciate this help very much for without it we should not be able to spread this literature among our poor isolated Catholic friends in the country.

Our principal work here, as you may know, is to teach the truths of our Holy Faith to the children living out on the Prairie who are not in regular contact with the Church and there are thousands of them. Besides instructing children by mail; we, on request, also send senior lessons to adults, and would-be-converts, who are too isolated to receive regular instruction from a priest. The response is excellent. As much as our funds will allow, we remail the Catholic literature sent to us. We also send out monthly letters containing junior and senior contests for the children, and give prizes for the best submissions. We answer the many personal letters and inquiries that we receive and also try to interest people in procuring Catholic pamphlets.

We send out all lessons gratis; once a year we send out an appeal to all families on our program and they help us if they are able. This year on account of one of the heaviest crop failures in history, the majority are unable to assist us.

Please continue to send us Catholic literature. Catholic magazines are always acceptable. Catholic newspapers should preferably be fairly recent. Because we are so hard pressed this year, we make bold also to ask you, if possible to help us with a donation of money or stamps that we may continue wielding our pen to send God's messages throughout the West. We ask this in the name of our poor isolated Catholics. We hope that at this Holy Season of charity [Christmas. 1937] you, and other interested friends will assist us. We shall also be grateful for your prayers.

That our Infant Saviour will bless you and yours, and reward you for your past generous help to our missionary endeavours, is the fervent wish and prayer of,

The Sisters of Service

There was some, but not a great response to this appeal in 1937. In March 1938, Archbishop Monahan made a direct appeal to the public in Eastern Canada by putting the following advertisement in the *Catholic Register*:

REMAIL YOUR REGISTER
AND OTHER CATHOLIC
PUBLICATIONS TO
Poor Families in the West
Hungry for Catholic Reading

In *The Catholic Register*, Archbishop Monahan stated that there are great numbers of Catholic families in Western Canada, hungry for Catholic reading. The Sisters of Service, in addition to their catechism by correspondence, were directing the remailing of Catholic literature. There was an immediate response to this appeal of the archbishop.

Archbishop Monahan was so pleased with the excellent caring responses of so many Easterners that he asked the Sisters to send a letter to the respondents. On December 14, 1938, the Sisters reported to Archbishop Monahan that they had sent 1285 names of families to people from Eastern Canada, who had promised to remail their Catholic papers. They had on hand the names of 350 families, who were waiting to be adopted and they expected to receive many more names from their new enrollment of pupils, who had but recently received a notice concerning "remailing." Archbishop Monahan was pleased. with this news that he promptly wrote a letter Henry

Sr. Monica Meade, the editor of *The Field at Home*, received inquiries asking how readers might

help the missions. Sr. Meade then printed the following suggestion in the July 1938 issue: "After you have read your Catholic papers or magazines, you can remail them to a family in the West who, owing to poor financial circumstances - perhaps because of drought, grasshoppers or hail - is unable to subscribe. By this means, you will ensure a steady supply of Catholic reading to at least one family. If every one of our readers acted on this suggestion, they would be doing a great work of charity in promoting good reading with a Catholic viewpoint. Fr. Daly also reported in the same issue: "The Sisters at the Montreal Club responded quickly to the "Remailing Invitation". Wishing to foster the missionary spirit among the girls, they started a club which became known as "The Apostolate of the Press". The purpose of this club was to collect and remail Catholic literature from a variety of sources - churches, clubs, homes and schools. One hundred twenty-four members joined this club and agreed to pay a monthly fee of \$1.00 for stamps. On Thursday and Sunday evenings members assembled and addressed and stamped packages of literature. During the first four months, 1043 packages were mailed to families whose names had been obtained from the S.O.S. Correspondence School in Edmonton. Once the club was firmly established, it supplied 200 Catholic families with interesting Catholic literature."

The Edmonton Sisters make an appeal for remailers

On a small scale, the Sisters at Edmonton had interested some Catholic families to "adopting a family" for remailing, appealing through the parishes and the press for Catholic literature to be sent to their Edmonton house where they packaged and mailed. This remailing became onerous in time and money. In the early 1940s under the caption of "Be a Missionary by mail," they appealed for remailers to take part in this missionary enterprise by sending a postcard to the Edmonton catechetical house. These volunteers became "Apostles of the Catholic Press" and received the name and address of a family. Considered as an act of charity, "which entailed little labour and negligible expense," the remailing would be of inestimable value in keeping alive the Spirit of Christ among Catholics in outlying districts. There was an excellent response. The remailing of Catholic literature continued until the late 1960s. From among numerous letters from mission helpers in the East is an excerpt from R.C.A.F. Radar Station, Moisie at Sept Iles, Quebec on September 22, 1963: "I am sending you a packet of Catholic newspapers, which I hope you can use in your work. I received your name from Catholic Extension. This is a small Radar Station but we receive quite a bit of Catholic Literature. Every Catholic family gets a free Sunday Visitor each week. We also buy quite a few magazines as: *Liguorian*, *Madonna*, *Catholic Digest*, and *Scarboro Missions*. When the C.W.L. begins its year about October 9, I'd like to suggest we collect these after they are read and send them on to people who can use them. Would you care to have some of each about every second week?"

In 1963, the list of remailing committee of St. Augustine's Seminary, Toronto, was 89 names, most of which are in Saskatchewan. By 1964, the Sisters had sent a new list of 92 families.

SISTERS OF SERVICE MARIAN CRUSADERS, 1937-1941

At the Sisters' first General Chapter in May 1937, it was decided that all the volunteer youth missionary helpers should be known by one name. At that time, there were 5,000 Marian Crusaders and about 100 Young Missionaries of Christ the King. To preserve unity of purpose, it was considered best for all the missionaries to promote the Marian Crusade. All Sister catechists throughout Canada were asked to organize a branch of the Marian Crusaders among the children that they taught during the summer with the consent of the pastor.

A question and answer sheet was updated in 1939 to answer student questions about the crusade.

1. WHAT ARE MARIAN CRUSADERS?

They are a band of Catholics, young and old, who have promised faithfully on their word of honour to say three Hail Marys each day and to do a kind act each day in honour of the Blessed Virgin.

2. DOES THIS "WORD OF HONOUR" BIND UNDER PAIN OF SIN?

No.

3. WHY WAS THE MARIAN CRUSADE FORMED?

To unite through prayers to the Blessed Virgin those Catholics, especially, who are out of regular contact with the Church.

4. WHAT DO WE GAIN BY BEING MEMBERS OF THIS CRUSADE?

We share in all the prayers offered by the Crusaders.

5. WHAT IS THE CRUSADERS' MOTTO?

"All for Jesus through Mary."

6. HOW MANY CRUSADERS ARE THERE?

In April 1939, there were 5,660.

7. IS THE PRACTICE OF SAYING THREE HAIL MARYS SOMETHING NEW?

No. St. Anthony of Padua taught this devotion in the 13th Century.

Later, St. Alphonsus and other great saints encouraged it.

8. IF ONE SHOULD BREAK ONE'S PROMISE, WHAT THEN?

This may happen. If so, be sorry and ashamed that you have broken your word. Do not give up; try again to keep your promise.

9. AT WHAT AGE MAY ONE MAKE THE CRUSADER'S PROMISE?

It is suggested at any age after one's 8th birthday.

10. HOW MAY ONE JOIN?

Write to the Sisters of Service at 2220 Cameron Street for a free enrolment form. On signing this form and returning it to the Sisters, you become a member.

Your name is written on the M.C. Honour Roll in Regina. Those who wish may obtain a beautiful picture of the Blessed Mother with the promise printed on the back as a reminder of their promise. We suggest a 2-cent stamp for this.

11. HAVE CRUSADERS A BADGE BY WHICH THEY CAN RECOGNIZE ONE ANOTHER?

Yes, at the request of many Crusaders, a badge was designed. The badge is one-half inch across, the letters of M.C. are in silver on a blue background. The cost including postage is 25 cents.

12. MAY ONE OBTAIN SUGGESTIONS OF KIND ACTS TO PERFORM?

Yes, we have a leaflet containing suggestions sent in by M.Cs.

The editor of *The Field at Home*, Sr. M. Meade, also promoted the Crusade by featuring a Marian Crusaders' page in the magazine and printing letters from members. She invited Marian Crusader units to make use of a Sisters of Service film, "In The Master's Service" with the offer that a Sister would visit the unit and speak on the topic of the Home Mission field. A number have accepted this offer.

Checking and choosing winners from the hundreds of junior and senior contestants was more than the Sisters at the correspondence school could handle. The Junior CWL members accepted this challenge. Here are a few of the encouraging answers to one of the contests sent out in the spring of 1941:

How do Catholic religion lessons by correspondence help you?

- I have learned many things about my religion of which I had never even imagined. This gives me the inspiration to read Catholic articles so as to learn more.
- Before I took the lessons, I was afraid to speak of my Catholic Faith to my Protestant friends, but I do now, because these lessons have taught and encouraged me to do so.
- It teaches me why we are in this world and how to live here.
- I can make a book of the lessons and keep it to look up information. I can also colour the pictures and hang them up for enjoyment. It makes me want to do the right thing to gain heaven.
- Parents know that their children are learning their religion without always being after them, of which both parents and children get tired.
- Learning one's religion prepares us for when we grow up. We may meet unbelievers who tell us we are wrong, but if we know our catechism, we will be able to answer the questions put to us.
- By taking "Catechism by Correspondence", we can take it any time and learn it, but if we had to where they teach catechism, we might not always be able to go, especially in bad weather.
- We love the Catholic papers we get and wouldn't be able to get if it wasn't for our lessons.

A prize-winning poem by Irma Fossenier of Radville, Saskatchewan, in the 1930s:

HOW TO BE A CRUSADER

We are the Marian Crusaders
Marian Crusaders true.
And if you wish to join us,
We'll tell you what to do.

Upon your WORD OF HONOUR
You must promise you will say
Three fervent Hail Marys
To Mary every day.

A kind act to go with them
Each day, too, you must do,
Then you'll be a Crusader,
A Marian Crusader true.

Marian Monthly letter of May 1938

An excerpt of a monthly Crusade letter sent during May 1938:

Dear Crusaders,

Your Archbishop, is asking each of you to do something special during this beautiful Month of our Blessed Mother; namely, say the Rosary every night in honour of our Queen of May for the following intentions

1. That more young men and women will become priests and sisters.
2. To implore the blessing of rain that we may have good crops.
3. For the success of the Eucharistic Congress in Quebec in June.

You may, of course, add your own special intentions to these. Remember that "in union is strength"; if we unite in prayer for these intentions, we can be sure that God will answer them.

PLEASE NOTE WELL!

No lessons will be sent out to you after May 31, but please continue to send your lessons to us. We shall return your corrected lessons in September. The prize winners of the April-May Contest will be announced in the September letter; the prizes will be sent out to the successful ones in June.

RELIGIOUS VACATION SCHOOLS

Be sure to attend the nearest Vacation School this summer; you will learn many wonderful things you didn't know before.

BE FAITHFUL TO YOUR PRAYERS IN VACATION TIME!

May God bless you and keep you safe during your summer holidays.

Marian Crusaders at the Regina parish of Canadian Martyrs

In September 1936, the Regina Sisters began teaching catechism each Sunday to the children of the newly-formed Regina parish of Canadian Martyrs. The children joined the Marian Crusaders and were eager to do something special in honour of our Blessed Mother. After some discussion, the class decided to prepare for a May procession. The Sisters taught the children some Marian hymns and also how to walk two by two in a solemn procession. Sr. Alice Walsh and students planned a procession in honour of our Blessed Mother for May 23. No one could have predicted that showers of welcome rain prevented an outdoor procession on that particular day. Despite the rain, almost all children were present. To adapt for an indoor procession, the men moved the chairs and kneelers so that two side aisles were provided for the children to process. Most of the girls wore wreaths and veils and all the altar boys wore cassocks and surplices. During the procession, the children sang hymns in honour of Mary and carried a picture of Our Lady decorated with streamers. On reaching the beautifully decorated shrine of Mary, one girl crowned her statue with a wreath of flowers and another read an Act of Consecration. The ceremony closed with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and the hymn, "Holy God, We Praise Thy Name." All were well pleased with the success of this attempt to increase devotion to our Blessed Mother in the hearts of the little ones.

GROWTH AND ASSISTANCE IN REGINA, 1937-1940

Vigorously and enthusiastically, Archbishop Monahan encouraged the growth of the Religious Vacation Schools. In Circular Letter #13 of 1937, the archbishop insisted that Religious Vacation Schools should be set up in every parish and mission of the archdiocese. In that year, the program provided instruction for 6,700 children. The archbishop also promoted the Catholic Press through a wide diffusion of Catholic literature, supported radio broadcasts of Catholic Truth under Frs. Yandeau and Allan and stressed the need for religious study clubs.

Archbishop Monahan often stated that the children in our Religious Vacation Schools today are the Church of tomorrow. To plan for further improving this program, he called a one-day catechetical convention, which was attended by priests, religious and lay catechists at the CYC Hall at Blessed Sacrament parish on April 19, 1938. Six weeks later on June 1, he followed with a letter reminding all priests of the command of Pope Pius XI that a Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) unit be set up in every parish. To do so, he urged them to enlist the services of those persons qualified for this work. Taking a special interest in the Religious Correspondence School of the Sisters of Service, the archbishop set up a fund for a new building for this work. Through these means, he strove ceaselessly to deepen knowledge of the Faith in the Archdiocese of Regina. He showed also great solicitude for the poor and unemployed and during Second World War, he supported the Red Cross and other charitable agencies.

Similar to Edmonton, the Regina Sisters, facing growing pains and the subsequent financial difficulties, reluctantly sent an urgent appeal to the parents in the fall of 1938, seeking financial help for the correspondence school. The Sisters received letters with donations of real sacrifices along with appreciation.

Dear Sisters,

Bressaylor, Sask.

I wish to thank you for your interest in our children; we certainly appreciate it as we are far from Church and the catechism is a great help. I am sorry to say that I cannot donate much to your good work as our crop and garden have all been destroyed by hail this year so money is very scarce. If I could, I would certainly send more, but this small amount of One dollar is sent in sincere appreciation.

We would like you to send lessons to Angela, also. She is nine years old and made her First Communion this spring. Is she old enough do you think? Thanking you again, and hoping you will understand. B. Z.

Southey, Sask.

I am sending a small offering of \$2.00 for the good work you are doing for our children. I also enclose 10 cents for a booklet, *The Truth about Catholics*. Dear Sisters we thank you for the lessons, papers and pictures you are sending us. I, myself, am interested and look over every lesson which I have never learned before. I am your sincere friend, Mrs. M.

Illerbrun, Sask.

I have another little boy to start in catechism. He has not had any training yet in church, but he is very eager to start. He is very fond of the little pictures the rest have been getting. We are sending \$2.00 to help pay the postage. I am pleased the way the children are progressing, especially as I am a convert and it is very hard for me. I would like to get some good reading for myself. What books would you suggest? Thank you. Mrs. J.

Vanscoy, Sask.

Am in receipt of our recent letter and would certainly like to have my children enrolled for lessons again this winter. Wish we were closer to Regina, as we could easily give you some vegetables this year; we have plenty and no sale for them, but don't think it would pay to ship them from here as the freight would be more than they are worth.

Will enclose \$1.00 as this is all that we can possibly spare because I have been unable to work for eight years and the children are doing their best to carry on. Mr. G. E.

Illerbrun, Sask.

I am enclosing fifty cents to help pay postage on the children's lessons. Our crop wasn't very good and we didn't get threshed before the rain. So when expenses are paid, there's not much left. Hoping this will help out some. We hope for better returns next year. Mrs. V. C.

The Sisters reported the results of the appeal in the October 1937 issue of *The Field at Home*. "In a response to our appeal for funds for our Correspondence School, we received 30 cents from the little children in a Northern Ontario School. Because these children are very poor, they had to make sacrifices to send this amount. They asked that their thirty cents would be spent in stamps for our "Catechetical Correspondence School." As one of our benefactors, we ask God to bless them for their thoughtfulness and generosity. These coppers are worth their weight in gold for it is the spirit behind the gift that counts."

From the beginning of the correspondence school in 1934, the Sisters had sent correspondence lessons throughout Saskatchewan following the request of the province's Bishops dioceses. The Regina school had enrolled students in the dioceses of Gravelbourg, Prince Albert and Saskatoon as well as the Abbacy of St. Peter's, Muenster. When the parents and pastors witnessed the good results of Religion by Mail, they planned to set up religious correspondence schools of their own. The Sisters assisted them by giving them lists of pupils' names who were already enrolled and by explaining correspondence procedures to them.

During the intervening years the Bishops of these Dioceses sent contributions to Regina when they were able to do so. The Ursuline Sisters of Bruno were the first to set up a correspondence school for the children of St. Peter's Abbacy, Muenster in 1936-1937. In 1945, Bishop Lemieux of Gravelbourg set up a correspondence school, which the Sisters of Jesus and Mary directed from 1948 until 1989. In the 1950s, the Presentation Sisters started a correspondence school at Prince Albert.

Progress Report from Dioceses in Saskatchewan served from Regina, 1937-1938

	Families	Children	Senior	Intermediate	Junior
Regina	1,706	3,673	983	1,844	846
Saskatoon	508	1,171	223	548	400
Prince Albert	410	881	297	422	162
Ukrainian	61	118	29	71	18
Total	2,685	5,843	1,532	2,885	1,426
Grades		-	9-12	4-8	1-3

Children from Manitoba and Northern Ontario received lessons from Regina, bringing the total to more than 7,000.

Sr. Barton attended international conference

While travelling West by train to Regina in August 1938, Fr. Daly met Dr. Fletcher, principal of the government correspondence school at Wellington, New Zealand. Dr. Fletcher was travelling to Victoria to attend an International Conference on Correspondence Instruction. Keenly interested in the agenda of this conference, Fr. Daly thought a Sister might gain some ideas useful for religious education by correspondence. On arrival in Regina, he discussed the matter with Archbishop Monahan, who offered to pay the expenses. Chosen for the conference, Sr. Madge Barton was accompanied to the three-day conference (August 22-24) by Sr. Agnes Black, Superior of the Sisters' residence in Vancouver.

Each Sister attended different sessions to share their information. The Sisters were impressed with the organization of the government correspondence school, finding some similarities in methods of operation. They noted the emphasis on personal involvement of the teacher with the student. It was made clear that although students and teachers were widely separated, they were united through a highly individualized process of correspondence instruction. On receiving the corrected lessons, the students look for something extra, such as a little note or letter. Teachers do as well. A mother in Montana wrote to a principal: "I have felt much encouraged in looking over Warren's returned papers. The nice notes and comments your teachers have written have been very helpful. All seem to take such a personal interest in him!" Another comment noted: "There are hundreds of complete letters, some running into many pages. Certainly the teacher takes time to answer. We must take time. That is part of our responsibility."

The Sisters were introduced to new procedures of using two-way envelopes, travelling libraries, travelling teachers and periodic general exhibitions of students' work as well as to invitations to students to come to the correspondence school to meet their teachers. The Sisters also learned of the ever-increasing interest of educators in correspondence work as a means of reaching out to members of society unable to attend a regular school of instruction. These students included rural students, expelled students, adults wishing to complete their elementary or high school grades, adults needing commercial or technical courses, and those with prolonged illness, in jails and treatment centres.

Dr. Fletcher described a 1927 exhibition in Wellington, NZ, for correspondence students. Besides meeting their teachers and seeing exhibits of other students' work, the students observed a demonstration of the new colour printing machine, duplicator, assembling stapling, binding machines, monthly circulars and other school materials. The Sisters saw this idealistic program as an excellent aim for the correspondence school but of prohibitive cost. On her return to Regina, Sr. Barton visited the Edmonton Sisters to share the new ideas from the conference.

Sister Black appointed as Superior

In September 1940, Sr. Agnes Black was appointed as Superior of the Regina correspondence school, replacing Sr. Madge Barton who returned to teaching in a one-room school at Marquis, Saskatchewan. Concerned about the school's financial situation, Sr. Black sent an appeal to families in the fall of 1940:

Dear Friends,

We are writing this letter not only to you parents, but also to you students. As this letter contains something very important, we ask you to please read it very carefully.

We have now about 7,000 persons taking Religious Instruction through the mail. We believe and fondly hope that these persons are getting great good from the lessons they receive. The following is what two of our pupils said about it: "It teaches and encourages us

who live far from a Church and do not get religion instruction in school." "It is the most valuable thing we have ..."

This year, in order to make these lessons even more valuable, we have ordered 42,000 new Junior Lessons together with printed question sheets for each child. We have also ordered 40,000 Senior Lessons which have been written by the Sisters of Service especially for you. All these lessons will cost about \$1,000.

At present we do not know where we shall be able to get the money to pay for these. We do know and even feel sure that with God's help and your assistance, we shall obtain it somehow.

You may ask, "How can WE help? We will suggest three ways:

1. If you are can, please send us an offering of money to help pay for the printing of these lessons.
2. Send with your lessons a few stamps. Every stamp helps.
3. Pray - First, we want you to know that those of you who cannot help with money or stamps are just as welcome to the lessons as those who can. But so that all may have a share in helping this great work, we ask you to pray that God will inspire others to be generous so that we may be able to carry on the work as well as possible.

A Special Message to Children

We think you will like to know how some children in Eastern Canada are helping by sending stamps to us:

A school in Hamilton, Ontario, put on a concert. They charged a three-cent stamp for admission. The students sent these stamps for your lessons.

In a school in Northern Ontario, the children saved their pennies for a week. Then they bought stamps with them. These stamps went on your lessons.

We feel sure that God was very pleased with the sacrifices that these children made. Perhaps some Marian Crusaders may get an idea from hearing about what these children did.

May God bless you all and help you to know what you should do. On each of you, we ask God's blessing.

Your Sincere Friends in Christ,
Sisters of Service

On December 27, 1940, Sr. Black wrote Sister General Margaret Guest about the many generous friends at Christmas. She reported monetary gifts of \$350 from Bishop Gerald Murray of Saskatoon and \$25 from Bishop Duprat of Prince Albert as well as \$25 in stamps from the Bishop of Gravelbourg. She also reported receiving \$10 and a list of new pupils from Lochalsh, Ontario. Despite temperatures of -38F, the CWL bazaar raised \$100. From the families on the farms, the Sisters received nine turkeys, four chickens, three hams, eggs, cream, and a good supply of vegetables. City friends sent many Christmas treats and some cheques.

Effect of the Second World War

When Canada declared war on Germany on September 9, 1939, there was a long list of correspondence students who have answered their country's call to fight. The Sisters believed that the knowledge and love of their faith gained through the mail, helped them in the struggle. It was an exceptionally difficult time for Western farmers. Farm chores for rural children greatly increased during these years and meant less time for home religion assignments. More reminders from the Sisters were necessary. It was not unusual in the early 1940s for a Sister answering the doorbell to be saluted smartly by a soldier in the army, air force and navy, introducing: "I've taken your courses for a long time." One recruit brought with him a friend soldier from the barracks saying, "My friend is taking instructions to become a Catholic. Thanks to the course I have studied from you, I have been able to explain many point of Catholic belief to him."

CHANGES IN CORRESPONDENCE LESSONS, 1940-1965

Confraternity of Christian Doctrine

Informal schools of Christian doctrine have existed from the early days of Christianity, but at the time of the Council of Trent, (1545-1563), the Church authorities decided that a formal organization was necessary. The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine [CCD] became the Church's official association of Catholics dedicated to the ministry of religious education. The first Society of Christian Doctrine was established in Rome in 1560 under Pope Pius IV and consisted of priests and laymen dedicated to teaching religion to children, youth and adults in the churches of Rome. Renamed Confraternity of Christian Doctrine in 1571, Pope Pius V recommended the CCD to all Bishops. During 1566, the first comprehensive catechism, *The Roman Catechism*, was completed as a compendium of Catholic truth and as an enduring source book for subsequent catechesis until its last edition in 1978.

Through the efforts of bishops, CCD gradually spread to all parts of the world. In subsequent years, it assumed a variety of structures to meet the needs of the times and countries. In January 12, 1935, the Decree of the Congregation of the Sacraments obliged bishops to establish the CCD in every parish, especially to assist Catholic children not attending Catholic schools. The decree stressed four types of Apostolic work:

Four types of Apostolic work

1. Religious instruction of elementary Catholic school children not attending Catholic schools - through Parish Schools of Religion, Religious Vacation Schools and Correspondence Schools of Religion.
2. Religious instruction of high school boys and girls not attending Catholic schools, also youth of the Parish - through Catholic Students' Mission Crusade, [CSMC]; Catholic Youth Clubs, [CYC]; Retreats, etc.
3. Adult religious education for laity in general - through Study Clubs, Convert Classes, taking a Correspondence Course in CCD Methods of Teaching Religion, Catholic Action Clubs, and other Parish Organizations.
4. Religious instruction in the home by parents following directed programs or teaching outlines.

Archbishop James McGuigan of Toronto organized an Archdiocesan Convention of the CCD in Toronto during January 1937. He reminded the delegates of the importance of supporting the bishops in their efforts to promote the work of the CCD. He stressed that the greatest enemy of Faith is "ignorance of her doctrines, her ideals and her great influence on the souls of all through her Sacraments and Sacred Liturgy."

Under the title of Apostolic work in the CCD manual, the Correspondence Apostolate is grouped with religious vacation schools and parish schools of religion. In 1925, the Sisters began the complementary works of correspondence and religious vacation activities. Although the decree of Code 711 from Rome was issued in 1935, some bishops were unable to promote it entirely until the 1950s.

Little revision of courses was made during the first 14 years of the Sisters' correspondence work. During those years of 1925 to 1939, the content of the correspondence courses was similar to the curriculum in the Catholic schools. For the most part, the content of religious education was contained in a catechism, which consisted of questions and followed by answers which were expressed in precise theological phrases. The questions were divided into three sections of the Creed, the Sacraments and the Commandments.

By the late 1920s, new findings of applied psychology about the development of children's learning and reasoning skills sparked a revolution in teaching methods of secular subjects. Catechists followed this trend later when they became increasingly aware of the catechism's limitations, realizing that much of the objective truth of Christian doctrine in a catechism was very abstract and philosophical, not Biblical. It tended to go over the heads of the children and past their hearts. This realization led to a greater interest and emphasis on the good news of the Gospel and on the wonderful works of God in saving His people.

Sisters change to the Jesus and I series

The Sisters had received some adverse criticism in the mid-1930s that the senior lessons were too long with difficult vocabulary and that the language was abstract and philosophical. They decided to use a new text, *Jesus and I* by Fr. Aloysius J. Heeg SJ, which had been acclaimed enthusiastically in Catholic schools.

Published in the 1930s, the series followed the biblical approach and presented the good news of Jesus Christ. Christo-centric, beautifully illustrated and written in simple language, the series correlated with the catechism. A lesson about Jesus' teaching was connected with the catechism's summary of the principal truths of Faith. In using this method, Fr. Heeg was a few years ahead of Pope Pius XII's Encyclical, *Divino Afflante Spiritu* (On the Promotion of Biblical Studies), published September 30, 1943. In addressing biblical scholars through his encyclical, Pope Pius XII encouraged them to work with all zeal and care. "What is more sublime than to scrutinize, explain, propose to the faithful and defend from unbelievers the very word of God, communicated [to all] under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit." (#59, Encyclical, Sept. 30, 1943.) This emphasis on the bible provided a foundation for the future development of all religious teaching.

In 1938, Fr. Heeg gave permission to the Sisters of Service to use his text for the correspondence courses. Regina Archbishop Monahan encouraged Sr. Madge Barton to collaborate with Fr. Heeg in adapting the *Jesus and I* series for First Communion correspondence lessons and offered to assist with the cost. This adaptation consisted of rearranging Fr. Heeg's text into 18 four-page booklets and preparing accompanying question sheets of 25 questions. Each lesson contained a related outline picture based on scripture. The course provided not only an excellent preparation for First Confession and First Communion but also a strong foundation for the successive lessons of the correspondence course. Because of its clear presentation of basic truths, it was considered also a good reference for adult converts.

Sr. Barton sent Fr. Heeg some comments of the correspondence students.

- By taking Catechism by Correspondence, we can study it any time and learn; but if we had to go to a place where catechism is taught, we might not be able to attend regularly.
- We only have catechism here for two weeks in the summer and I think that is not enough.
- It is especially a benefit to country folk (like myself) who can get to Church only once during the winter.

- Correspondence teaches and encourages us especially who live on a farm far from a priest and are unable to take religion in school.
- There are certain things about the Church that we should know and would not know unless we took religious instructions by mail.
- I find a great deal of pleasure and enjoyment in entering the contests and colouring the pictures.
- There is always something new and interesting to learn from each lesson.
- Parents know that their children are learning without always getting after them - of which both parents and children get tired.
- At home, we sometimes put off studying our lessons; but when lessons arrive by mail, we do them promptly.
- In studying by correspondence, each student has to answer every question while at Sunday school, you might have to answer only one or two questions.
- We wouldn't receive the Catholic newspapers we now get if it wasn't for the lessons we receive.
- It helps me to keep bad things off my mind.
- When your friends see your work, they become interested in God's work, too.
- It is beneficial to the parents who by seeing their children doing catechism, start reading it themselves.

On November 22, 1938, Fr. Heeg wrote to Sr. Barton from St. Louis, Missouri:

Yesterday, the Bishop [Bishop Winkelmann of St. Louis, Missouri] called me to his home. He asked me to explain what I had found out about various correspondence courses. I told him about eight correspondences course centres and the different procedure each followed. At the end of the explanation, I remarked to him that the Sisters of Service were doing the best job of all. He readily agreed. I suggested to the Bishop that we in St. Louis ought to profit from your experience in Regina. I called his attention to the fact that you are engaged in the work of producing a complete series of correspondence courses. He was delighted when I told him that I presumed that in your great zeal, you would cooperate in helping us take care of our needs in the States. By this I meant, and the Bishop understood, that you would likely let us buy and use your material. Am I right in assuming that the Sisters of Service are willing to cooperate with us in this way?

Bishop Winkelmann, being a man of action, at once said: "Order us 2,500 sets of the Jesus and I correspondence course. Let's get the questions printed too, if that seems a good idea. You can do this ordering directly through Loyola University Press, can you not?"

Before proceeding with any printing of text or questions, I should like to know what you intend to do. I feel sure that we can help one another.

Again thanking you for all your kindnesses, not the least of which was the sending of those delightful letters from your correspondents, I am,

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Aloysius J. Heeg, SJ

On November 25, 1938, the Sisters informed Archbishop Monahan on the progress of the adapted *Jesus and I* course:

Your Excellency:

We are enclosing a copy of our Christmas letter for you to see.

We also enclose a copy of a letter just received from Fr. Heeg, S.J. concerning the *Jesus and I* course which you kindly gave us permission to get. At our last writing to Fr. Heeg, we were not sure of how many lessons to order, but since then have written Fr. Schmidt, S.J., of Loyola University Press asking him to print 2,000 lessons for us and 2,000 for our Edmonton House. We thought you would be interested to know that His Excellency, Bishop Winkelmann, intends making use, in his archdiocese, of the Correspondence Junior Leaflets for *Jesus and I* which we have prepared. We told Fr. Heeg we would be glad to cooperate in whatever way we could. We hope all will work out well.

In response to some correspondence material requested by Fr. Heeg for Bishop Winkelmann, the Sisters received a letter dated April 25, 1939 from Fr. R.B. Schuler, secretary of Bishop Winkelmann:

Dear Sisters:

I wish to express my thanks for your letter of April 20 and its interesting enclosures. Possibly Fr. Heeg has indicated to you what inspiration we here in the States have derived from your work in the correspondence field. Under separate cover, I am mailing you a set of the correspondence course, *JESUS AND I*, as prepared for use in the Archdiocese of St. Louis. You will observe in our list of instructions to the teachers how we have drawn on your material. We make grateful acknowledgement to the Sisters of Service in the newspaper articles announcing this course.

I would very much appreciate receipt of whatever mail is sent out in connection with the correspondence instructions, and will be pleased to compensate for this material. We have many calls for some intermediate course, and I would be much pleased to have a complete set of the course you announce, that by Fr. Raemers, CSsR. If the enclosed check does not cover the cost, we will send more.

Praying our Divine Saviour to bless your work and sacrifices in behalf of His little ones.

A letter on May 25, 1940 from Fr. Heeg from St. Louis, Missouri explained one of the delays of the *Jesus and I* course:

Dear Sister Barton:

As you may expect from the delay, I have been having one glorious time getting that correspondence course off the press, into boxes, and on the train for Canada. I won't go into details to explain the delay; it will interest you more to have me say that the material has finally been shipped.

The total bill for all the material is \$475.00 in U.S. There were several ways of figuring this final cost. The way we have put it on the invoices eliminates the need for considering discounts. Nineteen cents a set is what we should charge anyone in the States for an order of like quantity. So you can see that we are not giving you anything more than we planned to do, but we are saving you a lot of arithmetic by telling you if we receive \$475.00 in U.S. money, the bill is entirely paid.

All the material sent to 2220 Cameron Street is for your house in Regina. It contains no material that we mean you to send elsewhere.

I am very grateful for letting me see the first lessons of your Intermediate Course on the Prairie Series. Congratulations, Sister. I can say in all sincerity that this is the best course for the group you intend it that I have ever seen.

A further delay was due to a misunderstanding of the nature of the *Jesus and I* course by the Canadian Customs. This caused much difficulty for the Sisters to clear the cartons at the Customs Office.

The Sisters were grateful to Fr. Heeg for his interest, cooperation and work in making it possible to obtain his excellent lessons which became the foundation for the whole series of correspondence courses. The Sisters realized that Bishop Winkelmann's decision to use the correspondence form of *Jesus and I* in his archdiocese of St. Louis and in other dioceses resulted in large printing and a lower price. A complete set of 18 lessons, including outline pictures and question sheets cost less than 19 cents a set. For this favour, the Sisters were especially grateful.

Queen of the Prairies Series

Both parents and children were delighted with the *Jesus and I* course. The Sisters decided that a follow-up intermediate course on The Apostles Creed was found in The King's Series by Fr. Raemers, CSsR in the series of booklets on the prayer interspersed with illustrative stories. With the blanket permission of Fr. Raemers, and the blessing of Regina Archbishop Monahan, Sr. Barton proceeded to adapt the booklets for the correspondence lesson. Prepared with the valuable assistance of Fr. A. McGolrick, the Regina diocesan censor and professor at the Regina Cleri seminary, Sr. Mary Regan typed the lessons. Fr. Heeg's heartening response on receiving a copy of the first lesson was a great encouragement. In 1939, this course of 28 illustrated lessons was completed, imprimatured by Archbishop Monahan and also copyrighted under the name of *Queen of the Prairies Series*.

Fr. C.J. Martin, director of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine at the archdiocese of Halifax and a religious radio broadcaster, wrote on January 22, 1940 upon receiving a sample of *Queen of the Prairies* series: "It is excellent for my needs. I want you to send me at my expense the whole series as they come from the Press." Requests for this course came from the Sisters of Loretto in Hamilton and others Ontario communities. In 1942 after a request from Sisters in Montreal, it was translated into French. The *Queen of the Prairies* series was used until 1965 at the end of Vatican II Council.

Courses constantly updated

The Sisters were constantly on the alert to keep their lessons up to date. In the 1950s, many religion teachers became increasingly aware of the limitations of the current catechism, realizing that a memorized answer was not sufficient proof that learning had taken place. The question-and-answer method was inadequate and was too fixed on memory, neglecting the intuitive, imaginative and reasoning capabilities of the students. Learning should not be the goal of a religious program but rather that children should answer Christ's call of Come Follow and develop a personal relationship with God.

In the 1950s, a new kerygmatic method developed by Jesuit Fr. Johannes Hofinger began to spread as a decided improvement on the catechism approach among religious education circles. The kerygmatic method was derived from the Greek word of kerygma, which meant the message which came to refer to the joyful announcing of the Good News of Christ or Gospel. It was through this method that the phrase of salvation history became popular. The saving deeds of God show God's great love for us and were recorded in the bible. The kerygmatic method was intensely biblical and included a call to respond to God's love with faith and love. Furthermore, an increased interest in biblical and liturgical studies as sources of spiritual growth led catechists to include the bible and liturgy in their religion classes.

When the kerygmatic method was introduced, parents were not informed about the extensive research on the psychological development of students and of the meaning of the new kerygmatic approach of teaching catechism. Some parents became disturbed when their children could not recite from memory the answers that the parents themselves had learned in their catechism

classes. This omission to inform parents caused some misunderstanding between parents and catechists.

Upon learning of Fr. Heeg's new publication of *The Illustrated Catechism*, a revised version of the *Baltimore Catechism*, which followed the kerygmatic approach, the Sisters decided to ask Fr. Heeg about it. For correspondence lessons, the Sisters found the scriptural approach in *Jesus and I* very effective. On September 11, 1950, Sr. Agnes Dwyer of the correspondence school in Fargo, ND wrote to Fr. Heeg, asking for questions for correspondence to accompany *The Illustrated Catechism*. In replying, Fr. Heeg suggested that the Sisters compose the questions, which he would review. Sr. Margaret Morgan of the Regina school, prepared the questions, which Fr. Heeg who responded: "Congratulations, Sister; you certainly made a fine correspondence course out of the *Illustrated Catechism*. It represents a great deal of work as is evident from the thoroughness which it shows."

The Sisters' successful adaptation of *Jesus and I* and *The Illustrated Catechism* were well used in Canada and the United States. In mid-1950s, Fr. Heeg asked Sr. Mary Jackson of the Edmonton correspondence school to collaborate with him in adapting the other courses. Sr. Jackson, a teacher, successfully wrote the adaptations for the intermediate correspondence students of Grades 4-8 and for the senior students of Grades 9-12. The courses consisted of the 16 lessons for the text of *The Apostles' Creed*, 20 lessons for *Sacraments* and 20 lessons for *Commandments*.

In the 1950s, Sr. Mary Jackson also wrote several courses to meet special needs:

- 1) *Little Lessons*, a beginner's course on The Sign of the Cross in response to some parents who had requested a course for their pre-school children.
- 2) *First Communion* consisted of 20 lessons, which were used until 1965.
- 3) *The Social Teachings of the Church* Sr. Jackson wrote this comprehensive course to meet the need of seniors in Grades 10-12. The lessons were based on the papal encyclicals and on her studies (1957-1960) on the Church's Social Doctrine at St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, NS. This course was used as correspondence course for senior students and by students in the Catholic high schools in Edmonton.

The Sisters adapted other courses to supplement existing courses. From the text of *The Blessed Virgin* and with the approval of author Fr. Lord, SJ, Sr. Alice Walsh wrote six junior lessons under the title of *The Blessed Virgin and Guardian Angels*. Sr. Gertrude Walsh wrote six lessons for a *Brief History of the Old Testament* as well as lessons for Christmas, Lent, Easter and Pentecost under the title of *A Child's Pal for Juniors on the Liturgical Seasons*.

From *The Story of the Mass* and with the permission of the authors, Frs. G. Allard and Heeg, Sr. Mary Fitzgerald wrote lessons under the title of *Ten Lessons on the Mass*. Used mostly for convert instruction, *Father Smith Instructs Jackson*, six lessons of a fundamental study of Catholic faith and practice, were obtained from the Kenrick seminary in the 1930s.

CATECHETICAL ACTIVITIES IN EDMONTON, 1940-1948

The Advent-Christmas letter of Archbishop MacDonald to the correspondence students had become traditional. In fact, all Bishops whose children were taking the Sisters' correspondence lessons sent Christmas letters to the children in their dioceses. In the letter in 1940, Archbishop MacDonald thanked the children for their last Christmas gift of a bound book of prayers and letters.

My dear Children:

It seems a long time since my last letter to you. The War was just after starting, and we were all hoping and praying that it would soon stop. Things are worse now than perhaps they were at that time and we must pray harder for peace than we ever did before. My sincere thanks for all the prayers you said for me this year. Some of you children said prayers for me every day; others for awhile. I am very glad to get your prayers, because they make my work more pleasing to God, and more useful to people.

I am hoping to get a whole lot of prayers again this year. I am an awful beggar when it comes to prayers. I don't mind asking for them because I know that you can give them. I never get enough of them. I want and need them for all sorts of people; for little children who have no chance to get to Mass; for parents who are careless in doing their duty; for poor people who have no work; for those who have no place to live and for our brave soldiers and their families.

I know that you must be very grateful to the Sisters of Service for all the nice lessons they have sent you during the year. I am very thankful to them and I am sure that you are too. Do you know that these lessons are the only means that some children have to learn their holy religion, their duties to God and to one another. They are very good lessons indeed.

Sending these lessons is very hard work for the Sisters, but they love children because Christ loves them. When we love anyone, we are ready to do all we can for them. Many parents ask for these lessons because they know that they will do a lot of good to their children. It costs a lot to send lessons week after week, and parents always pay when they can.

These lessons teach you to be honest, truthful, and more kind and helpful to your parents and to everyone else. I do hope that the Sisters will be able to send the lessons every week this coming year. If you know of any children who should be taking these lessons, please tell them to send their names to the Sisters at once.

I hope that you are going to have a very happy Christmas with peace in your hearts, peace in your homes, and peace in the country all round. The surest way to be happy is by loving God and keeping His Commandments; then loving and helping one another for God's sake. Your parents have done more for you than has anyone else. You ought, therefore, to love and help them in every way you can. Helping one another is one of the best ways of showing the world that we have the Spirit of the Divine Child in our hearts.

The Sisters had written to the children, asking each to say three Hail Marys for the archbishop and to contribute a penny for a gift of a perpetual calendar for him. The children responded generously and on December 24, 1940, the Sisters sent the children's gift to the archbishop with the accompanying note: "Please accept this little gift from your flock of Rural Alberta. It was with great pleasure and enthusiasm that the pupils contributed a penny towards this present. We trust this little souvenir will be pleasing to Your Excellency. Each child has said three Hail Mary's as a spiritual bouquet for all your special intentions."

Christmas Eve of 1940 at the Edmonton correspondence school was different. Parents and parishioners had been generous with gifts of turkeys and a variety of goodies. The altar was beautifully decorated with red carnations. Srs. Mary Corke and Patricia McConway were preparing to leave to help out at the Midnight mass at Dunvegan when the telephone rang. It was a request from Fr. Hickey, pastor at Vilna and a patient in the Edmonton General Hospital, if he could celebrate the midnight mass in the Sisters' chapel. Srs. McConway and Corke arrived in time to join Fr. Hickey and the Sisters for a merry breakfast. After Fr. Hickey returned by taxi to his hospital bed, the Sisters had a jolly time opening their letters and gifts which had arrived during the Advent Season.

At 7.20 a.m., Srs. Agnes Hearn and Rita Hurley left with Fr. Emmett Doyle of the cathedral parish for the New Sarepta mission of Maple Hill, where Sr. Hearn prepared a crib and took choir practice before mass. Sr. Hurley went to Kelly's Ranch to assist and celebrate with the people. The celebrations ended about 1.30 p.m. and Fr. Doyle treated the Sisters to lunch at Magnon's. They arrived in time for the community Christmas dinner at 5.20 p.m.

The closing days of 1940 were happy ones. Archbishop MacDonald called to spend a pleasant hour and a half with the Sisters on December 27, asking them to thank the children for their prayers, letters and gift of a perpetual calendar. On December 30, Fr. Daly was awarded the medal *Pro Ecclesiae et Pontifice* by Pope Pius XII, in recognition of his missionary service to the Church especially in Western Canada.

Help from Archbishop MacDonald

On November 10, 1948, Fr. Daly asked Edmonton Archbishop MacDonald for a letter of support, wishing to use the religious correspondence courses offered by the Sisters of Service for propaganda purposes:

Your Excellency:

As I am contemplating a little piece of propaganda printed in favour of the Sisters of Service Correspondence Course, I was just wondering if it would be too much to ask of you a short letter explaining the need, the value, the efficiency of the SOS Catechetical Course.

As you know in matters of this kind, nothing is worth more in the eyes of our Catholic people than an authoritative statement from our Bishops.

I thought that before this time of the year, I would have had the pleasure of seeing you, but I have been delayed by many unforeseen circumstances and now that the end of the year is drawing nigh, I thought that I would put off my Western trip until January.

All the celebrations of the Golden Jubilee are over. There is only a golden memory left! My friends were exceedingly kind to me on this occasion, and among them I am glad to count your Excellency.

With your kindest blessing and fondest prayer, I remain,

Your humble and devoted servant,

In reply to this request of Fr. Daly, Archbishop MacDonald wrote a letter on November 20, 1948:

Dear Father Daly:

Your letter of the 12th inst. to hand, stating that you planned to distribute information on the SOS Catechetical Correspondence Course, and asking my opinion of its need, value and efficiency.

There is no question of its need. There is very little land in this province unfit for cultivation, and people are squatting wherever there is unoccupied land, sometimes thirty miles from the

nearest Catholic Church. The priest cannot visit these people often and without this course, both parents and children would soon lose the Faith altogether.

Priests often feel loath to send names and addresses to the Sisters because of their inability to meet at least part of the cost. They feel that the Sisters should not be expected to carry the whole cost of catechisms, stationery, and postage; and they cannot expect much aid from people who have all but lost the Faith.

The value of the course is also beyond question. People have time and again told me of its value to them and to their children. There are a great many homes in this diocese where Bible students alone would be welcome today, only for the help afforded by the SOS Course.

But its efficiency is greatly enhanced, and its maximum power is only attained by the periodical visits of the Sisters to the homes of those taking the course. This touches a lack in the Religious Vacation Schools where children are gathered for a few weeks each summer. For efficiency, they rank far below the system usually followed by the Sisters; visiting the various missions, getting acquainted first with the parents who often need more instruction than the children; getting first-hand knowledge of the difficulties in the children's way; winning the respect and later the cooperation of those without whose help the training of the children would prove useless; getting the background so useful in later correspondence with the children; and smashing the prejudice often so strong in the hearts of people towards religion when they know nothing about it except some of its burdens and obligations.

Fr. Daly wrote a quick response of thanks: "I will make use of your letter for propaganda purposes for during Lent every year, we circularize our friends emphasizing some particular aspect of our work."

On December 13, 1948, Fr. Daly wrote the archbishop, telling of one quick result of this letter: "The letter you had the kindness to give me showing the value of the SOS Catechetical work within your jurisdiction has already borne fruit. Enclosed you will find a cheque for \$200 from Fr. O'Leary of Dixie, Ontario. There is \$50 for Mass intentions for Fr. O'Leary to be said immediately and \$150 for our catechetical house. I should tell you that Fr. O'Leary, in the course of conversation, asked me to suggest to him some good work for he had a few hundred dollars he could spare for that purpose. I suggested Catechetical work. The above result came from this."

Archbishop MacDonald wrote immediately to Fr. O'Leary: "My sincere thanks for your generous donation for the work of the Sisters of Service. Their correspondence course has kept the faith alive in many a home too remote for the visits of any priest, and too far from any church to be able to attend Mass, even if otherwise able to do so. This work has been carried on for the past five years under severe limitations for lack of funds; and I cannot help thinking what a boon it would be for our scattered missions if Fr. Daly were fortunate enough to meet a friend like you every month. Thanks be to God for all the favours."

To the Sisters, Archbishop MacDonald gave further expression of his gratitude:

Dear Sr. Superior:

The enclosed cheque of \$200 includes a donation of \$150 from Reverend Dr. O'Leary of Dixie, Ontario, received yesterday through Fr. Daly; and one of \$50.00 from the Archdiocese - both for your catechetical work. The latter would have to be many times larger before it would be commensurate with our appreciation and gratitude; but we hope to add to it by arousing in the hearts of priests and people directly concerned a greater sense of duty to support your work.

SISTERS' INVOLVEMENT IN CCD ACROSS CANADA, 1941-1988

Winnipeg, 1941-1948

Sr. Monica Meade's contribution to the Winnipeg archdiocese is summarized in an article from *The Northwest Review*, which was published on September 16, 1948.

The guiding spirit of catechetical and group work in Winnipeg and vicinity for the past seven years, [1941-1948], was Sr. M. Meade, SOS, who has just been recalled to the Toronto Motherhouse for assignment to another field of endeavour.

Identified with The Catholic Central Bureau, Sr. Meade organized and directed the Marian Clubs and Sunday School Centres through which scores of Catholic children attending public schools were found, brought together, instructed and reinstated in the Church. In many cases, the entire family was reclaimed. Working with devoted auxiliaries, Sister also gave impetus to the movement of providing Christmas toys for the poor children of outlying mission posts. The number of indigent and disoriented persons who have received help and counsel through her efforts is counted in the thousands.

During the past two years, since the appointment of a Director of Catholic Charities, Sr. Meade acted as secretary for this organization and also continued as supervisor of the group work, camping, catechetics, and referral activities carried on through the Charities Bureau. Typical of this work, the report of the past eight months reveals 430 visits, 8 Sunday Schools in operation, 2 Clubs, countless referrals and a large part in the preparation for the Institute of Social Service conducted by Bishop Berry and in the drawing up of comments on the Mayer Report.

Prior to her departure, Sr. Meade was honoured by the Ladies Auxiliary at the Bureau.

Winnipeg, 1952-1966

In June 1952, Sr. Alice Walsh began working in CCD office with the director of religious education at the CCD office of the Winnipeg archdiocese and continued until 1966. She was assisted by Sr. Rosemarie Hudon (1957-1961). The Sisters were responsible for organizing classes for children attending public schools; training, aiding and assigning catechists to classes; organizing Religious Vacation Schools for July-August for the Archdiocese of Winnipeg; dispensing CCD material to Pastors, CYO Leaders, Catholic Action and study groups; providing and correcting a correspondence course for prospective catechists who were unable to attend oral training classes. This course was prepared by Sr. Rosalia and followed the Adaptive Way Method. Later, Sr. Marge Denis continued the work of Sr. Walsh in the CCD office.

Winnipeg-St. Paul parish, 1969-1973

In submitting an application to Winnipeg archdiocese, Sr. Agnes Hearn discovered from Fr. K.J. Bernard, archdiocesan director of religious education, of a new practice of engaging Sisters and lay personnel as parish workers. He suggested that she inquire of Fr. H.J. Stangl of St. Paul the Apostle parish in Winnipeg. Sr. Hearn, who had served as a catechist for three decades, was hired in September 1969 as the catechetical coordinator of St. Paul the Apostle parish. To prepare for assisting catechists with the new *Canadian Catechism*, she attended a 12-day live-in course in Edmonton of a preparation program for directors and assistants. This course covered three areas of study, which involved new insights into timely theological topics; modern catechetics as exemplified in the *Canadian Catechism* as well as problems involved in diocesan organization; teacher training and supervision.

Sr. Hearn served the St. Paul parish for four years until the end of June, 1973, when she resigned

for health reasons. Although Fr. Stangl and parishioners were very cooperative and appreciative, the parents, accustomed to the *Baltimore Catechism*, found it difficult, at first, to accept the new approach to catechetics in the *Canadian Catechism*. Sr. Hearn recruited, trained, assigned and supervised catechists. For classes, she selected films and filmstrips to various classes. She typed and mimeographed outlines and wrote letters to parents. Besides home visiting, Sister instructed children and adults who needed special preparation for the sacraments of Penance, Holy Eucharist and Confirmation. She also organized a Youth Club and a youth choir.

Saskatoon, 1951-1954

In the spring of 1951, Bishop Philip Pocock of Saskatoon asked Sister General Mary Quinn if a member of the Sisters of Service was available to conduct a survey of the diocese. Sr. Rita MacLellan, a teacher at Berlo, Manitoba, was appointed to this task. For several months in 1951, she studied at the CCD program at Franciscan Sisters of Baker, Oregon.

Following the course, Sr. MacLellan addressed a meeting of the diocesan priests in September 1951, outlining her studies and its benefits to the diocese. At Bishop Pocock's request, she visited every parish as well as public and Catholic schools to obtain the names of all Catholic children. Placed in charge of the diocesan CCD office, Sr. MacLellan arranged classes for children attending public schools, trained and assisted lay catechists and provided CCD material to parishes throughout the Saskatoon diocese.

Sisters study new approaches to teaching religion

In the 1950s when CCD was being successfully promoted and increasing in dioceses throughout Canada and the United States, Sister General and the community's council encouraged the Sisters to study seriously this program. Sisters studied newer approaches to scripture, theology, church history, liturgy and catechetics. These religious studies enabled the Sisters in the most effective way to transmit God's message of Good News to children and adults to evoke a greater commitment of Faith.

In response to Sr. General's encouragement and in charge of the CCD archdiocesan offices, Sr. Mary Jackson of Edmonton and Sr. Alice Walsh of Winnipeg attended CCD courses at Catholic University of America, Washington, DC in July 1954. Excerpts of Sr. Jackson's diary about the experience were published in the October 1954 issue of *The Field at Home*.

Other Sisters took courses at St. Paul's University, Ottawa; St. Joseph's College and Newman College, Edmonton; Mount St. Francis, Cochrane, Alberta; Saint Boniface, Manitoba; The Divine Word Institute, London, Ontario; St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, NS and Memorial University, St. John's.

Nelson, BC, 1962-1969

By invitation of Bishop Emmett Doyle of Nelson, BC, the Sisters of Service took charge of the CCD office at Nelson. For seven years, six Sisters served for two or three years usually working in pairs at the CCD office. The first pair, Srs. Carmelita Camozzi and Frances Coffey arrived in 1962 visited all parishes and many families in these parishes. With the blessing of the pastor, they organized parish schools of religion and prepared and encouraged catechists to teach catechism in these schools. Throughout their travels, they enjoyed learning from the families with whom they lived. From August 1965 until June 1969, Srs. Hilda Lunney, Agnes Dwyer, Patricia Cooper, and Margaret Murphy replaced Srs. Camozzi and Coffey to continue and expand the work of the first pair.

To assist catechists in the Nelson Diocese to prepare for teaching religion, Sr. Coffey in January 1962 to teach religious students at Notre Dame University in Nelson, which she did until June 1967.

Sr. Rosemarie Hudon replaced Sr. Coffey at the university for two years until June 1969.

Corner Brook, Newfoundland, 1970-1973

Sr. Rosemarie Hudon was appointed as the first religious consultant for the Humber St. Barbe Catholic School Board of the Newfoundland diocese of St. George. With an office at Corner Brook, Sr. Hudon aided catechists in Catholic schools as well as reaching Catholic children attending public schools. Through her influence, a correspondence school of religion was opened in Corner Brook by the Presentation Sisters in 1972 and in Grand Falls 1975.

Through the extensive services of Memorial University, St. John's, Sr. Hudon taught scripture courses (1973-1975) to first-year university students at the Regina High School in Corner Brook. During these years, Sister lived with the Presentation Sisters at Mount St. Bernard Convent in Corner Brook.

Penticton, BC, 1973-1975; 1974-1981

At the request of Bishop Emmett Doyle of Nelson, Srs. Mary Corke and Florence Kelly took charge of CCD work at Penticton parishes of St. John (1973-1974) and St. Anne (1974-1975). Meanwhile, Sr. Carmelita Camozzi was consultant and coordinator of CCD religious education in St. Anne's from 1974-1981. Sr. Viola Mossey served as parish worker at St. Anne's (1975-1976) and Sr. Anita Hartman succeeded her in this position (1976-1981).

Camp Morton, Manitoba, 1924-1988

Of any mission, the Camp Morton Mission held the longest CCD record of 68 years. In their first two rural public schools at Camp Morton, the Sisters taught religion not only to Catholic students attending their schools, but also to those in the surrounding areas. Actually, they were engaged in CCD work from the time they accepted the first school in 1924 until they were recalled to Toronto in 1988.

Besides teaching in three one-room rural schools, and in later years at the public school in the Icelandic settlement of Gimli, the Sisters taught catechism at weekends in five farming areas for miles around. These areas as well as Camp Morton had been settled by poor European settlers from: Germany, Poland, Bukavina, Galicia, the Ukraine, France, Iceland, England and Ireland. Through the years, the Sisters also instructed converts, visited families, trained choirs and altar boys and took care of the sacristy and altar linen.

Sr. Lena Renaud taught in the schools of Camp Morton and Berlo for a total of 14 years and in the centralized public school at Gimli for 16 years. During these years of full-time teaching, Sr. Renaud was active in CCD work of teaching and correcting catechism lessons; assisting catechists, giving talks to parents and catechists, and preparing liturgical celebrations. Sr. Renaud helped catechists to prepare lessons, taught converts, prepared married couples for a marriage blessing, brought Communion to the sick, attended meetings about the mentally retarded, assisted the elderly in their homes, visited the sick in the hospital, distributed used clothing to needy families and assisted Al-Anon members.

In 1978, Sr. Margaret Murphy began full-time CCD work at Camp Morton, expanding a program of instruction which Sister Renaud had initiated and developed through the years. She recruited and trained 21 catechists from Camp Morton, Gimli, Fraserwood and Winnipeg Beach as well taught one of the weekly high school classes of 39 students. Under Sr. Murphy's guidance, the catechists distributed the weekly correspondence lessons which the students answered at home. Since most of the catechists were mothers with no time to correct lessons; Sr. Murphy corrected the 5,487 lessons from September to June. In addition to these duties, Sr. Murphy instructed 21 adults and

converts, took weekly choir practice at Camp Morton, visited families of catechism students and conducted bible study with four couples once a month.

Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan, 1981-1985

From the 1983 second issue of *The Field at Home*, a description was written of the CCD activities of Sr. Silvie Nachtegale:

In the fall of 1981, Sr. Silvie Nachtegale, who had just retired from Nursing Aid duties at Providence Villa, Scarborough, Ontario, was sent to help out at the mission parish of Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan. There were 700 Catholic families in and around this town in Northwestern Saskatchewan, which is situated 100 miles north of North Battleford and 70 miles east of the Alberta border.

The Pastor, Fr. Hector Ferland, OMI, and his assistant, Fr. Martin Michaud, OMI, were glad to have Sister's assistance in parish work. As in many other SOS missions, the members of the Catholic Women's League helped Sister Nachtegale to get settled. She found an apartment in the newly-built High Rise Manor for seniors which the CWL members helped to furnish. In October she was joined by Sr. Mary Fitzmaurice who spent most of her time visiting the tenant at the Manor and doing errands for the shut-ins. All were very appreciative of Sister's help.

Sr. Nachtegale besides doing some part-time nursing, assisted the priests in taking Holy Communion to the sick and shut-ins. She taught catechism at the school to the grade II's to prepare them for their First Communion. During her second year she worked with an adult class on Sundays and helped in organizing Bible Study groups. She also did parish visiting, served on a committee to meet and welcome new members to the parish and helped with convert instruction.

NEW CATECHETICAL ERA IN REGINA, 1948-1966

In a June 1983 article published in *The Prairie Messenger*, Monsignor Anthony Goski, who had worked for the first four archbishops of Regina, observed: "Archbishop Mathieu was scholarly, diplomatic kind and saintly; Archbishop McGuigan was worldwide in outlook; Archbishop Monahan was energetic, and to a point abrupt, but efficient and a meticulous administrator; the outstanding gift of Archbishop O'Neill had the ability to build on the achievements of each of his predecessors."

Archbishop Michael O'Neill was appointed to succeed Archbishop Monahan, who died on May 6, 1947. For the Sisters, Archbishop Monahan had supported and encouraged the correspondence work. In the October 1947 issue of *The Field at Home*, Fr. George Daly outlined the deceased archbishop's influence on the Sisters of Service:

Kneeling by his grave, we wish to pay the Archbishop a tribute of admiration and lasting gratitude. At his invitation, two school foundations of the Sisters of Service were made - one near Minton, and the other at Sinnett. He particularly loved to visit the Mission near Minton where from 1940-43, two Sisters lived in the old abandoned R.C.M.P. Barracks. In 1938 they lived in a teacherage while teaching in the Diamond Coulee one room school, Bergfield.

But it was undoubtedly our school of "Catechetical Correspondence" that had a particular claim on his affection. Through it, he was reaching the little lambs of his flock and leading them into the green pastures of Christian Faith. One of his last communications to the President of Church Extension reveals his paternal solicitude:

No words of mine can picture the sentiments of gratitude that come to my soul on receiving this cheque in favour of the Sisters of Service in Regina. No body of people within the Church of Western Canada is more deserving than the Sisters of Service. Few priests, if any, are faced with more trying labour and less visible results. Still they carry on week after week; month after month. I have been having a special collection in the diocese for the Sisters to help build a home for them this coming summer if possible; you see, therefore, that this cheque comes at a most opportune time, and I want to assure you of my deepest gratitude. ... "

Archbishop Monahan was a great Bishop in the Western Church. The wide spaces of the open prairie appealed to him. His heart seemed to expand to embrace all his flock in that immense diocese. The welfare of his people and the extension of God's Church were his only thought and ambition. Although for some time, his weakened heart had sounded a fatal warning, his great zeal would not allow him to rest. Like a brave general, therefore, "he died in action". He now rests in peace. Our prayers follow and accompany him into the Church Triumphant.

Archbishop O'Neill was installed in Holy Rosary Cathedral on April 28, 1948 and served for the next 25 years. Before ordination, he served in the First World War and was awarded the Military Medal for gallantry in action. In the Second World War, he served as chaplain of the 49th Loyal Edmonton Regiment and rose to the rank of Colonel and Chief Roman Catholic Chaplain of the Canadian Army overseas. In March 1945 at Buckingham Palace, he was decorated for distinguished service by King George VI with the Order of the British Empire. After the war, he returned to Edmonton where he had previously served as rector of St. Joseph's seminary and later appointed as rector of St. Joseph's Cathedral, Edmonton, for three years.

The Family Rosary Crusade, 1948

In the fall of 1948 and with the cooperation of the four bishops of Saskatchewan, the new archbishop launched the Family Rosary Crusade under the joint chairmanship of Fr. J.C. Keohan and A.B. Gerein. The crusade encouraged daily recitation of the rosary in the homes and the necessity of prayer. More than 25,000 attended a rosary rally in Regina in the stadium and listened to the message of Fr. Patrick Peyton, CSC, known as the rosary priest.

Confraternity of Christian Doctrine established in Regina, 1953

In a pastoral letter of May 15, 1932, Archbishop McGuigan stated that the CCD under Canon 711 should be established in every parish and mission in the diocese. By launching the religious vacation schools in 1932 and establishing the correspondence school in Regina in 1934, he had laid a foundation for the CCD. Archbishop Monahan in a pastoral letter of June 1, 1938 reminded priests of Pope Pius XI's directive to set up a CCD unit in every parish.

In 1953, Archbishop O'Neill asked Fr. Gerald Mulligan, Director of Religious Education in the archdiocese, to organize a regional CCD congress. On September 12, 1953, the archbishop formally opened a three-day congress in the Hotel Saskatchewan, Regina. On the second day, Sr. Margaret Morgan addressed the Congress on the subject "How Correspondence Courses Can Help Parents" and led the discussion that followed the presentation. This Congress concluded on September 14 with an enthusiastic rally of about 6,000 at the Regina stadium.

Following the Congress, the archbishop commented that: "It was a privilege for the Archdiocese of Regina to host the Regional Congress. The general support given to it from all quarters of the Archdiocese was excellent and assured its success."

The archbishop gave a special word of thanks to Fr. Mulligan, who was charged to give CCD priority position among all parish organizations. After the Congress, Fr. Mulligan promoted the CCD throughout the diocese. In a CCD bulletin of November 1955, he outlined his methods by regional rallies, catechist training and confraternity classes.

Regional rallies

Fr. Mulligan noted that a rally in Melville was well attended and should spark enthusiastic work for the parishes. Fr. Burns of Esterhazy had the task of demonstrating the use of bible stories in confraternity classes. Here is the key of successful catechizing, according to Frank Sheed in the brochure, "Are we really teaching religion?" The Sisters of Service participated by giving an excellent demonstration on a current lesson.

Catechist training

Fr. Mulligan noted that for 20 years, the Sisters of Service received a donation from the archdiocesan-wide annual fund-raising campaign. The funds provided the necessary financial support for the correspondence work and for the future catechetical centre where their work can be carried on with greater scope.

Fr. Mulligan was convinced that lay people were capable of teaching religion and should be encouraged, even urged, to do so. He wrote: "Surely RCs have enough talent and generosity to furnish recruits for the army of catechists without which we will make little or no progress. At no Congress, Regional or National have we seen better catechizing than that done by the Sisters of Service. In your own youth work, surely you can spot a few young men and women who can be trained as catechists. As Fr. Heeg, SJ. said in Kingston on November 11 that the good catechist needs to know how to use picture charts, how to tell an illustrated story, and how to consult the text of the Manual and the Supplementary works. Do you use Picture Charts properly and efficiently? If you try to train a few catechists, you'll find it a most rewarding effort."

Fr. Mulligan wrote: "With an early winter already upon us, we are naturally concerned with the successful continuity of confraternity classes. Why should they present such a problem? Protestant Sunday Schools function regularly simply because the whole load is not left to the Minister. Our own laymen and women certainly have equal intellectual equipment and a much superior set of tools. Let us call on the appropriate people more and more and delegate to them the task of recruiting, entertaining and teaching our pupils. All of us have access to nurses, teachers and people with business training as well as capable farmers who will respond if we have the confidence in them which their Confirmation graces deserve. How about planning a Christmas pageant in the form of a procession for all pupils preceding Midnight Mass in which the "Infant" is carried ceremoniously to the Crib, blessed and incensed?"

In a concerted drive to recruit and train catechists, the Sisters played a major role. Sr. Eileen Bridgeo, with much experience in CCD work, came from the Sisters' mission in Fargo, ND to assist in the training. To meet the needs of prospective CCD teachers who were unable to attend classes, the Sisters used a correspondence course in CCD methods, directed by Sr. Alice Walsh of the CCD Winnipeg archdiocesan office. The 15 lessons explained the purpose of a parish school of religion; the role of the teacher; lesson plans and methods of instruction. The test sheet with each lesson was returned to the instructor in Winnipeg.

Archbishop O'Neill promoted the CCD work. In a circular letter of April 9, 1956, he made a strong appeal to his clergy: "The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine must continue to have priority position among all parish organizations. There is a place for all in its framework. Its main objectives are to increase knowledge of the faith and to form true Christians. The strength of the organization depends on the pastor. To the Director, Very Reverend Fr. Mulligan, I express my thanks for his tireless efforts. To each and every priest I appeal for whole-hearted co-operation in this work."

In September 1956, Archbishop O'Neill appointed Fr. Michael Hogan to succeed Fr. Mulligan as the Regina director of CCD. In a circular letter of April 17, 1957, the archbishop wrote: "Once again I appeal to all pastors to give their support to the Confraternity. While appreciating the fact that not every phase of its work may be possible in your parish, I do feel that with some extra effort more can be accomplished. If pastors show enthusiasm, there will be a corresponding response from the people."

Before most parents had a chance to catch up with the kerygmatic approach, teachers of religion searched for a more effective way of presenting God's Word. The experiential or experience-based method recognized that we understand all that we see and hear against the background of our own personal experiences and drew on the child's own experiences of belonging, of growth, of failure.

In the 1960s, new insights in theology and liturgy were still in the process. As a temporary measure, the Sisters decided to use the Grades 1-7 course of *On Our Way Series*, adopted by many Catholic schools in Canada and prepared by Sisters Mary Presentina and Catherine Austin of the Diocese of Spokane, Washington. Using the new experiential method, it stressed the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and the signs of scripture, liturgy, doctrine, and Christian witness through which Christ's message is proclaimed. Its colourful illustrations greatly enhanced the practical content. The Sisters at Edmonton and Regina schools recognized its effectiveness. To keep up with this new method, Srs. Mary Jackson and Domitilla Morrison spent two summers adapting these books for correspondence. Other texts of *Our Life With God* and *The Adaptive Way* were written at this time to improve the teaching of religion.

Although some parish schools of religion had been organized, Archbishop O'Neill made it clear that

the religious vacation schools should continue. In his circular letters of April 1961 and April 1962, the archbishop directed: "The Religious Vacation Schools will continue to operate as in the past and pastors should spare no effort to ensure full attendance and provide the necessary facilities."

Within a few years of Father Hogan's appointment, Pope John XXIII announced the Second Vatican Council. The Council met from October 11, 1962 until December 8, 1965 and ushered in a new era of renewal for the Church. This renewal called for great changes in the approach to catechetics, which posed a great challenge to Fr. Hogan as director of religious education for the Regina archdiocese.

Most of the 16 documents of the Vatican Council had serious implications for religious education, calling for the role of parents in Christian education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to find an adequate substitute. This directive spurred the archbishop to search for a way to step-up the CCD program and get more parents directly involved in teaching religion to their children.

Archbishop O'Neill, steadfast in his efforts to continue promoting the CCD program in the Vatican Council era, sent circular letter in April 1963. It outlined the basic principles of modern catechetics, presented at the catechetical congress at Eichstaett, Germany in 1960. At that congress, catechetical experts from all parts of the world had assembled to discuss the problems of catechesis in the light of the best catechetical theory and practice. They were concerned with the necessary adaptation of the Christian message to the present generation, who would need an ideal to attract them as a living force to impel them from within. Archbishop O'Neill summarized the basic principles which catechetical experts had agreed.

I. Our Aim

Catechesis carries out the command of Christ to proclaim God's message to all.

II. Our Message

- (a) Catechesis proclaims the Good News of God's Kingdom and the merciful love of the Father for us.
- (b) Catechesis is Christ-centred: in Him and through Him, God the Father carries out His loving design.
- (c) Catechesis proclaims that Christ continues to live and work in His Church through the Holy Spirit and the ministry of His shepherds.
- (d) Catechesis emphasizes that worship is the heart and life of the Christian community.

Our Response

- (a) Catechesis teaches us to respond to God's message by an inner change of heart, expressed by a life of faith, hope and a loving fulfillment of His commands.
- (b) Catechesis makes the Christian aware of his/her responsibility in respect to God's world and to take an active part in making it better.
- (c) Catechesis leads a Christian to share the faith with others.

Our Method

- (a) Catechesis follows God's message: proclaiming "the wonderful deeds of God" which reveal His wisdom and love, moving the heart and inspiring the whole life.
- (b) Catechesis uses four chief ways to make known the Christian faith: Liturgy, Bible, the systematic presentation of doctrine, and the testimony of Christian living.
- (c) Catechesis adapts itself to the life and thoughts of peoples, respects their correct views and customs, and integrates them harmoniously into a Christian life.
- (d) Catechesis introduces the Catechumen into a living community (parish, family, particular groups) and helps him/her to be an active member of it.

In order to formulate a plan to assist pastors and catechists in furthering the CCD work, the archbishop asked Fr. Hogan, director of religious education, to call a meeting at the Sisters' correspondence school in December 1963. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the proposed setting up of an archdiocesan CCD office at the Sisters' school. Present were Frs. Michael Hogan and Kenneth Koep, specialist in catechetics and director of religious education for the Regina Catholic schools, Srs. Eileen Bridgeo and Alice Walsh of the CCD office in the Archdiocese of Winnipeg. At the close of the meeting, Fr. Hogan asked Sr. Walsh to send a report of the discussions to Archbishop O'Neill. Sr. Alice Walsh submitted it to Archbishop O'Neill and had a bearing on the establishment of the CCD office in Regina in 1965:

Sr. Alice Walsh's report, 1964

Purpose. To set up a Diocesan CCD Office in Regina with the immediate purpose of working to bring the standards of Religious Education in CCD Parish Schools of Religion in line with those of our Catholic Parochial Schools; and to encourage parishes to provide regular religious instruction throughout the school year for Catholic children attending a public school.

Catholic schools - An ideal system. In the ideal educational set-up as exemplified in the Catholic school system, of which we are justly proud, our Catholic young people live in a Christian environment every hour of the school day. They attend graded classes in comfortable well-equipped rooms and are taught by teachers who are spiritually, academically and professionally trained for their task. The daily routine of the school includes formal religious periods and, therefore, does not demand of the student the sacrifice of legitimate recreation outside of school hours. Also the teachers and students are provided with an official course of study, textbooks and a library. The whole system is under supervision of a school board including a priest-specialist in catechetics. Only those living in the larger centres of a diocese are able to avail themselves of these opportunities. **Rural and small town schools.** There is another group of Catholic students whose religious education is of equal concern to all of us; namely, those living in small towns or rural areas who attend a public school. They spend their school day as a minority group in a non-religious environment. Their attendance at the Parish Religion Centre - often at considerable personal inconvenience - is voluntary. There being no diocesan regulations as to the construction and equipping of teaching centres, these are almost always unsatisfactory as to lighting, temperature, ventilation, privacy, water and toilet facilities, seating and space.

Classes are often under the direction of teachers who are untrained, immature or both, with the result that teaching periods are often uninspiring for the students and unduly toilsome for the instructors. Training courses are not, at present, available to teachers in outlying districts, nor do they have the help of an official program of religious instruction, a good series of religious textbooks for the students nor a useful library. Funds for obtaining small supplies usually come from their own resources. It almost never occurs to the voluntary catechists that they have need for help and the right to ask for it. Also, pastors sometimes do not know how to use a graded course of study, nor how to teach children effectively over an extended period of time.

Pressing need for effective parish schools of Religion. Those who have had dealings with young people - some of whom volunteer as catechists - in Religious Vacation Schools, or with first year students in senior high school, or with young adults, agree that the unawareness of these young people about their holy religion is often deplorable. There is, therefore, a pressing need to make religion classes that are held in Parish CCD Centres more numerous, more attractive and more spiritually profitable for the young people who attend them.

What a Diocesan CCD office might do to improve CCD Religion classes

1. Establish Diocesan standards for parish weekly and summer classes.
2. Work diligently and wisely to help parishes to reach these standards.

Suggested standards for weekly CCD classes

- a) An official programme of religious education. This would include a series of graded teachers' manuals and students' textbooks in line with modern catechetics.

b) Certification of catechists. As a preparation for certification, training courses should be set up for Catholics no longer attending school; Catholics enrolled in Teachers' Colleges and universities and Catholic high school students.

Group 1: Because many prospective catechists in the above group might live in isolated districts, they would need a correspondence course in conjunction with platform lectures and practical demonstrations.

Group 2: These catechists would attend and successfully complete a specified number of training courses.

Group 3: Training in catechetics would be part of the religion courses in junior and senior high school. Graduates from our Catholic high school would then be prepared to teach religion in the parish and in the classroom with understanding and skill.

c) Specifications are needed as to the arrangement and equipment of CCD teaching centres.

d) Concerning graded classes - there should be at least not more than two grades per teacher. (To achieve this, it may be necessary to stagger the classes on a particular day or to hold them on different days.)

e) A total weekly teaching period from two to two and a half hours is needed for grade four and over; and one hour for children in grades one to three.

f) There should be official dates for the opening and closing of CCD sessions. Preferably, these dates should follow as closely as possible those of the Catholic schools.

g) Record cards for deportment and attendance are needed; also grading certificates.

h) Parish CCD Units should gradually assume responsibility for the staff and maintenance of CCD Schools.

i) The CCD Diocesan office staff should supervise and guide CCD Schools either by personal visits or by examinations or both.

Concerning standards for Religious Vacation Schools - (RVS)

Before a Diocesan CCD Office can set standards for RVS, it will need answers to the following questions:

1. Many parishes do not have weekly religion classes during the school year. Is this due to the fact that they have to depend entirely upon RSV for the religious education of their children?

2. Now that it is evident that the number of Sisters available for RSV work is diminishing yearly, can the generality of parishes continue to depend upon Sisters from outside the parish boundaries to staff their RVS?

3. Faced with the increased difficulty of obtaining competent catechists - religious and lay - to send to RVS from the larger centres, should RVS staffed by outsiders be restricted to those districts where it is impossible to hold weekly classes: i.e. to districts where correspondence courses are the only possible means of regular religious instruction?

4. Is it the ideal to have enrollment in RVS mainly from Grades I through VI as is now generally the case?

5. Should there be a definite link between the religion program of the RVS and that of the Correspondence School?

6. What changes can be made in the religious correspondence program to bring it into line with modern catechetics?

To help parishes reach the suggested standards, the CCD office might:

a) Provide a set of sermons - outlines with development - for the use of pastors in preparing their people for the new approach in catechetics; these, hopefully will help motivate them to become deeply involved in promoting the religion program of the Diocese.

b) Issue a bulletin and other circulars to give inspiration and guidance to CCD workers.

c) Give lectures, teacher-training courses, etc., related to this new work.

d) Cooperate with the National CCD Office in Ottawa.

The Diocesan CCD office

A British historian has stated that the most dangerous time for a weak government is when it begins

to make reforms. The proof of this assertion has been proven many times by a weak CCD Office. Unless it has the evident backing of authority and a well-qualified and numerically adequate staff, the Diocesan CCD Office, when it attempts to raise the standard of religious education in an area, will meet not with gratitude and cooperation, but rather with the scorn of those it presumes to help.

The Canadian CCD differs from its counterpart in the United States

According to the Canadian CCD manual, the Confraternity in Canada will embrace all types of religious education; in this respect, it obviously differs from the U.S. plan where the CCD has only to do with religious education outside the Catholic School System. While it is advantageous to have but one catechetical office, there is a possible danger that the traditional school system will continue to absorb the specialists and trained teachers as well as the financial contributions of the faithful, while the parish CCD schools languish for lack of these.

To do effective work, a new Diocesan CCD office requires:

A full-time qualified director who, among other qualifications has the specialized training in modern catechetics needed to take an active and leading part in the initiation, direction and development of the work. This is a task that only a qualified director can do. On February 12, 1964, Archbishop O'Neill acknowledged Sr. Walsh's report, adding: "Don't think you need feel that yours was anything in the nature of a disturbing report. Your frank and sincere appraisal is appreciated and even if we cannot meet the demands at the present time, it does direct out thinking and future activities. Thank you for having come to Regina.

New building for Regina school

In the 1960s, changes took place for the building of the Regina correspondence school. Envisioned and initiated by Archbishop Monahan in the 1940s, a new well-equipped building was sponsored and made reality by Archbishop O'Neill. Early in 1962, definite plans were made for building this house under Fr. Walter Wadey, rector of Holy Rosary cathedral. Under his watchful eye, the old house was demolished in April and the excavation made in June. Through Fr. Wadey's supervision, the building was officially opened and ready for occupancy on November 17, 1962. Open Houses were held for three successive days. Many religious sisters visited on Sunday, November 19. Over 50 priests from the city and rural areas came on Monday and many lay people on Tuesday. All rejoiced with the Sisters at having such a pleasant well-equipped place to live and work. This new well-constructed functional building was completed just in time to serve a new phase of CCD work in the archdiocese of Regina.

SISTERS ADDRESS CCD CONGRESS IN EDMONTON, 1952

To make known the work of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD), Archbishop MacDonald organized a CCD Regional Congress in Edmonton for September 1952. Archbishop MacDonald asked Sr. Mary Jackson of the Edmonton correspondence school and Novice Mistress Sr. Agnes Dwyer of Toronto to address this Congress on the Sisters' correspondence work and the religious vacation schools. The two addresses were published on September 20, 1952 in the *The Ensign*, a Toronto Catholic newspaper, and later in the April 1953 issue of *The Field at Home*.

Paper presented by Sr. Mary Jackson

Sr. Mary Jackson presented a paper entitled "Correspondence courses in Religion for rural areas: Why correspondence schools of religion?":

Some weeks ago, we were asked by friends to whom we were explaining the procedure of Correspondence School Work: "Why is it necessary to teach catechism by mail?" This question caused us, whose little world is a Correspondence School Office, to reflect that there may be many who have had no reason for considering, either the need for religious instruction by correspondence or the benefit that it can be to thousands who have no other way of learning their religion. It is, therefore, with pleasure that I speak to you about this work that is one great means of bringing religious instruction into Catholic homes dotted over the prairies and across the mountains in British Columbia.

The answer to the question, "Why Correspondence Lessons?" is found in the Parish Confraternity Manual. It states: "The religion correspondence course provides a means of instruction for children and adults who cannot otherwise be reached or assembled for effective instruction." In this group, we find, first of all, people in areas so isolated that they have no opportunity for oral instruction; second, children who do have some, but not nearly sufficient instruction e.g. those who attend the annual Religious Vacation Schools (RVS), and those who are given short catechism classes after Mass on Sunday or weekly at school; adults - some non-Catholics, more often converts or Catholics of limited instruction who are eager to add to their knowledge of the catechism; Catholic public school children in the larger centres who cannot be assembled for oral instruction.

Now, in imagination, we see before us our correspondence class. It is, indeed, a large class. The task of bringing to it adequate, practical, and interesting instruction in the Catholic Religion is a responsible undertaking; as our Holy Father says of catechism teaching, "It is a lofty work, rightly numbered among the most important of the Apostolate." (International Catechetical Congress, 1950).

In correspondence teaching as in other types of teaching, we must face problems. Some of those which can weaken the effect of written lessons, are; inability of parents to help their children; the weakness of Faith in many homes; the materialistic and Protestant environment in the public schools which they must attend; difficulty of access to Mass and the Sacraments. To these may be added, in regard to the lessons themselves, poor reading and study habits of pupils; difficulties of some with the English language, and for many in using the Catechism vocabulary. In spite of these obstacles, since it is necessary to depend upon correspondence instruction to help make good Catholics, the lessons must be such, that they assist children and adults to know, to love and to live their Faith.

The selection of courses and the setup of the individual lessons must, therefore, be made to meet the specific needs of the students. In this matter of selection, a good principle to be guided by, is suggested that a child ought gradually to learn the Catechism according to

his/her capacity.

We must not forget, however, that the religious training of these pupils will consist of what they have learned by the time they are 13 or 14. The series of courses must then provide for gradual learning of prayers, doctrine and Catholic practice and yet cover the essentials in a few years.

Such a series would necessarily include a pre-school set of lessons with activities suited to five and six-year olds; a course of preparation for First Confession and First Communion followed by a post Communion review course. Then courses on each of: the Apostles' Creed, the Commandments, the Sacraments and the Mass. This combination of courses seems most practical and satisfactory. It continually places emphasis on basic Catholic teaching so that pupils view this teaching now from one angle, then from another. It provides ample opportunity for all well-meaning pupils to receive a firm grounding in the catechism by the time they have passed grade eight. For senior grades and more advanced students, it seems advisable to have courses based on these same subjects, but gone into more extensively and with greater detail.

With regard to the setup of the individual lessons, in order to facilitate the pupil's study, it seems best to keep lessons simple in wording and explanation. The ideal would be, of course, to have parents supervise the lesson and assist the child to put into practice what he/she has learned. Some parents do this, and even study the lessons themselves. Since it is, however, almost impossible to rely on parental assistance, the lessons must be suitable for the child to do, without help from others. They must also, as Fr Heeg, S.J. reminds catechists, make full use of the pupil's memory, understanding and will. It is especially necessary that they gain the pupils' cooperation and hold their attention.

To meet these various requirements, use should be made of all, or most of the following devices:

1. An Opening Prayer. This should be short but inspire the child with confidence that God Himself is there to help him/her understand the lesson and put it into practice. One, we suggest in some of our Courses and which is called the "Lesson Prayer" is "Dear Jesus, help me to hear all that You say to me in this lesson. Mary, my Mother, help me to listen carefully to Jesus, and help me to do what He wants."
2. Reading and rereading by the pupil of the part of the text under consideration.. Since the Catechism text is the pupil's main source of information, the lesson must make provision for the pupil to become well acquainted with what the text has to say to him/her.
3. Various types of Exercises. These should be planned so as to evoke thinking, rather than mere copying. If well arranged, they are a means of getting the pupil to make good use of his/her text.
4. Memorization. Certain prayers and basic catechism answers should be memorized. A good plan is to suggest that the pupil recite for some other person what he/she has memorized. Children are adept at helping one another memorize. It is well, also, to provide a line or space on the lesson sheet, where the pupil can put a star when he can recite without error.
5. Writing. In some lessons, at least, it is well to provide space for writing the prayers and answers to fundamental questions. If there is a reminder to the child to check his spelling, capitals and punctuation, the written work will usually receive careful attention.
6. Something to do. One of the most important parts of each lesson is putting into practice what has been learned in that lesson - something that fits into the environment and needs of the pupil. To exemplify briefly - in a lesson on Sanctifying Grace, give an explanation of the use of an Act of Spiritual Communion as a means of increasing Sanctifying Grace in the soul. The idea is to get children interested in obtaining Sanctifying Grace through Spiritual Communion when they have no opportunity of receiving Sacramental Communion. Again, a line or space may be provided for the child to put a star for each time he/she is

faithful to the practice. Children respond well to these activities, although to help their honesty and to avoid compulsion, the idea is merely suggested and no marks are given for doing it. By means of this activity, many Catholic practices, such as, use of Sacramentals, practice of the Presence of God, prompt obedience, Morning Offering become habitual. With some children, a few of the practices do become habitual, but if each pupil does each act 3 or 4 times while he has the lesson at home, he is showing good will and surely receiving God's blessing on his little efforts.

7. A game or puzzle. One of these should accompany each lesson. This device is invaluable for interesting the pupil in the work. It also provides for a quick review, and helps clinch in the child's mind the more important points of the lesson.

We come now to the procedure of the Correspondence School office. Pupils are enrolled, usually, by the local pastor, but names may be, and often are, sent in by anyone who knows of a need for the instruction. The sole requirement is that the pupil cannot receive sufficient regular instruction elsewhere. In our schools there is no fee; many families make a voluntary offering. This, of course, is very helpful since the work is supported by charitable contributions.

Upon enrolment, a sheet of instructions about study, postage and procedure is sent to the pupil together, with the first lesson and the text upon which the course is based. Incidentally, the texts we use are: Fr. Heeg's *Jesus and I*; Fr. Heeg's three *Illustrated Catechisms*, adapted for correspondence courses; *The Prairie Series*, an illustrated course on *The Apostles' Creed* and *The Story of the Mass*.

In deciding on which course to start a pupil, we like to have specific information about his/her needs or circumstances, and his/her name, age and grade. It is most desirable that pupils begin the course on or close to the opening date, September, and send in a lesson for correction at least every ten days, so that they may complete the course during one term. It is neither possible nor desirable to have a system of grading, i.e. to have pupils pass from one grade to another. Rather, they go from course to course, there being a suitable degree of difficulty as they proceed.

A certificate of merit is awarded at the satisfactory completion of each course. This certificate gives the pupil a feeling of accomplishment and is a source of pleasure to the child and parents. It is also a great incentive at getting him busy at the next course. - Concerning the awarding of certificates, the Sisters are grateful to Fr. Henry Carr, CSB, President of St. Thomas More College, Saskatoon, for suggesting to them and urging them to award certificates. He said that from these certificates, he could gain some idea about the instruction the first year university students had taken in religious studies.

Every effort is made by the correctors to mark the lessons and return them, together with the succeeding lesson, the day after they are received. This promptness is necessary in order to keep pupils interested and alert. Since children like to receive letters, the lessons are mailed directly to them. It is one more device whereby their interest and good-will are maintained. An accurate record of each pupil's courses and marks is kept. A family filing card is used for this. These records are reviewed regularly and check-up notices sent to pupils whose response becomes tardy or remiss.

After the lessons themselves, the correcting has most to do with the effectiveness of correspondence teaching. Here, if anywhere in the work, the friendly touch of a sympathetic personality comes into play. The correcting supplies the only direct contact between teacher and pupils. The corrector must be quick to see and grasp opportunities to teach, to encourage, even to remonstrate if necessary. Speaking of the good that can be done through the correcting of correspondence lessons, the Confraternity Manual says: "When notes of encouragement are written on the corrected exercises, parents are quick to perceive that the instructor is taking a genuine interest in their children. They, in turn, frequently write personal letters in which they seek advice about problems at home. Thus is

opened up an avenue by which helpful counsel and direction may be given to families who are deprived of many of the normal consolations of religion." Experience at a religious correspondence office proves the truth of these words.

Let us now consider the place of correspondence teaching in the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine [CCD]. What a boon to the work it would be, to find itself set in the Confraternity framework! The effectiveness of correspondence work is always limited unless it has behind it the support of those concerned. As a part of the Confraternity Program, it would be surrounded by the helps it needs to really make it strong and vital. The Confraternity outline makes two suggestions for providing pupils with the lessons that they be enrolled at the Diocesan Centre or enrolled at a Local Parish Centre organized and conducted and controlled by the pastor himself or under the pastor's direction by the members of the Confraternity.

Whether the work be done from a local or diocesan centre, Confraternity members can do much to assist it. The interest of the Priest Director himself in the children's perseverance in their courses, is indeed a real blessing, and, in turn, can assure to the work a large measure of success. The place of parents in correspondence work cannot be too highly rated. By their explanations and supervision, they can be most helpful. Even by good example and good will, they can do wonders. Interested parents behind the work can, indeed, cause problems to dwindle.

Teachers, Visitors, Helpers and Apostles of good will also have their place. They can render real assistance by mimeographing, cutting and folding of lessons and addressing and stamping envelopes. They can secure names and necessary information for enrolment, visit homes to help establish the correspondence work, assist and encourage pupils with the lessons, hold little study clubs to discuss with the pupils the subject matter of lessons and spread information about correspondence instruction.

Any who offer themselves for one or several of these duties, will certainly find that there is real joy in assisting others to know, love and serve God. That many in the rural areas do want help and are eager for correspondence instruction is, indeed, evident from the letters received daily at a religious correspondence office. Excerpts, such as the following could be quoted by the hundreds: "For a long time I was wishing I could study and learn more about our religion. This summer, one of our neighbours told us we could have religious education through the mail. Mom wrote to you right away and my sisters and I started our catechism in September. We were very happy about it all and look forward to receiving our lessons (from four sisters who have answered faithfully for the past three years.)

"My brother-in-law, who was very bitter against the Church, casually picked up some of my lessons. He became interested in them each time they arrived in our home. Now he is a Catholic."

"We are living out in an isolated bush camp 50 miles from town. Our only contact with the outside is by a small bush plane. It brings your interesting lessons. Both boys enjoy them." (From a family near Yellowknife,)

"We have enjoyed most thoroughly working with you during the past nine years. During these 9 years, we cannot recall one regretful moment during which we were studying the catechism lessons." (From two young men who had just completed their final senior course.)

"It pleases me to hear that my brothers and sister are answering the lessons well. I used to like them very much and even missed answering them after I entered the convent." (A postulant from a convent.)

What a privilege to assist in the religious instruction of people who are so eager and grateful. It is a privilege that brings with it many blessings. Those who assist in the work have the satisfaction of knowing that they are, in a very literal sense, helping "to restore religion to the home." They share in the rich and numerous spiritual privileges with which

the Popes have blessed the Confraternity. The blessings continue even in the life to come for as Scripture tells us, "Those who instruct others unto justice, shall shine as stars for all eternity."

Sr. Dwyer spoke on religious vacation schools

In her presentation, "Teaching Religion in Vacation Schools," Sr. Agnes Dwyer described an ideal religious vacation school, using the CCD guidelines for such a school:

Nineteen hundred years ago, Jesus Himself walked the roads of Palestine, and as He went "through the cities and villages teaching" (Luke 13:22), mothers brought their children to Him, and "He embraced them, laid His hands upon them and blessed them (Mark 10:16). Christ loves the children of today no less than He loved those favoured ones, and of all the ways of bringing to them His message of love, there is none that bears a semblance to His way than that of the Religious Vacation School. Indeed, a catechist can scarcely approach her field of labour without seeing in her mind's eye Our Lord seated in a boat on the seashore, on the slope of a Galilean hillside, or in a village synagogue always surrounded by "the poor" who now "have the Gospel preached to them" (Matt. 11:5).

The catechists who are to teach in a Vacation School realize the privilege and the responsibility that is theirs - the privilege of helping in the work of saving souls, of helping to prevent sin; the responsibility, as Fr. Drinkwater puts it, of giving the children "a true rich full idea of God." They know, to use the words of Fr. Heeg, that "in teaching little children they must try to help them, not merely to know Jesus but to love Him; not merely to memorize prayers, but to appreciate them; not merely to learn about religion, but to practise it." Aware of all this, they would be loathe to begin if they did not know that throughout the grace-laden days of the Vacation School, it is Christ Himself who will be the real Teacher. It is He who "will give goodness."

Earnest catechists, bear in mind the function of the Vacation School as outlined in the CCD Manual; namely, "The Vacation School seeks to impress the message of religion through every faculty of the child capable of receiving it". These catechists "have taken steps during the year to prepare themselves for the task ahead. They know that notwithstanding the great zeal and self-sacrifice of the busy pastors who direct these Vacation Schools, and in spite of their own preparations, the good effects of many a Vacation School will be hindered, considerably hindered by weaknesses in its organization. These weaknesses are not limited to any one province. Experienced catechists during the past twenty-five years have found these weaknesses, not only in many sections of the Prairie Provinces, but also in parts of British Columbia, Northern Ontario, Nova Scotia and North Dakota. It is these weaknesses that prove beyond a doubt that if the Vacation School is essential to the CCD, the CCD is essential to the Vacation School.

An analysis of the problem reveals that the solutions come from the Diocesan and Parish Confraternities. Without specifically stating these problems, we may note that they fall under these three headings of attendance, accommodation and curriculum.

The successful solution pre-supposes on the part of all concerned such attitudes as these. A realization of the importance of having all who are to enroll in the Vacation School, present on the first day. A firm and unyielding conviction that all who do not receive a Catholic education, are to be present for each Vacation School during the eight years they attend elementary school. The need for additional instruction for pupils such as Diocesan Religion Correspondence Courses. An understanding of proper teaching accommodation. The usefulness of a curriculum.

Assuming these attitudes, let us visit an interested Parish Confraternity in action one month before the school is to open. With the consent of the Director, the members of the Publicity

Committee make known through the local or Diocesan paper the date of the opening of the school, and the place where it is to be held; write letters to all the families concerned, including any married outside the Church urging them to send their children. Members plan to visit these homes as the opening date draws near. They place a poster in the Parish Church announcing such highlights of the school as the dates of First Holy Communion, Confirmation, public examination and exhibit of work or other closing exercises.

The transportation Committee arranges with families of the same locality to take turns in bringing all children. A second group is to be picked up daily by a zealous worker who offers his/her services.

Those who assume the responsibility of securing classroom facilities, assure the local school board that the property will be taken care of, and obtain the use of a classroom. This is ideal for there will also be access to the church for part-time teaching, or for a second group. (In the event of a refusal by the school Board, an unoccupied house or even a granary would serve the purpose. Such places with the addition of a little shrine and a few pictures or posters can, in a few moments, be transformed so as to give the desired religious atmosphere.) Plans are made, too, should cold or rainy weather make this necessary.

Other members of the Confraternity plan to bring the children a hot drink on cold days, and arrange for an adequate supply of drinking water. They also supply for each class, a blackboard, a stand upon which to hang a chart, and a ball and bat. They plan, too, unless they are lay-catechists assisting in the instruction of the children, to help with organizing and supervising recreation, particularly at the noon recess, and in general, to assist the catechist in charge.

With a view to greater efficiency for the Vacation School, a report outlining the plans made, and stating expected enrolment is then made by a Confraternity Official. This information is sent in good time to the catechists.

The problems of attendance and accommodation being in the hands of a capable Parish Confraternity official, we give our attention to curriculum. An outline of requisites for the Diocesan Vacation School is of great value both to priests and to catechists. In many dioceses, this takes the form of a Course of Study more or less detailed and includes a daily time table. This outline has as its primary aim the coverage of essentials and as its pivotal point the spiritual needs of the rural child. Since it is framed with the purpose in view of restoring religion to the home, it emphasizes those practices which should become part of every child's day and which are capable of producing in him, in his rural environment, a rich spiritual life.

For a start, it would seem well to have the outline require:

1. At every Religious Vacation School:

- (i) teaching of certain basic Christian Doctrine e.g. chief mysteries of our faith; the particular commandments and sacraments that are part of every child's life.
 - (ii) study of the life of Christ and progressive study of the Mass; the first, that the child may get to know Him Whom they are to love; the second, that children may develop a love and understanding of the Mass, at which they are obliged to assist every Sunday of their lives.
 - (iii) emphasis on those practices that can always be part of the spiritual life of the rural child.
- (a) Morning Offering with special attention to the value of uniting daily actions with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.
 - (b) self-chosen morning and evening prayers to be said kneeling down.
 - (c) the value of ejaculatory prayer and intimacy with God Who makes the child's heart His home.
 - (d) the family rosary enriched by short meditations on each mystery.

(e) the use of such sacramentals as medals, holy water, and blessed palm.

(f) an attitude of reverence for the parish priest, as the appointed mediator between the parish and God.

2. A three-year plan of rotation which would place emphasis in turn on the Creed, Commandments and Sacraments - this to aid catechists to prepare work, to provide variety for pupils and to make possible the thorough coverage of these subjects.

3. Use of specified texts e.g. *Jesus and I* for Juniors, a definite Baltimore edition for Intermediates and Seniors. These should be accompanied by worksheets. Specified texts make provision for uniformity in form of confession, wording of prayers, and definitions. The worksheets help the children to review and retain what they have learned.

4. Memorization of certain selected answers from the catechism. Fr. Drinkwater says, "The actual wording of catechism answers is often very important. ... that is why we learn them by heart. Catholics take a great pride in knowing exactly what they believe." Unfortunately, most of this memorization, as well as that of prayers, is left for the Vacation School. Would it not be a fine project for the Year-Round-Instruction Classes to begin this year's program with a prayer sheet from which all children would learn and say their prayers? This could well be followed by the memorization for the particular catechism answers selected for the current year.

Much memory work will still remain for the RVS. By helping pupils with memory work and by supervision of project classes, picture study and recreation, the lay-catechist can be an invaluable helper. She should remember that all that was said earlier of the high vocation of the catechist, applies to her, and that with her assistance, much can be accomplished. With the theme of this Congress, "Restore Religion to the Home" uppermost in our minds, let us see what part the RVS can play in so lofty an aim.

It is the first day of school. All are present and for this we are grateful. The thrush in Browning's poem could "recapture the first fine careless rapture" of its song, but for those who are absent, there is no recapturing the spirit of that first day of Vacation School, for on that day is laid the foundation of the whole school.

In an effort to keep the school "Christ-centred," with the aid of the "Jesus and I" chart and a home-made map of the Holy Land, we take the children, as it were, on a magic carpet to Palestine. To them, we present the glad prospect of two weeks' companionship with Christ, seeing what His disciples saw, hearing what they heard, and more and more, as the days go by, feeling as they felt. The children before us know that those in Jesus' day could learn to know God from Jesus Himself; they experience no difficulty in realizing that it is the same Jesus Who is teaching them, helping them with what they find hard, and talking to them in many, many ways through the happy days that are to follow.

First Communicants and Confirmands are asked to bring their Baptism certificates, and much is made of the day on which they received their supernatural life. With the words of Pius XII in mind: "Mysteries revealed by God cannot be harmful to us; nor should they remain as treasures hidden in a field, useless. (*Mystici Corporis Christi*); every effort is put forth to make the children value this great gift. One means used is a short daily meditation on grace itself or on the means to increase it. Included in this is that prayer in which the child speaks to God dwelling in his/her heart, for the country child is often alone, and it is not unusual to hear one say, "I talked to God all the way home."

Plans for the First Communion Day are discussed, and all the children hope that the beautiful custom practised in many parishes, of having the parents walk with them into the sanctuary to receive Our Lord with them, will be adopted.

After careful timing of prayers, by which even the most skeptical are convinced that by talking with God one moment in the morning and two in the evening, they can assure themselves of His blessing on both morning and night, the children decide what prayers

they intend to say at these times, on their knees, during the year. This decision made, they ask themselves the questions: "When I woke up, did I make my Morning Offering?" "When I was dressed, did I say my morning prayers?" Then, they ask, "If I did, I will thank Jesus for reminding me. If I did not, I will tell Him I am sorry, and promise to do it tomorrow." These questions become a regular feature of the examination of conscience

The children look forward to "Rosary time" when after they tell the story of the Mystery, they close their eyes and think of what they see." (A.Heeg, S.J). One child, thinking of Jesus as He had seen Him just before in the picture of the Crucifixion, said to his Mother that evening: "Mother, you told me a lot of things about God, but you never told me that Jesus loved me."

The heart of the RVS will be the children's participation in the Sacrifice of the Mass. The objective will be to have them conceive so great a love and understanding of it that their lives will be permeated by it. This seems difficult. In reality, the children grasp readily the significance of offering themselves with the Victim, Jesus Christ, by giving Him their daily actions. Each morning, they come to the altar, not empty-handed, but laden with their joys and sorrows, their own little sacrifices, to make them holy by uniting them with His Great Sacrifice. During Mass, they watch carefully every action of the priest as the Sister reads simple explanations.

Once the idea of the Mass is firmly grasped, the child takes it to his home. In the lives of his/her parents there is much hard work, much suffering, and it consoles them to find they can unite these sufferings to the Sacrifice of Jesus in the Mass. Through their children, then, they begin to accept their sufferings and trials as from God's hands, and these, thereby, in the words of Pius XII, "naturally lift" their "souls above the passing things of earth to those of heaven and stimulate" in them "a certain unsuspected thirst and keen desire for spiritual things" (Mystici Corporis). Thus, the RVS in its earnest effort, to form and enrich the spiritual life of the child reflects this effort in every place the child goes, and nowhere more than in his own home. So true it is, "that a little child shall lead them."

In 1953 after the successful CCD Congress, Archbishop MacDonald officially established the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine in the Edmonton archdiocese. Sr. Mary Jackson was appointed in charge of the CCD office for two terms (1953-1956 and 1960-1961).

The death of Fr. Daly, June 1956

In declining health for several months, Fr. George Daly died of cancer in St. Michael's Hospital, Toronto, on June 3, 1956. At the age of 84, he was the oldest-living Redemptorist. Cardinal James McGuigan of Toronto attended the Solemn Requiem mass, held at St. Patrick's church, filled with clergy, religious and mourners. He was buried in the Redemptorist plot in Mount Hope cemetery.

Five years after his death, Sr. Alice Walsh wrote a tribute in the July 1961 issue of *The Field at Home*:

The community was a bare five years old when I entered the novitiate and met, for the first time, Father George Daly. His letters had led me to envision a powerfully-built rather austere person. But on that memorable day, the person I saw coming toward me with a beaming smile and outstretched hand was a short fatherly priest with a thatch of white hair standing straight up over a high forehead, appraising eyes and a complexion flushed pink. What a warmth of welcome in the rich vibrant voice; what security in the handclasp; what ease in his presence. This small man with an apostle's energy and boundless determination would stand out in any group. In the more than a quarter of a century of knowing him, I became aware that his fascination for people whom he met, regardless of age or position, never lessened.

Father Daly's first concern was, of course, our spiritual development. In his little talks

given daily in the novitiate when he was at home, he pictured for us the thousands of people in areas remote from the Church, in need of our spiritual help. We were on fire to be out and doing. But with the appeal came the warning: "Weaklings will not stand the test of the missions. Your contact with souls will be fruitful just inasmuch as you are in habitual contact with our divine Saviour, no more, no less." A sobering thought that did not daunt us in that spiritually stimulating environment.

Father Daly enjoyed cigars. Fresh ones were always on hand on the missions when he arrived for his annual visit. Then, enveloped in their rich fragrance, he would relax in an armchair, while we sat around listening to the latest news about the motherhouse, the novitiate, the new postulants, the missions he had visited, the missions to be opened in the near future, the work that was calling to be done and the need of more prayer and sacrifice on our part for success and blessing. This was a golden hour that seemed to have only fifteen minutes in it.

Father Daly's annual visit to the missions was always brisk and cheerful. That he did not linger long in any one place was a cause of regret not only to the Sisters but also to the many outside the community who desired to have the consolation of an interview with him. Inevitably, as he advanced in years and the strain of travel forced him to make his visits briefer, a warning had to be sent to the Sisters from the Motherhouse, to keep the exact date of his arrival from everyone but the Local Ordinary, lest Father's affability be his undoing.

If one happened to be stationed on a city mission, there was always the possibility that one would be among those chosen to travel by car with Father to an outlying S.O.S. house. Those matchless hours would be filled with happy conversation, much good humour, several rosaries, the Litany of the Saints for the crops, and other prayers for world-wide intentions. Father moved from the natural to the supernatural and back again effortlessly.

His missionary zeal seemed to grow brighter as the years went on. His interest encompassed the world. Once as he stood on the dock watching a liner set out for the Orient with a group of missionaries on board, he remarked: "How I envy those young priests! If I were young again, I would want to go with them." For although Father's immediate goal in developing our Institute was the Canadian mission field, he had no intention of finally restricting the work to one country. Like the Marquis of Lorne, he frequently admonished us to "LOOK AT BIG MAPS."

His concern for the missions increased his solicitude for our spiritual and temporal welfare. He had a deep and sympathetic insight into the minds and hearts of 'his children', as he liked to call us. Did he see a book that would be useful to a nurse, catechist, teacher or social worker, it would be hers by the next post. Did he see an item in a newspaper that would amuse a downcast Sister, it would be clipped to give her a laugh!

How many Sisters have tucked away as prized possessions, cards sent by Father from various parts of the continent: 'I met your pastor today; I told him about you.' 'I called on your good parents' - a detour of perhaps about seventy miles - ; 'Your former high school principal was asking about you.' Letters of congratulation on the smallest distinction, letters of sympathy, letters of spiritual advice and occasionally of gentle rebuke came through the mail.

Father was a perfect gentleman, of course, but even perfect gentlemen as they advance in age, are sometimes forgetful of the finer amenities. From the age of sixty-five, he anticipated with pleasure his increasing years and had the illusion that we took the same enjoyment from this phenomenon of nature.

'Child', he would say, glancing at the sisters surrounding him and letting his eyes rest on one of the group, 'How old are you now?' And the particular victim on that occasion

would colour slightly, very conscious of the alert ears who hadn't been able to guess her age and of the two priests who had driven Father out to the mission, and gasp in wintry voice, 'Just turned forty-three, Father.' 'Getting on, Child, getting on,' he would remark with satisfaction, blissfully unaware of her discomfiture and of the relief of the others who had escaped his question.

Father never left a mission without giving the Sisters a sense of importance to the work in hand. I do not think that he ever hinted that he was disappointed in us. But with the insight that comes with age and experience, I am sure that at times he was. He had great dreams of achievement for the Church. He, himself, was so competent and brave; we, so inexperienced and timid. No doubt, with Chaucer, he sometimes murmured: "God knows, I have an ample field to plow and feeble oxen. But that magnanimous heart kept its own counsel.

NEW CATECHETICAL SERIES AND NATIONAL OFFICE CREATED, 1963-1968

Catechetical renewal in Canada was underway from the 1950s until 1962. New catechisms were adopted for French-speaking children in Quebec. English Canadian institutes of catechetics were established in eastern and western Canada. An upsurge of interest developed in the promotion of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD). Both French and English-speaking leaders in religious education had been studied at European catechetical centres.

With this increased interest in catechetics throughout Canada, the Canadian bishops in 1963 authorized the establishment of central offices of religious education. The French sector under the Quebec bishops was organized in Montreal under L'Office de Catechese du Quebec (OCQ). Through the English-Canadian bishops, the English sector was located in Ottawa under the name of National Office of Religious Education (NORE), which gradually replaced the English Canadian CCD. The two offices were mandated to work in close cooperation through research and workshops to promote catechetical renewal at all levels. As its first major activity, NORE established offices across Canada to assist the bishops in their task as chief teachers of the Faith. To help in this effort, a team of professional consultants was attached pro tem to the four permanent staff at NORE.

Origin of the *Canadian Catechism*

During the early 1960s, Frs. R. Marsolais, H. Caron, R. Berube and Mille. Francoise D'Arcy from Quebec attended Lumen Vitae in Belgium to study methodology. At this same time, texts in religion needed to be updated. In 1963, the director of l'Office de Catechese du Quebec assigned Frs. Marsolais, Caron, Berube and Mille. Francoise to co-author in French, a new series of lessons. The first text, *Come to the Father*, was cited as a radical and welcome change to the teaching of catechism at that time. The name of *Canadian Catechism* was given to the new series. The revolutionary teaching method introduced in the new series ushered in a new era in the teaching of religion in Canada.

Come to the Father

After the Second Vatican Council, the English members of the Canadian Council of Catholic Bishops searched for a catechism or text to reflect and promote the thinking of the Council. Favourably impressed with the text of *Come to the Father*, they considered it a practical means of presenting the teachings of the Council to both children and parents. In collaboration with the OCQ, the English bishops arranged for an English translation of the text.

Added impetus to preparing the new series was provided in 1966 when the combined conference of English and French sectors approved *The Canadian Catechism* for use in Catholic schools in all dioceses.

Characteristics of the *Canadian Catechism*

Most people identified a catechism as a question and answer book, a type invented by Martin Luther. Such a text presented the basic teachings of the Church in a systematic manner. The *Canadian Catechism* was different. Though it did present basic Catholic teachings in a systematic manner, it did in essay form. The text presented the proclamation of the Good News of Christ. This involved teaching the child by mingling doctrine, scripture and morals of various age levels of understanding and development.

A special aim of the experimental method was to reach not only the head, but also the heart of the child. Reaching the heart helped the child to establish a personal relationship with Christ. This called

for discussion, activities, celebration and reflection. It stressed the discovery or experimental approach. In brief, the parent or teacher used experience situations to guide the child to recognize the value of Christian principles and the way to live them. Thus, the child would become a closer follower of Christ, and hopefully grow into a responsible and accountable citizen of the world and of God's Kingdom.

Bernadette Tourangeau was appointed as director of NORE in 1963 to oversee the era of catehetists and held that position until 1995. When the translation of the French series into English was completed, the staff at NORE began to promote in promoting the use of the *Canadian Catechism* by providing essential assistance to catechists through workshops, conferences, publications, in-service training, and by cooperating with diocesan offices in all provinces. The NORE office became a unifying and stabilizing force for religious teaching throughout Canada. Students learned from the same text throughout the country.

To coordinate the catechetical renewal, a group of 10 consultants attached to NORE worked with the permanent staff in research. NORE personnel developed a school edition of the *Canadian Catechism* series. Later a parish edition for the use of catechists teaching in parish schools of religion. In the 1970s, a correspondence edition was prepared for families who did not have access to either school or parish schools of religion.

The acceptance and demand for the *Canadian Catechism* exceeded all expectations. Religious experts around the world hailed it as a model to be followed as well as in the media, including an article by Canadian writer June Callwood in *Macleans* magazine and a feature in *The New York Times*.

By 1996, the catechetical materials produced by NORE were used by approximately 150,000 Canadian children in parish programs and by 97% of English Canadian Catholic schools. A total of 15,000 volunteer catechists taught in parishes across Canada and 8,000 families used *Born in the Spirit* correspondence courses. NORE also developed adult catechetical material for dioceses across Canada and the U.S.

THE CLOSING OF THE EDMONTON CATECHETICAL MISSION, 1965-1971

Archbishop Anthony Jordan, who succeeded Archbishop MacDonald in 1964, attended the Second Vatican Council. While still in Rome, he had telephoned Fr. Walter Fitzgerald, director of religious education at the Edmonton archdiocese, who was studying at Lumen Vitae in Belgium to ask him to prepare updated procedures in catechetics for the archdiocese. Back in Edmonton, Archbishop Jordan and Fr. Fitzgerald discussed the need of all religious educators assist catechists. In 1966, Fr. Fitzgerald worked a pilot project in the Edmonton Catholic school system. This experimentation was so successful that a plan was devised in the 1960s to assist teachers and catechists to understand the psychology as well as methods to teach each grade level in the new *Canadian Catechism* program, which had become the official catechetical series for Grades 1 to 8 in the archdiocese in 1966.

After discussions with Fr. Martin Jeffery, director of National Office of Religious Education (NORE), Fr. Fitzgerald arranged a series of 48-hour "live-ins" at the newly-opened Grey Nuns' Regional Centre in 1968. Small groups of teachers and catechists of 25 to 30 at each grade level were invited to take part in a preparation program for their religion classes. The "live-ins" brought an enthusiastic response from all participants from other dioceses in Canada and the United States, teachers, parents and priests, bringing attendance to 2,700. Sr. Mary Jackson played a prominent part as co-ordinator and instructor in the "live-in" programs. Archbishop Jordan and Fr. Fitzgerald were elated with the success of the "live-ins" and with the interest of many adults enrolling for religion courses in colleges and universities.

With the archbishop's approval, Fr. Fitzgerald organized the Western Conference of Religious Education. To this conference held at the Grey Nuns' Regional Centre in Edmonton, he invited all the Western religious directors with Sr. Jackson as the only woman attendee. The focus involved the promotion of *The Canadian Catechism*. So successful was this first conference that it became an annual event. At successive conferences held in Banff, directors and religious coordinators attended from all western provinces and NORE in Ottawa. The conference continued to serve catechists and promote unity of action among catechists in Western Canada.

In 1972, a Teacher Formation Book was published, providing resource materials for the *Canadian Catechism*. Others who contributed articles were Frs. Jeffery, Lawrence DeMong, OSB, Lionel Byrne as well as Srs. Valentia Leibel, SSND, and Sr. Mary Jackson, who wrote eight of the 15 articles.

Correspondence School transferred to O'Leary Hall, 1967

In 1967, the Sisters closed the residence for young women and the catechetical mission, purchasing one house to accommodate the Sisters from the two Edmonton missions. In consultations with the Sisters, Archbishop Jordan proposed that the correspondence work be moved to O'Leary Hall on the lower level of St. Joseph's Basilica, where operations began in the fall of 1967.

Srs. Agnes Hearn, Margaret Morgan and Edith Wayland were assigned to continue the correspondence work at the new location. From 1967 until the fall of 1971, the O'Leary Hall acted as an agency of the archdiocese. Archbishop Jordan placed Fr. Fitzgerald in charge of the correspondence work. In his autobiography, *The Exhilarating Years*, he wrote:

One of our first meetings dealt with finances. I found that the Sisters received a yearly grant

of \$3,000 from the Catholic Church Extension Society, Toronto, and that they held an annual raffle with their students serving as ticket-sellers. I suggested that they levy a family fee of \$10.00 per year for the correspondence lessons and an extra charge of one dollar for each additional student from the same family. Somewhat reluctantly they agreed to discuss this suggestion with their Superior General. I also offered to speak to the Archbishop about providing a monthly stipend to each of the Sisters.

The Archbishop approved both suggestions: the fee and the stipend. He offered to give a stipend of \$100.00 a month per Sister, which was raised shortly after to \$200.00 a month, a small amount indeed, but it placed the staff in a position to contribute something to the support of the community.

The stipend granted to each Sister at O'Leary Hall was the first remuneration, during the past forty years that any Sister had ever received for Correspondence Work from the Archdiocese of Edmonton.

When the Archdiocesan Report was presented in 1968, the report carried two recommendations that are relevant here:

- a) That the work of the Correspondence School be re-enforced and continued;
 - b) That an Archdiocesan Catechetical Team be established to provide catechetical assistance for each of the five deaneries outside the city of Edmonton
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Archbishop Jordan continued his predecessors' practice of sending Christmas greetings to the correspondence families. In 1967, his Christmas greetings affirmed Sr. Morgan's September message: "The Sisters of Service here, Sr. Hearn, Sr. Morgan and Sr. Wayland, who send you your lessons in religion, are very interested in you and do everything they can to help you in every possible way. They are my devoted helpers in assisting me to carry out my responsibility of teaching all Catholic children, the truths given to all Christians by Our Lord. The Sisters and I share this role of teacher with your own devoted Father and Mother, who are your first and best teachers. We hope that we are of assistance to them and to you."

Sisters end correspondence work

By the late 1960s with rural roads had been greatly improved, it made it possible for rural children to come together at centres for instruction if catechists were available. To determine the feasibility of establishing rural parish schools of religion, Fr. Fitzgerald set up a committee in 1967. The committee's subsequent 20-page report called for the formation of a rural catechetical team. The report added that if the Edmonton correspondence school at O'Leary Hall should close, Fr. Fitzgerald should make arrangements for those needing correspondence lessons.

With the Sisters unable to provide personnel, Fr. Fitzgerald made arrangements with other communities. In 1970, a Sister Supervisor was appointed to organize parish schools of religion with Fr. Fitzgerald's help. One qualified catechist was assigned to each of the five deaneries outside Edmonton. A total of 700 catechists were prepared to teach weekly classes in parish halls, homes or in available buildings.

At this time of the ending of the correspondence work in 1971, the Edmonton Sisters had also taught at weekends in nearby rural parishes, at the Children's section of the University Hospital, children of servicemen and women at the Air Force base at Namao and at the Canadian Forces Base, Griesbach, near Edmonton.

In *The Exhilarating Years*, Fr. Fitzgerald paid tribute to the Sisters.

By 1970, because of the success, of the Parish Schools of Religion, the enrolment at the

correspondence school had decreased significantly. Also, because it was foreseen that with further promotion of the Parish Schools of Religion, correspondence enrolment would further decrease, Fr. Fitzgerald, therefore, suggested that the Correspondence School close at the end of June, 1971. In June of 1971, Father decided that the names of students who were unable to attend face-to-face classes in their area be sent to the Sisters of Service Correspondence School in Regina. Records in Regina show that a number from the Edmonton School registered with the Regina Correspondence School to complete their courses. Subsequent isolated families who phoned the SOS for lessons were also enrolled in the Regina School.

Before the Correspondence staff left Edmonton, Archbishop Jordan entertained them in his home in recognition of the debt of gratitude the Archdiocese owed to the Sisters of Service for their help in instructing those who would otherwise have had no access to religious lessons.

It seems pertinent to note that the Religious Correspondence School, officially sponsored by Archbishop O'Leary, in 1926, spent its closing years in O'Leary Hall. This arrangement was a fitting tribute to Archbishop O'Leary's interest in religious education during the eighteen years he spent in Edmonton.

For adult education in 1970, Fr. Fitzgerald arranged for summer schools in sacred scripture at St. Joseph's College of the University of Alberta. These courses continued for four years until Catholic universities placed the courses for degree credits. Fr. Fitzgerald also organized night courses for teachers at St. Joseph's High School in theology and scripture with certificates awarded to those who completed the requirements. Fr. Fitzgerald also set up a special summer school at St. Albert retreat house for rural lay catechists to receive essential training for their weekly religion classes.

In 1989, he issued a summary report of the place of religious correspondence lessons in religion education. In it, he noted the untold good that has been done by the Sisters of Service through correspondence lessons.

CHANGES IN REGINA AFTER THE VATICAN COUNCIL, 1965-1969

In February 1964, Fr. Michael Hogan attended a meeting in Ottawa of diocesan directors of religious education called by Bishop W. E. Doyle, national director of NORE. Following Fr. Hogan's report of the meeting, Archbishop O'Neill decided to establish a CCD office for the Regina archdiocese. In June 1965, Fr. Hogan as director of religious education began to set up and take charge of a CCD office at 2220 Cameron St., the Sister's residence, where the archdiocesan office was located.

Following the successful CCD Regina Regional Congress in 1955, Fr. Mulligan, the director of CCD in Regina, began to establish parish schools of religion. Under his direction, Srs. Eileen Bridgeo and Alice Walsh introduced and set up some of these rural schools. In 1965, Archbishop O'Neill urged all rural pastors to cooperate with Fr. Hogan and Sr. Bridgeo, appointed as his secretary in the new venture, in setting up more parish schools of religion. Improved roads and better means of transportation made the extension possible. Under Archbishop O'Neil's urging, Fr. Hogan gave an introductory talk at rural missions and the Sisters remained to assist parents and prospective catechists in the teaching the new catechism. The Sisters built confidence in the volunteers as well as provided instructions in methods of preparing a weekly class and use of visual aids for the new series of *On Our Way*.

From October 1965 until 1967, Fr. Hogan with Srs Bridgeo and Louise Antonini held workshops and established new parish schools of religion throughout the diocese. For Yorkton, the team went in mid-March 1967 and the new centres were established at Cedoux, St. Hubert's, Kennedy, Dysart, Lestock, Moosomin and Pangman.

Fr. Hogan invited Fr. Fitzpatrick, director of NORE, to explain the new methods an address on January 19, 1966 to pastors, catechists and parents at the newly-organized information centre in the former Sacred Heart Academy in Regina. Fr. Fitzpatrick spoke about the new approach to catechetics, alerting his audience to the importance of the new experiential method of teaching catechism.

At a meeting on January 29, 1966 in Ottawa attended by bishops and religious education directors across Canada, Fr. Hogan showed samples of a variety of correspondence courses from Regina. After some discussion, the bishops and diocesan directors, particularly those from Western Canada, emphasized a need to develop and update of these correspondence courses. This was the beginning of NORE's interest in the method of teaching religion by correspondence.

When Fr. Hogan returned from Ottawa, he wrote to Sister General Mary Reansbury about this interest in updating the correspondence courses and about a new role for the correspondence school. In his letter, he stated that the change of the Sisters' correspondence school to the office of religious education for the necessity of training catechists. The new areas of religious education would include correspondence courses, parish schools of religion, especially in places where there were no separate Catholic schools, the separate schools outside Regina, institutes, courses and teachers in training at the College of Education

Fr. Hogan made it clear that each phase had its own importance and that those engaged in any of the phases were a part of the office of religious education. He added that "this Office - serving as it does one of the largest Archdioceses of Canada - should loom large in plans and programs of the Sisters of Service."

It took the Sisters time for the change from correspondence work to the variety of activities needed in a CCD office as outlined by Fr. Hogan. Although Sister General Reansbury was unable to supply all the Sisters needed for the new operations, she asked the Sisters to do their best to meet immediate demands.

In his pastoral letter of May 1966, Archbishop O'Neil testified to the success of the catechetical team of Fr. Hogan with Srs. Bridgeo and Antonini: "Since undertaking the work of establishing parish catechetical centres, over twenty parishes have availed themselves of the facilities and guidance provided by Fr. M. Hogan and Sisters E. Bridgeo and L. Antonini. All these parishes are loud in their praise of these services and the response of their people has been heartening. I feel that many more rural parishes could benefit and I urge them to make arrangements with the Education Office." The Archbishop also stated that the religious vacation schools would continue to operate as in the past, "wherever there have been no alternate arrangements for the instruction of the children. Requests for teachers should be made to the Office of Religious Education, 2220 Cameron St., Regina."

By attending workshops at various catechetical centres, the Regina Sisters prepared to meet the new catechetics challenge. On June 5, 1966, Srs. Clare Gilmore, Margaret Morgan and Bridgeo travelled with Frs. Hogan and K. Koep to Mount St. Francis in Cochrane, Alberta to attend a workshop on updated specifics of teaching religion.

Four Sisters also attended one of the first workshops on the English translation of the *Canadian Catechism* was conducted in August 1966 at Saint Boniface, Manitoba. Srs. Bridgeo and Antonini from Regina attended this special course along with Sr. Agnes Dwyer, on her way for CCD work at Nelson, BC and Sr. Helen Hayes, who represented the director of religious education at Grand Forks, ND.

During 1966-1969, Archbishop O'Neill made it possible for priests, parents, catechists and parishioners in Regina to become informed about the new catechetics of the Second Vatican Council. He provided opportunities by asking priests to give talks on various aspects of the Council:

1) Fr. Hogan gave instructions to parents and catechists, November 1966

Fr. Hogan fulfilled his mandate of assisting parents and catechists to become aware of the profound change that was taking place in religious education. Besides holding workshops throughout the diocese, he began a series of classes for parents, teachers and catechists of the pilot class on the Grade I at Holy Cross School in November 1966. A month later, Fr. Hogan prepared a set of guidelines on CCD work to assist priests and catechists and answered questions of inquirers. For parishes, he also prepared, published and sent a follow-up series of news notes on CCD activities to keep members informed on new developments.

2) Fr. Pat Murphy gave a series of 10 lectures on the Philosophy in the Modern World in October 1966

Fr. Murphy gave the first of ten lectures on Philosophy in the Modern World at the newly-opened Media Resource Centre, formerly the Sacred Heart Academy, 13th Avenue, and Garnet St. The purpose of these lectures was to instruct catechists and people generally on the "updated thinking" contained in the Documents of Vatican II.

3) Fr. Sebastian OFM gave a series of 10 lectures on the Second Vatican Council renewal.

Fr. Sebastian of Lumsden, Saskatchewan presented the 10-lecture series at the Grey Nuns' Hospital from November 1966 until March 1967. This series was attended by 60 persons.

4) Fr. Hogan gave a series of 10 classes on the theology and proclamation of the Vatican Council.

On February 17, 1967, Fr. Hogan started a series of 10 instructive classes for catechists at the office

of religious education. Interesting discussions provided catechists with a clearer idea of the Council's purpose.

In commenting on the purpose of the Vatican Council, Fr. Hogan stated the solemn words at its opening session in 1962 just before it began its serious work: "Coming together in unity from every nation under the sun, we carry in our hearts the bodily and mental distress, the sorrows, the longings and hopes of all peoples. We urgently turn our thoughts to all the anxieties by which modern man is afflicted... We humbly and ardently call for all to work along with us in building up a more just city in this world." Fr. Hogan cited *In Making a Better World with Vatican II* by Fr. J. O'Connell, CSsR: "This was the first time a Council of the Church had set out to examine minutely the role that Christians should play in the building of a temporal civilization. At the end of the Council in 1965, after much prayer, study, consultation and discussion, the Council Fathers issued Sixteen Documents. These consisted of 4 Constitutions, 9 Decrees and 3 Declarations, one of which was on Christian Education." Fr. Hogan said these documents were attempts to realize the goal of the Council; namely, to make the Church more effective in spreading the Gospel of Christ and to make her more relevant to the modern world. The Vatican II Declaration on Christian Education gave a description of the kind of development that Christian teaching should offer our children and adults today. It also made clear the effect of the findings in psychology on the method of teaching religion

Meanwhile Archbishop O'Neill's continued priority was making sure that Vatican II instructions were ongoing. In 1968 and 1969, he arranged for a series of lectures to be offered for the archdiocese's catechists at Miller high school. During this time at O'Neill high school, catechists and teachers attended a series of lectures in scripture by Fr. Isidore Gorski, professor of sacred scripture at Campion College, Regina.

With the progress of the parish schools of religion, the number of children requiring correspondence lessons greatly decreased. A report from Fr. Hogan in December 1967 stated:

This year the Correspondence has set up a new system whereby the onus is being placed on the Pastor. Instead of the Sisters recruiting students from the Religious Vacation School lists, the Pastor in each Parish is asked to decide which children in his Parish need the help of the Correspondence School, sends in the list of names to the Sisters, then purchases the texts required and distributes them to the students.

At present, the enrolment is approximately 1,500. This is a substantial decrease when compared with that of previous years. This can be explained by the increase in Parish Schools of Religion. (PSRs)

To date, PSRs have been set up in approximately fifty centres. The Sisters have been kept very busy, travelling extensively.

As in Regina, so in Edmonton, the success of the Parish Schools of Religion affected the enrolment of the Correspondence School as shown by the following figures.

In view of this report, Archbishop O'Neill replied in a circular letter in May 1966:

It is impossible to estimate the great value of the work in the past and its continued use in the future for the spiritual welfare of the rural children in Saskatchewan. It will be many years before there will be no need for this work. The Parish Schools of Religion are only beginning and have scarcely scratched the top of this project. If these succeed in the years to come, naturally, the correspondence enrolment will decrease. This will be shown in time if enough parents and teachers can be trained and inspired to dedicate themselves to this work of teaching and do it faithfully.

Concerning Religion Vacation Schools in the 1960s, the archbishop notified all rural pastors that

these schools would continue as in the past wherever there have been no alternate arrangements for the instruction of the children. Requests for teachers should be made to the Office of Religious Education at the 2220 Cameron Street, the Sisters' correspondence school.

In September 1967, Srs. Carmelita Camozzi, and Alice Walsh came to Regina, replacing Srs. Bridgeo and Antonini. Fr. Hogan appointed Srs. Camozzi, and Walsh as supervisors of religion in the archdiocese's rural areas. For three years the Sisters revisited the parish schools of religion, conducting renewal sessions and establishing new parish schools of religion. Sr. Camozzi wrote reminiscences of her three years' experiences (1967-1970) in the Regina archdiocese.

In September of 1967, Fr. Hogan appointed Sr. Alice Walsh and I to succeed Sr. Bridgeo as Supervisors of Religious Education for the Rural Parishes of the Archdiocese of Regina. As we travelled around the Diocese meeting Pastors and Catechists, we marvelled at the good foundation that Fr. Hogan and Srs. Bridgeo and Antonini had made.

During our three years of travel, we conducted 87 workshops throughout the whole Diocese, giving one about every four days. Our main task was to introduce *The Canadian Catechism*. When asked to do so, we also gave instructions on the ON OUR WAY SERIES. We demonstrated and explained new methods of teaching and of using audio visual materials.

During our visits, we lived mostly with the people and sometimes at convents or rectories. Our experiences of living with the people and religious were very enriching. My already great admiration for the priesthood was enhanced when I sat with various pastors and talked with them about their situations and their flower gardens and partook of their hospitality. I envisioned their solitude in the midst of the prairie storms, grasped a little of their economic plight and became aware of the hidden demands made on them. By working with them, my awareness of the Canadian Missionary grew.

Living with various religious communities was a reminder that "All things work together for good for those who love God". Staying with Sisters always had an element of fun about it. It was fun to sleep in a maternity ward in the Esterhazy Hospital and eat fudge with the Sisters in Estevan.

Staying with families, talking, and sleeping in various homes was always a privilege that I did not take lightly. As we listened to stories of life on the prairies in the early days, we were filled with wonder at the bravery of the people. We learned how people coped, preparing and burying their dead and how, in the grim face of poverty, they acted in times of emergency.

Catechists in the country were interested in hearing of the "teaching trends" in the city. We arrived loaded down with equipment to show them. We taught in halls, homes, bedrooms, churches, schools, barns, basements, rectories, and choir-lofts. Our main task was to build the confidence and knowledge of the teachers and to start classes where none were being held. The first step to building confidence was to encourage preparation, prayer, planning and punctuality.

We were inspired by the faith of the people. It was this that kept us going. With respect and admiration, I recall, Redvers, the dedication of the Sisters with the handicapped. I was impressed with the generosity of the priests and their housekeepers, especially the one in Rama. It was touching to see the gratitude of the people in Minton as they recalled our Sisters working in their area and teaching their children in hard times. I loved the children in the Indian School at Kamsack; the welcome in Claybank, and the new classes in Quill Lake. - I foresee good results from the growth of the Regina Christian Film Service. My happy experiences point to a progressive future in rural catechetics.

I recall going to a cabin to ask directions around Outlook - Broderick. I knocked at the door only to realize - too late - that there was a hot loud argument taking place between two

bachelors. When I heard the hollering, I didn't know whether to stand my ground or disappear fast. The door was flung open by a big burly man. When he saw me standing fearfully on his doorstep, he melted and there it was - the most beautiful twinkle I have ever seen. Yes, so much went on and what I remember the best was the child who fell asleep in my arms and the twinkling of an eye.

After 12 years, Fr. Hogan resigned as CCD director in September 1968. At the Ottawa meeting in January 1966, he had called the attention of NORE to the value of religious correspondence work in rural areas. From his urging, NORE recognized the value and necessity of the correspondence method and the expansion of correspondence work across Canada. The outcome of this recognition resulted a new phase of operation for the Sisters' Regina correspondence school of religion.

In 1968, the archbishop appointed Fr. Jacob Kutarna to succeed Fr. Hogan. The previous year as director of the pastoral centre, Fr. Kutarna had completed a year-long renewal course in catechetics at Corpus Christi College, London, England. Under the mandate from the archbishop, he was directed him to combine the pastoral office work with religious education. In September 1969, Fr. Kutarna decided to transfer the CCD office from the Sisters' catechetical office to the pastoral office, established in the former Sacred Heart Academy. This change occurred on September 5, 1969.

NORE ENTERS CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL, 1971

During the summer of 1969, Fr. Martin Jeffery, co-director of NORE, took the responsibility of putting the correspondence plan into action, initiating a project in Regina. He gathered a team of religious educators, including Sr. Patricia Flynn, SOS, to prepare the Grade 1 course of 20 lessons for correspondence in the *Come to the Father* catechetical series. Sr. Flynn, a teacher and artist, illustrated the lessons and was commissioned by Fr. Jeffery to pilot this course. Sr. Flynn sent 350 lessons to rural families of the Regina archdiocese and visited some of the families to receive reactions. Sr. Flynn continued to visit families and to discuss the lessons with parents until May 1970 when she attended a teach-in at Nelson, BC, to help work on Grades 2 and 4 as part of a team of catechists directed by Fr. Jeffery.

In January 1971, Sr. Flynn notified Fr. Jeffery that she would be preparing for teaching school the following year and would not be able to continue with the correspondence program. Sr. May O'Hanlon, another co-director of NORE, contacted Sr. Flynn for a list of all those involved in the new program and indicated that uncertainty had arisen about the correspondence lessons. In reply, Sr. Flynn, also uncertain about the future development of the program, was shown by her comment: "It is more and more doubtful that the senior grades will be adapted, but it seems quite feasible that after grades I and II of the *Canadian Catechism*, the switch to *On Our Way* for grade III will be easy."

New role of the Regina correspondence school

In early January 1971, Sister General Burke and Fr. Jeffery discussed the new role of the Regina correspondence school in association with NORE. Realizing the changes in personnel and policy, Sr. Burke called a community meeting for Edmonton. At the meeting on April 21, 1971 were Sisters of Service P. Burke, G. Walsh, Regina Superior; Pauline Coates of Regina; Councillors Mary Roberts and Marge Denis; Margaret Morgan, Edmonton Superior; Mary Fitzgerald of Edmonton; Mary Jackson, supervisor of religion in the Edmonton separate school system; Mary Regan of Edmonton. The Sisters met to outline principles and practical procedures regarding the amalgamation and nationalization of the religious correspondence schools under the direction of NORE.

Finances

It was generally agreed that this work should be subsidized from sources other than the Motherhouse of the Sisters of Service. With the support of NORE, it was suggested that financial aid be sought from the dioceses benefiting from the lessons and the Catholic Church Extension Society. Donations would be another source of revenue. Fees of \$3.50 per pupil per course should cover the cost of the materials for each course.

It was agreed that the fee be set at \$10 per family per year when registering in September; \$5.00 per family for registration after January or later in the year. The cost of texts would be added to the course fee.

Personnel

To enable operations to run smoothly and to clarify duties of personnel, the following requirements were suggested:

- The principal of the correspondence school should possess a theological, catechetical and scriptural background. The duties would be to liaison with the National Office; call staff meetings; formulate and execute policy and/or procedures; give guidance to

correspondence teachers; supervise correction of lessons; train and assist new correspondence teachers; be responsible for lesson revision and to be aware of available materials for use in correspondence work.

- A business manager would be responsible for financial matters and order supplies.
- An office manager would be responsible for filing and lesson procedures, for mimeographing and compile work reports.

For the operation of 1971-1972, Sr. Gertrude Walsh was placed as business manager and Sr. Pauline Coates as the work co-ordinator. Since a Sister was not available for the position of principal in 1971, Sr. Margaret Denis, a member of the General Council, would act as liaison between the correspondence school and NORE and would be available for the correspondence school staff in Regina.

Fr. Jeffery suggested that a well-qualified Sister of another community might be available and ready to work at the correspondence school. The Sisters decided that when necessary and in specified cases, another Sister could live and work with the Sisters of Service either full or part-time.

Procedures of correspondence school

Each Sister is to keep a daily work report to be handed in every month and details of the correction and marking of lessons.

Brief reports will be sent to parish priests in January and May with a statement that a more detailed report would be available upon request.

Fr. Jeffery requested that the *Come to the Father* series for Grades 1 and 2 continue as a pilot project. It was suggested that Sr. Patricia Flynn assist correspondence teachers in the mechanics of correcting these lessons.

The revised *On Our Way* series continue for Grades 3 to 8.

With the possibilities and needs for adult education, Srs. Mary Jackson, Rosemarie Hudon, Alice Walsh and Madge Barton could be available for the development and adaptation of such a correspondence course.

Resolutions from the joint meeting:

- 1) For the past few years, the Western Directors of Religious Education have discussed the possibility of expanding Correspondence work. It was decided that this question be placed before the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops at their fall meeting.
- 2) Srs. Pat Burke and Denis will contact Fr. Jeffery about the continuation of the *Come to the Father* pilot project and NORE's financing this project as in the past and about the development of more courses on this series.
- 3) A request will be made for financial assistance from Catholic Church Extension Society.
- 4) The possibility would be pursued of obtaining financial assistance from bishops whose dioceses are benefiting from correspondence lessons.
- 5) The possibility would be pursued of meeting other persons interested or involved in correspondence work.
- 6) The mechanics of making the correspondence service would be available to other dioceses possibly through the NORE newsletter.
- 7) Srs. Denis and Jackson would discuss correspondence service at the coming meeting of the Western Directors of Religious Education.

Research oriented centre needed for correspondence courses

In 1971, the correspondence school through the insight of Fr. Jeffery was given an added role of a

research-oriented centre of service for those dioceses throughout Canada in need of correspondence. A policy was needed for this new role, which should be prepared by NORE in consultation with Srs. Burke and Denis.

NORE policy for the Regina centre

There still exists in Canada a need for some form of religious education by correspondence, particularly in those remote areas of the country where people are isolated and cannot partake in a group learning situation. It is to be understood that correspondence courses are not a substitute for the parish school of religion or public school programs; nor are such courses to be used as supplementary material in existing religious education situations.

The strength of any religion program, particularly a correspondence course, is in proportion to the involvement and local responsibility of the diocese concerned.

The dioceses, which recognize a need for a religious correspondence program, will undertake to set up their own diocesan administration and correction centre for the correspondence lessons, and where possible to encourage such centres on the local parish level. The primary responsibility of the diocese in the area of religious education is toward the adult Christian, particularly the parents. In correspondence courses, every effort will be made to involve the parents, enabling them to fulfill their own responsibility of providing a Christian education for their children. The new national centre of religious education by correspondence, located in Regina under the direction of the Sisters of Service, is primarily a research-oriented centre for those dioceses in need of correspondence materials.

The Sisters of Service, who have had many years of valuable experience in the religious correspondence field, will continue to prepare programs for correspondence teaching, to research new materials; to keep informed and to provide diocesan centres of new/local materials and to aid in the setting up of local correction centres.

In an effort to extend the religious correspondence courses to those in greatest need of this service, the Sisters of Service have collaborated with the National Office of Religious Education, amalgamating their two correspondence centres of Edmonton and Regina and placing the new centre under the NORE. Sr. Margaret Denis has been appointed conjointly by the Sisters of Service and by the National Office of Religious Education as the official liaison between the Regina Centre and the National Office. As liaison, Sr. Denis will be responsible to the National Office for decisions affecting the policies laid down in this statement. Dioceses wishing to obtain programs or wanting further information on the centre should write to: Sister Gertrude Walsh, SOS, Sisters of Service, 2220 Cameron St. Regina, Saskatchewan.

Regina centre renamed Daly Centre

Fr. Jeffery suggested the new centre be named the Daly Centre in recognition of Fr. George Daly's initiation of religious education for children in rural area. On September 9, 1971, Sr. May O'Hanlon, OSU, co-director of NORE, wrote the Regina Sisters:

As you start your new project I would like to wish you every success. Here at the National Office we feel very happy that the Sisters of Service have undertaken such a centre.

Your community has done pioneer work in correspondence courses in religious education in Canada. Many people across the West have spoken of the contribution you have made to religious education in Canada. Now that correspondence has begun to evolve in new directions, it is only fitting that the Sisters of Service should continue to take the lead.

Policy discussed at the Daly Centre

The new role of the correspondence school necessitated a few changes in the administration. To discuss the new general policy from NORE, Sr. Gertrude Walsh, superior and business manager, called a three-day staff meeting (September 13-16, 1971) for all Sisters at the Daly Centre including Srs. Coates, work co-ordinator, Agnes Dwyer, Mary Fitzgerald, Margaret MacMillan and Mary Regan, of the Regina house; Sr. Denis, liaison with NORE; Fr. Robert Kennedy of NORE and Fr. Patrick Murphy, director of religious education of the Regina archdiocese.

Regarding the new general policy of NORE for the Daly Centre, suggestions were made that the Daly Centre combined the task of a research-oriented centre for those dioceses in need of correspondence materials with the local administration and correction centre for the Regina archdiocese and for the scattered families transferred from the Edmonton archdiocese. For only the coming year, lessons from Corner Brook in the Newfoundland diocese of St. George's will be corrected at Regina. However, the heart of a correspondence school is always the personal concern of the teacher for each pupil and that Faith is passed from one person to another. The present staff will carry on with competence the long-standing tradition of the Sisters of Service.

It was decided that the Daly Centre would become a distributing centre to send the courses to diocesan offices, schools parishes and individuals across Canada. These courses could be used by catechists as a guide in classroom teaching. This change of general policy was made at the request of some busy catechists. A correspondence course for catechists unable to attend oral instructions was based on the *Adaptive Way* program by Sr. Rosalia, OSF. The Sisters in Regina and Fargo, ND as well as Sr. Alice Walsh had used it successfully.

Each staff member of the Daly Centre will be responsible for new ideas to include in monthly letters to families, to local correctors and students. Sr. Dwyer was assigned the responsibility of perusing the monthly periodicals of *The Religion Teachers' Journal*, *Parent-Educator* and *The Catechist*, noting ideas and articles which may be effective in correspondence work: Sr. MacMillan collected copies of former courses used by the Sisters in correspondence work.

Course of studies outlined

Pre School: There is no regular correspondence program for pre-school children. The Sisters are asked to advise parents to obtain a copy of *In the Beginning*, which provides an excellent preparation for Course 1 of the *Come to the Father* series.

Course 1 - As a pre-requisite for enrolment in *Come to the Father*, the child should be registered in Grade I in elementary school or its equivalent.

Course 2 – *Celebrate God's Might Deeds*

For the corrections of Courses 1 and 2, students' drawings are not right or wrong in the traditional sense. No value judgments should be written on these lessons, such as excellent, good and fair. At this level a child's answers are really responses which indicate his/her aptitude.

Finances

For the re-printing of Courses 1 and 2, Bishop Doyle, NORE president, prepared a budget for eventual presentation to the Catholic Church Extension Society.

NORE had consented to underwrite the cost of restencilling and reprinting Courses 1 and 2 of the *Come to the Father* series. Sisters at the Daly Centre will stencil, print, collate, staple and deliver the finished product at the time needed.

Collaboration

The meeting was an opportunity for Fr. Kennedy of NORE to become acquainted with the staff. Fr. Murphy as the Regina director of religious education, noted the importance of close co-operation

with Daly Centre in matters of common concern about the Catholic children of the Regina archdiocese. Fr. Murphy expressed great interest in attending all staff meetings at Daly Centre, which were scheduled for the first Wednesday of each month. He promised to assist in the study of the doctrinal themes of the *Come to the Father* series for Grades 1 and 2.

In a circular letter on October 13, 1971 to English-speaking bishops and directors of religious education, Bishop W. Emmett Doyle, NORE president, outlined a brief statement of policy relating to the agreement between the Sisters of Service and the National Office of Religious Education

The National Office of Religious Education has been attempting to assess and respond to the needs of religious education by correspondence courses in Canada. A number of Diocesan Directors have expressed a need for this type of programming.

The National Office has prepared and put into pilot situations correspondence courses at the grade I and grade II levels of the Canadian Catechism. These pilots have been conducted for two years and have been found successful and valuable by all participating in the experiment. The National Office has had the generous cooperation of the Sisters of Service in this venture.

It has now been decided, jointly by the Sisters of Service and the National Office of Religious Education to establish a research centre in Regina, Saskatchewan, to further this pilot study.

The National Office is most grateful to the Sisters of Service for cooperating so readily in this research. The Sisters of Service have years of invaluable experience in preparing and conducting correspondence courses in religious education. This Congregation has made a significant contribution to the Canadian Church, particularly in Western Canada, through their successful religious correspondence apostolate.

The National Office will send out a general policy indicating the perspectives in which this work will be undertaken. I know that we can count on the cooperation and support of the Directors and Offices of Religious Education across Canada. For further information, please refer to the National Office.

In a letter dated on October 25, 1971, Bishop Doyle wrote to Sr. Gertrude Walsh, Superior of the Regina Correspondence School, concerning the recent agreement between the National Office of Religious Education and Sisters of Service:

I believe you are familiar with a letter which I sent on October 13, 1971, to the Bishops of English-speaking Canada with a copy to the English-speaking Directors of Religious Education.

At this time, I simply wish to express my personal appreciation for the tremendous work carried on by the Sisters of Service in their Correspondence Courses during the past forty or more years, and the service they have rendered to the Church, particularly in Western Canada. At the same time, I wish to say how pleased I am that the National Office of Religious Education has found a means of supporting this work and having it continue.

This week, I hope to meet Sr. Patricia Burke and the new Director of Catholic Church Extension in order to discuss some means of financial assistance.

I would appreciate your conveying to the other Sisters at Regina (and to any of the many Sisters who have been engaged in this work at Regina and Edmonton) the official thanks of the Bishops.

On November 19, 1971, Sr. Walsh notified Bishop Doyle of the \$7,300 grant from the Catholic Church Extension Society.

NEW RELIGIOUS COURSES CATECHISMS AT THE DALY CENTRE, 1972-1975

In 1972, Sister General Patricia Burke appointed Sr. Theresa Duffley as Principal of the Daly Centre to administer the two-fold responsibility of the school and contact with NORE. Fr. Jeffery outlined Sr. Duffley's duties in a circular letter to bishops, diocesan directors of religious education, assistant directors and consultants in the offices of religious education:

In 1971, Daly Centre, 2220 Cameron Street, Regina, was opened under the direction of the National Office of Religion Education. It is a National Centre of Service to those Dioceses needing correspondence courses in religious education.

We are blessed to announce the appointment of Sr. Theresa Duffley, S.O.S. as the full-time Principal of Daly Centre. Sr. Duffley brings to this position a rich experience in religious education in rural parts of Canada. The Daly Centre is staffed by the Sisters of Service who have pioneered in this field. They work directly through the Diocesan Director.

Each Diocese is expected to look after its own correspondence needs. They may obtain materials from the Regina Centre.

The courses in use at present are Courses One and Two of *The Canadian Catechism* and Courses 3 to 8 of the Revised Vatican II Edition of the *On Our Way* series.

One important aspect of the Correspondence Courses is that it offers an opportunity for adult education in the faith. Very often parents help their children with the themes. To do this effectively, they themselves need help and are very open to it. This is a major responsibility in Dioceses using correspondence.

At Daly Centre, during the coming year a qualified sister, Sr. Alice Walsh, will be doing research in adult education with a view toward developing a course in religious education specifically directed to adults.

We trust that the services of Daly Centre will aid local Dioceses in the implementation of their programs.

Sr. Duffley was welcomed to Regina at the beginning of May, 1972, and immediately became immersed in the work of Daly Centre. She was invited to join the editorial team of Frs. Martin Jeffery, co-director of NORE; Lawrence DeMong, OSB, St. Peter's Abbey, Muenster; Srs. Georgette Payeur, CSC, Edmonton; Muriel Loftuss, SSA, Victoria; Marge Denis, SOS, liaison with NORE. All five met at St. Michael's Retreat House, Lumsden, for five days of revision work, starting May 8, 1972.

At Lumsden, the team under the guidance of Fr. Jeffery, worked on revising Courses 1, 2 and 3 of *The Canadian Catechism* series. As part of this team and of each subsequent team, Sr. Duffley helped in the editing of the lessons and proof-reading of all courses. Although Sr. Flynn was teaching school in Churchill, Manitoba, she continued to assist in lesson preparation. For the first four courses, Sr. Flynn did the lay-out and design. Ms. Loretta Moroz, secretary at the Regina pastoral centre, assisted the team by typing the lessons.

On May 19, 1972, Sr. Duffley sent each director a letter explaining updated policy. She stated that Daly Centre was now "a source for correspondence materials and procedural aids for use in the setting up of local diocesan and/or parish correction centres. Fourteen such centres had been established during the past year." She outlined the service available from each of the 14 new centres and added that the procedures, samples of letters sent to pupils for various occasions,

celebrations were available without charge.

At a staff meeting on November 9, 1972, Sr. Duffley reported that 12 new centres were receiving correspondence lessons in bulk for courses 1, 2 and 3. The centres were Sydney, NS, Saint John, NB, Ontario centres of White River, and Peterborough, Saskatchewan centres at Green Lake and Vawn; Alberta centres in Calgary and Grouard and British Columbia centres of Prince George, Nelson, Victoria and Port Hardy.

Sr. Marcella Hinz, OSU, of Bruno joined the staff of correctors at Regina in September 1972. Although the main task was correcting the lessons from the Abbey of Muenster, Sr. Hinz also assisted the editorial team in revising courses.

Finances of the Daly Centre

The increased activity at the correspondence school meant more funding. In November 1972, Sr. Duffley submitted a financial report to Fr. Robert Clune, president of the Catholic Church Extension Society in Toronto, showing a need for \$11,800. In his reply of December 12, Fr Clune enclosed a cheque for \$1,500 and a promise to write the bishops on November 24 "to consider whether the Daly Centre should come directly to Church Extension for their operating deficit or to the dioceses using this service." The bishops had suggested the dioceses should pay.

Concerned that Fr. Clune considered the financial request from a purely practical perspective and overlooked the complete scope of the work at Daly Centre, Sr. Duffley wrote to Fr. Jeffery in Ottawa and Sister General Patricia Burke in Toronto about Fr. Clune's misunderstanding about the cost of research and experimentation. Fr. Jeffery wrote an explanatory letter to Fr. Clune on January 18, 1973:

Dear Father Clune:

Sister Theresa Duffley recently sent me copies of the correspondence which was exchanged over the autumn months between the Catholic Church Extension Society and Daly Centre in Regina. My only reaction can be adequately described by saying that I was astounded! I'm afraid that the Extension has a very inadequate knowledge of the scope and work of Daly Centre.

I recall the brief discussion that you and I had in Ottawa about a year and a half ago. At that time, I explained briefly the Daly Centre operation and, I believe, that you agreed with me. I also remember offering to discuss the matter further in Toronto if you wished. From that time, I haven't heard anything further from you. I assumed you understood the perspective in which we were working.

Briefly, the situation I described is this, Daly Centre is owned and operated by the Sisters of Service in Regina. This school is the result of extraordinary service to the most remote areas of the Church in Canada and at the price of considerable sacrifice. The affection and esteem of countless Catholics brought up on the "correspondence system" attest to this. During those pioneer years, the Sisters received very little help from any institution and maintained themselves and their work on raffles and donations of chickens and the like.

The National Office of Religious Education got into the picture because the Bishops and Diocesan Directors - particularly in Western Canada - expressed with considerable insistence a need for the development of the correspondence course. It was with a certain reluctance that we moved in this direction, but the pastoral needs of people in remote areas of Canada seemed to be concrete and real. Hence, after discussing it with the Bishops at the National Office, we undertook to develop this course.

I'm not sure how the statistics in your letter were arrived at. However, I'm certain that they're only partial. When you suggest that \$2,100.00 has been spent to educate 1,100 children, something is amiss. I know that 1,500 sets of grades one and two alone were sent

out during the fall of 1972. Consequently, there must be many more children enrolled.

The various dioceses using the correspondence course (i.e.- Calgary, Prince Rupert, Kamloops,) all operate their own distribution and correction centres. These dioceses buy the courses they need at cost price from Daly Centre. They pay their own administration costs for the program.

From your letter, I am inclined to believe that you may not be aware of the extensive distribution of the correspondence. I know that, among others, the course is being used in Peterborough; St. John, New Brunswick Diocese; and all along the western part of The Great Northern Peninsula from Corner Brook, St. Georges' Diocese, Newfoundland.

Let me quote from a recent newsletter from the Diocese of Fort Smith, N.W.T., January, 1973: "A great number of smaller settlements are taking advantage of correspondence courses for children especially where local catechists are not available or are not sufficiently prepared to catechize: - Breynot, Chard, Conklin, Anzac, Fort Chipewyan, and Cambridge Bay."

I think that this exemplifies our hopes and dreams in helping to make a program available. Such development requires dedicated people who do adequate research, develop programs and make them available to the leaders on the frontiers of the Church. I believe that the Sisters of Service at Daly Centre fulfill this inestimable service in a very quiet but most effective manner.

What now? My reaction at this point is to request a meeting with you and your financial advisors to discuss the situation at Daly Centre. If something cannot be worked out, my recommendation will be that the Sisters of Service terminate their work and close their research centre in June.

Surely an apostolate of this importance can't be expected to live from the receipts of bake sales and quilt raffles!

N.O.R.E.'s intention in studying the situation was to assist the pioneer work of the Sisters of Service. What they had developed and built was pastorally sound. The need was merely to help the Sisters to develop their work in line with the Church of the Renewal. It is our conviction that this work belongs to the Sisters of Service and our aim is to develop it and to maintain it if possible.

There seemed to be two main tasks in the development of the work:

- First, there was the need to reorganize and re-write the doctrinal and methodological aspects of the program to bring them into line with contemporary religious education.
- Second, the procedure of distribution, correction and administration of the Correspondence Courses: these operations had to become based at the local diocesan level rather than centralized in Regina.

Daly Centre, thus, became a research centre to develop these two aspects of the program. Its main service is to the development of the course to meet adequately these two needs and thus provide the local diocese with a pastoral instrument to serve adequately their people. This, of course, demands a great deal of reorganization, re-writing and financing.

It was my recommendation that encouraged the SOS to make contact with the Catholic Church Extension Society. I knew the aim of your organization was to help dioceses and people in the less economically advantaged areas of Canada. As the work of Daly Centre was mainly research to help people in all of these areas - especially those in the most isolated areas - it seemed to me that the Catholic Church Extension Society should be interested and involved. Surely a work of benefit to the whole Canadian Church is as worthy of financial consideration as the work of individual dioceses.

N.O.R.E., meanwhile, offered to help the Sisters in the reorganization of their course. We have been expending approximately \$5,000.00 a year during the past three years for sessions to reorganize the content of the lessons. Once again, our aim was to help the Sisters of Service maintain and develop their correspondence courses for the benefit of the

Canadian Church as a whole.

The Sisters rendered inestimable service to remote and isolated peoples through such humble schemes in the past. They lived in true and real poverty that most of us would find hard to conceive. They have dedicated the best of their lives and their talents and have never even asked for recognition. I believe they have a real contribution to make to the Frontier Church; I am anxious to assist them.

If you believe that a meeting with you, Bishop Allen and Father Wall would serve any purpose in helping to understand this situation, I would be very pleased to come to Toronto. If such a meeting is possible, I would hope that Sr. Denis of the Sisters of Service could also be present.

I'm sorry this letter is so long. But I believe that the question is important to the Canadian Church in her efforts to bring the Gospel to people in isolated locations.

In Our Lord,

Rev. Martin Jeffery, Co-Director.

The Home Program outlined

After Fr. Jeffrey's letter, the Canadian Catholic Extension Society decided to support the writing and publishing in all its phases and in distributing of the correspondence edition of what became known as the Home Program. On a trip to Western Canada, Fr. Clune visited the Daly Centre to observe the two-fold activity.

During the 1970s, catechists and parents began to refer to the correspondence course of religion as the Home Program, which stressed family orientation and reflected the teaching of Second Vatican Council on parents as the first and foremost educators of their children. .

In early 1972, some parent-catechists asked for helpful religious teaching material. Sr. Alice Walsh responded by preparing an adult course, based on Fr. Melvin L. Farrell's text of *Theology for Parents and Teachers*. Although this course was not adopted by NORE, it was used intensively by a few adults from the Regina school during 1973 and 1974 and in Newfoundland for some adults and by some catechists as aids in their teaching in the 1970s and 1980s.

Sr. Duffley's reports

The work procedure at Daly Centre, resulting from the two streams of activity, differed from the previous method of operation at the correspondence centre. Work reports of 1974 and 1975 by Sr. Duffley provided an overview of the correspondence situation throughout Canada and gave specific features of some day-to-day happenings at Daly Centre particularly in the research activity.

Sr. Duffley reported that "the increased demands from coast to coast for Canadian catechism correspondence courses affirmed the importance of correspondence in the spreading of the message of Christ. During the year 1974, over 4,500 sets of lessons were distributed. Courses developed at Daly Centre are being used in all the provinces of Canada. Although distribution in Nova Scotia is small as yet, those involved in religious education in that province, especially those in rural areas, see the need for a Home Religion Program. They foresee that within a year there will be a more extensive use of these courses."

In September, 1973, the Ukrainian Diocese of Saskatchewan decided to use a correspondence program. To save the expense of developing their own program, they arranged to use our first three courses this year to which they have added a Ukrainian Supplement.

Each year, correspondence courses were used more extensively on the Reserves across the country. Some catechists, however, think further adaptation is required to make these courses more appropriate for Native People. In Churchill, correspondence lessons were used as the basis for the

translation of the Canadian Catechism Program into the Inuit language.

In September of 1975, at the request of Bishop A. Penney of Grand Falls Diocese, Newfoundland, correspondence centres were opened at Grand Falls by three Sisters of the Presentation and at Clarendville by two Sisters of Service. It is expected that from 600 to 700 children will receive instruction through these centres.

In the early years of correspondence work until the 1950s, correspondence lessons were sent primarily to isolated rural families. In later years, it became apparent that this form of instruction was also of value to urban families with children attending public schools. Some urban pastors, who encountered difficulties in scheduling classes for students attending public school, encouraged parents to obtain correspondence courses for their children. In Regina, approximately 150 public school children are receiving religious instruction through Daly Centre. The Saskatoon diocese also decided to use correspondence lessons more extensively.

Although the Edmonton archdiocese implemented the parish schools of religion through the "deanery" system, very isolated children from that archdiocese were registered at Regina for correspondence instruction. The diocese of Calgary, also requested correspondence lessons for many of its rural children. Sr. Duffley noted: "Today and in future years when we expect that smaller rural missions and parishes will continue to be closed because of the shortage of priests, there will be a greater need for the Home Religion Program. The Regina archdiocese enrolled 410 students during 1974-1975. Many of these were from the Regina and isolated areas of Edmonton Archdioceses. Some families were from the Diocese of Prince Albert and a few others from Nelson and Vancouver. At this time of transition of courses, it is imperative that we have at least one "roving teacher" available to assist parents. Because of the addition of a new staff member this year, we have, therefore, been able to arrange more parent meetings. On request, a Sister goes out to families to explain the new program. We also invited groups to Daly Centre for Celebrations. We made a special effort to visit families when needed." She added, "Many priests continue to find the correspondence program an excellent means for adult education. In some areas, they arrange bi-monthly or monthly meetings for parents. Through correspondence lessons, doctrinal notes for the courses, and other pertinent material, parents receive instruction to assist them in teaching their children at home. On occasion, particularly for a celebration, children come with their parents to the meeting. Such practices result not only in more parent involvement in religious education, but also in more family involvement in the life of the parish."

During a Canada-wide rail strike in 1975, a system of "pick-up" and delivery was implemented to try to keep lessons moving regularly. She wrote: that "one advantage of this system was that it presented an opportunity for us to meet many parish priests, parents and children. In areas where this system was not possible, we made personal deliveries, usually to co-ordinators of religious education. The co-ordinators then delivered the lessons to the families. Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, presented a special problem which we solved by sending lessons in bulk by bus to the Office of Religious Education. The lessons were distributed from that centre.

Work of the National Catechetical Team at the Daly Centre

The first national catechetical correspondence team, selected by NORE, was composed of leaders in catechesis across Canada. Following its first five-day workshop in Lumsden, the team met usually for five days at Daly Centre for on-going revision of the school editions and the correspondence courses of the *Canadian Catechism*. In April 1974, the team developed Course 4 for the text of *We Have Seen the Lord* and the course was printed that summer and received a positive response from teachers and teachers.

From April 25 to May 5, 1975, the team worked on courses of the Grade 7 and 8 text of *Spirit of the Lord*. Besides Sr. Duffley, the correspondence team included Frs. Peter Sanders, SCJ, the new NORE director; Lawrence DeMong, OSB, of Muenster Abbey; Srs. Colleen Mahoney, SSA, assistant director of NORE; Georgette Payeur, CSC, of Edmonton; Catherine Fenn, CSJ of Toronto and Muriel Loftus, diocesan director of Victoria, BC.

Aware of the rising costs associated with printing each additional course, the catechetical team members were intent on completing the courses as soon as it was financially possible. They decided that to work on the courses for *Spirit of the Lord*, aimed for junior high school students over a three-year period with 20 lessons a year. Following the five-day meeting at Regina, three team members worked another three days at St. Peter's Abbey, Muenster, editing the lessons for printing. Sr. Duffley spent an additional seven days at Muenster, selecting photographs for the immediate layout of 20 lessons and for the remaining 40 lessons for *Building the Earth*.

Sr. Duffley spent much time working on the new lessons at Muenster. She assisted Fr. de Mong on the doctrinal notes for Courses 1, 2 and 3. These were printed at the Muenster Printing Press. Sister also worked on the parent pages of *Spirit of the Lord* course, which she stencilled and duplicated. Due to the lack of junior high school courses, the *Spirit of the Lord* courses experienced a great demand. It was decided to delay printing the revised Grade 5 course of *Building the New Earth*, which was in the pilot stage only in 1975. Priority is being given to editing and printing the remaining 40 lessons of *Spirit of the Lord*. This will bring the number of Canadian Catechism correspondence courses to seven.

Born of the Spirit Series created

In 1975, the Canadian Bishops commissioned a new series, entitled *Born of the Spirit* to be written and to gradually replace the *Canadian Catechism* series. The general secretary's report in March 1975 to the CCCB executive committee stated that the competent personnel at NORE could create and produce catechetical texts and there could be more direct involvement of the Episcopal Commission in the development of the texts. This option provided greater possibilities for producing texts suitable to Canadian needs. The CCCB Publications already existed, and its record was considered second to none. It had the expertise for market survey, advertising, production and distribution. Since its production costs were usually below market costs, it could sell the texts at very reasonable prices. In all aspects, NORE would have direct control of its texts and all the royalties plus considerable revenue from publication and distribution.

Some priests, catechists and teachers had rejected the early editions, produced in the late 1960s of the *Canadian Catechism*, citing lack of content in the texts. In an editorial published on September 19, 1988, *The Prairie Messenger* praised the *Born of Spirit* series:

The new series, entitled *Born of the Spirit* took seriously the criticisms levelled against earlier texts. It was tested in every part of Canada and carefully scrutinized, line by line, by a committee of concerned Bishops. They made certain that the doctrine was correct. If any criticism is to be levelled about this new series, it may be that there is now too much content.

We have now a catechism of which the whole Canadian Church can be proud. It has a solid scriptural base, while at the same time it relates carefully to the Canadian way of life and culture. This relationship has become one of Pope John Paul's special interests. In every country he visits, he insists that the faith be enfolded in the local culture.

What sets this catechetical series apart is its content for the home. Seriously used in any one of its three editions, [School, Parish, Correspondence], this catechism becomes a rich tool not only in catechizing our children but also in transforming our homes into Christian Centres.

The Sisters received letters from parents in 1981 speak for themselves:

Dear Sisters,

In the past, my husband and I have been rather conservative with our prayers and attitudes. This is the way we were brought up by our families. Now, with our children growing up, they are actually teaching us how to be more spontaneous and vocal with our love for the Lord. We like to sing our songs of praise and have some conversation with the Lord. The teaching and the learning of our religion has changed so much from my schooldays. I think children now are learning to love God and trust in Him at a much earlier age. I am glad I am in a position to learn along with my children for in their innocence, they have much to teach me

We were a bit slow getting started. Brian seemed bored; maybe he thought he had heard it all before. He was used to being in a fairly large class and his mind wandered. Also, probably being new at the job, I wasn't the best teacher. But this has all changed. One day he discovered that he enjoyed the course and became very cooperative. Then he really started to learn things.

It has been a good basic course and Brian has learned a lot from it. He is now ready to start his next course this coming fall. He likes your comments and thinks Sister must like him. I think it is good there is no criticism so students don't worry about displeasing you and that his not so fancy art work isn't the most important. All told, it has been a successful year; we look forward to the next course. Thank you for all the work

We usually had our little sister, who just turned three in April, listen in on the lesson and I thought you might like to hear about how she comprehends God so far. One day we were all sitting around and Betty and her Dad were talking about things Jesus would approve of. Little Anne got in on the act by saying quickly while looking up at the ceiling: "And I can do that too, can't I, Jesus?" Then she looked down at the floor, changed her voice to a deeper tone and said, "Yes, you can, Anne." This really tried our straight faces as she was very serious.

Although this year is not yet over, I wish to say that teaching my girls about God and all His love for us has been truly rewarding. Our lessons have brought this family closer together and taught us how to share our love for each other through and with the love of God. I think the activities set forth enable the whole family to participate in the lessons. The celebrations also are a great family affair. When the girls learn a Bible verse, then hear it on Sunday in Church, they turn to me with great big smiles saying, "I know that one, Mommy."

Helping Sr. Duffley was Loretta Moroz, secretary at the Regina diocesan pastoral office, who typed many of the lessons and worked on the stencils for the lessons. As the demand for lessons increased, the first four courses were printed at low cost at the diocesan pastoral office. Sr. Duffley received help from some volunteers with light ton trucks to help transport the large quantities of lessons to the basement supply room at Daly Centre. Some members of the Knights of Columbus of Holy Rosary cathedral also helped. When the demand for lessons continued to increase, the printing was undertaken at commercial printers of the Western Lithro Printers Ltd at a higher cost. The Lithro Printers printed the lessons until 1984 when the printing operation was transferred to the publications service of the CCCB in Ottawa.

Since early spring of 1975, 6,000 courses of 20 lessons each or 120,000 lessons were brought to Daly Centre and stacked on shelves in the supply room. From late August until late December, approximately 5,800 sets of courses and 2,492 doctrinal notes have been mailed to various areas in nine of the 10 provinces as well as North West Territories and Alaska. This entailed counting 116,000 lessons plus 2,482 doctrinal notes and wrapping and mailing innumerable large cartons.

In 1974 and 1975, Sr. Duffley attended fall meeting of the Western Religious Education Conference at Banff. Representing NORE, she presented a detailed report on new correspondence courses prepared, the prices of these courses, and other items pertinent to correspondence work. Following this report, appreciation was expressed for the invaluable contribution to religious education made by Daly Centre with the development and distribution of *Canadian Catechism* correspondence courses. Although the catechetical team prepared one new course a year, urgency was stressed to improve correspondence courses for Grades 7 and 8.

Through the funding of the Catholic Church Extension Society, at least 6,000 children throughout Canada received the correspondence lessons. On behalf of religious educators across Canada, Sr. Rose-Marie Goguely, SSA of Victoria also expressed appreciation for the society's financial support of producing the correspondence courses: "We are indeed grateful to Daly Centre for their contribution for the proclamation and integration of the "Good News" in the Victoria Region. This is certainly Evangelization at its best. Thank you, Catholic Church Extension, for supporting this ministry. It is helping us to establish the Kingdom of God on Vancouver Island."

Sr. Duffley sent a copy of the 1975 report to Archbishop Charles Halpin, who officially was installed as Archbishop of Regina on December 12, 1973. In addition of thanking him for his continued support and encouragement, she noted that the demand for the correspondence program increased each year as more parents and pastors discovered its possibilities. On January 28, 1976, Archbishop Halpin acknowledged the report in a letter: "I read with interest your description of this year's activities and want to express my sincere gratitude to you and to all who help in this important and absolutely necessary work of education. I am particularly interested in finding out how the Regina city public school children on correspondence courses make out this year. I feel that if parents work with their children regularly on the lessons, there can be added benefits for the whole family. This is true evangelizing that you are doing. "Evangelization," says the Holy Father, in a recent exhortation, "is the Church's proper mission; it is, as it were, her identity." You say that your work is unpretentious, but it is an expression of the life of the Church influencing Christians far and wide. God bless you for it."

CHANGES AT THE DALY CENTRE, 1976-1979

In April 1976, Annette Westley, Director of Communications for the Catholic Church Extension Society, circulated a questionnaire to priests and catechists, using the correspondence courses of *Canadian Catechism*. This survey results emphasized the need for a continued national program in the field of religious correspondence education: "During 1976, approximately 8,000 sets of lessons were mailed to all parts of Canada. We expect this number to increase annually." In articles written for Catholic newspapers, she explained, promoted and encouraged parishes to try correspondence and its great value in meeting specific needs in many Canadian dioceses.

The Sisters were fortunate to have generous volunteers to give tremendous assistance in the work of counting, packaging and mailing sets of courses to all parts of Canada. During the latter part of August, five high school students came regularly from Sacred Heart Academy to help fill orders. Since the beginning of September, Mrs. Betty Ryback, a CWL member, came three afternoons weekly. Knights of Columbus from Holy Rosary Cathedral have picked up numerous heavy cartons for mailing. In December 1975, Sr. Marcella Hing, OSU, was recalled to Bruno to replace a teaching Sister who had become ill. From January until June 1976, the office was short-staffed. Two teachers, Eleanor Kutarna and Joan Vogel, assisted on a part-time basis.

Many rural catechists have discovered that the home religion program provided many opportunities for family and parish involvement and for the instruction of adults in the post conciliar renewal. Teacher-correctors tried to work closely with parents and often gave personal help through family visits. More personal contact came when some parishes arranged monthly meetings for parents and others held meetings every six weeks for both parents and children. Many gathered for celebrations only

In February 1976, a group of 35 Grade 10-12 students and Fr. Keith Heiburg from Weyburn visited to see the operation of the Daly Centre, where many received correspondence courses. In a corner of the office, the Sisters had mounted an exhibit of samples of students work surrounding an illustration of Christ with the theme of Christ Sowing the Seed.

On April 7, 1977, Ed Rooney of Stratford, Ontario, producer-owner of the Stratford Children's Productions, asked permission to use some of the Christian concepts from the course in his show of the Puppet Show. He had received the course *Come to the Father* for his little son. He wanted to see singing of the latest Catholic folk songs at the end of each show in the new series. "This way, I can reach some children that the Church never sees."

Another team gathered at the Daly Centre to work on the set of *Spirit of the Lord* courses from April 25 until May 1. In addition to Sr. Duffley, the group consisted of Fr. Peter Sanders, SCJ, NORE director of the religious education in Ottawa; Sr. Colleen Mahoney, SSA, assistant director of NORE; Fr. DeMong, OSB; and Muriel Loftus, diocesan director for Victoria. The typesetting was undertaken at the Benedictine Monastery at a minimal cost after the layout was completed at NORE in Ottawa. In the spring of 1977, the team hoped to complete the *Spirit of the Lord* themes and develop parent pages for the entire junior high school program. The revised school program for course 5, *We Walk With the Lord*, was expected to go to press that summer and the correspondence course for this text developed in 1978.

Increased demand for a home program had placed a responsibility on the national correspondence

team to continue producing first-rate courses. There were also constant requests for preparatory lessons for First Communion, First Confession, and Confirmation. An adult course was also urgently needed.

Overwhelmed by the increasing number of requests for lessons, Sr. Duffley requested asked Sister General Helen Hayes for the appointment of another Sister to serve as principal of the correspondence school in Regina. In mid-May 1976, Sr. Helen Hayes assured Fr. Sanders, now NORE director, replacing Fr. Jeffrey that Sr. Mary Corke would begin to serve as principal in 1977. A specific plan for the division of duties of director and principal followed.

On June 1, 1976, Fr. Sanders wrote to Sr. Duffley, outlining the new arrangements:

Sr. Helen Hayes and Sr. Mary Corke came to see me the other day. It was very encouraging to hear that Mary was going to Regina. This should make your work considerably lighter. It would be good to divide the workload so that both you and Sister Mary Corke would carry part of the responsibility, it would then not all fall on your shoulders

I think that if you were the Director of Daly Centre and responsible for the administration aspect, while Sr. Mary Corke were the Principal of the School and responsible for the school proper and pastoral animation involved in correspondence, both of you would have more than sufficient work and each could concentrate on a particular dimension.

DIRECTOR

- Liaison with the National Office;
- To work with NORE new correspondence courses;
- To be responsible for printing;
- To be responsible for financial matters;
- To be responsible for the distribution of lessons;
- To be responsible for the ordering of supplies.

PRINCIPAL

- To oversee all correspondence with reference to enrolment;
- To supervise correction of lessons;
- To be responsible for assigning the correction load;
- To hire, train and assist new correspondence teachers;
- To give guidance to Correspondence teachers;
- To call meetings for correctors;
- To visit areas where correspondence lessons are sent and give guidance, support and explanations re. the courses.

I would see that Sr. Mary Corke first get acquainted with the Regina area and the school itself; then eventually take on the pastoral dimension outside Regina. Together, you will make an excellent team and Correspondence Apostolate will continue to flourish with each of you able to devote time and energy to a particular area of concern.

Hopefully, this will make it easier for you since the whole of Correspondence has been your responsibility for such a long time. Your talents, dedication and devotion have made it possible to carry on in a rather demanding situation; a lightening of that load is long overdue. If there are any questions or suggestions in this regard, I will be very happy to discuss them with you.

Fr. Sanders new policy for the National Office

To Sister General Hayes, Fr. Sanders wrote on June 21, 1977, notifying Sister General Helen Hayes of the new policy of separating the local office for correspondence work and national office:

I want to bring you up to date about a meeting attended by Archbishop Halpin, Sr. Mary Corke, Sr. Theresa Duffley and myself. The topic was the separation of the Local Office for Correspondence from the National Office for Religious Education. As you know, both offices were closely linked as far as personnel and finances were concerned.

During the meeting, it was agreed that as of July 1, 1977, the Local Office for Correspondence of Religion would be a separate entity from the National Office. Sr. Theresa would concern herself with matters that pertain to the national aspect. The national office would continue to use one office for Sr. Duffley and that part of the basement which is presently being used as a storage and packing place for the correspondence lessons. The rent for the use of these areas would be \$3,000.00 per year. The auxiliary material, e.g. the library that was being used also by the local office would remain with the local office.

It was agreed that the cost of the operation of the Local Office [as a pastoral centre] would be supported as in the past by the Archdiocese of Regina and the Sisters of Service. The amount of money that was yearly received from Church Extension for the development and printing of texts would continue to be used for that purpose.

The above is a brief account of the meeting. If there is any part that is unclear, feel free to let me know and I shall endeavour to clarify the matter for you.

Archbishop Halpin outlines financial policy to Correspondence School

After discussion with Sister General Hayes regarding the financial policy of the archdiocese to the correspondence school, Archbishop Halpin wrote on June 24, 1977:

This is to confirm our arrangements concerning the Correspondence School of Religion for the Archdiocese of Regina.

As of the first of July, 1977, the Archdiocese will continue the responsibility for the support of the Correspondence School according to the terms discussed. The school under the principalship of Sr. Mary Corke then comes under the Department of Religious Education of our Pastoral Office.

As requested by you, a sum of \$14,000.00 will be allotted for the school year 1977-78. Payments will be made quarterly beginning on the first of July. This budget is subject to review at the end of the school year.

I am very grateful that suitable arrangements have been made with the National Office through Fr. Peter Sanders. It is a privilege to have Sr. Duffley and her department of the National Office in Regina. I trust that all will have a good year.

I am very grateful to you, Sr. Helen, and to the Sisters of Service for the competent and generous service rendered over the years by your community in this vital field of catechetics by correspondence. It has proven itself to be a valuable instrument for the religious education of both our youth and our adults. I ask God to bless you and your community abundantly.

Sr. Hayes replied to Archbishop Halpin on June 28, 1977.

Thank you for your prompt reply to my letter of June 17. Your very positive answer arrived during our scheduled General Council Meeting and I assure you it was an answer to prayer.

I shall notify the Sisters in Regina so that they will be aware of the contribution that is being made by the Archdiocese. Payments made quarterly beginning on the first of July will be

most suitable for us.

Fr. Peter Sanders of NORE has notified me of the contribution from the National Office. For Father's records, I would like to make a copy of your letter and send it to him.

I realize that you did not have much notice regarding this change of funding, so I thank you again, Your Grace, for your prompt attention to our request. We are happy to continue this Correspondence Apostolate in the Archdiocese of Regina. It is one of our pioneer works.

As principal, Sr. Corke directed the religious education to the 467 students registered at Daly Centre from the Regina archdiocese. Meanwhile as director, Sr. Duffley concentrated on the correspondence program, the bulk distribution of courses and working with NORE in the further development of courses. On June 13, 1978, Sister submitted her resignation to Fr. Sanders.

My six years at Daly Centre have been rich in new experiences. Working with such wonderful people who were part of our correspondence team has been a privilege and a joy. Seeing a new program develop from infancy to adolescence has been exciting. Knowing that our up-dated Canadian Catechism Correspondence Courses have been made available to children in all parts of Canada has been and is rewarding.

My gratitude to NORE is without limit. The Canadian Catechism Correspondence will continue to grow to maturity. I am sure that it will. I am sure, too, that it will become an even greater means of renewal in the local Churches across the country.

Fr. Sanders replied, expressing much appreciation for the "dedication and competency which you have applied yourself to the development of correspondence. Not only have you given your personal energies and resources to the task, but have also imbued it with a deep spirituality. Many, many families almost too numerous to count, will be forever grateful to you for what you have done for their spiritual growth."

Sr. Florence Kelly appointed as Daly Centre Director

On July 1, 1978, Sr. Florence Kelly was appointed Director of Daly Centre. On November 1, she submitted a report to the National Office representatives at the diocesan centre in Regina:

This report relates to the period, August 1st to November 1st, 1978.

During this time, I have responded to your orders by sending out 9,000 sets of courses I to V and VII to IX, plus extra items as Doctrinal Notes, Parental Pages, Initiation Cycle and Christmas Celebration booklets - a total of 5,200 copies.

I filled the orders for Course V and sent them to you as soon as they were available from the printer. I hope that your celebration of the new beauty in format and layout more than compensated for the delay in receiving these orders.

Concerning course VI:

Provided there are no unforeseen or major delays, the present news is that they will be available in the fall of 1980.

This course is being examined for inaccuracies. The material and format are also being updated. Hopefully, the course will be ready in 1980 in a format similar to that of course V.

New cost-saving service initiated:

We have initiated a new service of supplying you with single copies of lessons and themes. Some of you have already taken the opportunity of replacing missing links in your course sets. For this service, we have worked out a pricing service based on cost. I feel sure this service will mean a saving to you.

Concerning distribution:

My hope is to be able to complete and remit your orders to you as soon as possible. Thus, if you place your order in May or June, I shall mail it to you then unless you indicate otherwise. By following this system, there should be less frustration due to delays with packing or possible postal strikes.

We shall send order forms to you early in 1979. Whether there will be a price rise will be dependent on the cost of printing.

Concerning finances:

The support of the Catholic Church Extension continues for which we can all be grateful.

Concerning a questionnaire-evaluation form:

We have prepared a questionnaire-evaluation form. Your evaluation can point out strengths and weaknesses, areas for improvement, and sharing of your creativity in the use of the courses. It will be very helpful to us if you will please take time to complete this form and return it to us by November 30.

I rejoice in the beautiful things that are happening among God's people. I would like to celebrate this with you by my best possible service.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS AT THE DALY CENTRE, 1979-1983

Sr. Kelly recounted a visit to the Daly Centre in the April 1980 issue of the *Here and There*, the community's internal newsletter:

In early August, 1979, Father Patrick Tarrant, Pastor of St. Joseph's Church, Plentywood, Montana, USA, called to look over and obtain Correspondence Courses I and II. In September, he returned enthusiastic about the potential of the courses for his parish and three missions. Because of the cold winters, icy roads and scattered families, personal teaching was impossible in his area. He decided, therefore, to give the correspondence method a try. Later, he returned with his three coordinators of religion for a one day seminar given by Sr. Corke and myself. We discussed lesson content, methods, procedures and "tips to teachers."

Father anticipated an enrollment of approximately 100 children. To his surprise, many more than this applied for the courses. We, therefore, sent more supplies. On December 9, Father Tarrant called on his way East by plane. He reported that the response and participation of the families was exceeding his most optimistic dreams. He said that three of his neighboring parishes were now showing interest and plan to get started on the Home Religion Program next year.

It is good news to relate that the Correspondence form of the Canadian Catechism is going South of the Border to spread the Kingdom of God. Early in the New Year, we hope to go South, too, to conduct workshops for the volunteer catechists. Jesus is indeed being born for us all over the world. Let us greet Him with joy and hope in our own hearts.

Sisters attend Western Religious Conference, November 1981

In attending the annual conference of the Western Religious Conference for Religious Educators at Banff, Srs. Kelly and Clare Gilmore met Fr. deMong, the newly-elected religious co-ordinator of NORE. Annette Westley of the Catholic Church Extension, interviewed Sr. Kelly. The interview was published in the Autumn 1981 issue of *The Field at Home*:

Press releases announcing startling news about teaching religion are seldom, if ever, seen. When I asked Sr. Florence Kelly, Director of the National Office Home Religion Program in Regina, "What's new?" She replied: "The explosion of interest in Home Religion Courses might be compared to bringing the Constitution to Canada - without any dissenting voices."

Not since the Catholic Correspondence Courses in Religion were initiated in Western Canada, some sixty years ago by the Sisters of Service, has there been so much expansion activity and appreciation of the courses.

From coast to coast and from the far North as well as to South of the Border, the family-centred lessons have climbed to record high. The National Office, Ottawa has recently revised the Canadian Catechism series and renamed it - the Born of the Spirit series. We are proud to know that it is an all-Canadian series. Courses I to IX inclusive, are now available.

"In general" said Sr. Kelly, "lessons of the Home Program are no longer planned only for the children. They are now directed to whole family involvement." Revised courses are first piloted across Canada by teachers and families to ensure that they are relevant to the people using them.

"We've come a long way from the days when the Courses were used only by children in

Canada's remote missions," said Sr. Kelly. "Today, many teachers and volunteer catechists find the lessons very helpful as resource material in preparing their lessons or in synthesizing faith teaching. Also, together with their children, parents are able to update their own knowledge in day-to-day living."

When a pastor in the United States heard about the courses, he, together with three catechists, visited Regina to enquire about them. The visitors were so impressed with the material that they took with them what they thought would be a sufficient supply of lessons for their parish needs.

"In no time" said Sr. Kelly, "they were back for more. To their surprise, families not known to be Catholics who did not attend Church regularly, asked for lessons for their children. As a result, these families returned to practising their faith."

Because the courses follow simple teaching methods, parents are able to be catechists to their children, "and to themselves, and walk the Way of the Lord as the title of the Course V invites them to do."

The Courses have an attractive format, on multi-coloured paper, with large spaces for the children to write or draw. There are twenty lessons in each course which follow the liturgical year of the Church.

The number of courses sent out from Daly Centre, Regina, increases each year. Some 12,000 courses were distributed across Canada in 1980. "With 20 lessons in each course," Sr. Kelly pointed out, "this represents 240,000 instructions in our faith by the Home Program alone. This is a tremendous thrust into those areas closed to other avenues of religious education."

"To assist in the packaging and distribution by mail of the courses, we have dedicated volunteer help. Without this help, it would be impossible to reply promptly to the numerous requests we receive."

"On behalf of all those who receive these courses, I am very grateful to Church Extension benefactors for their continued annual support of \$17,800.00. Without their generosity, the expansion of the Home Program would be greatly hindered. May God Bless you all!"

About the Home Religion Program, Ms. Westley also wrote an article about Maureen Brechin, another conference delegate, which was published In *The Prairie Messenger* on September 12, 1978:

It seemed reasonable to Maureen Brechin to ask her parish in Port Alberni, Victoria Diocese, to accept her children for catechism classes. To her surprise, she was told there were no catechism classes.

She was disturbed to find that parents were expected to teach their own children at home with the help of a Home Religion Program provided by the parish.

"I felt totally inadequately prepared, to teach my children at home. My initial reaction was panic and fear."

It was only after the former parish coordinator, Sr. Ann Thomson, SSA, who, "with much care and affirmation," challenged Maureen to look at what she had already been doing from the day her children were born - teaching religion to them by just being what she is - that helped her to accept the challenge.

"So I became more and more aware of my responsibility," said this mother of two children. "I became more comfortable with being the primary religious educator of my children."

Maureen credits the Home Religion Program for helping her reach that level.

"Through the Home Program and the recognition of my responsibility to share my faith with my children," said Maureen, "I was motivated discover more about my faith."

After acquiring enough self-confidence to teach religion to her children, Maureen decided to attend summer courses and workshops to update her knowledge of theology. When the

parish was looking for a new coordinator of religious education, Maureen was approached and she accepted this second challenge.

Five years later, she became the Diocesan Coordinator helping parishes to organize family-centred catechism sessions using the Canadian Catechism as resource material as well as the Home Program..

Maureen's accomplishment is just one family example why Sr. Kelly calls the Home Program "a family journey in faith". Because the program is no longer planned for children alone, but involves the whole family, Sister says:

"They all journey together by learning from experience gained through family living. It's not just memorizing for the sake of learning something but sharing their faith by living it; that's the beauty of it."

"With the new Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults," said Sr. Kelly, "because emphasis is now more and more on parents to take responsibility for the faith development of their children, many families are involved in using the Home Program. This program fits right in with the R.C.I.A."

Speaking about her experience at the Western Conference of Religious Educators in Banff last November, 1981, Maureen received a standing ovation for her great victory over a challenge that began with "fear and panic."

"It is the annual contributions of the Church Extension Society" said Sr. Kelly, "that permits more extensive service to help families become involved in the faith development of their children." On behalf of all families who benefit from the Home Program, Sister Kelly expressed sincere gratitude to all the Extension benefactors for their continued generosity.

On July 20, 1981, Fr. Tarrant came to Regina for more correspondence materials, reporting greater interest in the correspondence lessons. Accepting Fr. Tarrant's invitation to Plentywood and to meet some parents and catechists, Srs. Kelly and Corke drove for a one-day visit on September 23, 1981. The Sisters found great great enthusiasm for the correspondence lessons and helped the parents and catechists with a clearer understanding of the experiential method of teaching

A month later, Fr. Tarrant revisited Regina, bringing three catechists, Bernice Johnson, Mary Lomox and Millie Marub and Fr. Martin Fisher, OSB, from Billings, Montana, who was interested in all aspects of the Correspondence work. .

Another Montana group came on September 27, 1982. Fr. Lothar Krauth of Poplar with two of his catechists, Sr. Patrice Foeckes and Sr. May OP learned about the Home Program and took some Home Program materials.

National Catechetical Team meet at Daly Centre, May 1982

Members of the National Catechetical Team arrived at Daly Centre on May 26, 1982 to begin comparing notes on the advance resources packet they had received from NORE. The members included Fr. deMong, OSB, Muenster, SK; Joanne Chafe and Joyce Harpell from NORE, Ottawa; Maureen Brechin, Port Alberni, BC; Muriel Loftus of Nanaimo, BC; Srs. Corke, Kelly and Barton as well as Tom and Dolores Owens, representatives of the Regina Catholic school teachers. Archbishop Charles Halpin showed his appreciation for the hard work of the team by inviting them to a luncheon at the Hotel Saskatchewan on May 28, 1982.

Report calls for revisions of the Home Program

At the end of June, Joanne Chafe, assistant director of NORE and a specialist in promoting adult education and family catechesis, sent a detailed overview of the meeting at the Daly Centre:

A group of catechists from across Canada met at Daly Centre in Regina from May 26 to May 28, 1982, to talk about the ongoing development and revision of the Home Program - Primary Cycle.

Prior to coming to Regina, all participants had received from NORE a packet of resources to assist them in their preparation for the meeting. Pieces included in this resource packet as a list of possible questions to be asked of the various resource persons in the field were: "Evolving Catechetical Orientations," Familiaris Consortio, Year One Pilot, General Evaluation Resume, synthesis of the National Meeting on family catechesis entitled, Family Growth in Faith. The Year One Pilot Synthesis, a summary reading of Familiaris Consortio, and The Resource Centre of the Home Program, were made available at Daly Centre.

The discussions were rooted within the context of the history of family catechesis in Canada, the experience of families involved in the Year One and Two Pilot Projects of the Canadian Catechism, Primary Cycle and existing Home Program.

Based on our history of family catechesis in Canada, we had piloted a family resource in the Year One and Two Pilot Projects of the Canadian Catechism. Through their involvement with these two resources, families today are telling us many things:

- They enjoy spending quality time together and the family resource of the Year One Pilot provided quality time together;
- They sometimes need an 'excuse, or 'reason' to get together - especially with all the demands of individual activities that splinter rather than unify;
- They often express a serious lack of free time to spend as family. This is especially true of families with older children involved in sports etc. They need to be called together as a family;
- Once together, they discover many new things about one another, especially the need to communicate feelings and the role of God in their lives;
- They do not like being told what to do and when, e.g.: resistant to structured time or activities superimposed on family life;
- They resist the experiential process initially but in the long run experience it positively;
- They want to include the whole family in the resource and become frustrated when they experience the resource to be for one child only, or for younger children only;
- They would like to experience the resource with other families;
- That as parents they would like to gather with other parents and try out some of the activities before doing them with their children;
- That as parents they are awkward with spontaneous prayer and scripture catechesis. Many express the desire to learn but don't know where to begin;
- They are concerned about the presence of T.V. in their homes. Some families do not have a television; others have begun to be more selective in their viewing;
- They need to learn how to relax, enjoy and celebrate together;
- They are growing together in faith as they work out the demands of being of mixed faiths;
- The meal time is a natural gathering time especially for families of primary age children;
- They enjoy the unit block of Year Two over the demands of the weekly thematic flow of Year One;
- They need to feel affirmed in their traditional modes of religious expression.

Participants shared with one another their experience of the existing Home Program - Primary Cycle. Many strengths and weaknesses were identified.

The strengths were as follows:

- There is 100% participation of families in isolated areas;
- The Home Program is a tool of adult education for many;
- The spaces for writing are important to encourage involvement;

- The resource provides a way for the adults to share their faith growth and to grow themselves.

Weaknesses of the Primary Cycle:

- The Home Program could be more open to family clustering and intergenerational learning;
- Some activities are repetitious;
- The worksheets can isolate the child making the learning experience non-relational and reducing the experience to an exchange of information;
- Tends to focus on the child to the exclusion of the rest of the family.
- Language is sexist;
- Focus is parent-child; it needs to be for parent and child to grow together;
- Minimal community outreach.

In the light of these shared experiences and history, many needs were identified.

Needs identified for format and context:

- Letter as opposed to legal size;
- Ample space to invite drawings, diagrams, pictures;
- Lay-out needs to be bright and colourful (see Home Program brochure);
- Student text durable and lasting, e.g.: a prayer text to be treasured;
- A similar format for primary as for Years 4, 5, and 6 current Home Program.
- Pre-school introduction to Canadian Catechism from ages 3 - 5 (In The Beginning and You Are Invited are presently being used);
- Home Program could become more involved in high school catechesis (High-Time) and provincial programs like Christian Ethics in Saskatchewan are now being used);
- Stories and music need to be included;
- Greater variety of activities needed; prayer dimension needs to be strengthened;
- Social justice component needs enrichment;
- Intergenerational with core experience could be supplemented with inserts for the various ages and/or special events.

Concerning the family:

- to be affirmed in what they are living as family;
- need to learn, to name the faith dimension of their family life;
- help in being reflective about what they are living;
- be supportive in terms of the experiential process;
- resource for intergenerational , multi-aged families;
- to be encouraged to relax, enjoy and celebrate life and one another;
- get together with other parents who are involved in the Home Program to share experiences;
- get together in family clusters, to develop a support group of families;
- to affirm faith growth in families of mixed inter-faith marriages;
- to facilitate an 'at-homeness' with scripture and spontaneous prayer, especially at the adult-level of providing the necessary background material.

Adult Education:

- We need to create the resource with an adult in mind;
- Parents need more background material and help getting started;
- Strong coordinator presence at diocesan level needed;

- Family clustering initiated by both the families participating and the facilitators coordinating the Home Program;

Needs to be launched from the parish:

Based on the pastoral experiences of those presently involved with the Home Program, the following orientations were affirmed:

- intergenerational catechesis;
- family clustering;
- strengthen and enrich family orientations;
- build on the experience of Years 4, 5 and 6

During our time together, several questions were raised for ongoing research:

How do you go about intergenerational learning, adult education, family catechesis?

In the light of the reality of isolated families who seem to be cut off, ought we to be looking at some creative ways of co-ordinating the Home Program locally and nationally?

Based on the shared pastoral experiences of the group, the following orientations were affirmed as foundational principles for the Home Program and Primary Renewal:

1. The family is the foundation stone and the most natural environment for growth in faith; therefore the Home Program needs to be family based;
2. It is the responsibility of the adult community to nurture and initiate the young into the faith community, therefore, the Home Program needs to be an intergenerational resource based on the principles of adult education and the R.C.I.A.
3. Families, because of their involvement in the Home Program, are experiencing family clustering. They are expressing a desire to continue to meet together, to break out of the grade syndrome of the existing resources and become more involved with the dynamics of faith growth. Therefore, the Home Program needs to be pastorally oriented, relational and formational, that is to say, be concerned with the conversion of adults, offering support to those adults concerned with nurturing and initiating their young. This will necessitate a move away from the school mentality, disengaging the resource from the child focus, being more inclusive of the total family and communal dimension.
4. Systematic learning is important for adults, whereas, children learn best through initiation into the adult community. Therefore the Home Program needs to be concerned primarily with the faith development of the adult and faithful to the principles of adult education and growth, providing an environment where learning can happen together.
5. Intergenerational learning is dependent on the commitment of the adult community. Therefore, the Home Program needs to be supportive, providing adequate facilitation and coordination on a relational level to all concerned, especially for adults.
6. The development of the Home Program ought to be evolutionary in process, providing additional resources when necessary.

These orientations have definite implications for the revision of the Home Program Primary Cycle. Resources created for the Home Program need to be progressively oriented to a family focus; intergenerational in format; formational and experiential in content with activities encouraging family participation; affirming of parents, children and family life; concerned with faith growth of adults and respectful of the adult life cycle; contemporary, bright and attractive with colourful illustrations; relational; creative and varied family activities that are open-ended; progressively de-grade the resources; respectful of persons and faith expression; integral to the liturgical year; assist families as they move out of isolation and into community; encourage

community involvement at all levels; further enrich the process of Christian Initiation according to the R.C.I.A.; nurture the reflective life stance of the adult faith community; foster hospitality and affirm natural family activities; provide a pastoral resource for animators; situate sacramental preparation within the context of family life and the process of initiation; create a student book that is prayerful and reflective for the whole family; make the family and student books companion resources; provide viable and alternative resources for those families interested and committed to growing in faith together.

Future prospects:

Looking to the immediate future, one additional resource could be a Home Program based on the lectionary. As well as the core content drawn from the scripture reading, there would be optional themes to cover the variety of celebrative moments and needs of the family that parents could use with their children. Therefore this resource would be intergenerational and non-graded providing optional activities for all ages and interests and parish situations. This resource should be based on existing pilot material and research. A section of a cycle, say from Lent to Easter, could be developed and piloted as a possible resource for family use.

The lectionary suggestion raises many questions for research:

1. Developmentally, children would not be able to meet the challenge of the scripture readings. This, in turn, would raise questions about intergenerational learning.
2. What would the goal of such a resource be? Where would the flow and unity come from?
3. What about R.C.I.A. with its process of belonging, discovering and living?
4. The volume of material, e.g. 3 weekly readings?

Because many of the above suggestions came from parents and catechists across Canada who have been involved in the Home Program, they are valuable guides for catechists on the National Team seeking to improve the Home Program. The implementation of some of these suggestions may take several years.

Daly Centre implemented NORE recommendations

Srs. Kelly and Corke decided to try to interest parents in family clustering and intergenerational learning. They visited parents and students, inviting some families to come to the Sisters' house. At this meeting, the families took part in a liturgical activity suggested in a Home Program text, which included scripture reading, discussion and sharing thoughts about the reading followed by a hymn. From this activity, the parents were shown a guide for meeting other families in their own homes or in a parish hall for one of the various suggested programs.

During 1981-1982, in response to requests for help with the Home Program, Sr. Corke and occasionally with Sr. Kelly gave talks or held workshops for parents and catechists at Quill Lake, Moose Jaw, Estevan and other in the archdiocese. Requests continued in 1982 for adult courses. Sr. Corke initiated three short adult courses for parents: Getting Back to Basics or Evangelization Begins With Me; The Bible – What It Tells Me; and A Closer Look at Jesus, the Christ.

On September 25, 1983, Sr. Corke accompanied the Archdiocesan Religious Education Team of Srs. Valerie Leibel and Julie Lettner, SSND, and Adeline Behm, FJ, to assist in giving workshops on the Home Program in the Deaneries of Moose Jaw, Whitewood, Yorkton, Wadena and Prelate.

In 1983, the Sisters invited Home Program students attending a public school in Regina to come to the Sisters' house for an informal visit. Parents usually accompanied the students. The Sisters showed filmstrips and discussions followed. Occasionally, a timely paraliturgical celebration was outlined in one of the lessons. On one occasion of April 30, 1983, students and parents from the parishes of Holy Rosary, Sacred Heart, Christ the King, Little Flower, St. Athanasius, Holy Cross and

St. Anthony's took part in a celebration, which was followed by an enjoyable lunch. From these collaborations, Srs. Corke and Kelly presented a workshop and a liturgy in Estevan in October. The following morning, they visited some correspondence families in Estevan and in Bengough.

National Catechetical Team meet in Regina, 1983

The national catechetical team members arrived in Regina on April 9. Fr. DeMong, OSB, who succeeded Sr. Colleen Mahoney, SSA, as Director of NORE on September 1, 1982, led the team of Muriel Loftus, Maureen Brechin, Srs. Kelly, Corke and Barton with some attendance by Tom and Delores Owens of the Regina Catholic teachers and by Sr. Valentia Leibel of the Regina pastoral centre. Sr. Gilmore assisted with the typing.

From the meeting, Fr. DeMong reported:

As we worked through the Year Two Outline, we kept in mind the need to determine the content of Year Three. Seeing the entire initiation cycle as a catechesis to help the children to affirm their identity as Catholic Christians, we viewed Year Three as a lived reflection on what they have experienced in the light of the mission of the Church to the World, i.e. the "mystagogia" according to the R.C.I.A.

Our brainstorming suggested the following, including titles:

Year 1 *We Belong to God* being welcomed into a circle of love, the children come to know God as persons.

Year 2 *We Belong to the Lord Jesus* now that they know Jesus, they share in the action of His Spirit today.

Year 3 *We Belong to the Church* continuing the Emmaus story from Year 2, deepen awareness of the Lord's presence and see His action through the action of Christians by opening up some concerns of social justice.

Fr. DeMong emphasized communicating with all those participating in the research work. As a means of unifying the collective endeavour, he sent lengthy progress reports and welcomed feedback and data. These were used for resource papers and recommendations for the Episcopal Commission for continuing religious education. On October 28, 1983, Fr. DeMong announced a new phase of relationship to the Episcopal Commission for Religious Education. This new phase of relationship had evolved during the past year [1983] in the editing of the Year 1 Program: "Largely through the efforts of Bishop Emmett Doyle, the bishops have, in fact, become co-workers with the staff in developing the catechetical instruments. We very much appreciate their contribution and support."

In April 1983, Sr. Kelly reported that approximately 260,000 lessons had been sent to 120 Western centres, 190 centres in Ontario and Quebec, and 90 centres in the Maritimes. The increased demand for the program strained the space and facilities at Daly Centre. The work of assembling, weighing, packaging and transporting the large cartons to the post office was demanding. Fortunately, Sr. Kelly had an assistant Sebastian Reinhardt, brother of Sr. Celestine Reinhardt.

Collaboration between the pastoral centre and the correspondence school

Early in September 1983, the Regina diocesan catechetical team under direction of Sr. Leibel, visited the correspondence school to become acquainted with correspondence work and to seek collaboration. From this meeting, a Sister of Service representing the correspondence school began to attend the regular meetings of the Regina catechetical team. By receiving names of overlooked families, the correspondence enrolment increased and the Sisters kept better contact with the families. Through Fr. Jacek, OMI in September 1983, the Regina Correctional Centre received lessons from the Daly Centre.

SISTERS CELEBRATE 50 YEARS IN REGINA, 1984

On June 24, 1984, the Sisters of Service celebrated 50 years at their Regina mission at a Thanksgiving Mass held at Holy Rosary cathedral. Archbishop Halpin observed in his homily: "For 50 years the Sisters of Service Correspondence School of Religion has provided a Home Religion Program that has made a most precious contribution to evangelization in the Church of Regina and across our land. ... I am overjoyed at the response your ministry is getting among our people, children, adults, parents and teachers ... I ask God for continued blessings on your rich apostolate."

The Sisters expressed appreciation to Regina Archbishops McGuigan, Monahan, O'Neill and Halpin; Saskatoon Bishops Gerald Murray, CSsR, F.J. Klein, and P. Pocock; Bishops R. Duprat, O.P. of Prince Albert; M.J. Lemieux, OP, of Gravelbourg, and Abbot Severin Gertken, OSB of Muenster, for their support and encouragement. Gratitude was extended to many pastors of the archdiocese, especially Msgr Hughes and Fr. Celestine, OFM, who welcomed the first SOS to Regina; Frs. Mulligan, and Hogan, directors of religious education for their help encouragement and advice and Fr. Walter Wadey, former rector of Holy Rosary Cathedral, for directing the construction of new correspondence school, and chaplain Fr. Don McNeil. The Sisters remembered with gratitude the faithful members of the Senior and Junior CWL for their financial and clerical assistance as well as the financial and other assistance of the Knights of Columbus and of the Catholic Extension Society of Canada.

Testimonials from the Clergy

Fr. Charles Gibney of Christ the King parish, Regina, grew up in rural Canora, Saskatchewan and paid tribute to the Sisters at the Correspondence School: "Many times as a priest, I look back to the 1930s remembering gratefully the Sisters of Service correspondence lessons, their personal answers to questions, and their radio broadcasts of awards for faithful response. In an area where the priest came rarely and Catholics were few, the lessons were a delight and a challenge.

Fr. John Reidy of Balgonie, Saskatchewan wrote: "I sincerely congratulate the Sisters of Service on their 50th anniversary. I am very much aware of their great contribution to a very large number of people in the field of Religious Education. I, personally, am indebted to the Sisters. Part of my religious education was obtained through "Religion by Correspondence Courses and from summer vacation schools conducted by the Sisters. As a priest, I also used these courses for catechists in my parish and missions. I take this opportunity to thank the Sisters and compliment them for fifty years of dedicated "service."

Fr. Joe Firkola of St. Martin's parish, Regina, recalled: "Through the Correspondence School, many families were assisted in the religious instruction of their children. In our family, living on a farm in Grove Park, Saskatchewan, attending a public school and having catechism only in July for two weeks, the Sisters provided continuous instruction and formation. I recall that my mother used to gather together my brothers and sisters and me and give us the lessons to be studied. She then saw to it that we answered all the question sheets and mailed them to the Sisters. Throughout our elementary school, the Sisters of Service Religious Correspondence School was the foundation for understanding our Faith."

Fr. Louis Kubash of Holy Child parish, Regina wrote:

A highlight in the life of a young Catholic growing up in rural Saskatchewan during the 30's, 40's and 50's was the annual Summer School of Religion taught by the Sisters. They came

from Regina and other centres to the small towns and outlying areas to teach catechism to all who showed up for lessons. For many years it was the Sisters of Service who came to Broderick to teach us catechism and prepare us for the Sacraments.

At the close of the summer sessions we would be enrolled in the SOS Correspondence Course and every two weeks or so our new lessons and corrected set of questions would return to us with Sisters' corrections, kindly comments and encouragement. I experienced many years of summer school and correspondence courses with the Sisters.

It was one of the Sisters of Service who first asked our class if we had ever thought of becoming a Priest, Brother or Sister when we grew up. I had. Sister most likely passed on my expressed interest to Fr. Francis Yuzyk, our Pastor at that time.

Though I stopped attending summer school after grade eight, I did continue the correspondence course through high school and actually completed the last lesson just before I left home to attend St. Peter's College, Muenster. The Sisters' last mailing arrived at the College with my corrected lesson, a note of congratulations and a small souvenir crucifix which I kept for a long time.

I believe that the Sisters of Service were an important part of the development of my vocation to the priesthood by their teaching, example and prayers, and I'm sure that they followed me with their prayers during my days at St. Joseph's Seminary in Edmonton.

That contact is maintained today as a number of children in Holy Child Parish, Regina, who attend public schools, are enrolled in the SOS Correspondence Course. The Sisters make an annual visit to the parish to meet the children and their parents thus providing a pleasant opportunity to renew acquaintances and to recall our mutual commitment to the Lord.

Fr. Len Albens of St. Paul's parish, Vibank, Saskatchewan wrote:

For a number of years in the '30's, I received your correspondence lessons at Bengough. We lived 15 miles from our mission church and most winters we couldn't get to Mass for months at a time. Often our priest from Ceylon could travel only by train, and then Mass would be celebrated on Saturdays at 6.00 am. When Sunday Mass was impossible, we always had family prayers: Rosary, Litany and the Scriptures of the day - with stations in Lent.

I had no thought of the priesthood then. When I went to Notre Dame, Wilcox, for grade 12 and my B.A. degree, Fr. Murray, Mother Edith and my pastor, Fr. McKenna of Ceylon, all urged me to think of it. Finally, after writing the final B.A. exams in 1944, I decided to give the seminary a try. Within four years, I was ordained, the beginning of 49 years of happy parish ministry in the Archdiocese.

I do think that your correspondence lessons and the annual two weeks of "summer school" were very instrumental in steering me to the priesthood. Thank you for your devoted work in His service!

Fr. Joseph Balzer, Chancellor of the Regina Archdiocese, offered appreciation for catechism by correspondence that had helped him during his schooldays in rural Saskatchewan.

Fr. Roger Yaworski, SJ, who grew up in the Polish settlement of Rama, Saskatchewan, said that he learned his catechism during the first five school years through correspondence lessons. This experience, he said, plus his religious practices at home, gave him a good foundation for his later years at Campion College, Regina.

Fr. Joseph Kot, CSsR grew up on the prairies and was grateful for religion by mail during his early school years.

Testimonials from parents

~The Aussants of White City, Saskatchewan wrote: As parents we think you are doing a super job. The courses have gotten us involved in the forefront of our children's teachings - something we often like to relinquish totally to Religious Orders. The children, when questioned, agreed they learned very much about God's world and really enjoyed their lessons. Through the years, we have grown closer as a family in Faith by sharing and doing these lessons."

~Herb and Agnes Beingessner of Regina wrote: "Our daughter, Virginia, always awaited eagerly the lessons made available to her in the effective Correspondence Lessons from Grade VI to Grade XII. The lessons were motivational and the comments returned on the lessons were very encouraging and added a personal touch. We, as parents, always benefitted from the outlines and the suggested celebrations for the various Liturgical Seasons. These added interest and relevancy. Virginia is grateful to have had such a satisfying religious education experience.

~Lawrence Beckie wrote: "Marg and I are of the third generation since our grandparents homesteaded. Since our earliest school days, our parents saw to it that summer school of catechism was supplemented by a religion course from you, Sisters of Service. The Sisters of Service, 2220 Cameron Street, Regina, have contributed to our religious instruction for over forty years. Our older children began with the Sisters in 1964 and in 1984 our two daughters are enrolled. In addition, Marg and I are taking an adult course. You Sisters were undaunted by the changing times; your courses are up to date keeping in touch with today's needs. We are grateful to you, Sisters, and to our parents who passed the Faith on to us.

~Ivabelle Appel of Bangor, Saskatchewan, a parent of two young students, wrote:

"I have enjoyed these lessons and have learned from them. I like the experiential approach of the Canadian Catechism. It is much better than the religious instruction given to us when we were children. I think it would be good to give lessons such as these to parents. There are many people who go to church who don't understand what is taking place at Mass. Many fear God rather than love Him. We enjoy the Bible references, too."

Recollections of the former students

~Margaret Dutli, a former student of the correspondence school and an assistant professor of English at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon, was delighted to meet the Sisters, saying: "I have always wanted to thank you personally for all the lessons you sent to me years ago."

~Harold Gallagher, a noted musician in Regina, organist at Holy Rosary cathedral, Regina, and choir director at Blessed Sacrament church, kept a hand-written letter of congratulation from Archbishop Monahan after receiving the first prize award of the annual archdiocesan examinations for students of Grades 6 to 8. Harold recalled:

My first recollection of the Sisters of Service was in the summer of 1935 when Mum came home from Mass to tell me that there was to be a summer school of Christian Doctrine at St. Gerard's [Yorkton] the following week. It would be conducted by a new order of Sisters who wore a different habit from what we were accustomed to. I was sick in bed at the time so had not been able to attend Mass.

My two brothers, Bernard and Hugh, went to the Sunday afternoon session and told me all about it. There would be morning and afternoon sessions for the week. Being sick and unable to go was a terrible disappointment to me. I recall that I did have an opportunity to meet two Sisters, A. Walsh and M. Regan who came to the house to visit me.

This was the beginning of our most fortuitous connection with the "new" Sisters. Shortly afterwards, we began the correspondence lessons to supplement our Sunday School classes. I remember that one copy of the instruction booklet came with a sheet of questions which had to be answered and returned for correction. The three of us took turns using the printed question sheet - the other two wrote out the questions so that there would be no copying. We looked forward eagerly to the return of the corrected lessons with the next set.

We especially liked the brief messages of encouragement and the occasional sacred picture with a prayer to add to either our morning or evening prayers.

Several years later, I was one of the fortunate ones selected to teach catechism in small mission stations of St. Gerard's parish which did not warrant sending two Sisters. My corrected lessons - which I kept for many years - were useful in helping me prepare the small groups for the Sacraments of First Communion and Confirmation.

In the ensuing years, I have often thought how blessed we were in the good Catholic homes we had at Yorkton, and the wonderful work of the Redemptorist Fathers, the Brothers of the Christian Schools and the Sisters who conducted Religious Vacation Schools and Correspondence Courses. Above all, I am grateful for devoted parents who instilled in us the love of God and the Church. Mum and Dad had quite different connections with the Church. Dad came from Eganville, Ontario, from St. James' parish with its strong Irish Catholic influence which permeated peoples' entire lives. Mum, on the other hand, came from a pioneer English Catholic family who despite repression of the Catholic Faith had retained it. Later, they emigrated to Saltcoats, Saskatchewan, where they were the only Catholic family in a large area. They had a visit but once a year from the great Father DeCorby. In spite of all difficulties, they retained a strong faith and succeeding generations are the beneficiaries.

Of our immediate family, only Bernard and I survive. Bernard died suddenly of a heart attack in August, 1995. I have been blessed with good health and able to be active as a church musician for 60 years. With the help of God, as long as my brains, hands and feet cooperate, I hope to keep at the console of Blessed Sacrament organ for some years yet.

The Sisters of Service have been a strong influence in the lives of many. I certainly have been blessed through their work. God has been very good to me in giving me a good start along the path of life. I am also grateful for the love and companionship for almost 48 years of my dear wife, Margaret McDermott, also a noted musician] Margaret, in the early days, was a member of the Junior CWL, one of the devoted band of helpers who for many years, assisted weekly in the Office work of the Sisters of Service. I am also blessed with a wonderful son and daughter who continue to carry on with the Catholic values we hold so dear.

~From Nestor Trach, principal of a Catholic school in Humboldt, Saskatchewan wrote:

Growing up in a mission parish of Mikado, served by the Redemptorist Fathers of Yorkton about once a month - less in winter - , my parents provided our religious education through enrolling us in your Correspondence Classes. This was in addition to the week or two of summer school which was also provided by your Sisters. These correspondence lessons were my formal religious training as a youngster.

Many times there were tears and frustration but eventually the lessons were completed; the pictures coloured and the "at home projects" worked out. Dad would take the lessons to town to be mailed. Then we waited for the results and the coming of the next lesson. (Often the only mail we received). I can't forget the Lenten lessons and the "do good cards" we pulled out of the matchbox every day.

It really is strange how one forgets all this as life goes on until something happens to make you think back and realize how grateful a person really should be. Your service may be taken for granted by many, but hopefully my letter will speak for many of us when I say "Thank you" Sisters for the service you have provided over the years. In many cases you were the sum total of religious instruction to many.

Today, I am the Principal of a Catholic School in Humboldt and I think that my background which qualified me for this position was the result of your work. I'm lucky because the religious education of my four children has been provided through the school system. I wasn't so lucky myself. If it had not been for the seed you planted, and the background of

religious instruction through your lessons, I very likely would not be where I am today.

To you, Sisters present and past - "Thank you". May God reward you for your work. My wife, the former Elizabeth Wolkowski, from Tiny, Sask., is also a product of your instruction; she asks me to add her thanks to mine.

~George Exner, a real estate agent in Regina, sent the Sister a photo copy of the certificate of merit he had received in 1946 for successfully completing the foundation course of *Jesus and I* with the comments: "We belonged to Govan Parish and lived on a farm about nineteen miles from the Church so were seldom able to attend Mass. I did go to Religious Vacation School and recall that in order to do so, I had to get up at 5.00 a.m. to do chores before attending school; then walk miles to class. Before going to bed, like so many others at that time, I had more chores to do. I enjoyed doing the lessons. They have been very helpful to me in my life."

~Rita Hilbig, a 1983 graduate of Kuroki, Saskatchewan wrote: "All the lessons from the Home Religion Program, in particular the High School Courses, contained material that was always relevant to my life. There were moments last year when I was scared and uncertain about my future. It was during those moments that I gained a lot of support and strength from the lessons. I also believe that it gave me a stronger Faith as I went on to University. The lessons, along with the love that was sent with them by you Sisters of Service are a pleasant and cherished memory from my Elementary and High School Years."

~Raymond Moisan, a 1984 graduate of Archerwill, Saskatchewan, wrote: "I did not find the lessons too difficult and really enjoyed learning more about my religion and God. These lessons have also helped me a lot with my oral reading and how to answer questions properly. Thanks, Sisters, for letting me have these lessons."

~Lucille Nawrocki,(nee Labrecque) of Rosetown, Saskatchewan, wrote:

I began my acquaintance with God in the 1940's at my Mother's knee where with my hands folded on her apron, I recited my night prayers. In 1948, at the age of eight, I enrolled in the catechism correspondence course with the Sisters of Service.

It was as though God poured His Spirit on me. Even though at times, I found the lessons difficult, I remember enjoying the learning experience. One great joy and reward was receiving mail as well as personal letters in my very own name. The lessons were corrected with encouraging comments. I recall receiving marks in the 80's which pleased my dear Mom and me too. These experiences were a delight as well as highlights in my ordinary farm girl's life.

Later benefits were evident as I taught catechism for 16 consecutive years in country settings. I began at St. Mary's Church in Moosomin, SK in 1968. Later, in 1978, I initiated and conducted a school of religion with up to 40 students at St. Columbkille Church in Grenfell, SK. I encouraged and helped other Mothers how to teach. Many new and innovative ideas and celebrations were introduced and implemented after Vatican II which stimulated the parent-catechist and delighted the children. What I liked best about teaching since Vatican II is that "LOVE" became the central theme. I often had "learning-meetings" with the parents of many eager children.

I am grateful to the Sisters of Service for a humble, great and wonderful beginning in my journey with God.

At present, I am attending the University of Regina completing a B.A. degree with a major in Religious Studies.

~Lillian Kutarna of Cedoux, Saskatchewan wrote:

I want to tell you of my memories of the Sisters coming to our little community of Cedoux, a mission of Weyburn, to teach catechism during two weeks of summer school. In those days, there was no electricity nor running water; therefore only outdoor bathrooms. We used wood or coal stoves for cooking during the hot July days.

When the Sisters came to our area, the community didn't know how to accommodate them. At first, families would take turns inviting them for dinner, and went all out to prepare a rich delicious dinner, but didn't think about where they would eat supper or sleep. After a few days of this feasting, the poor Sisters would be ill. Then and there it was decided that they should stay in one place. My folks, who had a reasonably large house only two and a half miles from the Church, were approached, and said "Yes, the Sisters could stay with us." This was a joy to us for we had lots of music and singing. Of course, there was confidentiality too.

Near the end of summer school, the Sisters enrolled us in correspondence courses. We, therefore studied catechism all winter. I remember taking the courses until I was fifteen. In our little mission, we had the Children of Mary Society and a large choir for which I played the organ. During Holy Week, we used to sing the Passion in Polish with a number of persons taking various parts.

I am very grateful for all the religious training we had at that time. The Sisters had a great influence on us young people. It was depression time and times were hard. Then World War II came and many joined the forces. Our Children of Mary lost many members and it died down and was never started again.

I should add that in winter when roads were impassable, the priest used to come by train on Saturday night and stay over with us until train-time on Monday morning. Those were the days of fasting from midnight. This was hard for everyone. Sometimes people fainted during Mass. I remember that Mother would prepare a lunch and a thermos of hot coffee for the priest to have after Mass, and would have a dinner prepared that could readily be heated on return from Mass. At Confirmation time we were privileged to entertain the Archbishop. Mother always had home-made chicken soup and home-made long noodles which were always a treat for the Archbishop who wanted nothing else.

Again, I want to say a big thank you to the Sisters for bringing their knowledge, love and understanding to our small community and ask God to reward you for all you did for our community. We in that community had little access to training and advantages provided in cities and at that time, transportation was very limited. We did, however, have good community living and people helped one another. I think back with fond memories of living in the little community of Cedoux.

May God bless each and every one of you with good health and long life - Sto Lat - which, in Polish, means 100 years.

~Hilda Reinhardt of Primate, Saskatchewan, wrote: "Over fifty years have passed since I received your catechism lessons by mail. How I used to look forward to the mail that Dad brought home from Primate, Saskatchewan, by horse and buggy or by sleigh. The kind comments, the coloured stars, and lovely holy pictures were always treasured. I especially treasured the crucifix that I received at the completion of my course. The learning and understanding of my faith are due, in large part, to the lessons and your kindness. I should add that I still have the certificates that I received for completing the courses. Thanks again for everything."

Recollections/testimony from Religious Women

~Sr. Phyllis Kapuschinski, NDS, a teacher of mathematics, science and religious studies at the University of Regina, said that she had received her early religious education by correspondence courses. At the annual banquet of Sisters Association Regina Archdiocese in September 1987, more than two-thirds of the 100 Sisters present had received their religious instruction from correspondence.

~Sr. Adeline Behm, Daughter of Providence, recalled: "I was already in High School when my whole family enrolled in catechism by correspondence. It was always a thrill to receive the envelope of returned lessons and new assignments. I read and reread all the comments with great interest and

with a sense of personal attention, When I left home, I continued the lessons. Many times I worked on them in between customers during slack time in the Royal Bank where I worked as cashier.”

~Sr. Anna Stauber, Sister of Charity of St. Louis, recalled: “I grew up on a farm near Success, Saskatchewan, during the Depression. Once each month, the priest came from Swift Current to say Mass in our little church. My Mother kept the Faith alive in our family by gathering us to say the rosary each day; by reading the Gospel to us on Sundays, and by teaching us Catechism. When correspondence became available from the Sisters of Service, they were an enjoyable supplement to our home religious instruction.”

~Sr. Armella Rolheiser of Edmonton wrote of appreciation of the lessons by mail “that I treasured as a little girl. You will never know how much good came out of this ministry.”

~Sr. Pauline Reinhardt, OSU, of Sister Angela's Academy recalled: “It is with fond memories that I look back, think back and recall the "Big Brown Envelopes" that arrived every month with the return address of 2220 Cameron St. This told me right away that the famous catechism lessons from the SOS Centre in Regina had arrived. This was, indeed, always a surprise envelope. How we awaited the opening of this envelope and treasured the coloured stars, sometimes even gold ones or a small holy picture or prayer card. These were tokens of awards for work well done.”

TRANSFERS OF THE HOME PROGRAM, 1984 and 1991

The ever-increasing demand for lessons and the lack of space to stack the lessons prompted a meeting of Fr. DeMong as director of NORE, Sr. Kelly and Sister General Helen Hayes at the Daly Centre in January 1984. Since ample space was available for lessons at the Publications Service Centre of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) in Ottawa, where all the texts originated, it was decided to transfer the Home Program to Ottawa.

Shortly afterwards, the shelves at Daly Centre were emptied and the lessons were transported to the CCCB publications centre in Ottawa. The new courses and the revised courses would be prepared and printed in Ottawa by Paulist Press through the CCCB

Following the transfer of the Home Program, Sr. Kelly was appointed in September 1984 to Ottawa, working with the catechetical team in preparing the new series of *Born of the Spirit* and supervising the re-editing of the Year 5, the completion of Year 2 and the implementation where it was needed. She remained in Ottawa for more than a year.

In 1986, Sr. Kelly returned to Regina as the archdiocese's coordinator of catechetics for two years. In this position, she had great scope in explaining and promoting the Home Program throughout the archdiocese, which had more than 1,000 rural catechists in the 10 rural deaneries. For the religion coordinator and catechists in each deanery, Sr. Kelly organized rallies at various centres, giving workshops in many rural areas and assisting catechists.

Since no Sister was available in September 1984, Sr. Corke hired Patrick Jenner, a religion teacher in Catholic schools for two years to correct lessons.

In the late 1980s, little prospect existed of obtaining much-needed Sister staff to help with the correction of lessons. The Sisters approached Archbishop Halpin for the archdiocese to assume the administration of the Home Program. He agreed. In January 1991, a plan was formulated for the transfer. Through a letter dated on January 14, 1991, Sr. Corke notified all correspondence families:

Dear Parents, Families and Friends:

For the past fifty-seven years the Sisters of Service have been caring for the religious education of many rural and some urban families and children in the Regina Archdiocese. It was in September 1934 that the first three Sisters of Service arrived in Regina and enrolled 5,000 students in the Correspondence Courses. Over the years, thousands of Catholic families have benefited from "Religion by Mail". Grandparents, parents, numerous sisters and many priests have received their faith instruction through the mail. Thousands of children living far from a parish have received regular religious instruction who otherwise might have been deprived of their right to faith instruction. Many parents, whose children are presently taking the courses, were themselves former correspondence students. Other "graduates" are now actively serving in ministries in their local parishes. Today, concerned parents as you are, have received and are still receiving "Religion by Correspondence."

During the fifty-seven years of this Correspondence Apostolate, more than seventy Sisters have, corrected and returned lessons to families. They have answered letters, encouraged, affirmed, sympathized and rejoiced with the respondents according to the messages received. In some cases, strong bonds have been formed between sisters and families.

You are likely aware that new members are not at present joining religious communities.

This is true of our own community. We do not expect this situation to improve immediately. It is, therefore, primarily due to lack of Sisters that we, with much regret, are forced to withdraw from this work. It is time now, we think, to hand on this work to the Religious Education Department of the Archdiocese. This letter, therefore, is an advance notice to you about this change.

We ask you to please be faithful to your Theme-due dates and to see that the final Theme 20 is returned to us by May 31. We shall advise you in good time as to the registration procedure for fall, 1991, by the Archdiocesan Religious Education Department.

We shall be here at 2220 Cameron St. Regina, to welcome at any time, any of you who want to drop by for a chat, a visit and a coffee. We shall keep you and your family in our prayers, our thoughts and our fond memories. You have been an inspiration to us. We shall miss those many delightful notes from you and your children.

May God bless you always,

As of June 30, 1991, we Sisters will no longer be sending out the Home Program.

I hasten to add that the Correspondence School of Religion will be continued by an efficient staff at the Department of Religious Education of the Archdiocese of Regina. For those of you who will be continuing the courses, please contact this department at the following address:

Mr. Bill Blanch
Department of Religious Education
445 Broad Street North
Regina, Saskatchewan

In the meantime, we shall pray that when the time comes for the transfer, the Holy Spirit will inspire some generous persons, particularly correspondence graduates to lend a hand to assist Mr. Bill Blanch if and when he calls for help.

Sincerely yours.
Sister Mary Corke, SOS
Principal

On February 15, Sr. Corke sent a courtesy letter to Bishop W.E. Doyle, former Episcopal President of NORE, about the transfer. Archbishop Doyle replied:

Dear Sister Mary Corke:

Thank you for your interesting letter of February 15th. I am pleased to have the update on the Correspondence School. No matter what happens now or in the future, the Sisters of Service and the Correspondence School have merited the highest reputation for what has been done over the past 60 years.

It was an initiative that was heaven-sent for the years of depression and war which made it possible for families to give their children religious education when radio, T.V. and other media were not available.

It developed according to the times and opportunities e.g. closing Edmonton when roads improved so that Parish Schools of Religion could be organized and "Sister" manpower declined; changing catechisms as new ways of presenting religious truths were formulated; joining with NORE to avoid competition; working through NORE; opening in Newfoundland etc.

Now in the Age of Computers it is up to the Church to take over. Regina has the ability in its Diocesan Centre and personnel to computerize the program - a service similar to what has been done in the liturgy (of the booklet for lay Presiders). Or NORE should do it for the National Scene. They have the connections for distribution and marketing for all types of catechisms.

Congratulations to the Sisters of Service. Your ministry in the Correspondence School will be forever one of the great benefits you have given to the Canadian Church just like the "Port Work" and the "Girls' Residences".

May the Holy Spirit fill your hearts with joy and peace, and give you His courage and fortitude. With thanks, prayers and love.

Emmett Doyle

Edmonton

On June 27, 1991, the Feast of our Mother of Perpetual Help and the patronal feast of the Sisters of Service; Archbishop Halpin celebrated the Eucharist in the Sisters' chapel assisted by Monsignor Hogan, Vicar General and former Director of Religious Education and Fr. Joseph Balzer, chancellor of the archdiocese. The archbishop thanked the Sisters for 51 years of devoted service in catechetics, especially to the rural families of the archdiocese and to the thousands of children in other areas beyond the boundaries of the archdiocese. He added that it was a source of joy to him that the correspondence apostolate would be continued at the Regina archdiocesan pastoral office. He gave his blessing to Bill Blanch and his staff for directing the Home Program, beginning in September 1991.

At this special ceremony were Srs. Corke, principal; Mary Roberts, Superior; Bernice Anstett, Clare Gilmore, Helen Hayes, Celestine Reinhardt, and invited guests of Luis and Priscilla Mogentale. Luis, former student of the Sisters at Sinnett, Saskatchewan, took photos and made a video of the ceremonies for future history. Besides Bill Blanch, Regina archdiocesan staff were represented by Maurice Rieder, business manager; Sr. Florence Kelly, director of pastoral services; Teresa Whalen and Bonnie Thiele.

In handing the texts of *Born of the Spirit* series copies of the student courses, Sr. Corke as principal symbolically transferred the Home Program to Bill Blanch and his staff.

In Holy Rosary cathedral on September 14, 1991, Rector Fr. John Weckend celebrated a thanksgiving mass in honour of the Sisters of Service and their correspondence apostolate during the past 57 years. The CWL presented a corsage to each Sister and hosted a brunch in the cathedral auditorium. By request, the Sisters recalled some interesting historical events of the past. CWL president Kay Klotz presented a scroll of recognition and an engraved Holy Rosary Cathedral lapel pin to each Sister.

Tributes at Banff Conference

At the Western Conference of Catholic Religious Educators at Banff in November 1991, the Sisters of Service were honoured for their significant contribution to Catholic religious education in Western Canada. Sr. Rose-Marie Goguely, SSA, and conference president, introduced Srs. Corke, Barton, Helen Hayes, Mary Jackson and Kelly, who had served in three areas as director of the Daly Centre, director of Regina pastoral services and as a directors of the religious program at NORE. Sr. Mary Jackson was recognized as the only woman among the founding group of clergy who had pioneered the first meeting of the Western Catholic Conference of Religious Education in 1964. A slide presentation followed of some highlights of correspondence activities at Regina, a plaque of recognition and a letter of appreciation from Fr. Martin Jeffery.

The plaque was inscribed: "With gratitude to the Sisters of Service for your many years of living the motto WE HAVE COME TO SERVE in your ministry to our Western Church, the Church of Canada, through the development of THE HOME PROGRAM."

Bernadette Tourangeau, Director of NORE, read a letter from the Episcopal Commission of the

CCCB, signed by Bishop Peter Sutton, OMI, and presented to Sr. Corke with an engraved silver tray inscribed: "In Recognition Of And Gratitude To The Sisters Of Service For Your Dedicated Service To THE PEOPLE OF GOD The Episcopal Commission and NORE"

Dated on November 12, 1991, Archbishop Sutton wrote:

To our Dear Sisters of Service:

Words are not hard to come by on this occasion. Unfortunately there is just too little time to say everything we want to say.

Do please associate the members of the Episcopal Commission for Religious Education of the CCCB with the song that will be sung or has been sung in your honour!

On behalf of Bishop Fred Henry, our Chair of the Bishops' Commission, I want to express admiration, appreciation and deep gratitude.

We admire your vision, your tenacity and yes, your success. We appreciate the years you have given so generously to the thousands of young Canadians from coast to coast and indeed to the many beyond our borders. We are grateful for what you have done and continue to do through those whom you have formed through the Home Program.

At another time - even if the well-worn story is apocryphal - while builders and artisans claimed to be cutting stone; shaping rafters or designing stained glass windows - one ordinary, honest and faith-filled worker claimed mightily that he "was building a cathedral!"

You have done just that - you have had a faithful hand in building the Church in Canada. Thanks for the vision!

Yours sincerely,
Archbishop Peter A Sutton, O.M.I

With gratitude, the Sisters accepted the tributes on behalf of more than 120 Sisters of Service who worked for religious education in Canada and North Dakota.

On December 20, 1991, Sr. Corke received a letter of appreciation from Fr. Martin Jeffery, who as co-Director of NORE in 1966, suggested that correspondence courses be "tuned into" the *Canadian Catechism* through NORE, and directed this achievement.

Dear Sister Mary Corke:

I received your letter of November 26th with joy and thanks. It was a reminiscence of past days of joy and appreciation.

I would have dearly loved to have been in Banff for your meeting. I have enormous respect for the Sisters of Service and the extraordinary work your congregation has performed - often in very humble and hidden circumstances. It was such a privilege to be able to send a brief word to your meeting.

I will keep all of you in my memory and my prayers as you embark on new directions of ministry. May God give grace and light to all of you in his service.

Sincerely,
Martin Jeffery

Aftermath

The Home Program continued. In 1996, the number of catechists had decreased to 800. Instead of deanery coordinators, Bill Blanch supervised the parish catechists, the volunteer correctors of the Home Program. With his staff, Blanch conducted workshops at larger centres to catechists of the parish schools of religion. The catechists also came to the pastoral resource centre in Regina to borrow classroom aids from a large selection of books, charts, pictures, tapes and videos.

In 2003, the Sisters of Service closed their mission in Regina.

NORTH DAKOTA**1939 - 1969****FARGO
GRAND FORKS****1939 - 1966
1966 - 1969**

INTRODUCTION TO NORTH DAKOTA

On March 2, 1937, Fr. Daly received a letter from Fr. William T. Mulloy, president of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference and director of CCD in the Diocese of Fargo, North Dakota:

My dear Fr. Daly:

While I am a perfect stranger to you; nevertheless, we share the priesthood of Jesus Christ in common. I am very well acquainted with many of the Redemptorists in East Kildonan. I, therefore, feel that I am not a complete stranger to you and to the work that you have done through the agency of the Sisters of Service.

It is precisely interest in the work of the latter which prompts me to write to you asking if I may have any literature which you may have published thus far on this community. I have no misgivings in doing so, especially because His Excellency, the Most Reverend Aloysius J. Muench D.D., Bishop of Fargo, has asked me to prepare a file on the work of these Sisters.

I have had the pleasure of meeting some of these Sisters actually engaged in work in the middle West. They have deeply impressed me as an agency for good, not only in our cities, but likewise in our rural areas. I cannot recall the names of the Sisters whom I met, but I assure you their spirit and their zeal has left a lasting impression on me.

The caption at the top of this page will indicate to you a more than passing interest on my part in Rural America. It is for this reason that we feel there is a place in our rural dioceses for this community. Not only do we need them for the religious instruction work, but also for service in the field of rural charity. I know that Bishop Muench would appreciate very much if you would forward to me any and all literature that you may have on their foundation, their training, their work, etc.

I wonder if you think it wise to experiment in my own parish with these Sisters? I would, of course, seek your advice on this in order to be fair both to you as their founder, to the Sisters, and to members of my own parish.

There is so much of the sameness about this section of the United States and Canada that the Sisters would find themselves very much at home in North Dakota. Hence, we need not look for any difficulty on that score.

I would be interested in knowing just what arrangements could be made for an experiment of this kind. I would like to know, for example, what stipend the Sisters would expect, what provision would have to be made for a place of residence, and any other information of a practical value that you think might be helpful.

If this experiment proved successful here, I feel that we could give some prominence to this community of yours by our National Catholic Rural Life Conference, sort of fostering their development in these parts. I would like to hear from you at your earliest convenience, and with kindest personal regards.

Fr. Daly promptly replied on March 4, 1937:

Very Reverend and dear Father Mulloy:

I received yesterday by Air Mail your letter of March 2nd. I was very interested in its contents. I can assure you that I will do my very best to cooperate with you inasmuch as it is possible. I have been waiting for a sign from Divine Providence to start a foundation in the U.S.A. In your country, conditions are much the same as conditions in the rural districts of Western Canada. It may take a little time to bring our plans to maturity, but on my next trip

West in the early summer, I will go to see you and we can talk matters over. In the meantime, we will pray to know God's Holy Will.

Under separate cover, I am sending you all the available literature on our work, and I have placed your name on our mailing list, so that you will receive our little quarterly bulletin, *The Field at Home*.

You ask in your letter what stipend we would expect. To be very frank with you, all we would ask would be a "living". We will go into details when we meet. I think I had the pleasure of meeting your Bishop when he was head of the seminary in Milwaukee some years ago. As to your Catholic Rural Life Conference, I am acquainted with it as at the invitation of Bishop O'Hara - who was then Father O'Hara of Great Falls, Montana - I once spoke at a Convention there a few years ago.

I wish to express my gratitude for the great opportunity you are giving us. We shall do our utmost to meet it. In the meantime, I remain,

The following month on April 20, 1937, Fr. Daly received the following telegram from Fr. Mulloy :
BISHOP MUENCH WOULD LIKE TO HAVE TWO SISTERS OF SERVICE FROM WINNIPEG AT GRAFTON MONDAY APRIL TWENTY-SIXTH FOR OUR CATECHETICAL MEETING WOULD APPRECIATE VERY MUCH THEIR COMING WIRE MY EXPENSE REPLY

On the following day, April 21, 1937, Fr. Daly answered with a telegram stating:
TWO SISTERS OF SERVICE WILL BE AT GRAFTON MEETING NEXT MONTH.

On the same day, Sr. Madge Barton, the superior of the Regina correspondence school, received a telegram with instructions: **BISHOP OF FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA, DESIRES PRESENCE OF TWO SISTERS OF SERVICE AT CATECHETICAL MEETING IN GRAFTON, NORTH DAKOTA, APRIL 26. YOU WILL GO TO THIS MEETING AND TAKE WITH YOU FROM WINNIPEG SISTER LEONA TRAUTMAN. AFTER MEETING, YOU MAY RETURN TO REGINA OR PROCEED DIRECTLY TO TORONTO, WHICHEVER YOU DECIDE BEST. BE IN WINNIPEG IN WINNIPEG SATURDAY NIGHT. AM WRITING TO SISTER CHARTRAND.**

On April 21, Fr. Daly also to Sr. Eva Chartrand, superior of the Winnipeg mission:

Dear Sr. Superior:

Enclosed you will find a copy of a wire I have just sent to Sr. Barton. This catechetical meeting at Grafton is important and I would like Sr. Trautman to go with Sr. Barton to this meeting. It is only for a day so this should not disturb in any way your mission.

On reception of my letter, you may get in touch with Fr. O'Donnell to see if it would be possible for himself or Fr. McCullough to drive the Sisters to Grafton. If not, please make arrangements for the Sisters to go on Sunday so as to be there for Monday, or if the train leaves early enough on Monday, they could take the early morning train. Fr. O'Donnell can advise you on this matter.

I place great importance meeting, as it will probably be the opening wedge for a foundation of our Sisters later on in North Dakota. Moreover, Reverend Fr. Mulloy, the pastor, is the President of the Catholic Rural Conference of the United States. I know you will do your best to cooperate with me in this important matter. You will tell Sr. Barton that she will likely be called upon to speak; her speech given to the C.W.L. National Convention last year will serve the purpose.

Srs. Barton and Trautman went to Grafton by train on April 25, 1937 and en route had a pleasant visit with Bartholomew Murphy, the father of Sr. Margaret Murphy, SOS and a Canadian Customs officer.

At the catechetical meeting, the Sisters met Bishop Muench, Fr. Mulloy and other priests. After Sr. Barton spoke of the correspondence work, Bishop Muench and pastors expressed their desire for the Sisters to come to the Fargo Diocese. Following the meeting, the Sisters returned to Winnipeg and Sr. Barton, a member of the first Chapter, continued east to Toronto for the meeting in early May.

On December 18, 1937, Bishop Muench wrote Fr. Daly that he and Fr. Mulloy plan to be in Toronto in early January and wished to arrange a meeting. Upon receiving Fr. Daly's reply, Bishop Muench and Fr. Mulloy visited the Motherhouse on January 5th, 1938. The next day, Fr. Daly sent Bishop Muench two of his books saying: "I thought they would be of interest to you and you will see by reading particularly *Catholic Problems in Western Canada* what prompted the foundation of the Sisters of Service. I presume that the conditions I outline there - with some exceptions - are practically the same that prevail throughout your State." he added. "We enjoyed immensely your visit and I hope that with time it will prove beneficial and fruitful both to the Sisters of Service and to your Diocese."

On January 13, 1938, Fr. Daly received a letter from Bishop Muench that Fr. Mulloy had met the newly-elected Sister General Margaret Guest in Winnipeg who promised "to do all that she possibly could to assist us in the project which we discussed in Toronto." The Bishop added that he hoped to get a letter to Toronto Archbishop McGuigan that week.

On January 21, 1938, Fr. Daly received a letter from Bishop Muench, enclosing a copy of his letter to Archbishop James McGuigan:

Your Grace:

When Father Mulloy and I visited Toronto at the beginning of this month, we were sorry to learn that the serious illness of your Mother had brought you a hurried call to be at her bedside. I hope that she is better after her recent siege of illness.

The purpose of our trip to Toronto was to get Fr. Daly's advice on a project about which we had been dreaming for some time. The idea of it came when last spring at a sectional meeting of our Diocesan Rural Life Bureau held at Grafton, I met two of your Sisters of Service. I was deeply impressed by their work. The Sisters of Service work under climatic conditions and rural circumstances in Canada much similar to those in our Diocese.

This spring we shall hold six rural gatherings at six different points in the Diocese. We should like to have two Sisters of Service to come to the Fargo Diocese and explain their work at *these gatherings*. *The purpose is to arouse vocations among young women who would be attracted* to this work and who have the qualifications for it. We should like to send them to Toronto for their training and then have them return to our Diocese for work here. It would mean setting up a foundation in the States.

May we have your approval for this project? Fr. Daly with whom we discussed this project at great length can give you further details of our conversation.

We are not asking for financial assistance, nor for personnel except to get the work started. As planned, the foundation here would be autonomous in its administration, personnel and finances, but nevertheless affiliated with the General Motherhouse in Toronto. The arrangement would be similar to what some of the large existing orders have.

Fr. Daly and the Sisters to whom we presented our plan are willing to help us. Of course, everything will depend under God's blessing, on whether we can find the right kind of subjects for this work. We are earnestly praying that it may be so, for there is a great mission field in the Dakotas. Commending myself to your prayers and wishing you God's blessing.

On January 21, complying with Bishop Muench's request, Fr. Daly sent the following explanatory

letter to Archbishop McGuigan:

My dear Archbishop:

I do not think our Sister General, [Sr. Margaret Guest] had occasion to see you, re. Bishop Muench's plans. I would like you to see her. As I said to you, I wish to keep in the background. But looking to the future development of the SOS, I think we have in Bishop Muench's offer an opportunity we should not neglect. I know Sr. General will plead against the proposal ... at least for this year. But with a little sacrifice, we should be able to accept. It is up to you to tell her that it is your wish ... and I am sure all will be well. I am confident you see my viewpoint in the matter. With your blessing, I remain,

The archbishop replied to Bishop Muench on January 26, 1938:

My dear Bishop Muench:

I regret very much that I was not at home to see you recently when you called at Toronto. I sincerely trust that you will return the visit and that I may have the great pleasure of having you as my guest.

I will be very glad to co-operate with you in any and every way in regard to the Sisters of Service. Whatever arrangement you make with Fr. Daly will have my approval and anything further I can do to make things easier for you, I shall be very happy to do.

On January 27, 1938, Fr. Daly acknowledged Bishop Muench's letter assuring him that all points were well covered and said that as soon as he had seen Archbishop McGuigan, he would write Bishop Muench. On March 3, 1938, Fr. Mulloy wrote Sr. Guest from Grafton:

Venerable dear Sister:

We are making final plans here in the Diocese of Fargo for the Sectional Meetings to be held throughout the Diocese in the month of May. The exact dates of these meetings are from May 9 to 17. There are six in number and are held at points of vantage throughout the Diocese.

During the visit which Bishop Muench and I made to Toronto in January, the matter of having yourself and companion come to our Diocese for these meetings was discussed at some length. When I had the privilege of an interview with you in Winnipeg later that same month, we discussed the matter at some length. This letter will simply serve as a confirmation of that arrangement, and to further convey the desire of Bishop Muench to have you present for these meetings.

More and more it becomes increasingly important for us to have Sisters of Service in the Diocese of Fargo and for this reason much can be accomplished by your appearance at these meetings.

May I, therefore, ask for an answer to this letter so that we can begin the necessary publicity for our meetings? I would appreciate very much a picture of yourself and companion which we could use in our own Confraternity paper along with the other persons who will appear on our program.

With kindest personal regards, I ask the privilege of remaining,

Sr. Guest answered Fr. Mulloy's letter on March 12, 1938: "We shall be very pleased, Father, to attend the Sectional Meetings from May 9 to 17. During our interview in Winnipeg, you mentioned that you would meet us in that city. I wonder if this is still your intention! I know you will let us know in good time whatever the arrangements are. We shall then make our plans accordingly."

Fr. Mulloy wrote Sr. Guest giving her an outline of events on the Fargo meetings on March 21, 1938:

Venerable and dear Sister General:

I am sincerely grateful for your letter of March 12. It is a great satisfaction to know that both yourself and Sr. Magdalen Barton are to be with us in the Diocese of Fargo, May 9 to May 17, 1938.

As arranged when we met in Winnipeg in January, I shall meet you and your companion in Winnipeg. From Winnipeg, we shall be travelling by car.

His Excellency is much pleased that you are to come to our Diocese. I sincerely hope that arrangements can be made for a foundation in North Dakota.

You are to speak at a general session in the morning and again at a youth session in the afternoon. I hope that it will be convenient for you to bring a series of slides and films of your work to illustrate your lecture either at the morning session or at the group meeting in the afternoon.

I am confident that much good will be accomplished in the Diocese for the youth. There are many likeable young women here among our North Dakota girls. I am sure that God will bless some of them with vocations to the Religious Life. Let us pray fervently for that grace. We should have plenty of literature on the Sisters of Service to distribute at our meetings.

This will be of great missionary value.

In April 2, 1938, Fr. Mulloy sent a follow-up letter to Sr. Guest about the diocesan meetings in May:

My dear Sr. Guest:

During the course of this week, I had a conference with His Excellency in Fargo. The major topic of conversation during the conference was, as you can well imagine, the Sisters of Service and their work in the prairie provinces of Canada. His Excellency and myself repeatedly reached the conclusion that there is an absolute need for the Sisters of Service in the Diocese of Fargo.

At his request, therefore, I am again placing our plea before you asking you and your counsellors to please give a most favourable consideration to His Excellency at Fargo.

I have already secured an option on a building adjacent to the priest's house in Grafton as the site of the first foundation of the Sisters of Service in the Diocese of Fargo. Father Vincent J. Ryan, who as Vicar Officialis of our Diocese is also just itching for a few of the Sisters to work in the city of Fargo. I want you to know, Sr. Guest, that we are genuinely sincere in our request.

In this letter, I am going to take the liberty of asking you to send to me a digest of the address that you will give on the Sisters of Service and their work at our sectional meetings, May 9-17, 1938. The reason of my asking this of you, Sister General, is that His Excellency wishes to publish a special edition of our little diocesan monthly Confraternity News for these meetings. It is his wish that these special editions serve as souvenirs of the subjects discussed at the meetings themselves. Hence, we are asking each of our speakers at our morning sessions to send us a six-hundred word summary of the matter which they will cover in their addresses or papers at the morning sessions.

According to arrangements already made, I will meet you in Winnipeg on Saturday, May 7, and that I assure you will be a very happy day for me because I know it will mark the beginning of your activities in the Diocese of Fargo. May I take the liberty of again suggesting that you bring with you films and slides as well as a great deal of literature of any and all types of your work which you may have available. We will have ample accommodations for you as well as plenty of space to display all the literature which you may bring.

On April 11th, 1938, Sr. Guest replied to this request:

Reverend and dear Father Mulloy:

Your very kind letter received last week made me more eager than ever to attend the Sectional Meetings in May, and I must confess to my hope of seeing the Sisters of Service permanently in the Fargo Diocese.

Naturally, it gives us much joy to know that His Excellency, the Bishop of Fargo, and yourself feel that our Community could fill a need of Holy Church in that Diocese. Our visit there in a few weeks will provide the opportunity of discussing the matter very thoroughly, and, I trust, very satisfactorily to you and to us.

As you suggested, we shall bring a good supply of literature for distribution and also a film that we have on our work. We shall be at 62 Hargrave Street, Winnipeg, when you call for us on Saturday, May 8th.

A digest of the talk which I shall give at the meetings is enclosed herewith. It exceeds a little the six-hundred words. You are quite free to cut it as you see fit to suit the space allowed.

Tour of the Fargo Diocese

Sr. Guest and Sr. Barton met at the company's residence in Winnipeg on May 6, 1938. On the next day, Fr. Mulloy offered mass in the Sisters' chapel and set out with the two Sisters for Grafton early in the afternoon, driving on roads heavy with snow and arriving in time for supper. Fr. Kuehn, the curate at the parish, joined them

In the morning programme of May 8, Sr. Guest spoke about the missionary work of the Sisters of Service. In the afternoon, she led the discussion of the girls section of the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO). On the late afternoon, the Sisters set out with Fr. Kuehn for Grand Forks, a distance of 45 miles and stayed overnight with the Sisters of St. Joseph. Arriving in Hillsboro, the Sisters joined a large congregation at a mass celebrated by Bishop Muench. At this church as well as at all those visited on this CCD tour, bright yellow papal flags mingled with the stars and stripes, giving a festive air to the proceedings.

Welcomed by the mayor and introduced by Bishop Muench, Sr. Guest addressed the congregation, relating stories of her own teaching and visiting experiences. The Sisters distributed the community's literature. Other speakers followed, outlining diocesan plans to implement CCD activities for children, youth and adults. In the afternoon at the Knights of Pythias Hall, Sr. Guest described Sisters' work, using colourful slides to illustrate her talk. Judging from the many questions asked by the audience, interest was keen. The Sisters wrote the names of interested persons who wished to subscribe to the Sisters' magazine, *The Field at Home*. After benediction and supper, they returned to Grafton for the night.

On May 10, 1938, the Sisters were free until after supper. This enabled Sr. Guest to prepare her next talk and Sr. Barton to check the equipment to show films. The Sisters took time to make the stations of the cross and say the rosary. After supper, they drove 75 miles to Langdon and were followed by a trailer filled with equipment, posters and a variety of books to promote Book Week. They stayed overnight with the Irish Presentation Sisters. The following morning on May 11 after mass in St. Alphonsus Church, Langdon, the Sisters went to a spacious auditorium, where 900 persons had gathered. The Sisters met the Sisters of Mercy of Devil's Lake. The morning and afternoon programme was similar to the first meeting. After supper that evening, the Sisters and all connected with the diocesan program arrived in Willow City, a distance of 135 miles. They stayed overnight with the French Presentation Sisters, retiring at midnight.

On May 12, the Sisters attended 7 a.m. mass. Another full day of activities took place in the city auditorium. After supper, the whole entourage set out for the state capitol of Bismarck, a distance of

185 miles distant, where the Sisters stayed with the Benedictine Sisters at their large five-storey hospital, retiring again at midnight. The following day, the Sisters toured the state capitol building before travelling to a sectional meeting at Napoleon, a distance of 75 miles. The itinerary of this tour of the Diocese of Fargo included Mandan, Edgely, Ellendale, Valley City, Fargo, Wahpeton, Crookston. From May 8 to May 17, the Sisters had travelled 1,700 miles, visited 10 locations and met/stayed with women religious congregations of the Irish and French Presentations, Benedictines, Franciscans, St. Joseph's and the Sisters of Mercy. They also met many of the 135 priests stationed in some of the 102 parishes, which served 86 missions of the Fargo Diocese. Wherever they went, the Sisters were warmly welcomed by clergy, Sisters and laity, returning to Winnipeg on May 19.

Knowing that all the Sisters were eager to hear news of her trip across the border, Sr. Guest sent a circular letter to each house on June 5, 1938:

After a month's absence from the Motherhouse, I returned home yesterday.

It was at the special request of His Excellency, Bishop Muench of Fargo and Fr. Mulloy, pastor of the Cathedral of Fargo and Past President of the Rural Life Conference, that Sr. Barton and I attended the Convention of the Rural Life Conference.

The meetings were held at six widely-separated points in the Diocese - Hillsboro, Langdon, Willow City, Napoleon, Valley City and Wahpeton. I enclose a copy of the daily programme which was the same in each place.

The meetings were well attended with clergy representing the entire diocese, also religious of various congregations. About 4,000 registered; a number of others did not register. There was great interest at the afternoon meetings when we showed the SOS film to the C.Y.O. for girls. Priests, nuns and other adults also attended. The young people of the Diocese showed great interest in our work. We received a kindly welcome at each place. At each meeting, the Bishop spoke highly of our work and told about his visit to our Motherhouse last January and of his impressions. We made the entire trip of about 1,700 miles by car.

I ask your prayers that we do God's Will in the matter of one day opening a foundation in the diocese of Fargo. Like Fr. Coughlan, I believe that "to begin our work in the United States under Bishop Muench would be under the most auspicious conditions." The Bishop is, as Father says, "a man of vision and action and would be an ideal promoter and protector of the Sisters of Service." Archbishop McGuigan, who, as you know, is our Ecclesiastical Superior, has asked us to comply as soon as possible with the request of Bishop Muench.

While in the West, I visited our houses in Winnipeg, Regina and Camp Morton. The work in all our missions is growing rapidly. The requests for work in the rural districts for the summer months are so numerous that we cannot supply the necessary Sisters. This should be to all of us a great joy, for it surely is a sign that our Community supplies a great need in the Church. It is also very pleasing to us that in nearly every place that our Sisters work for the summer, the priest in charge of the district requests Sisters of Service for the next year.

I ask each Sister who goes out to teach during the summer to be very exact about filling out our special summer school form. In this way there will be no delay in making the combined Report to the Motherhouse early in the fall. We found the report most useful to us during the past year.

Sr. Guest's letter to Father Mulloy on June 17, 1938 indicated an interest in a mission in Fargo:

Reverend and dear Fr. Mulloy:

Please do not think me ungrateful for not sending before now a note of thanks for the good care you took of Sr. Barton and myself during our memorable visit to the Diocese of Fargo. The fact is, I am back in Toronto only a few days and this is the first opportunity I have of

doing so.

I shall always feel that I was specially privileged to have such a splendid opportunity of viewing at close range the Field of Catholic Action in that particular part of the United States. I have returned to my work with a wider vision of future possibilities for the SOS, and I know I speak for Sr. Barton also.

Yesterday, I went to the Novitiate and gave the novices a detailed account of the Sectional Meetings, etc. They were most interested. I think when I had finished, they all would have been ready for work across the International Border.

Before returning to Toronto, I visited Regina, Winnipeg and Camp Morton Houses, as planned. They were busy days as there was much to arrange for in connection with the summer work in rural districts. The schedule is completed now. I guess in some instances we have robbed Peter to pay Paul, but it does the Sisters so much good to get out into the country for at least a few weeks.

By now, you have taken up residence in Fargo. I did not forget you on Pentecost Sunday as I believe that was the day you were dutifully installed. May God grant you many years of fruitful service as Rector of St. Mary's Cathedral.

I have not seen our Archbishop since my return and hardly think I shall until after the Congress in Quebec. ... No day passes without my spending some time in thinking of a way in which we could, even this year, accede to Bishop Muench's request for Sisters of Service. I am very sincere when I tell you I shall do everything I possibly can to bring it about.

Once again, I thank you, Fr. Mulloy, for your kindness to us and for making the trip to Fargo so very enjoyable.

On June 27, 1938, Bishop Muench in Fargo wrote to Sr. Guest:

Dear Sr. Guest:

I am pleased to have your message of congratulations on my sacerdotal silver jubilee. I am especially grateful to you and the Sisters for the prayers given me as a jubilee gift.

I take this opportunity to express to you my deep gratitude for coming into our Diocese at the time of our Sectional Meetings. I am confident that the seed which has been sown will bear its fruit under the warming protection of Divine Providence.

Kindly extend my most cordial greetings to the Sisters and assure them that I shall keep their work in mind in my prayers at the altar.

In a letter to Sr. Guest on July 15, 1938, Fr. Mulloy wrote:

My dear Sister General:

I was very much pleased with your letter of June 17. You know, of course, that the paragraph that contained even the slightest ray of hope that the Diocese of Fargo might even be blessed this fall with the Sisters of Service, was to my mind the best paragraph that you have written in all the years of your religious life.

I want you to know that Bishop Muench, our priests, sisters and laity are still most interested in welcoming you and your community to these parts.

Just the other day, His Excellency said to me that we must do all in our power to build up vocations for the Sisters of Service.

In the Cathedral parish, the devotions to our Lady of Perpetual Help have been most successfully carried on for some months. Since coming into the parish, we have laid special stress on the petition for vocations to the religious life. We are hoping that through the continuance of this devotion, more and more of our Catholic girls will volunteer for work in the Sisters of Service.

Thank you for remembering me in your prayers, Mass and Communion on Pentecost Sunday when I was officially installed in St. Mary's Cathedral. Will you please give my

kindest regards to Fr. Daly and to all the Sisters and novices whom it was my privilege to meet.

Commitment made to Bishop Muench

To Bishop Muench, Sr. Guest wrote on July 31, 1938:

Your Excellency:

I regret the delay in writing you, but it is only now that we are in a position to give you a definite answer in regard to the proposed foundation of the Sisters of Service in your Diocese.

As you know, when we were in Fargo, I felt very doubtful as to whether anything could be done this year; however, I can say without hesitation that on my return, nothing was left undone in order to arrange for three Sisters to go to you this fall. For several weeks we were confident this would be possible, but all our plans were defeated.

Owing to recent school regulations, the Department of Education in each of our Prairie Provinces will recognize no teacher's certificate unless she has established a residence of at least one year in the province in which she desires to teach. Because we had no other Sister with a year's residence to replace her, this ruling has made it impossible for us to send the Sister whom we wished to be the Superior of the foundation in Fargo. In making the foundation, we all realize how much depends on the first Sisters, particularly the Superior, and we feel sure our views are in harmony with yours in deciding to send the Sisters whom we think could most successfully begin this work.

Only today was I able to have an interview with our own Archbishop; it is the first time that I have seen him since I returned from your Diocese. I placed everything before him and explained our position. He was disappointed but he thinks we are right in not going until we can send the Sisters whom we think could most successfully begin this important undertaking.

We will make plans to send you Sisters after the close of school next June, and in the meantime we shall recommend this work in a special way to the prayers of the community.

I am sure you will be interested in hearing that we have recently received an application from a young lady in Iowa. It seems that she became interested after reading an article that appeared in the Denver Register telling of our activities around your Diocese last May. We hope this is the beginning of a long line of zealous workers who will one day be devoting themselves to missionary work in the United States under the banner of the SOS.

Asking your blessing on our community and its work,

Bishop Muench was prompt in replying to Sr. Guest on August 6, 1938:

Dear Sr. Guest:

I am very grateful to you for your deep solicitude concerning the spiritual well-being of our Diocese. It is difficult to change the dispositions of powerful modern governments. There were days when living was freer and easier. The controls of government did not lay so heavy a hand on our forebears as do modern government agencies.

While we are disappointed that we cannot begin the foundation of the Sisters of Service this year, we are happy, I assure you, that we may count on your coming next summer. God bless you a thousandfold for your kindness toward us. I am confident that the doing of much good awaits you in our Diocese.

It fills me with much joy that, at least, one young lady may enter the Sisters of Service as a result of your coming to our State last spring. I hope she will qualify for your congregation and mark the beginning of many vocations from the States.

U.S. vocation inspired by Sr. Guest

Marian Haut of Davenport, Iowa, entered the Sisters of Service on September 8, 1938. On her Silver Jubilee in 1963, she wrote in an article for the February 1968 issue of *The Field at Home*:

It was through casually reading *The Denver Register* from the paper rack in my parish church, St. Joseph's, Davenport, Iowa, that I learned about the Sisters of Service.

I had been thinking about entering a convent but "where" was the big question. In the *Denver Register* of June 1938 was one article that caught and held my attention. It was a story about the Sisters of Service relating how Sr. Margaret Guest, then Sr. General, had addressed a number of meetings of the National Life Conference around the Fargo Diocese. Included in her address were details about her Congregation. At the end was a plea for vocations to the SOS and an expressed hope by Bishop Muench that these Sisters would soon establish a house in Fargo.

In the following months, I considered entering many, many congregations, but kept returning to the SOS. Then I wrote for information and eagerly awaited a reply. Right away, I disliked the colour of the habit - grey. This was offset, however, by the knowledge that our Mother of Perpetual Help was Patroness of the Congregation. I had made the Redemptorist Novena Devotions, hence my love for Our Mother of Perpetual Help. Another strong appeal was that the principal apostolate of the SOS was to the "most abandoned souls", as is the Redemptorist apostolate.

Toronto was a long way from Davenport - perhaps not in actual distance, but any place in another country seems a long way from home. After much prayer, I decided that the SOS was the Congregation for me.

How do I feel as an American in a Canadian Congregation? I have learned that to do God's Will in the place He has destined for you can bring only happiness, peace and joy! Fr. Daly often told us "to look at big maps". The ecclesial dimension of his advanced thinking has, I think and hope, influenced the Sisters to whose welfare he devoted so many years of his life. To most of us, I believe, "where" we serve does not matter so much as "how" we serve. The "harvest is great" in every corner of God's world.

Preparations for the mission

On April 6, 1939, Bishop Muench wrote to Sr. Guest:

Dear Sr. Guest:

The months have sped by fast and we are looking forward with great eagerness and, I assure you, with much pleasure to the coming of your Sisters.

Yesterday, I had the opportunity to discuss with Fr. Ryan the nature of the work that you could engage in here in the Diocese of Fargo. In order to give the Sisters a good start, we thought it advisable to locate them here in the city of Fargo, either for social charity work right here in the city or as a centre of missionary activities in the Diocese.

We are keeping in mind, of course, also our objective of gaining vocations for your Sisters of Service. We think that the attainment of this objective will not be so difficult once the Sisters are located here.

I wish to give you every assurance that we shall leave nothing undone to provide for the Sisters and to cooperate with them in their work. The more I think of the great possibilities that lie before us here in the Diocese of Fargo, the more eager I am to have the Sisters here. I am leaving for Rome in about two weeks, and shall not return until the beginning of August. I have, therefore left instructions with Fr. Ryan relative to the coming of your Sisters. I wish you to communicate with him directly. His address is Very Reverend Vincent J. Ryan, 709 10th St. So., Fargo, N.D.

On June 6, 1939, Fr. Mulloy wrote to Sr. Guest about the proposed contract that she had submitted to the Diocese of Fargo:

After closely examining the proposed contract, I feel that the matters discussed when you were in Fargo have been thoroughly covered in your rough draft. The terms are reasonable. In fact, they are the same as a parish and a community of teaching Sisters enact. Certainly there can be no objections.

We are all eagerly awaiting the coming of the Sisters. There is much to do here. Already, our neighboring dioceses are beginning to feel the urge to secure Sisters of Service. The fields are "ripe for the harvest"; there is need of more and more labourers in the "vineyard". With sincerest personal regards, I ask the privilege of remaining

Agreement with the Diocese of Fargo for one year

Under the agreement outlined by Sr. Guest, three Sisters would be assigned to work in the Fargo Diocese. The bishop of Fargo would provide a rented house, which was equipped with a minimum of furniture and would cover the costs of heat, electricity, water and telephone as well as travelling expenses for their work in the diocese. Each Sister would receive \$25 a month.

In view of securing candidates for the community, the work for the first year would involve an awareness campaign of the missionary work of the Sisters in every parish of the diocese. The Sisters would be subject to the direction of the bishop in this work. When in Fargo, the Sisters would undertake parish visiting, dividing their time equally between the parishes of St. Mary's cathedral and St. Anthony.

Encouragement from Fr. Daly

On August 12, 1939, Fr. Daly wrote to the Sisters bound for Fargo:

As you are about to depart for our new foundation, Fargo, I deem it a duty on my part, to send you with my best wishes, a few words of fatherly advice.

I am sure you all realize the importance of this foundation being the first one in the United States. You are the bearers of the SOS standard carrying it into a new country. This is both an honour and a responsibility. The Institute looks upon you as the chosen ones to carry its ideals and its works across the Border. There is a great future for our little Institute in that immense Republic south of us. I am confident that years will prove the success of our venture.

Your duty, above all, is to go there as missionary Sisters, full of that humility and zeal that are the characteristics of your vocation. You are to work among the forgotten ones, and I am confident you will always show yourselves, wherever you go, true Religious, living up to your Rule. For you must remember that as our Institute is somewhat a departure from the beaten track, it is your duty to see that our life and our work are still inspired by the same ideals as those which lie at the foundation of all religious life in the Church.

In all, be very submissive to all directions given to you by ecclesiastical authority. For some time, you will, perhaps, be feeling your way as to what definite work you will be called to do in the Diocese. Take note of all and submit your doubts to Sr. General and her Council. They will always be with you by their direction, their encouragement and their prayers.

You are going into a new country. It is true, a missionary Sister has no country; she belongs to the Church at large. But this ideal does not stifle in our hearts a love for the land of our birth. Yet, for the good of the cause, you will give yourselves wholeheartedly to the country in which you are now to live, adopting its usages, its customs and to a certain extent, its mental outlook. You are not to be considered by the people as strangers; you must become one of them and that for the greater glory of God and salvation of souls. This is

particularly necessary if you are to attract, as you hope, vocations to your Institute. In all your relations with the people, be one of them; common sense, anyhow, will dictate to you this policy.

My heart and my prayers follow you beyond the Boundary, and I leave in your hands that work to which I have dedicated wholeheartedly, and I can say, unselfishly, these last seventeen years of my life. Knowing you, as I do, I know that the work is in good hands.

Once the details for the establishment for a foundation in Fargo were finalized, the process began to obtain documents required by the American Immigration authorities. Since evidence of financial status was essential, Bishop Meunch certified that the diocese would provide full maintenance during the stay of the Sisters in North Dakota. Furthermore, the bishop had submitted information on the financial status of his diocese while the Sisters provided a statement of the financial standing of their Institute. Once these documents satisfied the immigration authorities that the Sisters would not become "public charges" of the state, visas were issued.

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FARGO MISSION BEGINS, 1939

On Monday, August 21, three Sisters of Service arrived in Fargo from Winnipeg to open the first foundation in the United States. Under the headline of FARGO WELCOMES SISTERS OF SERVICE, an article was published in the *Fargo News*:

At the invitation of Bishop Muench of Fargo, North Dakota, Sisters Domitilla Morrison, Superior; Edith Wayland and Mary O'Kane arrived in Fargo, Monday, August 21, 1939, to establish the first foundation of the Sisters of Service in the United States. Warmly welcomed them. An article in the *Fargo News* commented on this event as follows:

... For the present, the Sisters will reside in Fargo. Their work will take them, however, into every quarter, of the Diocese. During the month of September, they will attend the Catholic Action Meetings in the Diocese where they will meet with many women and girls and give an account of the work which their community has done in Eastern and Western Canada. These meetings will give the Sisters a first-hand look at the Diocese. Priests, Religious and Laity will be happy to welcome them and North Dakota's hospitality will measure up in every way to the opportunity.

For the present, at least, they will reside in Fargo. Their work will take them, however, into every quarter of the Diocese. During the month of September, they will attend the Catholic Action meetings in the Diocese where they will meet with many women and girls and give an account of the work their community has done in eastern and western parts of Canada. These meetings will give them a first-hand look at the Diocese.

The day following their arrival in Fargo, Sr. Morrison wrote to Sr. Guest:

Fr. Mulloy said he was sending you a telegram last evening, so we thought we had better look around before writing.

We had no difficulty at all crossing the border. The officials did not even look at our baggage. We left Winnipeg at 9.30 a.m., had dinner at Grand Forks with Father at 2.30 p.m. and reached the Academy at Fargo 4.30 p.m. We had expected to find the Bishop here just before the investiture. As we reached the door, we saw His Excellency drive up in another car. Like a schoolboy, he was out of his car and at the door of ours in a jiffy. He said it was a great day for Fargo and reminded us it was the feast of St. Jane Frances de Chantel. He also said he had offered Mass for us that morning. We saw priests coming from all directions all smiling a welcome to us as they headed for their retreat at the Academy.

It seems that we are to stay at the Academy pro tem - rather disappointing - but with heaps of prayers, I think we shall be all right. Please write soon and tell us what you think about our "parking" here. But if this is the worst, well, we will manage. The Sisters are very kind and we feel as much at home as it is possible under the circumstances. Do make up your mind to come to visit us soon.

Sr. Morrison took to heart Fr. Daly's advice, to submit your doubts and difficulties to Sr. General and her Council, and keep them informed on how things were going. From August 20 to the end of December, Sr. Morrison wrote a series of lengthy letters to Sr. General. These letters reveal very poignantly the Sisters' reactions, and the whole gamut of their emotions as they tried to adjust to a new life and to wrestle with an indefiniteness that both bewildered and challenged them. The first weeks and months at a new mission are vital and often forecast the future direction that a new enterprise will take. In a letter on October 20, 1939, Sr. Morrison outlined the situation to Sr. General Guest:

Reverend and dear Sr. General:

I am going to crowd as much as possible on each page. I hope it does not affect your eyesight, but you know I do hate to have my letters overweight. This week has seemed as long as three months and we were wondering why no one was writing us; we were, therefore, specially delighted to receive your letter yesterday. There are so many things to say that I scarcely know where to begin. Here is the most important. You must make up your mind to come for the Jubilee. We need you! Because things are still so unsettled, I am glad you did not come down with us. By October 3, the date of the Jubilee of this Diocese, we shall be in our own home - such as it is going to be and we are piling up things for discussion. Fr. Mulloy thinks you should be here and so do we.

Now to give you an idea of our activities. Sr. O'Kane says there is only one thing that she is sure of and that is that we cannot stand this "mad pace". And I think she is right. There is much work to be done and evidently we are not going to get much direction as to details. Everything is being "left in our hands", but we are going about it a bit warily. In fact, we are sitting on "a piece of elastic with a hand pulling on each end." You understand, I know. The priests are friendly and very kind. I think I told you that on Tuesday morning after our arrival, the clergy being on retreat, Fr. Micheloski, a newly-ordained who was left in charge of St. Anthony's, came over to say that Fr. Ryan expects us to begin immediately and made arrangements for us to meet the Legion of Mary. We did so that evening at the rectory. They gave us a list of names of the parishioners and also a list of names of children attending public schools. Msgr. Ryan wished us to contact these children before the opening of school.

The next day, Wednesday, we sallied forth, Sr. O'Kane and I together and Sr. Wayland, alone. On Thursday, Sr. O'Kane had mustered more courage so we each struck out alone. As I was returning home about 5.10 p.m., I saw Fr. Micheloski standing on the hospital steps. "Sister", he said, "I've been trying to get you all afternoon. Fr. Mulloy hasn't stopped phoning since 2.30." They wanted us to go to the Academy to meet all the priests. Sr. O'Kane was home and in a few seconds, Sr. Wayland appeared so we set out immediately with Father. When we arrived, we were introduced to the 115 priests who were all very kind. Most of them shook hands, but some just bowed. We had supper at the Academy. Then Fr. Micheloski took us to St. Anthony's Rectory to confer with Msgr. Ryan and Fr. Mulloy.

They wanted to know how we were going to divide our time between the parishes etc. We tried to avoid making a decision and I was left undecided - both were very generous in regard to our working in the other's territory etc. etc. You understand, I am sure. They both offered their cars any time we wished to have them. That evening, several of Fr. Mulloy's girls called to see us. They said they were going to see to it that our permanent residence would be in the north end, that is, in St. Anthony's Parish.

All this time, our chief worry was the talks we had to give at the Catholic Action Meetings. Next morning, speaking to Fr. Mulloy on the telephone, I asked him a few questions about it - who would be there, what was expected of us, etc. Well, he would just drop over to the Hospital and we would discuss the thing thoroughly. He did drop over with Frs. Mehok and Hendrickson but forgot all about the Catholic Action Meetings. Fr. Mulloy again offered his car and being rather apprehensive about driving Msgr. Ryan's limousine, I accepted.

Frs. Mehok and Hendrickson took us down to the Court House where we obtained our driver's licences. Fr. Mulloy offered to pay for them, 60 cents each, but Fr. Hendrickson would not hear of it. Fr. M. also asked me if we needed any spending money and to be sure to let him know when we did. We took the car and visited some homes farther west. We then returned to the Cathedral and Fr. Mulloy drove us home. As we were working in Msgr. Ryan's parish, I thought we should try using his car. Having had some experience, therefore, with Fr. Mulloy's Plymouth, I phoned St. Anthony's that evening to ask if we might use the limousine next day.

After supper or rather after 9.00 p.m. when we were getting ready for bed, Msgr Ryan, himself, came over with another priest from the south west corner of the State. He said he would have someone pick us up in the morning. Next morning, James Weilitz, a seminarian called to take us to the rectory. Msgr. Ryan, Director of the Catholic Welfare Bureau, and Fr Pechel joined us and we all went over to the Catholic Welfare Bureau. Here we were introduced to two staff members, Mrs. Murphy and Mrs Weilitz.

Monsignor loaned us his car to go visiting. On our return, he told us we could take his car the next day, Sunday, to visit some special families in the afternoon whom he wished us to contact before school started. Actually, we were counting on a holiday, but promised to go.

After an early Mass on Sunday morning because we had been going at a "good clip", we decided to get a little snooze between 8.00 and 11.00 a.m. I was just nicely settled when the phone rang. Fr. Mulloy would like the Sisters to come to the Cathedral for the 11.00 o'clock Mass.

Out we rolled. Miss Foy called for us. We were ushered in through the sacristy so the congregation could get a good look at us. Father Mulloy preached, introducing us to the congregation; he told them about our work, that we had the same vows and were as truly religious as the other orders in the Church. He requested that his parishioners receive us with courtesy and respect. Miss Foy then brought us back to the hospital and after lunch, Srs. O'Kane and Wayland went out visiting. I stayed home to prepare my "speech". When the Sisters returned, we made out our report for Msgr. Ryan - 54 families visited. Because Monsignor wishes us to work with the Legion of Mary, we gave a copy to Mrs. Hendrickson, Vice President.

Fr. Mulloy had mentioned in his sermon that we were to commence work in his parish [St. Mary's] that week. We planned to phone Msgr. Ryan on Monday morning that we were going to St. Mary's for a few days. Before we had time to do so, Monsignor phoned to say that he and Fr. Mulloy were leaving town for a few days and asked what were our plans. I told him we would like to spend a few days at St. Mary's. "Of course, of course," said he. "You can give as much time as you like to St. Mary's. Just use your own judgment."

Everything is left in our hands. Then I phoned Fr. Mulloy who was leaving, too; he left a list of names for us. We could have the car in the afternoon. Was there anything else we needed? Could he do anything for us? Was there anything worrying us or anything we wished to speak to him about? I told him we would like a little more definite information regarding the Catholic Action Meetings. Well now, he would send Father down and we could discuss this matter before he left town. In a few minutes Fr. Doyle came to bring us to the rectory. Father then gave us information re. the meetings and said we should talk on vocations, show the pictures as you did etc. etc. He said he had been relieved by the Bishop of his work in the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine so that he could devote his time to the SOS and their establishment in the United States.

After dinner, we took the car, as suggested. We went to the Academy to see Sr. Bonaventure re children attending public schools. We then visited some families and returned the car to the rectory. Yesterday morning, when I was speaking to Fr. Mulloy by phone, he said, "And by the way, Sister, will you give a little talk to the Legion on Wednesday night?" Yes, Father, I said in as even a voice as I could muster. So that lies before me for tomorrow night! I am glad I have already met some of the "girls". It won't be too difficult. This will give me courage for September 4. This morning, we walked up to the rectory visiting families along the way. I write this as though it were easy. --- But it was soon over, and we got more courage.

Genevieve, Fr. Mulloy's housekeeper, asked us to call at the rectory for lunch any time we wished rather than return all the way to the hospital. We, therefore, phoned and said we would come for "a bite" and would prefer just to eat by ourselves in the kitchen. Because we arrived a little before noon, we went to the Cathedral to make our Examen; then planned to

enter the rectory by the side door. To our dismay, the two curates were waiting and welcomed us at the door. We said we had arranged with Genevieve to eat in the kitchen. Fr. Mehok would not hear of it. He made Genevieve set places for us at the table and the Fathers waited for us. You can imagine our feelings and our resolve for the morrow! Frs. Mehok and Boyle could not have been kinder. With them was Fr. Norbert, OSB, who is teaching Gregorian Chant in preparation for the Jubilee. The Fathers said they wanted to have us for dinner because they wished to get some information so as to learn our "technique". They seem to feel that we can teach them many things.

Fr. Norbert is having a hard time in trying to get choirs to appreciate Gregorian Chant. He was delighted when he found we could converse intelligently on this subject. Frs. Mehok and Boyle were really surprised that we could discuss how the sol-fa names or scale came about. I was happy that I could relate that the scale was taken from the first note of each verse of a hymn to John the Baptist. Fr. Norbert was so pleased that we proceeded to discuss Gregorian Chant from every angle. ... He knows Fr. Ronan and was impressed to learn of Fr. Ronan's regular courses at our Novitiate. We really enjoyed meeting Father.

Then we took the car and did more visiting. We left the car at the Cathedral at 5.00 p.m. and walked home. With the Bishop, Fr. Mulloy and Msgr. Ryan out of town, we thought we would have a quiet evening. After recreation, Srs. Wayland and O'Kane got into their kimonos and while Sr. W. started to press all our habits, I donned my oldest "wrinkliest" habit and settled down to write you. Then came a knock - enter Mother St. Thomas to say that the Bishop had just returned from Montana and was downstairs waiting to see us. What a scramble to get dressed and be presentable!

Msgr. Dworschak was with the Bishop. Both were very kind. They wanted to know how we were faring, how we were being received etc. The Bishop then told us he wanted us to come with him to the Catholic Action Meetings and it was only from him that we learned that we would not be returning home each night. Of course, we did not show our surprise; in fact, I think our faces showed pleasure at the prospect of going out into a less "civilized" place. He wanted to know if we had any literature and how we would go about distributing it. Like all the other clergy we have met, he said he had no experience in this line at all. It is too late this year, he said, to venture out into the Diocese but he thinks we will find much to keep us going in the city.

He also asked if we ever had lay help in our work. Thought it would be a good idea to get some nurses and teachers to help us - an indirect way to get vocations. To find vocations for us seems to be the prime task. Fr. Hendrickson, he said, was just appointed Superintendent of Education and he was going to have him instruct all school girls in the choice of a vocation by interviewing each one personally.

He also mentioned the possibility of starting a hostel for rural girls working in the city. He asked about you and if you were coming down for the Jubilee. I replied that you were not, as yet, sure but that I was writing to tell you that it was most important that you come and asked if I might add that the Bishop insisted on your coming. "Yes, Yes," and tell her, "We must get those contracts signed." Then he laughed heartily. Knowing nothing of the "contracts", we did not see the joke! He then gave us his blessing. Well, here I am still writing and I have lots more to say, yet.

So far, I have told you everything just as it happened. Now for the miscellaneous: Last week a Bishop from Montana visiting at the Cathedral said he would like to have some SOS. In the presence of Bishop Muench, Fr. Mulloy told him that if he wished to pay our expenses, he could borrow us any time he liked.

Concerning our material needs: The Sisters here are most kind to us. We get enough food at one meal to do us for a whole day. We drive around a lot, so I think we shall be putting on weight. The Sisters do our laundry and have given us an ironing board for our own use. We've had a hard time getting our collars done - there is no Chinese laundry in Fargo -. We

have finally discovered a laundry that will do them so we hope for the best.

Concerning our "spiritual exercises: We have no meditation book, no Saints Book or Maxim Book and no alarm clock. We each have, however, a score of small books - feast day gifts to us. We use our Missals for our Saints Book and as yet still remember the maxim for the month. At present, we are using Fr. Mullaly's *Spiritual Reflections for Sisters* for spiritual reading. The meditation book is our problem. Mass here is at 6.00 a.m. We, therefore, rise at 5.30; the Lord must approve because that is the hour He wakens us each day. We haven't overslept yet. Breakfast is served immediately after Mass - about 6.40.

After breakfast, we return to the chapel to say our own prayers and make our own meditation each keeping her own time. We have to do this because there is always someone in the chapel - hope this is OK. So far, between 7.30 and 8.30 a.m., at a second Mass, we have been saying our Visit and Beads. Dinner is at 11.30 and usually takes one hour so we make our examen at 12.30. We have "spiritual reading" at 12.45 p.m. and recreation at 1.00 p.m.; then we go visiting. We have our "second" dinner which they call "supper" at 5.30 p.m. and recreation at 7.00 p.m.

Concerning the car problem Sr. Wayland is about to get her licence. Sr. O'Kane will have to get one, too. Personally, I prefer to walk, but realize that we cannot cover much territory this way; also the Sisters find walking hard. The first few days the Fathers brought over the car, then drove us home, but we can't expect this every day. Yesterday, when I returned the car, I asked if the Fathers were home; they were not. Mrs. Long, receptionist, suggested driving us and we could hardly refuse. Then we learned that Fr. Mehok had never given her permission to drive that car. The next day when we returned the car, the Fathers were home, but I just returned the keys to the housekeeper and said we would walk - a distance of 20 minutes - not much, but after difficult visiting, one is tired. I suppose we could keep the car down here but parking it on our street is a risk and it might be needed at night! It is hard to know what is best to do.

Dear me, I thought I was finished, but more things come to mind. Fr. Mulloy wants to have our pictures in the Catholic Action News next week. He would like to have something in the next Field at Home about our "American Foundation" and in future he hopes there will be a page devoted to the American Mission". I am mailing you a copy of the Catholic Action News and the Fargo Forum.

We would like a few copies of the latest Field at Home to take with us. We shall return to Fargo after the day at Pembina, September 4; then go out again until the end of September. If you can find time, please drop us a few hints as to how "we go about these things" "our technique" and "method of approach".

In hindsight, I think the best thing we could have done was to get out and start visiting immediately. At the end of the retreat, all the Fathers were surprised that we had begun so soon. Frs. Mulloy and Ryan were bursting with pride while they were holding those priests until we could be located. As we were introduced, each priest made some remark about our being out already or being hard to find. They are all eager to get us into their rural parishes.

Hope this long "epistle" doesn't tire you too much. My fingers are numb. Tomorrow, we are going to stay at home and prepare speeches. Shall be waiting anxiously for your next letter. We hope to be in our new home when you come. When we were speaking to the Fathers at the end of retreat, they all agreed that having our own home was best. They could then see, they said, if we had the true spirit of poverty.

Fr. Mehok has just showed us the altar he is planning for our own home.

During the first months, the Sisters were concerned about not having a definite plan of operation. This concern was often expressed or implied in their letters to Sister General Margaret Guest. In a letter of September 9, Sr. Morrison commented: "On our visas we declared that we were to live in the U.S.A. indefinitely and it certainly is 'indefinite.' On our way to Jamestown, the indefiniteness of

life was forced upon us by hearing the trainman call out, 'The next stop should be Valley City' ". Sr. Morrison reported that they were engaged in a plan of action in St. Anthony's, noting that "the work in St. Mary's was not yet organized. So you see it is going to be a problem to work in both and how to go about it presents another problem. Our tact, or what we possess of it, will have to work in more than one direction!"

While each of the Sisters had come from a mission where all activity was well organized and regulated, each brought experience. Sr. Morrison, a teacher at a rural school in Camp Morton, also helped with the parish activities and teaching catechism in adjacent areas. Sr. O'Kane had gained expertise through appointments in the residences/hostels, especially as superior of the Winnipeg house. Sr. Wayland had been engaged in religious correspondence work in Edmonton and Regina. Although the community's rules permitted great flexibility, the Sisters were accustomed to having a set plan of action.

Impressed with the title of *The Field at Home*, Fr. Mulloy recognized it as very meaningful in an article published in the *Catholic Action News*:

Too often we Catholics think that all missionary fields lie far across the seas. Actually, there is a vast missionary "field" in our own Diocese. If we stop to think about it, all of us can recall some person or family of our own acquaintance whose Faith is weak perhaps because they lived a great distance from a church and had no or little religious instruction. The founders of the Sisters of Service recognized this need and the Institute was founded for the express purpose of bringing religious instruction into the home mission fields.

At the request of Fr. Mulloy, Sr. Morrison outlined the first months in an article published in the January 1940 issue of *The Field at Home*:

... During the month of September, we attended the Diocesan Catholic Action meetings. At each meeting, each of us gave reports on different aspects of the work of our Institute. At all meetings we were edified at the way in which the people responded to the appeal of their Bishop for Catholic Action. At Pembina, the Bishop celebrated a Pontifical High Mass. Here a group of "little angels" escorted the Bishop to and from the altar which was set in the midst of sheaves of wheat. This is a scene we shall not soon forget. At Jamestown, the city was full of young boys and girls, members of the C.Y.O., eager to show that they were doing their part to further Catholic Action.

At New Rockford, zealous parishioners had built an exquisite altar in the city park. On the morning of the Great Day, it rained! The "Age of Miracles" has not yet passed. With a fervent prayer on every lip, the hopeful organizers continued preparations and the crowd assembled. By the time the Bishop started Mass, the sky had cleared, the sun shone forth and the day was a wonderful success.

At Karlsruhe, neither the church nor the hall was large enough to hold the number of people gathered to take part in the celebration. At Devil's Lake, a civic holiday was proclaimed; Catholics and Non-Catholics joined in the celebration. Here, the Pontifical High Mass was offered in the Memorial Building and was attended by all the civic officials. The Boys' band was in attendance marching in the procession. Hankinson was the last centre; the crowds there as everywhere were eager to do their share in the work of Catholic Action.

At one of these meetings, I was touched particularly by the kindness and generosity of a dear old lady who, while walking down the aisle beside us, reached over and pressed some coins into my hand. Later, I found she was Canadian.

October 3, 1939, was the grandest day of all. On that day the Jubilee celebrations of the Diocese of Fargo were brought to a close by a solemn Pontifical High Mass in St. Mary's

Cathedral, Fargo, by His Excellency, Bishop Muench. Archbishops and Bishops from all over the United States and Canada were present. We realize we were fortunate to have been privileged to take part in such a magnificent celebration. Shortly after the celebration, we returned to Devil's Lake - this time to attend a Social Service Conference.

At the close of the series of conferences, we faced, what to us was the most important task of all; namely, moving into our new home. Until this time [two months], we had been well taken care of by the Sisters of St. Joseph. Now, we were to begin housekeeping. When the rented furnished house was selected for our winter residence, we lost no time moving in. We chose the best room for the Master and set up a temporary altar. On October 28, the Feast of Saints Simon and Jude, His Excellency, Bishop Muench assisted by Monsignor Dworschak celebrated Mass in our chapel. Present also were Monsignor Ryan and Father Mulloy. Now the Master is with us always and though our work takes us out for the greater part of the day, we never return to an empty house. At home, awaiting us is our Eucharistic Lord keeping watch over the first little SOS American Mission. Under His guidance and watchful care, we know that all will be well.

Aware of Fr. Daly's keen interest in the Fargo mission, Sr. Morrison wrote to him on October 25:

Reverend and dear Fr. Daly:

I feel sure that Sr. General has kept you posted on our Fargo doings, yet I feel a little guilty for not having written you myself. You will be glad to know that our chapel is almost ready and His Excellency is going to say Mass for us on Saturday, feast of Sts. Simon and Jude. Yesterday afternoon, he visited us to discuss our work. He has been so busy with Meetings, Conventions and Conferences that this is really the first opportunity we have had of speaking with him since our arrival. He is eager to get our work planned for the early spring and thinks it best that we remain in Fargo for the winter where we can do parish visiting and census work with the Legion of Mary.

In spring, he would like us to go out into different parts of the Diocese and visit every home in each district so as to locate the fallen-away Catholics. He has three parishes in mind for us but feels that we can make the detailed arrangements better than he. I have written Sr. General regarding this and she will likely discuss it with you. These districts are all small towns. As far as we can discover, there are no rural parishes in N. Dakota, at least not rural as we understand "rural" in Canada. The parishes are in the towns and the Catholic farmers come to town for Mass. Maybe I am wrong in this; I shall ask to make sure. In all our travels so far, we saw no little church or met any pastor whose parish was out in the country.

The Bishop is very much interested in our literature, as you know. He hopes we will get vocations. He also wants all the suggestions we can give him regarding our work, distribution of literature, and is pleased that Fargo will "shine" in the January F.A.H.

We are quite happy here. The indefiniteness and suspense were very trying, but now that the Bishop has spoken, we know better what is expected of us. He is most kind to us as are all the clergy and Sisters, particularly the Sisters of St. Joseph.

On November 14, 1939, Fr. Daly replied to Sr. Morrison:

My dear Sr. Superior,

I just received your letter and was delighted to see that at last you are in a home of your own, and that your Chapel which means so much in a religious house, is about to be completed. Today, the Feast of Sts. Simon and Jude, His Excellency is saying Mass for you. This certainly speaks well for the future.

When you will have travelled around the country, you will be in a better position to size up the Catholic rural conditions of N. Dakota. I presume that you will find many fallen-away

Catholics, perhaps more than in our Western Provinces. You will have a great opportunity of working with the Bishop in outlining work for next spring; this will help you to get a grasp on the religious conditions of the country.

Now, my dear child, that you are together in your new home, I know that you will do your utmost to carry out the Rule in all its points inasmuch as the work of each day allows you to do so. That we selected you three to go to Fargo is a mark of the confidence that we have in you and I know you will live up to this confidence by being thoroughly religious in your demeanour, your way of acting and in your work. Never forget the two characteristics of a true Sister of Service - zeal and humility. Let these two virtues shine forth in everything and everywhere.

Tomorrow is the Feast of Christ the King. My thoughts will be with you; for after all, you have gone to spread His Kingdom in the great American Republic. Together we will pray that the Sisters of Service will take deep roots in the soil of that great country and spread from State to State just as it is spreading in so few years from Province to Province in our Dominion. This means, my dear Sister, that you have to have your eyes open to get good vocations. Be very particular in your choice. Naturally, we will rely quite a lot on your judgment in this matter, for it is practically impossible to pass judgment at such a distance on persons unknown to us.

If there is anything I can do for you, let me know and it will be a pleasure to do it.

Also on November 14, 1939, Fr. Daly wrote a letter of appreciation to the Sisters of St Joseph at St. John's Hospital:

Reverend and dear Sister Superior:

May I be allowed to thank you for the extreme kindness with which you greeted our Sisters of Service and housed them during their first months in your city. They came to you as strangers in a strange land but willing to share with you the work of the Church. In your great charity, you welcomed them as Sisters and made them feel at home. We owe, therefore, to you and your Community a great debt of gratitude. I wish to thank you I wish to thank you very sincerely in my name and in the name of the SOS community for your extreme kindness. Rest assured that you will always be remembered among the great benefactors of our first foundation in the United States.

May God in return continue to bless your noble efforts.

Fr. Daly continued to be solicitous of the Sisters. He sent notes and cards on their feast days, dropping them a line when they were ill and encouraging them in general spiritual letters at Christmas, Easter and the feast of the Immaculate Conception. The Sisters wrote to him, as well as to Sr. General, keeping them updated on their activities. On seeing the mission's first quarterly financial and work report just before Christmas 1939, Fr. Daly congratulated them: "I have just received your first quarterly report. You surely live within your means, but I do hope that you are getting all you need. If I am any good at analyzing a report, I must say that you keep your expenses down. Your report for work shows much activity. You certainly are giving good publicity to the SOS. May God bless the seeds you are sowing and give them life and vigor." Such letters brought rejoicing in their hearts, renewed their zeal and increased their confidence.

An encouraging letter from Bishop Muench at Christmas also assured the Sisters that their service was acceptable and appreciated.

Dear Sr. Morrison:

I am pleased to have the detailed report which you have sent me of the work of the Sisters of Service since you came to Fargo in September.

This report makes it clear that the apostolic work of Mother Church is never done. The persons that you have contacted are like bruised reeds which must not be broken, and smoking flax which must not be quenched. It becomes our duty to heal the bruises and to fan the flax to new fires of love of God. I hope that we shall succeed!

The things which you have uncovered show that much missionary work needs to be done in our Diocese, both in the cities and in the rural areas. You have my assurance that God will support you in all your activities and especially that He may send us the necessary vocations for the work that needs to be done.

I take this opportunity to express to you my deep appreciation of the devotion and zeal in which you have entered into your work here in Fargo. I know that you have already won the esteem of both priests and people for what you are doing in the interest of our Holy Faith.

SISTERS OPEN FARGO CENTRE, 1940

Sr. Morrison outlined the Sisters' mission activities in 1940:

Since being established in our own home, we have been working in cooperation with the two Praesidia of the Legion of Mary in Fargo. During the weekends of November we were assigned the pleasant task visiting several rural parishes to speak on our work and on the Legion of Mary. Priests and people in each parish received us kindly. The memory of these visits adds to our growing conviction that the Diocese of Fargo is making its way into our hearts.

We had a very happy Christmas during which we were showered abundantly with gifts and greetings. Best of all on Christmas Day, we had three Masses in our own chapel. The Sisters of St. Joseph invited us to the Hospital for Christmas dinner. On the following day we were privileged to have His Excellency celebrate Mass with us. We had a lovely crib in the chapel which we reluctantly packed away after the Feast of the Three Wise Men.

The January good news was a visit from Fr. Daly who cheered the Sisters' hearts and boosted their confidence. He wrote later, "I was very pleased with my visit and found you all wanting to do the right thing. I know there are certain difficulties in the way, but they will clear up with time. You are surrounded with good will and that is the best asset."

Fr. Daly had also called on the Sisters at St. John's Hospital. When thanking Father for his visit which they had enjoyed so much, Sr. Morrison added, "The Sisters at the Hospital were very much pleased with your visit, particularly Mother St. Thomas. "At last", she said, "I have met a man who knows what community life means."

An unexpected difficulty soon emerged - the Sisters learned that the owner of their rented house - a little old lady, Mrs. Swanson - was planning to return to her house, perhaps as early as May or June. This posed a problem for the Sisters who had just got nicely settled. Where would they go? They had hoped to find a house before April, but by mid April they were still searching for one as were His Excellency and Fr. Mulloy. Since Sr. General was out on her annual visitation of missions, Sr. Morrison wrote Fr. Daly, "We are still looking for a house."

We learned from Fr. Mulloy that we are to start with hostel work. It seems to be the only way to settle the financing question for we shall then be able to get on the Community Chest Fund. Of the four houses they have been considering, only one would be suitable for a hostel, but it is not yet vacant! Time is running out. We wonder what we shall do! On Monday night, we start giving instructions to the girls at Florence Crittenton Home for unmarried mothers."

Father Daly wrote saying that he was "rather astonished that no move had yet been made for your house" but tried to encourage the Sisters by reminding them that Sr. General would soon be with them and she would "get things moving".

The Sisters were grateful for her visit in early May which she spent mostly house-hunting, still with no success.

The pastor of St. Anthony's had assigned the task of census taking to the newly-organized Legion of Mary. The zealous members had had little experience in this endeavour and being somewhat timid about it, asked us to help them get started. The thought that we might not be too brave ourselves did not occur to them. In order to encourage them, we promised to do our bit.

We made detailed plans by dividing a map of the city into sections. Sections 1 and 2 a sort of "No Man's Land" between the two parishes was chosen as the starting point. Eight Legionaries volunteered for the work. It was decided that they work in pairs, so four teams

were chosen. On a certain day, Team No. 1 met two Sisters at a designated point at 2.00 p.m. These four formed two teams, each team having a Sister and a Legionary.

Every home was visited regardless of Colour or Creed. There was a variety of both! After half an hour, the "Legionary-in-training" felt able to continue on her own, Team No. 1. then came together again to meet Team No. 2. This course was followed until each of the eight volunteers had had half an hour's training. By this time it was getting late but the girls were so enthused that it was difficult to call a halt. During the following weeks, these girls spent every moment of their spare time in this district. We, therefore, were able to begin taking the census at the other end of the parish.

The reports of the Legionaries indicated amazing discoveries. They found many Catholics who had drifted away and were waiting only for a helping hand to bring them back to the Church. They also discovered many Catholic children attending non-Catholic schools. After making follow-up calls, they decided that immediate action was necessary. After some difficulty, Father Mulloy was able to rent a room on Front Street. We call it our home.

We now have a new Mission Centre. It consists of one room partitioned into two little rooms in the basement of one of the rooming houses on Lower Front Street - the poorer part of the city. We invited the children to come for instruction on Saturday afternoon. On the first Saturday only eight arrived. The zealous Legionaries and we were disappointed. The next Saturday the "girls" called for the children before the movies started; helped them get ready and escorted them to our little classroom. With the legionaries combing the district, we soon had thirty-three children and had to divide them into two groups.

Father Mulloy had two long tables made for us which the Legionaries covered with linoleum. Gradually we acquired two blackboards, pictures, some catechism charts and an organ. One of the city firms kindly supplied us with a quantity of paper, pencils, rulers etc. Soon we had almost all the necessary equipment. Many of our little ones have not yet been baptized and before we opened our Centre, they were all attending a non-Catholic mission.

After our classes, we serve hot chocolate and sandwiches. That they enjoy this part of the program is evident from the fact that after they have had as many sandwiches as any child can possibly eat, they come to ask if they may take the rest home to Mamma and Daddy. - Little K. who has to miss class some days in order to sell papers, always drops in for some hot chocolate.

Fr. Norbert Gertken, OSB, of Collegeville, Minnesota, presently in Fargo teaching Gregorian Chant, has taken an interest in our Centre. He came to the Centre last Saturday to teach some hymns to the little ones and promised to come each Saturday while he is in the city.

Adult instruction

This Centre is also being used to instruct adults. Father takes this class himself every Wednesday evening; he now has thirty-six members. The greater number are Catholics who have neglected the practice of their religion. Some are non-Catholics - a Catholic wife may bring her non-Catholic husband and vice versa. One young couple bring their baby along and Legionaries care for him while his parents take the instructions.

While present one evening, we noticed that Father began his instruction by singing a hymn in honour of the Blessed Sacrament, followed by one in honour of our Blessed Mother. When teaching these, Father explained the devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and to our Lady. He then gave instructions on the Life of Christ. It was really wonderful to see the people sitting there with rapt attention. To many, it was a return to something cherished which they had lost; to others, it was a longing satisfied and to all a feeling of peace and happiness.

What especially touched them all was knowing there was someone who took an interest in them and their welfare. After the instruction, there was a little social when coffee and sandwiches were served. Soon we hope this Centre will be permanently established. Then,

hopefully, various social activities can be provided for those needy people.

Mission Centre of Legionaries - First of its kind in America

This group of Legionaries in Fargo is the first in America to establish a Centre of this kind. We regard it as a great privilege to have been able to help in this work and pray that it will continue to grow as rapidly as it has done in the last few months.

Active and auxiliary members of the Legion of Mary - 50 altogether from both parishes of Fargo, held their annual retreat at the Sisters' residence, March 31, 1940. Bishop Muench celebrated Mass for them. Several priests, whom the Legionaries had assisted, were present. The retreatants went for breakfast to the nurses' dining room at St. John's Hospital. The retreat closed with Solemn Benediction in the Sisters' Chapel at 5.00 p.m., after which the Sisters served a buffet supper which was followed by a merry social evening.

Weekly Mass at the Mission Centre

On March 16, 1940, to the delight of the Sisters, Msgr. Ryan began to celebrate Mass at the Centre and continued this practice during succeeding Saturdays at 9.00 a.m. All the children and many adults attended and were very attentive to the priests' instructive sermons. Sr. Wayland then taught catechism to the children and continued to do so until the end of that year.

On May 11, 1940, Bishop Muench, keenly interested in the Centre, came to celebrate Mass. Long before Mass time, the alleys around Front Street were dotted with men, women and children in their best attire. Many of these people were meeting their Bishop for the first time. For others, it was their first meeting with any Bishop; for all, it was a very happy day. During the Mass, all joined in singing special hymns which Fr. Norbert had practised with them for some weeks preceding this great event.

His Excellency was very pleased with what was being done for these people. He was especially delighted with their response. He commended them for their cooperation and urged them to bring others to share with them the spiritual benefits of which they had been so long deprived. He also told them that Father Ryan and the Legionaries were making plans to extend the work at the Centre and that he, too, would be glad to help.

Volunteer workers

Though the people who frequented the Centre are poor, they, of their own accord, suggested and voluntarily contributed towards a fund for the improvement of the rooms at the Centre. Among their number were men of talent - painters, decorators and carpenters who freely offered their services. A group of older boys suggested making a cinder path on the muddy pathway to the building. Women offered to serve refreshments. It was heartening to witness these gestures of good will - a hopeful sign for the future!

Tangible results, May, 1940

Many adults and older children are now attending Sunday Mass at the Cathedral or St. Anthony's. In the fall, we hope that most of the children will be attending parochial schools.

Since the opening of the Centre last fall, 13 children have been baptized, 8 converts received into the Church, and 21 adults have returned to the Church after many years of absence. These results have been achieved in a short time but only through the united efforts of generous, untiring workers. Besides giving Wednesday night instructions, one of the Fathers spends Saturday and Sunday afternoons visiting the people. The Legionaries are personally acquainted with each family and besides encouraging them to attend Mass, assist them in many practical ways. We, too, do home visiting. We get to know how much the families appreciate the interest of the Fathers and the members of the Legion!

Consecration of Bishop Ryan

On May 28, 1940, in St. Mary's Cathedral, Fargo, the most Reverend Vincent Ryan, D.D., who had served as Pastor of St. Anthony's for over twenty years, was consecrated Bishop of Bismarck. N.D. Though the people of St. Anthony's Parish and many others, too, felt keenly the loss of their beloved Pastor, they were determined to rejoice at the honour conferred

upon him and to make the day of Consecration a "Day to Remember" in the history of the Diocese. This they did!

The Sisters sent their heartfelt congratulations to Bishop Ryan and were delighted that Fr. Daly was able to accept the Bishop-elect's invitation to be present at the colourful ceremony.

House search

With the coming of spring, despite their anxiety at not finding a house, the Sisters, put this "house problem" behind them and as roving missionaries will, cast longing glances toward the wide open prairies. They hoped to work in rural areas in summer days and then be better able to find what opportunities this great State offered to them in their desire "to serve where the need is greatest.

In June 1940, the Sisters were assigned to work in the rural parishes of Oriska, Kensal and Hope. Here, their main work was conducting Vacation Schools and in conjunction with this, taking the census.

In late August, on returning to Fargo after the summer work, the Sisters were disappointed to find that no house had yet been found for them. They were welcome to return to their former home at St. John's Hospital. Fr. Daly advised them to be patient, saying that we do not always see why God permits some things, but we do know that things will work out, perhaps slowly, for the best. He reminded them that it is a good sign when the "cross" is present in a foundation.

Sister Morrison addresses the National Rural Life Conference

In September 1940, Sr. Morrison prepared a talk for the National Rural life Conference on the aims, methods and results of their summer's work in the rural areas of North Dakota. Receiving encouragement from both Sr. General and Fr. Daly, she assembled a comprehensive summary of the summer of 1940. It became the plan for the succeeding summers for the next 23 years:

The first aim of SOS

When a Sister of Service kneels before the altar to make her vows on the day of her religious profession, she makes at the same time a solemn promise to dedicate her life to the salvation of the spiritually under-privileged souls in the Home Mission Fields. Naturally, whatever her later work may be, her first aim will be to reach those most destitute of spiritual help. This year, three of us were privileged to spend the greater part of the summer months in the rural district of North Dakota where such souls were not hard to find. Many are living far from a church. Others have fallen away from the practice of their religion, due in many instances, to the fact that in earlier days they had been deprived of the spiritual advantages so necessary in the life of a Catholic.

Two specific aims

Our specific aims this summer were to help these people find their way back into the fold of the Church and to bring them, some of the consolations of the faith and to help the rising generation from the fate of their parents by teaching them and providing some means whereby they may receive some frequent and regular instruction.

Summer Vacation School in rural North Dakota

We made the Vacation School the axis around which revolved our summer work. In one parish where we were fortunate to have two lay teachers, the children from the parish and its two missions assembled each morning. Two Sisters and the Lay Teachers taught while one Sister devoted full time to visiting the families. Where there was no lay help available, all three Sisters taught and visited after school. School opened each morning with the celebration of Mass. The catechists used this opportunity to explain the Holy Sacrifice. Beginning with prayers at the foot of the altar, a Sister explained each part of the Mass to the children and together they said the prayers. After a few days, the children were able to take turns leading the prayers with Sister providing the explanations.

At each centre, we prepared boys for serving Mass. They enjoyed this feature and realized what an honour it was to be chosen. At one mission church, we had a problem - there was only one cassock and surplice and six boys prepared to wear it. It was decided that the boys themselves would select the best server for Sunday when a priest came from Fargo to say Mass. On Saturday morning there was great excitement when in the sanctuary, Sister took each boy in turn through all parts of the Mass while the other five kept score. Each fault was noted so that when the winner was announced, there were no hard feelings. The others in order of merit, were named for succeeding Sundays.

Home visiting

Visiting the homes of the children is almost as important as the teaching itself. It brings the family into a closer contact with the Church. Many mothers and fathers said they had never before had a visit from a sister or a priest. It was a pleasure to visit these good people. The little ones had prepared the way; if there were any family troubles or difficulties, the parents were ready to unburden themselves. In cases of weak or fallen-away Catholics, the story was different. Their children do not usually attend Vacation School and the question of how best to approach them is always a matter for discussion. The best approach we know of is to go to these people in a spirit of charity. Our visits are always on a friendly basis with never any word of reprimand. If we can but establish true friendship, we believe the Grace of God will do the rest. We count heavily on the little prayer, "Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy faithful!" True love for these people will lead us to the realization that in most cases they are more to be pitied than blamed.

The value of tradition and environment

There are two factors which play an important part in every person's spiritual life - Tradition and Environment. Rural people are the children of a pioneer race; of pioneers who came into this country when it was still in the making. Although they brought with them from the Old Country strong Catholic traditions, they found themselves in an environment which was not Catholic. Very often they could not find a church for miles and miles.

The Church, unfortunately, could not keep pace with the materialistic development of the West. Because, therefore, there were few or no Catholics to link up the traditions of the past, the children of these pioneers grew up lacking that stability which comes from a Catholic environment strengthened by Catholic tradition. These children are the parents of today. They were deprived of the Catholic environment which should have been theirs. These factors, naturally, have resulted in mixed marriages and marriages outside the Church.

What remains for us now is to provide for our growing boys and girls an environment which will give them that stability of soul and, incidentally, help form Catholic traditions for generations to come.

As to the results of our work, we can say but little. Results are often very intangible. We are working in a spiritual field where figures and statistics mean little. We do what we can and count on God's Grace to do the rest.

Summary of our summer work

Altogether this summer, starting out on June 1, we spent 68 days in active work in the rural areas. During that time, we instructed 370 children, 37 of whom made their First Holy Communion. We also taught 29 little boys to serve Mass. Among the high school students of one parish, we organized a unit of the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO). In the same parish, we encouraged a group of young women to form a Praesidium of the Legion of Mary and to pledge their support to their pastor who is just organizing a new parish in this district. Best of all, we were able to find a person in each of three districts who consented to give one half hour a week to the teaching of Catechism in a Public School. As it is the express wish of our Bishop that weekly instructions be provided for Catholic children wherever possible, we believe this is a beginning in this direction.

I should add that the children usually received the First Sacraments at the close of Vacation School - an occasion for a parish celebration. We always closed Vacation School with an enjoyable picnic. I am glad to say that the Pastors were most zealous and the children, delightful. It was a labour of love.

Some visitation experiences

Although our work is primarily to help those who should be Catholic, we found it necessary in some districts to make a complete visitation.

During these months, we were able to visit 454 families - Catholic and non-Catholic. We found many non-Catholic families eager to discuss Catholic doctrine and we usually had an opportunity to enlighten them on some teaching which had been somewhat of a mystery to them.

In one district where we were making a complete religious survey, we learned that in a certain small town there were no Catholics. We, nevertheless, included this town in our survey. Each home received us very kindly, but, indeed, there were no Catholics nor should-be Catholics. At one home we encountered a kindly old gentleman who gave us enough information to assure us there was no "Catholic blood" in his family. As we were about to leave, we said to him, "Are there any Catholics around here?" Very startled, he replied, "My God, I hope not!"

Summer recollections

As I write these lines, I cannot help but wonder what results may come from the summer contacts we made. - I recall a Catholic woman, Mrs. M. whose religious knowledge was so vague, she was not aware that her marriage outside the Church was invalid. In contrast to this case was Mrs. G. whose life was one long act of suffering, who wept bitterly and begged for catechisms to teach her little ones and for prayers that some day her husband would consent to the validation of their marriage so that she might receive the Sacraments.

It is difficult to describe the conditions in the home of Mr. C. where both Mother and Father are Catholic. The older children have been baptized but have not received First Holy Communion. The Father - a veritable brute - has given up the practice of his religion and denies to his family the right to practise theirs. The poor hard-working Mother does the field work of a hired man. Mary, the oldest child, attends high school in the nearby town. Tearfully, she told how her Mother suffers and begged us not to go into the fields where Mother and Father were working because the Father would punish her for allowing an interruption of this kind.

Mary wants to make her First Communion; despite all hardships, the faithful Mother has instilled into the hearts of her children a love for their religion. Mary is eager, too, to help her brothers and Sisters. Sobbing, she told of an unbaptized sister who is buried out in a field because the Father had no time for religious nonsense. There was little we could do for Mary except to console and encourage her. We are now sending her, through a Catholic lady living in town, a complete course of religious instruction. This will enable Mary, in secret, to teach the little ones at home and prepare herself for Holy Communion.

Neighbours for miles around, had told us about Mrs. K., a Catholic who had joined the Lutheran Church, and was now very anti-Catholic and a religious fanatic. We were advised not to call on her, that she would not likely admit us. Curiosity lent wings to our zeal and we decided to see her. As we neared the farm, we repeated the Holy Spirit invocation for help and at the same time slipped our crosses, our only religious symbol, inside our habits. Mrs. K. received us kindly and in a short time told us the story of her life. She had been born in Europe and because of the faithlessness of her Father, her Mother had fled with her eight children to America. One month after landing in America, the Mother died leaving her little ones in care of relatives living in a sparsely settled district with no resident priest. A priest came to this district once or twice a year. All the children had received their First Communion, but had received very little instruction.

Mrs. K. was married by a priest because her relatives insisted on it, but their insistence did not make the husband keep the promises made on the day of the marriage. For some time, Mrs. K. had attended Mass and received the Sacraments, but being unable to meet the arguments advanced by her husband, finally gave in and joined the Lutheran Church where she said she had "found the Saviour." When we told her we were Catholic Sisters, she was pleased and hoped that through our influence many souls would be "brought into the fold". She certainly was not a religious fanatic - rather, a victim of circumstances! This incident reminds us of Christ's words, "Go and teach!" He did not say "Teach when they come to you!" For a long time, we may have been waiting for the "weak" and "fearful" to come to us. The harvest was waiting and perhaps other reapers have been gathering it into their barns!

We met another Mother patiently trying to raise her children Catholics and to instil into their hearts a love for the Sacraments which she herself may not approach. Her husband will not consent to the validation of their marriage but does not object to the Catholic education of his children.

During the summer, we had two accidents which turned out to be blessings in disguise. The first was a flat tire while we were visiting a family who absolutely refused to thaw. On our departure, we noticed the tire and rolled up our sleeves to tackle the job of changing it. The mother and daughter feeling sorry for us came to assist; their reserve was broken. We all returned to the house to wash up and rest a bit. Meanwhile, the atmosphere had changed; we were, at last, able to make some headway in reaching this family.

The second - while driving to Mass one morning, we collided with a car driven by a man going to town. Both cars were going slowly so no damage resulted. Because the man's name savoured of Catholicism, we decided to visit him.

We were met at the garden gate by the mother-in-law who informed us that Max had joined the Baptist Church. With difficulty, we persuaded her to let us meet Max's wife. The wife was different; she admitted that Max was not happy with their marriage which had been performed by a Justice of the Peace. Three of their children had died without baptism; this worried Max which in turn troubled the wife. After a two-hour discussion about the Catholic Church and its teachings, Mrs. Max decided to take the initiative. She planned to go with Max to see a priest and ask to have their marriage validated; then later, get their children baptized. Maybe she herself would take instructions. - The mother-in-law was also agreeable saying she had learned it was not possible to make a good Baptist out of a Catholic.

Incidents such as these are the only tangible results that we can report. We have Faith that God in His goodness will not allow our efforts to go unrewarded. Some souls, we hope, have, as a result of our work, been drawn a little closer to His Sacred Heart.

During October 1940, Srs. O'Kane and Wayland spent some time in Winnipeg, getting ideas for the possibility of starting a hostel in Fargo. Sr. Morrison visited the Regina Sisters, observing the operation of the correspondence school of religion in case it was needed in Fargo.

In late October, Bishop Muench had found a house for the Sisters. By December 11, Sr. Morrison wrote to Sr. Guest about viewing the house. "It is magnificent. We are all thrilled; what a change! How shall we ever manage such an establishment! How soon can you come to visit us? It is impossible to give a good description in this letter but here are a few items - Venetian blinds, a built-in Frigidaire with three compartments, a washing machine, mangle, oil furnace, fireplace, built-in cupboards, book cases etc. etc. Sr. O'Kane will write you more details!"

On December 14, Fr. Daly sent his greetings and a welcome message:

My dear Sr. Superior and Sisters:

I just wanted to write to you all a word of welcome to your new home. Now that you are settled and no more like Gypsies going from pillar to post, I am sure that you are glad to be back at work in your respective field of action.

I know, my dear Children, that you will give, as in the past, the best you have in you. Above all, try to get vocations. It is now over a year that you are in the United States and surely by this time, some flower must have blossomed destined for your secluded garden.

I will be very anxious to know exactly what the Bishop has in mind as your definite work. When it will be known to me, I will be able to help you by my advice and encouragement. In the meantime, pray very fervently and ask our Mother of Good Counsel to guide you. Show always the same zeal that you have done in the past. ...

By the time this letter reaches you, you will be in full preparation for Christmas. I ask that your Christmas may be merry and that the Divine Infant bring to your hearts the sweet consolations of His love. Ask our Blessed Mother to prepare your hearts as she prepared the Crib for the coming Saviour.

Write to me and tell me how you find your new home. With my fondest blessing, I remain,

On December 22, 1940, Sr. Morrison wrote to Fr. Daly in an end-of-the-year report:

Father, our new home, in St. Anthony's Parish, is lovely but we don't yet know what our work is going to be. Fr. Mulloy talks "hostel" but the Bishop in his letter mentioned only "correspondence work"!

As soon as we are settled, the Bishop is coming to say Mass, so then, hopefully, we shall discuss our work. I think it is no use discussing plans with anyone but the Bishop - so we shall just have to wait!

The woodwork in the house is beautiful. There are lovely hardwood floors even in the attic - two fireplaces. Our chapel is on the second floor; we have a Chaplain who celebrates Mass at 7.00 a.m. daily. We haven't much furniture yet but we expect to be swamped by Christmas. The Bishop bought the dining room suite when buying the house. On Saturday, he sent down a chesterfield and some chairs. Mother St. Thomas donated three beds, so as usual all are most kind. The Fathers in both parishes are over-zealous in working the people up to hold showers for us. Just in case someone tries to duplicate gifts, they've just dropped hints as to what they themselves are giving us.

Msgr. Dworschak has offered to have a new altar made for us - a miniature of the one in the Cathedral. Last Saturday, the Ladies of St. Anne's Guild, and other groups, too, gave us a grocery shower with the promise of a monthly shower to follow; the Legion of Mary held a cookware shower. God is good to us, though He sends a taste of the Cross in that "indefiniteness" about which I am not going to complain anymore!

Tonight, Fr. Mehok drove down from the Cathedral to bring us to the closing ceremonies of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Novena. This Novena was conducted by Fr. Seymour, C.Ss.R. of Davenport, Iowa. That evening, Fr. Mulloy brought him to visit us. He was grand - had heard something of Fr. Daly and his Sisters but knew nothing about us. He asked us for some literature. Sr. Wayland and he engaged in some interesting conversation and with a warning look over his shoulder at Fr. Mulloy, slipped a ten dollar bill into her hand. He reminded us of Fr. Arthur Coughlan.

Please send us a copy of the picture of Our Lord's Sacred Head, - like the one in Regina - with the caption in Latin "This day you will be with Me in Paradise," and do let us know when we may expect you.

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PROJECTS EXPAND AT FARGO MISSION, 1941

The Sisters were overwhelmed with the kindness and gifts so generously given to them at the opening of their new residence on 401 Seventh Avenue South. In January 1941, they decided to express their thanks through an article in the *Fargo Catholic Action News*:

After a very enjoyable visit to our missions in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, we have returned to a beautiful new home at 401 7th Avenue South. We wish to take this opportunity to thank our good Bishop publicly for this superb, practical residence and for the many other kindnesses he has shown us since our coming to Fargo.

Also, we wish to thank those friends who are now helping to furnish our new home. Their generous assistance at this time means much to us, and to the success of our work throughout the Diocese.

For the benefit of those who feared we would be unable to return from "war-torn" Canada, [Canada was engaged in World War II] we are glad to say that we encountered no difficulties. Actually, Canada is anything but war-torn. There is no anxiety - just a little more seriousness. Everyone seems to be engaged in an all-important task. True, the streets are speckled with men in uniform; women have put aside their bridge cards and taken up knitting. Huge bombers fly low over the cities at all hours of the day and night. These held us spellbound, but even school children have long since ceased to gaze upwards.

It seemed strange to find our former students in uniform - visiting the Sisters who had taught them in the rural or Vacation Schools. Stranger still was it to hear the click of heels on the convent stairs and then to see beneath the sacred vestments the Army Khaki or the Air-force Blue. The alacrity with which the clergy have donned the uniform is most edifying. Now, after our wanderings, we are glad to be back home among you "to serve."

In a letter on February 27, 1941 to Sr. General, Fr. Mulloy also outlined the Sisters' activities:

The new SOS home is really beautiful. Structurally, it was a good buy. Geographically, it is well located. In design, it suits our purposes. I feel sure the Sisters have told you all about it. Now it remains for you to see it yourself, so please come soon!

The work is forging ahead. The Centre continues to grow in wisdom, age, grace and variety. You should be here to witness its ever-changing life. Recently, there was a round-up of the young girls who work in cafes, 10 cent stores, residences etc. There is plenty to do. When you consider the possibility of correspondence work, you can see that our interest grows daily.

Fr. Mulloy also asked for more copies of pamphlets to circulate.

After-school program introduced

While continuing to search for a definite apostolate, the Sisters served the immediate needs of the parishes of St. Anthony and St. Mary as well as continued to offer regular religious instruction at the Mission Centre. As a new venture, they held religion classes after school in the rooms in their residence's basement, which were converted into club rooms for the children.

On Wednesdays and Fridays, the Sisters, taught crafts, which were useful and interesting to the children. The boys, who were supplied with hammers, saws and other tools, made toy tables, chairs and other articles for their younger brothers and sisters. One practical-minded boy made a large sled to haul wood home for the family fire. Tin craft was also popular. Some made mail boxes,

dust pans, cookie cutters and other items. One basement room was set aside for the boys to assemble model airplanes. Some became so interested that they sometimes worked all day Saturday!

Most of the girls worked at sewing with a tea-towel and embroidering a design as the first project. At the beginning of these classes, some girls did not know how to hold a needle, but by Easter, each girl was able to present her mother with a home-made gift. They also made aprons and needle cases. Before the summer holidays, the girls were initiated into the art of knitting.

The afterschool activities were also open to non-Catholic children attended these craft classes. The Sisters also served a lunch served to the children. On cold winter days, soup was made with bread or a bun or hot chocolate with sandwiches. For most of the children, this lunch was for the meal of the day. Later in the season, the Sisters obtained from the County Welfare Board some surplus commodities, such as cereal, flour, dried and fresh fruit as well as canned milk. With these items, the Sisters varied the dishes for the children.

During Lent, the Sisters arranged for the 35 children, half of whom were non-Catholics, a series of eight religious movies shown across the river at a theatre in Minnesota. The Knights of Columbus paid the admission fee for all the children for the whole series and Fr. Mulloy supplied the St. Mary's cathedral school bus and the chauffeur to drive it. After the first picture, *The Living Story of the Bible*, the novelty had worn off. After seeing the *King of Kings*, the children were filled with religious enthusiasm. On the way home, they wanted to sing hymns, choosing "I Love Thee, O Mary," but only the Catholics were singing. Suddenly, without warning, the whole group, all of whom had at some time attended the Union Mission, burst forth with, "Jesus loves me, Yes, I know, for the Bible tells me so." The singing caught the attention of people on the street, who turned to gaze in amazement at the St. Mary's cathedral school bus.

Volunteers help mission

Members of the Legion of Mary were always ready to assist and to cooperate on all occasions. Several Junior Praesidia were also established whom the Sisters considered as the power behind the wheel. Some students assisted the Sisters in preparing and mailing 2000 appeal letters throughout the diocese. Others prepared several hundred project books and hectographed hundreds of pictures, mounted medals and rosaries for distribution as prizes to be given at religious vacation schools.

At Sacred Heart Academy, some young mission-minded freshmen students started a Home Mission Club. In selling chances to win a \$5 bill, the students raised \$15, with which each child at the Mission Centre was supplied with a prayer book and a catechism as well as linoleum was purchased to cover the tables in the basement rooms.

The Boy Scouts and Grade VII students of St. Mary's school collected newspapers and magazines which they sold for \$6.40. They also collected a large basket of foodstuffs for the poor. The Grade VIII students also gathered cast-off clothing, which was mended, washed and ironed it at the school for the Sisters to distribute to the poor.

Each week, two children supplied the Sisters with Catholic papers each week, saying that they sold papers at the church door and always got tips.

Marian Club established for young working women

The Sisters organized a Marian Club for young working women, focusing on a religious discussion club. At the Thursday evening meeting, the 15 members were divided into groups for an hour-

discussion. A social evening followed with singing, dancing and refreshments. On May 29, the final evening before the summer break, a pot luck supper was organized.

Religious Vacation Schools

When the elementary schools closed for the summer at the end of May, the Sisters set forth for the summer vacation schools on May 30, teaching at Fessenden, Bremen, Hope and Aneta and following a similar schedule of the previous summer. In July, they commuted by car to communities outside Fargo to teach catechism. In August, they taught in Wahpeton. The Sisters continued this summer program for 23 years. When classes were large, they tried to recruit lay catechists and often called for additional Sisters from Canada to assist.

Correspondence lessons started

After the second summer of religious vacation school work, the Sisters became convinced that the religion lessons by correspondence would be of great benefit to rural families, who had little or no instruction during the year. After consultation with Sr. Guest and Fr. Daly and approval from Bishop Muench, the Sisters initiated the correspondence program. In July, Fr. Daly had asked to be kept informed on "when and how you propose inaugurating 'Catechism by mail' for I promise to help you and I want to make good my promise." In a letter on August 5, 1941, Sr. Morrison outlined to Fr. Daly the first stage in this endeavour:

... About our Correspondence Course, Father, we know that some persons here are not enthusiastic about "correspondence" work. We are, therefore, moving very quietly and slowly. I would be glad to have some advice from you as there is no one here who really understands this correspondence method.

Here is our plan: We have ordered three courses –

- 1) Fr. Heeg's *Jesus and I*
- 2) Monsignor Day's First Communion course
- 3) Sr. Barton's *Queen of the Prairie* series

We hope to do a good job with these three courses this year and expand later.

Fr. McNeil of Wichita, Kansas, sent us a course on the Old Testament, which he used last year and will send us his new Testament Course as he prepares it this winter. He said we could use anything we wished of his work. Monsignor Day wrote to tell us that he had some of his lessons in book form and offered them to us for 15 cents a copy. We ordered two dozen for our Study Club work.

In the letter, Sr. Morrison asked Fr. Daly's advice about accepting an estimate of \$15 to print 500 file cards and folders for each child and \$28 for 1,000 heavy manila re-usable envelopes with windows. She also wrote of two elderly women benefactors, who own and operate a large furniture store in Fargo, who wish a copy of the same picture of Our Lord's Sacred Head, which he had sent the Sisters at Christmas. Fr. Daly replied on August 8, assuring Sr. Morrison that the estimates were reasonable and enclosed two pictures of Christ for the "furniture ladies." To assist the Sisters' new venture, Fr. Daly promised to give a talk on the correspondence lessons in St. Mary's cathedral. Upon the approval of the newly-elevated Monsignor Mulloy, Sr. Morrison responded to Fr. Daly that she was aware that some people did not favour this venture.

Noting the apprehensive about launching the correspondence work, Fr. Daly wrote in a letter on August 25, 1941:

I just received your note of August 22 and am glad to see that you intend starting your catechetical course. As to the objections that may come from certain quarters to this method of teaching, the best answer is "results". We have had glorious results from our

course in Canada, and I think "correspondence" is one of the best pieces of work we have contributed to the apostolate of Western Canada.

Naturally, and bear this in mind, the correspondence course will never take the place of oral instruction. Oral instruction is the best, but correspondence takes its place when oral instruction is deficient or too intermittent, as is often the case in our missions throughout Western Canada and, I presume, in the Dakotas. Enclosed is a clipping from *Newsweek* magazine which came to my attention a short time ago. It illustrates the point I am trying to make with you.

On the same day of August 25, 1941, Sr. Morrison informed Fr. Daly:

You will be anxious to hear about our Correspondence work. Because you advised us to go ahead "full swing", we are trying to do just that. Believe it or not, we have now a mimeograph machine and it looks as though we are about to get going after all. I tried to get Monsignor interested, but it didn't work. We kept going just the same.

The good news is that after talking business with Monsignor on Friday night, we got our machine installed on Saturday morning. It is a second-hand model - three years old and cost \$147.00. Monsignor Dworschak paid the down payment of \$60.00 and we have pledged to pay the rest in monthly installments.

As soon as we have run off the needed tests, we shall select the most needy among the children we have met in the last two summers and invite them to take our course. Actually, we could have hundreds if we wanted to take them, but I think it will be better to start "small" - we'll have a hundred, anyway. Monsignor asked how much we were going to charge and we replied, "nothing". I think it would be preferable for the various pastors to send contributions because if we set a price on the lessons, the poor, who need the lessons most, might not be able to pay; also, we would have more work than we could handle.

We are eagerly looking forward to your visit and talk in October and hope you will be able to stay in Fargo a few days.

Fr. Daly reminded the Sisters that it pays to be persistent and to have unlimited confidence in St. Joseph for "he will never fail you!" He agreed that the lessons should be free, but suggested that a financial appeal occasionally be sent to those receiving lessons. "You will be surprised how much you will awaken interest and interest will loosen purse strings because they are near the heart strings, and it is from the heart that interest comes!"

The Sisters were amazed at the many, who rallied to their assistance. Bishop Muench and Msgr. Mulloy became so enthusiastic about the correspondence lessons that both addressed a state gathering of the Lady Forresters, which had pledged to support the correspondence lessons. Msgr. Molloy also suggested that the Sisters to display at the back of the cathedral Fr. Daly's colourful poster of throwing a lifeline and the announcement that the correspondence lessons begin October 1 and needs support. The *Catholic Action News* carried a short appeal and the monsignor initiated a stamp collecting project among the Catholic school children.

In September, the Sisters received a letter from Our Lady of Perpetual Help Guild in New York, asking for information and a way to assist the mission work of the Sisters of Service. After receiving some suggestions, the Guild members sent a large box of religious articles, a \$10 bill and 1,500 one-cent stamps.

The correspondence School was officially inaugurated on October 1, 1941 with 134 pupils. The families, who were registered in the course, wrote interesting newsy letters and letters of gratitude. Other families who made enquiries were accepted in the program. In late November, Fr. Daly wrote

to compliment the Sisters on the growth of the Correspondence School, predicting that the little acorn would soon grow into a sturdy oak.

Sisters address National Rural Life Conference

Through Bishop Ryan, the Sisters were invited to speak about their mission work at a symposium on the Conversion of Rural America at the National Rural Life Conference, which was scheduled to be held from October 4 to 8 in Jefferson City, Missouri. Although the Sisters were exceptionally busy at this time, organizing the correspondence work, teaching at the Centre and working with the Marian Club, they accepted the invitation. On hearing of the above prospective possibilities of assistance, Fr. Daly commented to the Sisters: "It is extraordinary the diverse ways God takes to arouse interest in quarters where at times we least expect it. God's way of working is hidden but effective."

On behalf of the Sisters, Sr. Morrison prepared and delivered a comprehensive address:

We consider it a very great privilege to be here today at this National Catholic Rural Life Conference. I shall tell you briefly about the rural work for which our Community was established and relate in more detail what we are attempting to do in the Diocese of Fargo.

The thought which some twenty years ago inspired the founding of our Institute was the great leakage suffered by Mother Church through her inability to reach and provide religious instruction for our rural Catholic children. To safeguard the Faith of rural children unable to attend a Catholic School, our Sisters began teaching in one-room public schools which were attended by some Catholic children. In these schools, a Sister while teaching secular subjects can instill principles of Catholic conduct and morality. She can also usually arrange for teaching religion for half an hour daily or several times weekly after school hours.

Where there are no parochial schools and few opportunities for children to receive Religious instruction, our Sisters teach in Vacation Schools. In some districts, the homes are so scattered and so far from a church that getting children together for regular classes is difficult. Often, therefore, our Sisters give instructions in the homes of children who are unable to attend class. We believe that efficient teaching can best be done when the teacher is familiar with a child's home life. Here, therefore, as in all our work, we consider home visitation very important. We find that parents appreciate a Sister's visit and are more responsive to the suggestions offered for their children's instruction.

Although much is accomplished at a Vacation School, we know that knowledge gained in two weeks is small compared with that acquired by regular teaching. To continue the work of the Vacation School, we have, therefore, established a School of Religious Correspondence Instruction. From this school, children who live far from a church and who receive no regular religious instruction are sent lessons by mail. This month, in the City of Fargo, we have opened such a school. For the present, we are limiting the enrolment to those children; namely 135, from six districts whom we have taught at Vacation Schools during the last two summers.

We know from experience that these lessons will be a link with the Church not only for the child answering the lessons, but also for the whole family.

The greatest difficulty in the carrying on of Correspondence Work is the maintenance of the school. Because in many cases those most in need of this service are unable to pay, we ask for no set fee. We depend on the charity of our good Catholics to support this work and we have every reason to feel that we shall not be disappointed. In the city of Fargo, the pupils of the Parochial Schools have taken it upon themselves to supply us with stamps for mailing the lessons.

Another SOS work is the establishment of residences and employment bureaus in cities for rural girls seeking employment. Here the Sisters advise and assist rural girls to become

adjusted to city life.

In the city of Fargo, we have no employment bureau nor are we able to house girls from rural areas. We have, however, formed a Club, the SOS Marian Club for them. All members come together once a month for a general meeting. Once a week, different groups meet for recreational, social, educational and religious activities. There is also a lending library for them and we encourage them to come together any evening of the week for a social hour or to entertain their friends.

We feel that our contact with the rural girl, especially during her first few months in the city, is a safeguard and a protection for her. Through our Club, a girl gets to know other Catholic girls and is more readily introduced into the social life of the parish.

Our Sisters also direct rural hospitals where while healing the body, nurses can minister to the spiritual needs of the sick person.

The above is a brief summary of the rural activities of our Institute. In the Diocese of Fargo, we have undertaken only three of these works; namely, Vacation School Work, Religious Correspondence Work and our Club for the rural girl working in the city.

I thank our Right Reverend Chairman and those responsible for our being given this opportunity of speaking to you. Our Community is young and our foundation in the United States much younger. We know there is work to be done and with confidence we offer our mite towards the preservation of the Faith in Rural America.

Christmas appeal, 1941

At Christmas, the Sisters through Bishop Muench sent their first appeal in a colourful illustrated brochure to each of the correspondence families:

Catholic Religious Correspondence School
401 Seventh Avenue South
Fargo, N. Dakota

To rural children in the Diocese of Fargo, who do not have the blessing of a Catholic School. Through our Correspondence Courses, we try to provide these children with regular lessons in their Religion during the school year.

Will you share with us in this Apostolate by a Christmas Offering?

Let it be a birthday gift to Him, our Infant Saviour.

His reward is very great. You shall shine as stars for all eternity.

May God grant you Peace and Happiness this Christmas and throughout the New Year.

SISTERS OF SERVICE

This appeal has my cordial approval. May God bless the kind benefactors of our children.

+J.J. Muench, Bishop of Fargo

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MISSION PROGRAMS, 1942-1945**Reports on Correspondence School**

Reports of the correspondence school were published in the *Catholic Action News*. The following report of February 1942 was typical:

To interest others, one has but to arouse curiosity - a Correspondence School does just that. The teachers are unknown to the pupils; the building, an imaginary structure; their classmates, strangers. So when a Correspondence School is being inspected by a group of pupils, one witnesses the most eager interest.

This month, six correspondence pupils - all boys - with their pastor, visited the school in Fargo. The curiosity of this little group was not in regard to their teachers. They knew how tall, how fat, and about how old the Sisters were; all that had been settled two summers ago during Vacation School. They were curious about the convent, the office, the correcting and the mailing of lessons and how question sheets were made on the mimeograph machine. Everything was thoroughly inspected - the lessons, the files, and the system of keeping records.

The record cards created the greatest stir. These cards accurately record the progress of each pupil. The boys were allowed to examine their own cards and proudly they read aloud their responses and scores. They peeped at other cards to find out how other students were progressing and from which areas they came.

They talked about their study charts. Some had credits for everything - for prayers, for following the instruction sheet, etc. Some had slipped up - for forgetting occasionally to say the suggested Hail Mary for their Bishop and Parish Priest and for the benefactors of the school. They said they would be more faithful in future.

Stamp Appeal, October 1942

During the month of October, catechism lessons, letters and messages travelled back and forth from the religious correspondence school in Fargo to the children of our rural parishes. The Sisters appealed for donations of money or stamps. During the first year, the postage stamps for sending out lessons were supplied mainly by our parochial school children.

Response to adverse criticism of correspondence work, November, 1942

In response to adverse criticism of correspondence work, the Sisters responded in a November 1942 article, entitled "What is the value of the Correspondence Method?" in the *Catholic Action News*:

Do the children really benefit from Correspondence Courses in Religion?" or "Wouldn't it be easy for them to simply copy the answers?" Such questions imply that the primary motive behind this particular apostolate has been missed.

The purpose of "Teaching Religion by Mail" is to keep the Faith burning in homes where children attend public schools and who, due to distance from a church are unable to receive sufficient religious instruction. The many grateful letters from parents, that often accompany the children's lessons, speak volumes in defense of Correspondence work. These parents realize that the religious education of children is their primary responsibility; their gratitude for the lessons is, in our view, the best recommendation for the Religious Correspondence School.

Parents interested in the spiritual welfare of their children see to it that their children study each lesson before attempting to write the answers. Those who are less interested, or

weaker in faith, may simply allow the children to copy answers. In such cases, the family, at least, remains in contact with us and it is our hope that, even unconsciously, the spark of Faith will be kept alive and gradually be strengthened. In time, with God's help, the weak flicker of Faith, may be fanned into a living flame.

Appeal in *Catholic Action News* January, 1943

Under the column of Viewpoints, an original appeal was made to help Station S.O.S.

Your Station, S.O.S. broadcasting on a frequency of 34,899 square miles by the authority of the Bishop of Fargo, calling the 69,622 Catholics in the Diocese to stand-by. The attractive Christmas appeal of the Sisters of Service has been released. One hundred eighty-eight religiously needy children are interested. They have been rescued by the "Religion by Mail" course. All these children live in the Diocese of Fargo. They are Ours. We did not know of these 188 children one year ago. What of the other one hundred and eighty Eighters"? Where are they? They are where there are no Churches; no priests; no Masses.

WHO CARES?

GOD cares; the Church cares; the Bishop cares; the Priests care; our Sisters care; our Catholic People care. Please help these other Hundred and Eighty-eighters" by donating to the S.O.S. Appeal!

Let us do it right away!

In March 1943, the *Catholic Action News* printed the following FLASH:

EXTREME COLD WEATHER PREVAILS THROUGHOUT THE WEST
 RATIONING OF GAS AND TIRES HAS FORCED FARMERS TO PUT UP THEIR CARS FOR THE
 DURATION THIS CREATES A PROBLEM FOR THOSE LIVING FAR FROM CHURCH THE
 NEED FOR CATECHISM BY MAIL IS GREATER THAN EVER NUMBER OF LESSONS SENT
 OUT IS ON THE INCREASE ENROLMENT 490.

In May, 1943, just before the Religious Vacation Schools, the Sisters issued the following statement:

We are pleased to state that at the close of this school year, our Correspondence enrolment has reached 523. This number comprises children from 27 parishes. From Oct. 1, 1942 to April 30, 1943, we sent out 4,133 lessons, 341 personal letters to parents and senior students in response to inquiries; and over 1,400 Catholic magazines, papers and pamphlets to families. These facts provide a little idea of the "Field of Catechism by Mail".

S.O.S.

Correspondence School report, October 1943

At the beginning of the correspondence term in 1943, the Sisters announced the enrolment of 620, including several adults. In the *Catholic Action News* in October 1943, the Sisters wrote:

We are happy to have met and taught many of our pupils during the past summer. The shortage of farm labour [due to World War II] has caused some of our students to be late in returning their lessons for correction. We are, however, confident that next week will find everyone back to work with the same enthusiasm they have shown in the past.

We are deeply grateful to our many friends who gave us moral and financial support during the past year. We hope and pray that you will continue your interest and support and thereby collaborate with us in sending God's Word by mail to many young people who need our help. May God bless you!

On November 5, 1943 commenting on the enrolment of 620, Fr. Daly advised in a letter: "Keep in touch constantly with those 620. Remember that means 620 souls committed to your care and it is wonderful what can be done by mail for their spiritual welfare."

Correspondence courses, the chief apostolate of the Fargo mission

By 1943, it was evident that the Sisters had found a specific apostolate in the Diocese of Fargo through teaching religion by mail. Correspondence courses were graded according to regular classes, Grades 1 to 12. Like in Regina and Edmonton schools, each course consisted of 18 to 20 lessons. A dash of humour flavoured the correcting. In answering a lesson on prayer which included the story of the Pharisee and the Publican, one small boy concluded, "We should all pray like Republicans."

St. Anthony's Junior Legion of Mary had helped set up the correspondence school and continued to assist weekly. Twenty girls from Grades VII and VIII of St. Anthony's came weekly, sometimes twice a week, after school to fold, sort and arrange lessons on shelves and to stuff envelopes and mailing out the yearly appeal. For heavy parcels, boys lent a hand. A few students from Shanley high school assisted with typing and setting up lessons.

Four parents volunteered to help with typing, filing and correcting, including Mrs. Rustad, Mrs. D. Beaton, Genevieve Murray, Mrs. W.J. Bastien, Mrs. U. Power, Mrs. Leo Fischer and Mrs. Hanson. Donations and grocery showers came from St. Mary's Guild and St. Ansgar's League. Children, also collected money through their Mission Clubs for stamps for the lessons.

Bishop Muench announced the appointment of Monsignor Mulloy as the Bishop Elect of Covington, Kentucky. On behalf of the Sisters of Service, Fr. Daly wrote the following congratulatory note:

Monsignor Mulloy has for many years taken an active part in the Catholic Rural problem. His keen interest in this problem so vital to the welfare of the church will find an unlimited scope in the jurisdiction just committed to his pastoral care. He approaches this task in the full vigor of manhood and well prepared by the manifold experience in important pastoral offices. The challenge of the Kentucky frontier now comes to him. He will respond with burning zeal and self-sacrificing devotedness.

To the Bishop-Elect, the Sisters of Service send their heartfelt congratulations and the promise of their prayers. For many years he has been an admirer and promoter of our little Institute. When the Sisters came to Fargo to open their first mission in the United States, His Excellency, Bishop Muench gave him to them as a father and protector. In advance, we are pleased to wish the Bishop-Elect of Covington the words he will hear at his consecration:

Msgr. Mulloy was consecrated as bishop on January 10, 1945 in St. Mary's cathedral and delighted the Sisters by celebrating mass in their Chapel on the January 13, 1945. Later in the month, Bishop Muench appointed Fr. David Boyle, JCD as director and chaplain of the Sisters of Service.

Religious Vacation Schools in North Dakota, 1944

In recounting some of their Religious Vacation School experiences, Sr. Morrison wrote an account in the October 1944 issue of *The Field at Home*:

On May 27, we left Fargo and turned "Missionward." Our summer work would keep us in the rural parishes until mid-August. We set out with a prayer on our lips, well armed with catechisms, picture charts, hymn books, holy cards and medals. We had looked forward eagerly to this coming summer, grateful for the opportunity of rendering service to our zealous rural pastors. We taught in ten parishes and missions and reached some 300 children.

We taught first at St. Joseph's Parish, Bremen, for two and a half weeks. This was an eventful summer for the parish for on June 26, Most Reverend Aloysius J. Muench, Bishop of Fargo, made his first official visit to the church. His Excellency celebrated the 8.00 a.m. Mass during which four little children received their First Holy Communion and administered the Sacrament of Confirmation at 10.00 a.m.

That same afternoon St. Augustine's Parish, Fessenden, welcomed Bishop Muench. Here, he confirmed three adults and twenty children among whom were sixteen altar boys garbed in cassock and surplice. Earlier that month, we had held a ten-day Vacation School at Manfred, a mission of Fessenden.

While three sisters were teaching at Fessenden and Bremen, Two were working in Lakota and Tolna. On Sunday, June 18, after two weeks of intensive study, seventeen children received their First Holy Communion during a solemn and impressive ceremony at St. Mary's Church, Lakota. We had planned an outdoor procession but bad weather prevented this. First Communion at St. Joseph's Mission Church, Tolna, was held on July 2. Here the weather permitted a procession. The children followed by the First Communicants carrying lighted candles preceded the Pastor into the Church. After Mass, Father enrolled all the First Communicants in the Scapular and gave a certificate to each.

From Lakota, two Sisters went to Kensal and two to the Mission of Bordulac. Over fifty children enrolled at Kensal. Here we divided the children into three groups; the pastor taught the senior group and the altar boys. Twenty children attended Vacation School at Bordulac. Both schools closed on the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, First Communion Day. The choir, composed of Vacation School children, sang the High Masses at both the Church and the Mission.

Two Sisters then went to Fried and two to Hope for two weeks. At Fried, twenty-nine children attended classes. We were privileged to have Mass each morning during which the children answered the Mass prayers in common. The closing day of Vacation School was General Communion Sunday for the whole parish. Breakfast was served in the parish hall. The children then presented a musical program after which the pastor awarded prizes and gave a medal and picture as a souvenir of the Vacation School.

The classes at Hope also began with daily Mass and closed with Benediction in the afternoon. The pastor took part of the class time to train twelve new altar boys to serve at the altar. On closing day, the First Communicants led the procession to the church and the seniors, who had learned a Gregorian Mass during Vacation School, joined the parish choir in singing a High Mass.

We spent our last two weeks in the Sacred Heart Parish at Orrin and held classes in the public school. The church, having been destroyed by fire some months ago, the Pastor celebrated Mass each day in the Orrin Community Hall and before Mass gave a short instruction on the Mass. Seven little ones received their First Holy Communion on August 13.

On our return to Fargo, we began putting all in readiness for the opening of the Religious Correspondence School. We hope to keep in contact with all the children we have taught this summer. We are grateful for the opportunity of assisting, be it ever so little, in trying to spread God's Kingdom.

In September 1945, Sr. Morrison left for Toronto to accept the appointment of Mistress of Novices.

Sister Dwyer prepared a text for mothers teaching pre-schoolers

Sr. Agnes Dwyer replaced Sr. Morrison as superior. In November of 1945, Bishop Muench seeing the need for a text to aid mothers in teaching their pre-schoolers asked Sr. Dwyer to prepare a course of lessons on the Life of Christ as an aid to these Mothers. Sister selected and wrote simple instructions on the 40 coloured scriptural pictures to depict the Life of Christ from Infancy to the Ascension. The lessons were mimeographed and put into a spiral bound book and sold for \$1.

When the book was ready, a Mother-teacher club was organized in Grafton, N.D. on January 25, 1946. This group elected a president, a vice-president, and secretary-treasurer. They planned to meet every Thursday to work out together ways and means of using the book. Other Mother-Teacher clubs were formed throughout the Diocese and encouraged to use the Manual prepared by Sr. Dwyer.

A six-year review, 1939-1945

In October 1945, a review of the first six years was published in the *Catholic Action News*:

Vacation schools conducted	50
Children instructed personally	1,729
Children prepared for First Communion	253
Children prepared for Confirmation	80
Children enrolled in Religious Correspondence	2,821
Lessons sent out by mail	18,336
Circular Letters	28,020
Personal Letters	2,119
Catholic literature	12,391
Religious articles	4,762
Family visits	1,721
Hospital patients visited	442

Proof that the Sisters were fulfilling their mandate is shown by the above statistics published with the accompanying note: "Parish visiting, census taking, and the establishment of a Religious Correspondence School have been the occupation and the contribution of the Sisters of Service who entered the Diocese of Fargo on August 21, 1939. Bishop A. Muench offered the first Mass in their temporary residence at 614 4th St. S. in the presence of Sisters Morrison, Wayland and O'Kane."

NEW ENDEAVOURS AT THE FARGO MISSION, 1946-1963

Sr. Lydia Tyszkowski joins the Catholic Welfare Bureau

In January 1946, while Sr. General, Sr. Margaret Guest, was visiting the Sisters at Fargo, the director of the city's Catholic Welfare Bureau called to discuss the possibility of a Sister working at the bureau. On her return to Toronto, Sr. Guest, after consultation with the community's Council, decided that Sr. Lydia Tyszkowski, a qualified social worker, would assist in the Fargo Catholic Welfare Bureau.

Although Sr. Tyszkowski's duties did not commence until September 1946, she arrived on June 7 to lend a hand with the Sisters' religious vacation schools. The day after her arrival, Sr. Tyszkowski set out with Sr. Coates for Crary, ND and helped with the catechetical program on weekends and during the summer for the three years of her Fargo posting. At the welfare bureau, she was ever ready to assist and visit the poorest and the most deprived clients. To keep abreast of governmental regulations, she attended social service workshops and conventions. In the fall of 1949, she was transferred to the community's women hostel/residence in Vancouver.

When Bishop Muench was named Papal Nuncio to Germany in 1947, Msgr. Leo Dworschak was appointed as auxiliary bishop of Fargo. Following Bishop Muench's elevation as cardinal in 1960, Msgr. Dworschak was appointed Bishop of Fargo, assuming the full spiritual leadership of the 85,000 Catholics of that diocese, where he had spent most of his priestly life. Like Bishop Muench, he was ever a staunch supporter of the work of the Sisters and keenly interested in assisting them in their rural apostolate.

Weekly catechism classes taught

To fulfill the expressed wish of the Bishop to reach as many children as possible every week, the Sisters taught weekly classes. Beginning September 1946, three Sisters went to Argusville on Sunday mornings where they held choir practice before, and religious instruction following the mass. Until 1963, the Sisters continued teaching catechism on Saturday mornings, taking part in mass on Sundays and in helping the choir and special celebrations. In 1954, they went to Hillsboro and Hunter on Saturday afternoons. From 1956 to 1961, two Sisters taught at Buffalo and two at Oriska on Wednesdays after school. A volunteer catechist, Mary Ziemitz, also taught a class and drove the Sisters to Hillsboro and Oriska until January, 1956. In 1956, the Sisters were presented with a car, named "Gertie" and hence drove to the classes.

In December 1951, the *Catholic Action News* reported that approximately 800 students were enrolled in the correspondence school. For the Sisters, more than 1,000 lessons a month were mailed and corrected as well as the remailing of Catholic literature to numerous families.

Sr. Margaret Murphy recalled the Sisters' experiences during the summer of 1951 on the North Dakota prairies, noting the First Communion Day excitement. "Actually, one relives again the thrill and expectancy of God's little ones. With grateful hearts we thank Him for the privilege of being His instruments in their preparation to receive Him. We return to the hidden labours of our Nazareth home. Here we correct, mail and remail lessons to these little ones. There is no fanfare or blowing of trumpets in correspondence work, but its joys and crown are His words: "What you have done to these, my little ones, you have done to Me."

On July 2, 1951, Srs. Murphy and Margaret MacMillan helped in the celebration of the Golden

Jubilee of the Sacred Heart Church at Crary, N.D. A few months ahead of this time, Pastor Fr. Clement, asked if the Sisters would help the children to sing the Jubilee Mass. Sr. Murphy recalled: "After three weeks of intensive training, beginning from scratch, we succeeded in teaching them the Mass of the Angels plus the trimmings - responses, offertory, processional and recessional hymns."

Sisters take census in newly-organized parish

Fr. Walsh, chaplain to the Sisters from 1949 for over ten years, was appointed to establish a new parish in Fargo and asked the Sisters to take a census of the area that formed this new parish. Four Sisters sallied forth on September 2, 1960, visiting from 10:00 to 11:45 in the morning and from 2:00 to 4:00 in the afternoon, completing the census by the end of September. Fr. Walsh died in February 1961.

CCD introduced in the Fargo Diocese

In October 1961, Bishop Dworschak asked the Sisters to help establish CCD in the diocese within the year. Fr. Raymond Scheller was appointed as the diocesan superintendent of education and of the CCD in June 1962 a month after the Sisters of the Presentation announced the withdrawal of 19 of their Sisters from the four parochial schools in Fargo following the requirement by the Department of Education for the Sisters to take some university courses. This action highlighted the urgency of implementing CCD. Fr. Scheller decided to introduce the CCD in the city's parish schools of religion that fall instead of beginning in the rural areas as planned. Many members of religious communities, including Srs. Margaret Ready, Hilda Lunney and Domitilla Morrison, who returned to the mission in 1958, attended the month-long CCD summer school held at the Sacred Heart convent.

A pilot teacher training program was conducted for lay and religious catechists at St. Anthony's from September 10 to 24, 1962 under the direction of Fr. Scheller and Franciscan Srs. Alexia and Barbara from Hankinson. Sisters Alexia and Barbara conducted special sessions September 27, 28, for parents. Srs. Morrison and Ready became involved in the teacher-training program, directing a course for parents of First Communicants on September 19.

At St. Anthony's parish, Sr. Morrison was named as supervisor of St. Anthony's parish school of religion, which officially opened on September 29, 1962 with 317 children, 34 teachers, helpers, secretaries and interested parents. In May 1963, Fr. Scheller attended the appreciation night for teachers of religion and heard guest speaker Sr. Eunice, PBVM of Dubuque, Iowa, whom Sr. Morrison had gained much from her CCD course.

SISTERS DEPART FROM FARGO, 1963

With the Sisters' involvement in parish schools of religion, Bishop Dworschak decided the greatest need of the diocese was CCD work and the Sisters devoted their time exclusively to it. The correspondence school of religion was closed officially on April 30, 1963. The Sisters' large amount of catechetical material since 1939 was given to other catechists in the Fargo diocese.

Since Fr. Scheller, the diocesan CCD director, operated from his office in Grand Forks, it was decided that the Sisters should move to that community. The painful task began of packing and saying goodbye to their numerous friends and benefactors in Fargo. Various parishes organized farewell parties to enable the Sisters to bid farewell to their friends in and around Fargo. On June 9 at St. William's parish, the Sisters were honoured at a large gathering of parishioners and their former pupils. In appreciation of the Sisters' assistance and guidance, members of the C.Y.O. presented the Sisters with a Hi-Fi stereophonic record player with six records; a stainless steel coffee percolator and a camera with the inscription of "in deep appreciation for drawing us closer to Christ by your teaching and above all by your example. Argusville C.Y.O." Sr. Ready expressed thanks and also their deep regret at leaving kind friends whom they had come to love and admire.

Written on July 7, 1963, the Sisters explained the change in a circular letter:

This letter will give you some details of our moving from Fargo to Grand Forks.

First, I should tell you that at present we are just recovering from a round of farewell parties. We are overwhelmed with the great generosity of friends and former students in various parishes for their many beautiful useful gifts. Their expressions of gratitude moved us to tears. May God bless them!

On April 30, our Religious Correspondence School was officially closed, and for good. Pastors and pupils were notified that we would not resume work in September. Instead, we shall devote our time exclusively to CCD work. As our Diocesan Director, Fr. Scheller has his Education Office in Grand Forks, it was decided that we move to that city. We are to occupy the rectory bought and furnished by Fr. Paul Koehler in which he lived for one year. A "mover's van" will take our furniture to Grand Forks on Wednesday, July 10. After that date, our address will be 918 Columbia Road, Grand Forks, North Dakota.

The house is very small, three bedrooms, a living room and a kitchen on the main floor, and a chapel downstairs. It is well furnished and very conservative. It is equipped with everything including a deep freeze and a washer and drier. We are taking our chapel furnishings also two roll-away cots. We hope you will come to visit us.

Most of our work will be down town at the office, 1600 - 4th Avenue East. As far as we know now, one Sister will look after the office; the other two will "take to the road," setting up CCD Units and Schools of Religion throughout the Diocese. Besides the SOS, there will be two Franciscan Sisters and a lay woman. Fr. Scheller hopes to get another priest in the program. Because priests are scarce, this may be difficult.

Our new home is two blocks from St. Michael's Hospital. We have been there twice. The dear Sisters of St. Joseph are already swamping us with kindness. Fr. Bill Sherman welcomed us to Newman Centre at the University, three blocks from here, and hopes we will attend Mass there. This we shall do when Fr. Scheller is out of town.

We are having Vacation School this year, only at Argusville and Crary but expect a good attendance at each. We hope you will have a cool and fruitful summer. Please do not lose our address; we are counting lots of mail from you at Christmas.

God love and bless you all.

SISTERS EXPAND CCD IN GRAND FORKS, 1963-1969

The quartet of Srs. Morrison, Ready, Rosemarie Hudon and Eileen Bridgeo moved to Grand Forks on July 10, 1963 and their new home, the former rectory at 918 Columbia Road. The diocesan office of education was located in the former workshop at St. James Academy on 420 - 16th Street North. For the fall schedule, Sr. Morrison, the office manager, Sr. Ready and secretary Betty Metcalfe set up the office and completed the secretarial and clerical work.

CCD program promoted in the diocese

Fr. Scheller held two meetings on August 12 and 13, 1963, at Devil's Lake and Edgely for pastors in the diocese to become familiar with the Confraternity of Christine Doctrine (CCD) program, which was planned for that fall in the diocese. Of the more than 70 priests who attended, 35 expressed a desire to begin the CCD program in their parish while 40 requested sample material.

Regional teacher training workshops held

In September 1963, eight two-day regional teacher training institutes, conducted by two teams, were held in preparation for the catechetical programs being launched in the various parishes. Fr. Richard Rudd with Srs. Barbara and Therese, OSF, directed the workshops in the southern part of the diocese while Fr. Scheller with Srs. Ready and Hudon led the workshops in the northern part. During the fall semester, the CCD staff worked with 30 parishes and missions in the diocese and established schools of religion to initiate or to further teacher training. In January 1964, seven regional Institutes were conducted as follow-ups to the teacher-training. During these institutes and training programs, the CCD staff worked with approximately 400 teachers, who instructed 5,000 children weekly. This first year set a pattern for CCD planning for succeeding years.

Father Scheller delegates CCD work

On February 5, 1965, Fr. Scheller suffered a severe heart attack and returned to limited duty at the end of April. However on May 18, he called a meeting of all CCD personnel and invited six priests (Frs. Rudd, George Schneider, David Schmit, Joseph Senger, Edward Sherman and Gerald Sande) to organize a program for the fall semester and an outline for the second semester. By the end of that day, the agenda was accomplished with each priest accepting a specific responsibility, which had been part of Fr. Scheller's job description. The CCD staff now implemented the programs.

CCD work expands, 1965-1968

In July 1965, Fr. Sande was appointed as the diocese's assistant director of education and Sr. Helen Hayes replaced Sr. Bridgeo. In March 1966, Fr. Sande replaced Fr. Scheller as director. An excellent organizer, Fr. Sande believed that the task of helping each year's large crop of new religion teachers deserved top priority. For this purpose in January 1968, he promoted from his office a new correspondence course for beginning religion teachers based on the text of *Forming Catechists, An Introduction to CCD teaching* by Conway and Anderson.

The work of the Sisters was outlined in an article by columnist Mike Carrigan of the *Grand Forks Herald* on April 23, 1967. It was published under the headline of "Canadian Sisters' Headquarters here in Grand Forks, 1967."

Three Roman Catholic Sisters have been unobtrusively holding a "beachhead" for their Canadian based religious order here in Grand Forks for the past four years.

The three, Sisters Helen Hayes, Rosemarie Hudon and Margaret Ready are members of the Sisters of Service and the only sisters from their order stationed in the United States.

Their simple, almost secular mode of dress sometimes results in their being mistaken for public health nurses, Red Cross workers, hospital Gray Ladies or the like, a predicament which they say can get amusing.

Founded in Toronto, Ontario, in 1922, the Sisters of Service first worked among immigrant people trying to make a new life for themselves in Canada. Later, they were sent out in twos and threes to live and work among people in rural areas as teachers, catechists, nurses, and social workers.

The three sisters assigned to Grand Forks instructed lay teachers of religion in the Diocese of Fargo under the Church's Confraternity of Christian Doctrine Program. The late Cardinal Muench of Fargo was a close friend of the order's co-founder, Fr. George Daly, C.Ss.R. It was Cardinal Muench, then Bishop of Fargo, who had asked that a contingent of sisters be sent to Fargo to help Catholic families in rural areas. They arrived in Fargo in August, 1939. After two years, their main work became teaching religion by correspondence. In 1961, because of changing school conditions, it became necessary to speed up the organization of the CCD Program in which the SOS played an significant part. Because this CCD Program grew rather dramatically, the little band of Sisters was transferred to Grand Forks and placed in charge of coordinating the Program. This Program provides religious education to Catholic young people attending public schools where the Catholic religion is not taught.

The Diocese provided them with a home at 918 Columbia Road and office space in the Diocesan Education Office near St. James High School. Sr. Morrison spent considerable time organizing and efficiently maintaining a Religion Information Center and Office until 1966. Sr. Margaret Ready succeeded her in this apostolate. Now, Sr. Hudon and Sr. Hayes each give four to eight lectures a week to lay religion teachers. Currently, they are in contact with approximately 5,000 teachers of religion.

Women who become Sisters are "looking for fulfillment as mature women," Sr. Hudon said, "but do so for more than humanitarian reasons. We strive to act for love of God. Our own spiritual lives stem from a life of prayer."

Though the Sisters devote hours of their time to hard work and prayer (the Sisters estimated they spend about two hours each day in communal and private prayer), there is still time and freedom for individual self expression.

Sr. Hayes is the musician of this tiny community and has a Licentiate degree (LTC), in music from Trinity College, London, England. She also plays the guitar at folk Masses and performs impromptu concerts at home on a small portable organ she brought from Canada.

Sr. Ready, besides maintaining the office, expresses her virtuosity in the culinary department, whipping up succulent dishes from gifts of wild duck topped with an orange glaze, venison roasts and exotic recipes she just can't help trying her hand at - like onion casserole made with catsup and honey, sauerkraut salad and sour cream raisin pie. Mostly, however, the Sisters dine frugally on a more routine meat and potato fare like most everyone else.

Sr. Hudon's choice of relaxation is reading which is understandable for a Sister with a Ph.D. degree. One of her colleagues divulged that her taste in light reading includes "who-done-it" type detective stories, which, of course, isn't so understandable for a Sister with a Ph.D. She also has a taste for Mexican-style Tacos, but suppresses that particular vice in deference to her Sisters who "hate spicy foods."

When Fr. Sande resigned in February 1968, Sr. Hayes was named two months later as acting direction upon his recommendation. One of three Sister members in 1967 elected to the diocese's Pastoral and Apostolic Council and a member of the National Council of Family Relations, Sr. Hayes was an enthusiastic CCD promoter among the staff, pastors, Sisters and laity. Fr. L. Kuhn was appointed as the director in the autumn of 1968.

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SISTERS DEPART FROM GRAND FORKS

Due to dwindling vocations and pressing requests for the Sisters in Canada, Sr. General Mary Reansbury and the Council decided to close the Fargo mission. In May 1968, Sr. Reansbury notified Bishop Dworschak that the Sisters would withdraw at the end of June. However, under a special request from Fr. Kuhn, Sr. Hayes remained one additional year to assist with the CCD work.

Sisters make a regretful farewell

With genuine regret, the Sisters of Service bade farewell to the Diocese of Fargo. For 30 years, 21 Sisters had served in that diocese. The work in which the Sisters had been engaged was close to their hearts and with the basic aim and orientation of the community. After Sr. Eileen Dwyer returned to Canada in May 1968, Srs. Ready and Hayes prepared for the Benedictine Sisters, who would move into the home on 918 Columbia Road in August. Sr. Ready closed the mission and on June 21, 1968 and left Grand Forks by train for Winnipeg en route to Montreal, her new mission. Sr. Hayes moved to an apartment, where she would live during the following year, and attended a 10-day CCD workshop at Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. Sr. Hayes returned to Grand Forks on September 1.

In April 1969, Fr. Kuhn wrote a brief summary of his evaluation of the Sisters work for the past 30 years in the Diocese of Fargo. The following excerpts refer to the SOS' activity in Grand Forks:

... In 1963, the Sisters of Service moved from Fargo to Grand Forks to assist Rev. Raymond Scheller in the Office of Education and CCD work. Travelling from parish to parish they brought the techniques of teaching to parents and other dedicated lay people, also adult education through all the avenues of learning adapted through available sources.

During the past thirty years, many in our Diocese have had the privilege of getting to know and love the Sisters of Service who have worked in our midst. We were all saddened last year when because of a shortage of SOS in Canada and no vocations from our Diocese, the decision was made by the order that the Sisters be recalled to Canada.

Sr. Hayes was allowed to continue her effective work in CCD here in our Diocese for the past year, and now will also be recalled.

Working with Sr. Hayes during the past year, I have learned to admire and respect this dedicated woman; her wise counsel will be missed next year. The CCD program in our Diocese is very dear to her heart and it is to her that we attribute a great deal of the credit for the program as it exists today.

The catechists in our Diocese are also aware of Sr. Hayes' talents and this is why they sent petitions filled with signatures of priests, sisters and laity of the Diocese requesting that Sr. Hayes be allowed to remain, but it seems that her talents are also needed by the Order in Canada. Sister's new job will be to help to restructure the setting up of a General Council of their order which will meet in Toronto in 1970.

All the Sisters of Service who have worked in our Diocese during the past 30 years have been invited to return for a testimonial dinner in their honour at Westward Ho, Grand Forks, May 9, at 7.00 p.m. 1969. I sincerely hope that many of our priests, sisters, and catechists will be present to honour the Sisters of Service for their thirty years of dedicated labour in our Diocese.

Testimonial dinner to honour Sisters, 1969

On behalf of the community, Srs. Hayes, Ready and Hudon attended a testimonial dinner on May 9, 1969 with attendance of other Sisters, clergy and lay friends from Fargo, Grand Forks and many

rural areas where families had received the correspondence lessons. After the dinner, Fr. David Boyle and Bishop Dworschak paid tribute to the Sisters. Sr. Hayes responded for the community. The Sisters were grateful to Fr. Kuhn for organizing this dinner, which gave the Sisters an opportunity to visit and express their appreciation to the many genuine friends who had been so kind and generous during their years in the Diocese of Fargo. Although all knew, intuitively, that the bonds of friendship would remain, they were also aware that distance would bar them from the pleasant associations of the past. This gathering, however, would seal an indelible memory for the future.

Other tributes for the Sisters

in 1969, Blanche Cossette, chair of the Historical Committee of St. Anthony's parish in Fargo, wrote a tribute of the Sisters under the title of *The SOS in North Dakota through the eyes of Blanche J. Cossette: The funny Sisters with short grey dresses*:

There is an old cliché, "We don't miss the water until the well runs dry!" I would like to add - "nor do we want a drink until we are thirsty."

The Sisters of Service were with us for years, quietly giving from their well of Catholic Theology and Doctrine. They even lived in my parish! I remember their grey stucco house; it sort of went with their peculiar outfits. Peculiar for Sisters, because they were grey and short and their hair even showed from under their caps. Imagine! I didn't know too much about their work; heard they conducted correspondence courses and they had catechism school in the summer in the rural areas. They were very nice and always smiled very pleasantly.

Then BOOM! Seven years ago, because of revised teaching laws, many of our parochial Sisters had to return to school. There were not enough sisters or teachers to operate our schools. St. Anthony's had to close their three lower grades for awhile.

Suddenly, we were very interested and very aware of the vital work of the Sisters of Service. Our parish, St. Anthony's, became the Pilot Project of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD). Though the CCD had been around for a long time, few people knew what it was. Things began to happen! We who worked with the SOS, soon learned who those "funny Sisters" in short grey dresses with their hair showing, were, and what they did. They were real persons and they taught and lived Catholic Christianity.

We worked together, we, the laymen and laywomen, sisters and priests, teaching our children. We discovered we are all human, each with our own human short-comings, and we all belonged to the Body of Christ. Just when we at St. Anthony's were getting to know these Sisters, they were taken away. That's how it is when you are lame; you need a crutch. When you are better, you walk alone. The Physician knows the right time. Treatment, yes, because healing doesn't happen overnight.

When you, Sr. Hayes, were the only one left, we really got to know you. You were terrific! What a tiny package of dynamite - but what an impact! We all began to get the message. WE are the Church - WE carry the Cross of Christ - WE reveal Christ to each other. Then you were taken from us, too.

We protested. We did not get the results we hoped for - but our efforts were not in vain. The nourishing waters from the Spiritual Well you Sisters of Service had been tending, had been producing fruit all the time. Now was the great harvest! The awakened laity, the other sisters and the clergy let the whole Diocese and your Motherhouse know how we felt about you and what you had done.

You go! We are sad! We shall miss you! But Look around. Now there are lots more nuns in short dresses and hair showing! Sisters, priests and laity know we belong to the same family of God and must work for His Church. The Great Physician must know that we can take care now or He wouldn't have taken you away.

N E W F O U N D L A N D**1975 - 1992**

<u>CLARENVILLE</u>	1975 - 1992
<u>BISHOP'S FALLS</u>	1981 - 1992

INTRODUCTION TO CLARENVILLE

In 1975, Bishop Alphonsus Penney of the Grand Falls Diocese selected the community of Clarenville on Trinity Bay as the site of the correspondence school of religion. With a population of 3,000, Clarenville was a service base for the approximately 30,000 persons of the Bonavista Peninsula. For the next 17 years, the Sisters served this hub with its families in 28 parishes, comprising of 155 communities stretching from St. Anthony on the Great Northern Peninsula to Upper Island Cove, Conception Bay in the east.

In the early 1970s, Sr. Rosemarie Hudon, who had served in the catechetical mission of Grand Forks, ND, was hired as the first religious consultant for the Humber St. Barbe Roman Catholic school board in the western Newfoundland Diocese of St. George's. Since the religion classes were organized in city schools, she concentrated on the rural districts of Corner Brook and Port-au-Port. In her travels, visiting the Catholic schools, she stopped at towns with only integrated (Protestant) schools to inquire of the Catholic pupils, who were receiving no Catholic instruction. During the first year, Sister discovered 255 pupils and more the second year.

Sr. Hudon explained the introduction of correspondence courses into Newfoundland:

One cold, damp fall day, my duties as Religious Consultant brought me to a multi-grade school of Catholic children being taught in a country church. There were desks and benches of a sort and the altar where Holy Mass was celebrated once a month - weather permitting - was behind closed doors. The 18 children from grades I to VI were delightful. They were alert, interested and polite. About half of them were red-haired and all were exceptionally good-looking. The teacher was pedagogically trained but totally unfamiliar with the Canadian Catechism and admitted that the religion class consisted of 15 minutes daily when he took the whole class for prayers, answers from the catechism or read to them a holy story. He felt he was doing all he could.

I suggested to this teacher that he enroll the pupils in a correspondence school of religion. When I learned that he was unable to find a school in the Maritimes willing to take on extra pupils at such a late date, I applied to the Sisters of Service in Regina. This class was accepted as well as classes in two other schools in similar condition.

The teachers in these Catholic schools were able to supervise the lessons regularly during school hours. In my travels, I met a mother of twelve who told me that she had been able to send her oldest daughter to her sister in St. John's to prepare for First Communion, but this girl, now in grade VIII, had had no further instruction. None of the other children had received any formal religious instruction. In another village, there were eight Catholic families with children. The eight fathers were brothers and four of the wives were converts. They greatly appreciated the help of correspondence lessons.

In my visits to Catholic Schools on the Great Northern Peninsula, I used to pass two picturesque villages. I thought, "No Catholic School; so no need to stop!" One day, I learned from the pastor of the district that there were six brothers, Catholics, married and living in one or other of these villages. With some difficulty, I got one of the wives by phone. She invited me to her home, promising to have the other five wives there. We had a great meeting in her kitchen over tea. The result of this meeting was the enrolling of 14 children in the Regina Correspondence School.

I also found families along the south coast - at Rameo, Burgeo, Rencontre East, English Harbour East, Grand le Pierre and Terrenceville - all in need of correspondence lessons.

Later, on considering the vagaries of the mail system, the inclement weather of our

province and not least, the frequent mail strikes, I soon became convinced that Regina was too distant to provide the most effective correspondence for Newfoundland. It seemed obvious to me that the natural choice for a centre would be in Corner Brook. With this in mind, I approached Mother James, General Superior of the Presentation Order in Newfoundland. Mother James, concerned at the plight of these children deprived of regular religious instruction, decided something should be done for them. With her encouragement, the Presentation Sisters, Clement McCarthy and Mary Dominic, PBVM, opened a Correspondence School of religion in All Hallows Parish, Corner Brook, in 1973.

In 1973, at the request of Mother James, PBVM, the SOS Superior General, Sr. Patricia Burke, asked Sr. Pauline Coates, SOS, who had 20 years experience in Correspondence Work, to go to Corner Brook and assist the two Presentation Sisters in setting up a new Correspondence Program. Sister Coates had an enjoyable stay of five weeks with the Sisters giving assistance in setting up an office routine, and correction procedures. She also accompanied them in making visits to the families. A year later, Sr. Monica Fagan, PHVM joined the staff. The Sisters were enthusiastic about this new ministry and soon had 255 families listed on filing cards with many others waiting to be found.

It is readily understood by anyone who has had experience in correspondence lessons that their success or failure depends in large measure on Later, on considering the vagaries of the mail system, the inclement weather of our province and, not least, the frequent mail strikes, I soon became convinced the interest and encouragement of the parish priests and their assistants. Their show of pleasure for work well done keeps a child working to the full extent of his/her ability. We were fortunate in having pastors who gave us full cooperation and every assistance possible. They set up meetings in their various missions and did home visiting to encourage both parents and children in this important work.

During the 1970s, pastors in Newfoundland were interested in the *Canadian Catechism*, which had been approved by the Canadian bishops and in the correspondence method of instruction. In early January 1974, Fr. J.L. Lacey of Portugal Cove, near St. John's, wrote to the Daly Centre in Regina, requesting a set of the lessons of the *Come to the Father* series. A month later, Shirley Neary, the pastor's secretary, wrote that Fr. Lacey was pleased with the lessons.

More than a year later on May 6, 1975, Sister General Sr. Helen Hayes announced the establishment of the Clarenville mission in a circular letter to the community:

At this time I wish to recommend to your prayers a request made to us by Bishop Alphonsus Penney of Grand Falls Diocese, Newfoundland. He has some 1,400 children in his diocese who are not receiving regular religious education. Bishop Penney has asked us to set up a Correspondence Centre in his diocese. To date, he is not certain of the exact location, but he favours Clarenville. To begin this project Sisters Madge Barton and Agnes Hearn have generously offered their services.

The Presentation Sisters who have a convent in Windsor, west of Gander, will be responsible for the adjacent area. Our territory will be east of Gander, north and south to the borders of St. John's Diocese. The correspondence lessons will be sent from our office in Regina but the correcting will be done either in Clarenville or in the centre chosen by the Bishop. At this date, there is much to be finalized. I count on you to keep this intention in your prayers.

Sr. Agnes Hearn prepared the office

From her long experience in correspondence work, Sr. Hearn was charged with the arrangements for the office equipment at the correspondence school, sending a list to Bishop Penney. In a letter on June 17, 1975, Bishop Penney replied to Sr. Hearn:

Dear Sr. Agnes:

I wish to acknowledge your letter of May 1, 1975, which I received through the good offices of your Sister General, Sr. Helen Hayes.

I want, first of all, to welcome you to our Diocese and tell you that we are joyfully awaiting your arrival in the Diocese. In my wildest dreams I never thought that I would be receiving, so quickly and abundantly, the help which is needed to provide catechetical services to so many of our school pupils who do not have access to a Catholic school. The provision of this service by your Congregation is truly a red letter day in our Diocese.

When the dust settles from current activities, I will be raising some more dust to fulfill the needs which you outlined in your letter. Investigations are still proceeding to come up with a residence for yourself and Sr. Barton in a place called Clarendville which is fairly central in the field of your operations. Also, a list is being compiled of all the students, their age and grade, parents' names, school which they attend and the name of the place where they live. As soon as this is completed, I will be forwarding it so that you and/or Sr. Barton will be able to order supplies.

Assuring you of my help and cooperation and that of the priests in the Diocese, and of our union in prayer for God's blessing on this project.

On June 17, Bishop Penney also sent a cordial welcome to Sr. Barton, completing her teaching at Spirit River, Alberta:

I am writing to extend to you personally a very cordial welcome to our Diocese. and to assure you that I and many others are eagerly awaiting your arrival. It is a great source of encouragement and joy to know that the Diocese now has a means of bringing the good news and our Catholic traditions to so many of our boys and girls who, through no fault of theirs, do not have the benefit of a Catholic education.

Recently, I met a mother with three of her children; they are the only Catholics in a fairly large Protestant area. When I told her of our plans for September, she was genuinely delighted to be getting some help in teaching the catechism to her children.

CLARENVILLE CATECHETICAL MISSION OPENED, 1975

The two founding Sisters of the Clarenville mission met at a community retreat (August 14-16) held at the Franciscan House in Lumsden, Saskatchewan. Both Sisters brought vast expertise and expertise to the new catechetical mission. Sr. Barton, a teacher and the founding superior of the Regina catechetical mission in 1934, had been teaching in Spirit River of Northern Alberta while Sr. Hearn, a member of the staff of the Daly Centre, the Regina catechetical mission, had travelled many summers, teaching in the religious vacation schools. After the Second Vatican Council, she had been appointed as the director of religious education at St. Paul's church in Winnipeg.

While at the retreat, Bishop Penney's appointed each Sister as an Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist. On August 15, he wrote: "This appointment will enable you to participate, as circumstances and opportunities permit, in the pastoral ministry of the Diocese." Following the retreat, the pair departed for Newfoundland with a stopover in Montreal to visit Sr. Edna Deland, SOS, who was seriously ill with cancer.

Sisters arrive in Clarenville

Srs. Barton and Hearn arrived in St. John's on August 18, and were welcomed by Sr. Mary Fitzgerald, superior of the community's mission in St. John's and early member of the Edmonton catechetical mission. For the two Sisters, Sr. Hudon arranged a meeting with executive members of the Catholic Education Committee (CEC), which was responsible for the operation of all the Catholic schools in Newfoundland and Labrador. Under CEC policy, every Catholic child in Newfoundland had a right to a Catholic religious education. At the meeting, they were introduced to Dr. J. K. Tracey, CEC executive secretary, and F.J. Kearsey, the CEC's executive officer, who later succeeded Dr. Tracey as executive secretary.

On August 22, Sr. Hudon drove Srs. Barton and Hearn to Clarenville, 190 kilometres west of St. John's. Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Russell met and welcomed the Sisters at a fork in the road on Marine Drive and escorted them to #2 Duffitt's apartments on Vardy's Avenue. At the request of Fr. B.J. McCarthy, the priest in charge of the Clarenville mission church, the Russells had arranged for an apartment, which was in scarce supply with the operation of the oil refinery at nearby Come-By-Chance. The Sisters remained in the apartment building during the 17 years in Clarenville.

Since the furniture ordered for the apartment by the bishop had not been delivered from the Clarenville store of Cohen's, the Sisters spent their first night in the town at the The Newfie Bullet, the town's motel. The next day when the furniture arrived, Bernie Russell, Leo Quinlan and Philip Veitch set the furniture in place while the Sisters worked at getting three rooms in order.

Bishop Penney welcomes Sisters

When Srs. Barton, Hearn and Hudon attended their first mass in Clarenville, they were surprised to find Bishop Penney as the celebrant. The bishop, who had driven 156 kilometres from his headquarters at Grand Falls for this occasion, welcomed the Sisters to Clarenville and credited Sr. Hudon with this eventful coming of the Sisters. He said:

It is always a joy for me to come to Clarenville, but this time it is a special joy to welcome two Sisters of Service. Under God, it is principally through an inspiration of Sr. Rosemarie Hudon that the Sisters are here.

It was during the blessing of a Catholic School at Goose Cove, near St. Anthony, (near the tip of the Great Northern Peninsula) that I mentioned to Sr. Hudon, then Religious

Coordinator for Catholic Schools in St. Georges' Diocese, that I was concerned about many Catholic children scattered throughout a relatively sparse population over a large geographical area peculiar to the Grand Falls Diocese. My great concern was that these children were unable to receive regular Catholic religious instruction. Sister's suggestion was, "Why don't you try religion by correspondence? It serves well in other scattered areas, including St. Georges Diocese, why not in the Grand Falls Diocese?"

Following Sister's suggestion, I applied to Sr. Helen Hayes, Superior General of the Sisters of Service, Toronto, who very graciously accepted my request for this new venture. This 'religion by correspondence,' therefore, a program to aid parents in teaching religion to their children, is what we are about to try. I ask for your cooperation.

For lunch with the bishop at Duffitt's apartment, the Russells arrived with a large box containing a roast chicken with all the trimmings, vegetables, home-made buns with butter, and an apple pie as well as a tablecloth, dishes and cutlery. Before leaving, the bishop arranged for a September 3 meeting with pastors whose parishioners were interested in religious correspondence program.

Sisters learn about Clarenville

Founded in 1900 with a population of 209 engaged in logging, farming, and trapping, Clarenville held a strategic east coast location on Trinity Bay with over 90 communities in its immediate service area of about 30,000. In 1975, it was still predominantly Protestant with the majority of church goers attending the United Church followed by Anglicans, Salvationists, and Pentecostals. Baptists came later. Catholics who had settled in later years were very active. A friendly spirit pervaded with pleasant exchanges of ideas among the clergy and friendly cooperation among people of all faiths. This was evident in interchurch meetings and interfaith celebrations, especially during the January Church Unity Octave and the March "World Day of Prayer."

The friendliness and cooperative spirit of the town was embodied in Susie Singleton, the Catholic matriarch of Clarenville. The mission church of Our Lady of Fatima had been built on Singleton property. When there was no regular mass on Sundays, she demonstrated her faith by walking miles along the railroad track to the nearest mass. Respectful of various faiths, she helped with the bake sales and other ways in the other churches.

Mandate at Clarenville

From Bishop Penney's mandate, the Sisters were charged with spreading God's Word through correspondence to those Catholic families whose children were unable to receive regular Catholic religious instruction. This mandate coincided with the CEC policy "to promote the moral development, religious formation and spiritual training of every Catholic child in Newfoundland." Although the correspondence school was their immediate task, the Sisters envisioned a long-range plan for the correspondence program as an aid for parents at home as well as a teaching aid for catechists at parish schools of religion.

Meeting with Bishop Penney and pastors

At the Sisters' apartment on September 3, [the meeting](#) included Srs. Barton and Hearn, Bishop Penney and five of the seven pastors (Frs. Brendan J. McCarthy, Gambo; Ronald Bromley, Whitbourne; Michael Hynes, Plate Cove East; Leonard Kelly, North River; and Linus Coady, Bonavista with parishes of East of Grand Falls. Fr. David Heale of King's Cove, attended as an observer.) Sister General Sr. Hayes was prevented from attending after her flight was grounded in Halifax. At the meeting, the Sisters outlined aspects of catechism by mail and answered questions. Sr. Hearn received agreement that the correspondence school be named as the Living Word Centre since the principal work was to spread the Word of God. After discussion the territory for each Sister, Bishop Penney assigned the isolated Catholic families of Gambo; between Gambo and Clarenville

and along the Bonavista Peninsula to Sr. Barton.

This area included Clarenville, Port Blandford, Shoal Harbour and Random Island; scattered families of Gambo parish (Newtown, Brookfield, Wesleyville, Trinity, Bonavista Bay, Middlebrook, Wareham, Centreville, Dover, Hare Bay, Glovertown, Cull's Harbour, Sandringham, Eastport, Sandy Cove, Happy Adventure, Terra Nova National Park and Charlottetown); families of Plate Cove parish (Sweet Bay, Princeton, Southern Bay, Charleston, Portland and Musgravetown); and families of Bonavista (Dunfield, Elliston, Little Catalina, Catalina, Melrose, Port Rexton and Trinity, Trinity Bay).

Meanwhile, Sr. Hearn was given the responsibility of the families in the area east of Clarenville, including in the Long Harbour parish of the St. John's archdiocese. Sr. Hearn's territory covered had the eastern section, including the scattered families of Carbonear parish (Heart's Content, Heart's Desire, Heart's Delight; New Perlican, Winterton, Turk's Cove and Green's Harbour); families of Whitbourne (New Harbour, Old Shop, Blaketown, Dildo, South Dildo, Sunnyside, Gooseberry Cove, Little Heart's Ease and Hodge's Cove); families of North River (Butlerville and Shearstown); families of Long Harbour, St. John's archdiocese (Arnold's Cove, Come-By-Chance, Little Harbour, North Harbour, Sunnyside and Swift Current).

Although Bishop Penney had introduced the Sisters to the parishioners at Clarenville, the Sisters attended mass each Sunday at a different parish church of their assigned areas, receiving an introduction to the congregation. After the mass, the Sisters explained the correspondence program to the parish families. After attending the mission churches where mass was celebrated usually once a month, each Sister, armed with a list of names and addresses of Catholic families obtained through the members of a number of Integrated School Boards, drove to seek, find and interest the families in a new method of Catholic instruction. However, the families were helpful in giving directions for the next family on the visiting list.

Office set for operation

Similar to the long table in the Regina catechetical mission, Fr. McCarthy and parishioner Bill Hennesy constructed a large high work table with built-in drawers and compartments for supplies as well as two sets of shelves to stack the lessons and books. All was ready to receive the lessons ordered from the Daly Centre in Regina and books from the CEC office in St. John's. The Sisters used the office equipment loaned by businessman Bren Power until the arrival of the Sisters' typewriters and Gestetner.

Sister Hayes visits

When the office was operational, the two Sisters saw that the three-room apartment did not provide adequate space for living quarters and an office, which required at least two large desks, a long work table, shelves for a large supply of books and lessons, a Gestetner and filing cabinet. Although the Sisters searched for more spacious quarters, it was not until the visit by Sister General Hayes came in mid-September that the situation was resolved. Upon Sr. Hearn's suggestion that a trailer might solve the office space problem, Sr. Hayes and the Sisters decided that a three-room trailer in a trailer court off Tilley's Road, a 15- minute walk from the Sisters' apartment would serve as living quarters while the apartment as the office. The Sisters moved into the trailer on October 7.

While living in the trailer, the Sisters made friends with two of the neighbours dogs, Frisky, a lovable rascal, tricky, wire-haired terrier, and Blondie, a large golden-haired Labrador, Both vied for tidbits and attention. However, the Sisters discovered that Blondie was protective of their trailer, preventing a propane delivery and Bishop Penney from getting near their door for a visit.

EARLY YEARS OF THE CLARENVILLE MISSION, 1975-1980

The religious correspondence program was officially inaugurated during the celebration of a mass in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Grand Falls on September 21, 1975 on the 142th anniversary of the Sisters of the Presentation in Newfoundland. Bishop Penney officially commissioned Presentation Srs. Mary Sebastian, Marion Power and Mary Evangelista to provide correspondence service to the western section of the diocese with an office in Grand Falls. Srs. Barton and Hearn were commissioned to provide the same service to those families in the eastern section of the diocese from Gambo east to Carbonear, including the Bonavista peninsula.

Bishop Penney announces catechetics course for Grand Falls Diocese

In the *Grand Falls Advertiser*, an article published on September 25, 1975 reported on the commissioning ceremony and catechetics course by correspondence from the Grand Falls and Clarenville offices:

His Excellency, Bishop A. L. Penney announced on Monday, September, 22, 1975, that a new correspondence course in catechetics will be introduced into the Grand Falls Diocese this year.

Intended mainly for children in the elementary grades living in areas where they have no access to formal Catholic education programs in the schools, Bishop Penney said the new course would be geared mainly towards a supplement to the child's regular course of study.

The new program was officially inaugurated Sunday, September, 21, 1975, coinciding with the 142nd anniversary of the arrival of the Presentation Sisters in Newfoundland. It also represented the addition of the Sisters of Service to the diocese, two of whom would be working with three Presentation Sisters, to run the correspondence course.

His Excellency emphasized that the program was aimed at "preserving the traditions of the Church as an important aspect of a Christian lifestyle. It would also stress an increased awareness of the spiritual aspects that are the basis of the Christian tradition."

He said that in many isolated communities within the Diocese, there is only a small percentage of Catholic families. These families are concerned that their children are lacking in knowledge and instruction in the traditions of the Church.

With the highly competitive nature of the school system today, he said, the children in many communities attend schools of the integrated school boards, [Boards which administer schools of combined religious denominations except those of the Roman Catholic and Pentecostal Assemblies]. Bishop Penney reminded the people that in earlier days, religion was taught in the one-room school houses. Now for the most part, these had been replaced by integrated schools at larger centres. It was, therefore, essential that a way should be found for these R.C. children to learn about their own religious heritage.

The trend towards a decrease in separate school education and the subsequent increase in integrated schools, he said, is also due to the geographic size of the diocese and the influx over the years of a majority of non-Catholic families.

Covering one of the largest areas of the province, the population in the Grand Falls Diocese is approximately twenty per cent Catholic. With the communities being small and spread out, there are few large Catholic schools that offer the type of education comparable to that of the integrated schools.

His Excellency said that after many enquiries from families wanting to supplement their children's education, in the Church traditions, it was decided that it was the best way to do so through an extra-curriculum course to be taught in the home.

The Sisters of Service had inaugurated the teaching of religion by correspondence in

Edmonton, in 1926. At present in remote areas of Western Canada, they use the *Canadian Catechism*, a new program which has been adopted by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, as the National Course for Canada. The course will be made available to children in this diocese from kindergarten to grade nine, with 20 lessons per year for each student.

The Presentation Sisters will cover that area of the diocese west and north of the Gander parish to the Baie Verte Peninsula, Botwood and surrounding areas. The Sisters of Service will be living and working out of Clarendville, serving Gambo missions and communities east of Carbonear.

In each of the communities included, the Sisters will be setting up offices, to be called, Living Word Centres, from which they will be distributing the lessons to the families. A standard textbook will be supplied and each lesson will consist of a reading with some written work to be completed by each student. The completed lessons will be returned to the Sisters for marking and for answering the questions that the students are encouraged to ask.

So far, His Excellency noted that in preparation for the beginning of the program, the Sisters have contacted the various pastors in whose areas they will be working. It should get well under way before the end of the year.

Bishop Penney writes to parents and students:

Dear Parents:

Of all the letters I have written during my three years as Bishop of Grand Falls, no other has given me as much satisfaction as this letter to you.

Realizing that you do not have the help of Catholic schools in the rearing of your family in the Faith, I am delighted to be able to provide you with the service of the "Living Word Centre."

This centre will provide a regular course of catechetical instruction by correspondence in keeping with the traditions of the Catholic Church. The aim of the centre is to help you no matter what grade your child may be in - Kindergarten to grade XI.

I remind you that the service is a help to you. - It cannot fulfill your role in the religious upbringing of your family. Thus, if the program is going to be an effective instrument for your child, your support and involvement in it is vitally necessary so that:

Your child will know God and His Son, Jesus Christ, whom He sent and be enriched by the Catholic traditions of the Church.

I would also suggest that your participation with your family in the program will be a growing and maturing experience in your own faith.

Thankful for your interest and support in preparing the way for the life of Christ to grow in hearts, families and communities and wishing you and your family the Peace and Joy which come only from the Father of all good gifts.

Dear Boys and Girls:

I am writing to tell you how happy I am with your enrollment in the program of the Living Word Centre. The Centre will help you:

- to learn about God, our Father
- to learn about Jesus whom He sent
- to learn about the Church founded by Jesus.

All this can be an exciting adventure. It can be beautiful experience to be treasured all your life.

Certainly it will be if you also come:

- to KNOW God who first loved us
- to FEEL His love in your hearts

to RESPOND to your loving father in your life after the example of Jesus , your brother
 to GROW to be an active member of our Holy Catholic Church.
 May God bless you, your home and school work. Have fun and keep smiling.

The Sisters suggested to the parents and children that they respond to the Bishop's kind letters. Many did so.

Besides keeping in touch by letters, Bishop Penney often visited the Sisters on his trips to St. John's and on the Sundays when he celebrated mass in Clarenville while Fr. McCarthy travelled to the parish's three missions. When he did so, he always gave a boost to the correspondence students and encouragement to the Sisters.

Volunteer office workers assist

When the shipment of lessons arrived from Daly Centre in Regina, much work was entailed to unpack and place the lessons on the shelving. The Sisters were fortunate to find some willing volunteers as Bunny and Terry Russell, Renee and Michelle Fewer, Betty Strong, Antonia Lane, Jacqueline Carter and Brenda Lewis. Some continued through the years to help when a new shipment of lessons came and at year's end for taking an inventory.

In later years, there was a long delay in obtaining courses five and six of the *Canadian Catechism*. The Sisters prepared a temporary course of 15 lessons on the parables, which was typed by Mrs. Henley.

A postal strike from October 21 to December 3, 1975 was a great handicap in launching the new mail project. It caused delays and prevented the arrival of the lessons but also created ingenuity in finding ways of delivering mail. Pastors, parents, out-of-town students, and commuting Clarenville workers assisted and their help set a precedent for future postal strikes. This experience made it easier to cope with the next prolonged strike in August 1978.

During their first year of operation at Clarenville, the Sisters obtained their texts and other supplies through Dr. Tracey at the CEC. At the beginning of January, the Sisters learned that the CEC would not subsidize items for the correspondence school. However, Dr. Tracey approached the Knights of Columbus of St. John's about assisting financially with the correspondence lessons. Before agreeing to financially supporting the CEC course materials, the Knights received some samples of the correspondence work and visited the Living Word centre. The Sisters prepared a cost estimate for the 1976-1977 program, including teaching materials of individual correspondence lessons, texts, Bibles, teacher guides, paper, mailing costs, transportation costs to visit families. In December, 1976, Dr. Tracey was pleased to inform the Sisters that the Knights of Columbus had very generously agreed to finance the Sisters' correspondence program.

On the first year of the correspondent school, the *Clarenville Packet* reported in an article published on January 13, 1977:

Despite the slow start in initiating the correspondence lessons due to first having to locate families, explain the system, then cope with the postal strike, the Sisters were happy with the results of the first year's work. In June, 1976, in Our Lady of Perpetual help Church, Sweet Bay, Fr. Michael Hynes awarded certificates to 48 R.C. students from Grades I to XI who had successfully completed their courses. Fr. B.J. McCarthy, gave certificates to 33 successful students in Sacred Heart Church, Cull's Harbour. During Mass at Bonnew's Lodge, Badger's Quay, Fr McCarthy also presented certificates to 8 successful students who

lived far from a Catholic Church in Valleyfield, Wesleyville, Brookfield and Newtown. Certificates to students in Clarendville and in missions east of Clarendville were awarded in September of 1976.

In later years, when the Sisters could not, at times, attend the ceremony of presentation of certificates, they sent them to the various pastors, e.g. to Fr. Ronald Bromley at Whitbourne; Fr. Leonard Kelly, North River; Msgr. Hogan, Carbonear and Fr. Terry at Long Harbour. These pastors presented the certificates to successful students in their missions and complimented the recipients.

Sister Hearn cared for Trinity Bay communities

Sister Hearn paid special attention to some Catholic families living in two isolated fishing villages along the southwest arm of Trinity Bay, Little Heart's Ease and Gooseberry Cove. In the absence of the priest, she often drove along winding gravel road to the tiny churches in these coves on Sundays to conduct para-liturgical services.

During the week Sr. Hearn visited the cove families and helped parents with teaching problems. She also assisted the two parishes of Little Heart's Ease and Gooseberry Cove in fund-raising projects. At Little Heart's Ease, the funds covered the painting of the church and much-needed chalice. At Gooseberry Cove, church furnishings and a Christmas crib were obtained.

Sister Hearn extended apostolate to Churchill Falls

The Roman Catholic parents in Churchill Falls, Labrador, were concerned about the lack of religious instruction for the high school students in their community. In an October 1976 letter, Eileen O'Reilly, secretary of the parish council wrote to the Sisters:

Dear Sisters:

With reference to your article concerning religious education via correspondence in the September issue of *The Monitor*, we wish to enquire about this method of instruction.

Churchill Falls is a relatively small, northern community with public school facilities up to and including grade 11. The Catholic enrolment at the High School is approximately thirty-five students. ... At present, we lack any staff to carry on religious instruction. We have a visiting priest for a few days each month but due to other pressing duties, he is unable to give instruction to the students.

The foundation of our students in religious education is limited. It is, therefore, with great interest that we enquire about your correspondence course. Any information you can provide at your earliest convenience would be greatly appreciated. ...

In early October 1976, with the blessing of Bishop Peter Sutton, OMI, of Labrador-Schefferville, Sr. Hearn answered the request, enrolling several families and encouraging them through personal letters. Later that month at the request of Sr. Rose of the Our Lady of the Rosary in Happy Valley, Labrador, the two children of the Denisson family of Nain, Labrador were enrolled.

Bishop Peter Sutton, OMI, of the Labrador-Schefferville Diocese wrote on November 1, 1976:

Dear Sisters,

Greetings from Labrador and across the border. ...

Re. the High School Religious Education Correspondence Courses, I have been in touch with Bishop Penney from Grand Falls and the Parish Council in Churchill Falls. I welcome your help with every assurance of my cooperation and sharing whatever must be shared. Shall leave it to you to follow through.

I hope we shall be able to communicate more personally in the very near future.

With every best wish, God's blessing and hearty congratulations on a splendid initiative.

Responding to a further request from the parish council, Sr. Hearn visited Churchill Falls in February and October 1977. On the first visit, she explained the correspondence method to parents and enrolled more families in the course. In the October visit, she encouraged some catechists to use the Home Program as an aid in preparing their lessons. On October 18, 1977, Mary Norman, the parish council president, wrote to parents of high school students:

Dear Parents:

Once again this year, we are able to provide you with the services of The Living Word Centre, Clarenville, Newfoundland. The Sisters of Service there provide a regular course of catechetical instructions for grades eight to eleven by correspondence in keeping with the traditions and teachings of the Catholic Church.

As in other years, we have religion taught in school up to grade seven, but again have found it impossible to find a teacher to go into the high school classroom.

Sr. Agnes Hearn visited the high school last week, met with all the students and explained the course to them. We count now on your cooperation.

One enrolment form is being sent to each family. Please complete and return it to me as soon as possible. To help offset the cost of the course, mailing etc, we request \$10.00 donation from each family. The remainder of the cost will be covered by Parish Council Funds.

Your support and involvement in this program is vitally necessary if it is going to be an effective help for your child.

On September 20, 1978, Bishop Sutton thanked Sr. Hearn for her "faithful service to our young scattered people." The Sisters kept in contact with the Labrador students until 1980 when the parish council were able to obtain religion education teachers for their high school students.

Through the concern of Lydia Fewer, director of Clarenville Rest Home, about the spiritual welfare of some Catholic residents, particularly those confined to their beds, Fr. McCarthy asked Srs. Barton and Hearn to visit the Catholic residents each week. The Sisters conducted a prayer service followed by distribution of Holy Communion. This ministry continued by succeeding Sisters until the mission closed in 1992.

Correspondence method evaluated, 1978 and 1979

During the first years, some pastors were doubtful about the practical value of the Correspondence method of instruction. In June 1978, Bishop Penney called an evaluation meeting in Clarenville. In addition to Sister General Hayes and Sr. Hearn, it was attended by seven pastors as well as Mother Superior Nano, Sr. Margaret Mary, first councillor and Sr. Marion Power of the Presentation Sisters. After much discussion, it was decided to delay the correspondence program another year.

The following May 1979, a similar meeting was attended by six pastors and the same Sisters as in 1978 with Chancellor Fr. J. Beresford as the chair. At this meeting, the Sisters displayed samples of student work and parental letters. Fr. Kevin Barker had discovered that all students learning by correspondence in his area had responded well, some even surpassing those who received regular instruction in a Catholic school. He and other pastors voiced their satisfaction with the success of the correspondence work.

Sister Hearn departs, 1979

At the close of each year, Sister Agnes Hearn prepared special ceremonies for the presentation of certificates to those students who had completed their courses. These were held at Whitbourne by

Fr. Ronald Bromley; Turk's Cove by Msgr. Hogan; North River by Fr. Kelly and at Gooseberry Cove by Fr. B.J. McCarthy. Not only did Sister give spiritual help to the families in her area, but she also was able to obtain material assistance such as clothing for those in need.

In July 1979, after four years of reaching out to her scattered students, Sr. Hearn was transferred to Halifax. Before her departure, she was delighted by a surprise farewell party arranged by Susie Singleton. In September 1979, Sr. Adua Zampese, who completed a four-year teaching assignment in St. Julien's, replaced Sr. Hearn and continued Sr. Hearn's activities of visiting families, assisting parents in the teaching of their children, conducting para-liturgical services and arranging special sessions to prepare students for the sacraments of Penance, Holy Eucharist, and Confirmation as well as for the seasons of Advent and Lent.

Sr. Mossey appointed superior

With the appointment of Sr. Viola Mossey as superior in 1979, the Sisters increased their accommodation to the entire main floor of the two-storey Duffitt's apartment building, moving from the mobile home in the fall of 1979. Henceforth, they lived and worked in the same building. Sr. Mossey visited families, the sick and elderly, and helped in teaching catechism on Saturdays.

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CLARENVILLE MISSION EXPANDS, 1980-1983

Bishop Faber J. MacDonald of Prince Edward Island replaced Bishop Penney as Bishop of the Grand Falls Diocese in 1980. Srs. Barton and Mossey joined the parishioners of Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Grand Falls, to welcome the new bishop. Bishop MacDonald continued to support and encourage the correspondence work.

Sisters present certificates at Swift Current

Acting on parental suggestion, a special mass was celebrated by Fr. G. Walsh in the mission church at Swift Current. After the mass, certificates were presented to eight students, who had successfully completed their courses from the Living Word Centre. Sr. Zampese congratulated the students and the parents. Sr. Barton reminded the parents of Pope John Paul's message that "parents are the first and principal educators of their children."

Before this celebration, the correspondence students and parents held their monthly meeting with Sr. Adua Zampese at the integrated school to work on some lesson difficulties. During these monthly meetings, Sr. Mossey visited and sometimes prayed with the families in the area. The February 1980 mass was the first of combining monthly meetings and the celebration of the mass.

Sr. Rita MacLellan named as Pastoral Assistant

Afflicted with a severe back pain, Fr. Larry George, pastor of King's Cove and the Clarenville churches, requested and received a long-term parish assistant. Sr. Rita MacLellan, who introduced CCD in the Saskatoon diocese, arrived in September 1980 from Manning, Alberta, where she had retired from teaching. As pastoral assistant, her extensive duties included the correspondence students in Clarenville and surrounding areas and instructed these students at the Clarenville integrated school on the Catholic faith. At the request of the principals of Clarenville and Random Island Integrated schools, she led student tours of the Catholic church. She also instructed parents in preparation for their child's Baptism and adult candidates entering the faith. She also gave comprehensive tests on the Religion In Life Program to Local Patrols of Catholic Girl Guides and Boy Scouts to enable them to qualify for a badge in religion. The badges were usually presented in church during mass after the homily.

Assisting catechists

In a visit to the Clarenville office on October 2, 1980 to select lessons, Fr. William Hearn reported he used the catechetical program to teach 65 children in various grades in his parish of St. Anthony, near the tip of the Great Northern Peninsula. After the classes, he distributed and corrected the lessons. "By doing this," he said, "I can see how they are progressing." A month later in following up on a request for training catechists at Grand LaPierre, Srs. Barton and Zampese travelled to meet the catechists, using Fr. Hearn's method of teaching.

In February 1981, Fr. Slattery of Lamaline of the southern tip of the Burin Peninsula asked the Sisters to attend a catechists' meeting of six parent-catechists in teaching a weekly class in religion at Grand Bank. Srs. Barton and Zampese again suggested Fr. Hearn's method. Since the women were hesitant, it was decided to experiment by sending lessons to one family for a few months before enrolling all the children. The experiment succeeded.

Activities of correspondence students reviewed

The *Gander Beacon* published a yearly account of the 1980 activities of the Roman Catholic correspondence students in western areas:

First Communion, Saint Vincent's Cove, near Dover

~ On June 8, 1980, six students, prepared by Michael Kelly received their First Communion in their little Church of St. Anne, located in St. Vincent's Cove. Mr. Kelly, a teacher from Labrador City, was studying at Memorial University during the spring semester and spending weekends with his mother, Blanche Kelly at St. Vincent's, Dover. During this time, he had collaborated with the Sisters in instructing the children at St. Vincent's. On this occasion, Fr. Barker of Gambo presented certificates to 13 students who had successfully completed their religion correspondence courses.

Confirmation at Gambo

~ On October 28, after six weekends of special classes with Sr. Barton, five candidates were confirmed by Bishop MacDonald in Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, Gambo.

First Communion and Confirmation at Cull's Harbour

~ Rita Maher of Cull's Harbour prepared two children for First Communion on June, 1980 at the Sacred Heart Church, Cull's Harbour. On this day, Fr. Barker also presented certificates to 38 students from Grades 1-11 who had completed their correspondence religion courses. Father complimented Mrs. Maher, the parents, Sisters and students and urged them to continue their excellent work.

On October 10, 1980, at 3:30 p.m., Bishop MacDonald confirmed 12 students from Cull's Harbour, Glovertown and Sandringham. In his inspirational homily in Sacred Heart Church, Cull's Harbour, the Bishop referred to Jesus as a teenager questioning the Doctors of the Law in the temple. Very appropriately, he compared the questioning and searching of Jesus in the temple to the searching of today's teenagers for true values and guidelines for their lives.

He urged parents to be open and ever ready to respond to their teenagers' questions and to encourage them to search for answers. The Bishop expressed the hope that parents, besides setting a good example, would make it a high priority that their children were well instructed. "If your children are well instructed in the faith," said the Bishop, "they will be better able to meet the challenges of today and be ready to give a reason for the Faith that they profess." He also stressed the need for family prayer. After complimenting the children on their enthusiastic singing, he gave a special message to the candidates urging them to allow the Holy Spirit to guide them that they might be a sign to draw others to Christ. After Mass, the Bishop mingled and chatted with the parents and Confirmands.

Wesleyville area, First Communion, Badger's Quay

~ Children from Brookfield, Newtown, Wesleyville, Valleyfield, and Wareham-Centreville prepared for First Communion mostly through correspondence lessons plus some visits from Sisters Barton and Zampese. Because there is no Catholic Church in that area, Fr. Barker asked for permission from the Rev. Mundon Waye, pastor of St. Alban's Anglican Church, Badger's Quay, to have the First Communion ceremony in his church. Permission was graciously granted and the celebration took place on Saturday, May 31, 1980 at 7:00 p.m. Before the last blessing, Father presented certificates to and congratulated seven students who had successfully completed their religion courses.

Sr. Hudon teaches scripture

In response to a request of Fr. George, pastor of King's Cove of which Clarendville was a mission, Sr. Rosemarie Hudon arrived in August 1980 to teach a six-month scripture course to the teachers of King's Cove school. By special request, she conducted a similar course to an interdenominational group of adults in Clarendville and a few talks to adults in the Gambo missions. She also presented a paper on the Old Testament to interested members of the congregation of the United Church in

Wesleyville, almost 200 kilometres from Clarenville.

Sisters interviewed on the CBC

In early January 1981, the director of the Canadian Broadcasting Company in St. John's, arranged for the Sisters to be interviewed on television about their activities in Newfoundland. Sr. Hudon wrote an account for the *Here and There*, the monthly newsletter of the Sisters of Service:

On Sunday noon, January 11, 1981, the CBC TV featured a half-hour interview with Sisters Viola Mossey and Adua Zampese on the "Dialogue Program". As was natural, Sr. Adua answered the questions on the SOS work in Newfoundland; Sr. Viola spoke of the general work of the SOS in the rest of Canada - especially work with immigrants and residences for girls.

They both looked poised, composed and in control. The minute the program was over, the phone began to ring and kept on ringing until Sr. Rita MacLellan (on phone duty) said she was "run off her feet". We then took turns answering. There were some long distance calls. Of course, each call was congratulatory. Priests and others who have visited here, were lavish in their praise. They all said that the ringing note was sincerity.

In 1981, Sr. Zampese discovered a few isolated Catholic families at Monkstown on the Burin Peninsula. Several times a year, she accompanied Fr. Gordon Walsh, pastor of Long Harbour, to minister to these families and assist the parents.

Sr. Barton takes part in United Church service

When Fr. Kevin Barker, the pastor of Gambo, was unable to take part in a service at Brookfield United Church Centre on April 2, Sr. Barton accepted the invitation of John Frogley, United Church minister of Wesleyville to take part in the program entitled, "Lenten Study – Affirming our heritage and appreciating other traditions."

Accompanied by Sr. Zampese, Sr. Barton received a very warm reception, addressing a large number of interested and friendly audience and showing a film about the meaning of church membership. When many inquired about the meaning of the rosary, Sr. Barton demonstrated a recitation of her large master rosary. After the presentation, an old gentleman asked for a book with more information on the rosary. The Sisters promised to send him a copy of *Five For Sorrow; Ten for Joy*, a book written by a Methodist minister.

New Clarenville church blessed, 1981

Beginning in the spring of 1977, a small but enthusiastic parish committee, began planning to build a larger church in Clarenville. Through the encouragement of Frs. B.J. McCarthy and Kevin Barker, resident pastors of Gambo and administrators of the Clarenville church, a building committee was formed and fund-raising activities planned. The Clarenville Catholic Women's Association (C.C.W.A.) were instrumental in these ventures.

When Fr. George was appointed pastor of King's Cove with jurisdiction over the Clarenville church, he encouraged parishioners to financially support the building of the new church and called on his many friends for financial help, including the Sisters of Mercy, the Sisters of Presentation of St. John's and the Sisters of Service. On May 31, 1981, Bishop MacDonald officially opened and blessed the new church. The Sisters assisted with the liturgy for the opening. Sr. Zampese and Sheila Day prepared banners for the celebration.

Sr. Ready joins Clarenville Sisters, 1981-1992

Sr. Margaret Ready, a social work in Moncton, was appointed to replace Sr. Barton, who was

assigned with Sr. Hudon for two years to revise the rules of the constitution of the Sisters of Service. Sr. Ready joined Sr. Zampese in preparing the correspondence students of the Gambo missions for Confirmation and worked in the Gambo missions from 1981 to 1984,

Student retreats, 1981

A series of student retreats were conducted in November 1981 by Fr. George with Srs. Ready and Zampese and Geraldine Maloney, Grade VII teacher of Sacred Heart School at Gambo on November 1. Twenty Confirmation candidates from the Gambo area of St. Vincent's, Dover and Terra Nova National Park met at the parish house in Gambo.

A week later on November 21, a similar retreat was held at Cull's Harbour led by Srs. Ready and Zampese and Carmel Doyle, religious consultant at the Gander Roman Catholic school board. This group came from scattered communities along the Eastport Peninsula of Sandy Cove, Happy Adventure, Eastport and Sandringham. Focusing on a theme of Christian Witness, a film about the life of Mother Teresa of Calcutta focused on her call to witness as a Christian among the poor. Fr. George concluded the morning session with a penitential service and the sacrament of Penance. After lunch, some parents joined the group and watched the film, entitled "Please Come" about the power of the Eucharist in our lives and discussed the message of the film. Following the liturgy, the certificates were presented to the Confirmandis.

Through the religious coordinators in the eastern section of the diocese, Sr. Zampese arranged that correspondence students of Heart's Content and Whitbourne join the Catholic school students to prepare for the sacraments. In assisting the religious coordinators with the retreat schedule, Sr. Zampese drove some Confirmation students of Little Heart's Ease and Gooseberry Cove for a retreat at Long Harbour, a distance of 100 kilometres. These retreats were similar to those conducted by the Sisters in Clarenville, Turk's Cove, Botwood, Norris Arm, Lewisporte and other centres.

Sisters participate in ecumenical activities in Gambo missions

Always aware that the Second Vatican Council encouraged and even urged Catholics to join in prayer and works of mercy with clergy and individuals of other faiths, the Sisters represented pastors at community events. In September 1982, Sr. Ready represented Fr. George, pastor of Gambo, to bring greetings of the Catholic community of Gambo to the Loyal Orange Lodge at St. George's Anglican Church in that community. She was also spoke in various churches on the World Day of Prayer in March. On several occasions, Srs. Barton, Ready and MacLellan spoke at the Salvation Army Citadel, United Church and Anglican Church in Clarenville, Shoal Harbour, Hodges' Cove, Gambo, Middlebrook, Wesleyville and Brookfield. They also took part in a shared Lenten service at the Anglican church in Clarenville.

Sisters' Diamond Jubilee celebrated

The 60th anniversary of the Sisters of Service was celebrated at a surprise party, organized by Susie Singleton. in 1982. Sr. Mossey wrote an account of it in *The Field at Home* in the 1982 winter issue:

The Jubilee news spread as the Sisters were also honoured at a formal appreciation dinner at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Gambo on May 14, 1982. Organized by Fr. George, the dinner was attended by Bishop MacDonald, local clergy, religious, Gambo Mayor Mollett as well as parishioners, parents and teachers of the Gambo parish and missions. Fr. Kevin McKenna, a member of the Catholic Education Committee of Newfoundland, observed that while the Sisters of Service as a missionary religious community, was born to serve the needs of the Church in Western Canada, they still serve where the needs of the Church are greatest, including the 39 years in Newfoundland and Labrador.

On May 25, 1982, the Sisters went to Southern Bay to present certificates to the students of nine families. During the Mass, Fr. Antle congratulated the Sisters and Patricia Ryan made a presentation and invited the Sisters and the whole congregation to her house for a jubilee dinner, prepared by the mothers of the students.

Sisters participate in summer ministries program, 1982-1983

When Bishop MacDonald started the Summer Ministries' Program in 1982, Sr. Zampese took an active part in its organization. A spiritual preparation in Grand Falls was conducted before the teams set out for their ministries. The proposed purpose of this program was for the Sisters to be a "presence" of the Church in the communities that they visited and to serve as the needs occurred. During July 1982, Sr. Patricia Flynn, who had taught with Sr. Zampese at St. Julien's (1976-1979), provided summer assistance. Srs. Flynn and Zampese organized a successful summer program of daily religious instruction, including sacramental preparation and music both morning and afternoon for six weeks around the Gambo missions. In the following July, Sr. Colette Sabourin came from Toronto to assist Sr. Zampese in the summer ministries program.

An evaluation day was held in Clarendville by the priests, ministry personnel and lay people at the end of the summer's activities. The needs were ported for parish visitations, liturgical ministries, sacramental preparation, activities for seniors, youth and children. This program involved 11 parishes, 22 religious, including one Sister from the United States.

An article in *Our Diocese* in the September-October 1983 issue reported the evaluation meeting at the end of July 1983 concluded that the benefits from this program were a two-way street. "Those ministering reported a strengthening of their own Faith, affirmation of their talents, more awareness of spiritual opportunities, and the building of good relationships. Priests experienced a deeper awareness and understanding of parish needs and the importance of their presence during the times of their ministry. The families served were grateful and cooperated well."

Sisters attend annual diocesan meeting in Grand Falls, 1982

In the fall of 1982, Sister General Helen Hayes, accompanied by the Clarendville Sisters, attended the diocesan annual meeting at Grand Falls, recommended that the diocese undertake future planning as she could not guarantee that the Sisters of Service would remain indefinitely in Clarendville. She advised the diocese to seek other religious women communities or lay people to continue the correspondence work or to train more catechists to work in rural areas. The Bishop thanked Sister for this notification.

Parents attest to the success of the Home Religion Program

The aim of the Home Program was to help parents teach religion and share their Faith with their children. To do this throughout the year was a challenge, a rewarding one in which the whole family benefitted. The proof of the success of this program was shown by those who have used through the hundreds of letters from parents and students. These indicated a greater awareness of the Presence of God in their lives; a personal relationship with God; an enhanced value of their faith more and a better understand of the meaning of Christian.

Extracts from parents' letters:

Of the Grade I course, a parent wrote: "My child now understands "trust" and that God looks after us as a shepherd looks after his sheep. Scott enjoys the pictures and I often ask him to tell me what the pictures are saying to him. He said, 'God must be very beautiful because the world He made is so beautiful.' "

Others wrote:

... We are falling into a good routine of parent and child working together.

... We feel it is just wonderful how you can get families more involved in doing the religious program. It is so well set up and easy to understand. It helps us to learn about the Lord Jesus as we teach our children, and helps us also to develop our personal understanding of Jesus and how we can grow in the sense of belonging to God's Family. Thank you.

... I think the Home Program is very educational for both my child and me. I, personally, have felt stronger about the Church since April has been taking the course.

... I thank God that my children take your religion courses through which they learn to really love others. I am happy, too, with these courses because we are learning God's Word. Now that I know God better and try to keep closer to Him, things are different and we are happier.

Sr. Colette Sabourin joined the Clarendville Sisters during 1983 and 1984 and assisted Sr. Barton, who had replaced Sr. Zampese in the eastern territory. A talented guitarist, Sr. Sabourin enhanced her lessons in the eastern missions by teaching a variety of hymns, and sometimes assisted with the liturgy in Clarendville. An efficient correspondence worker, she often delivered the corrected lessons personally to the students or parents, who needed assistance. As an expert typist, she was treasured in the office for much-needed typing of monthly letters and other documents, especially annual reports.

SISTERS EXPAND TO BISHOP'S FALLS, 1981

In the fall of 1981, Srs. Carmelita Camozzi and Anita Hartman were assigned to Bishop's Falls to assist and support the correspondence program initiated by the Sisters of Presentation in 1975 at Grand Falls. The Sisters continued the work begun by the Presentation Sisters, encouraging and assisting some parents to become catechists as well as teaching catechism to the children in Bishop's Falls, Grand Falls, Windsor and Norris Arm and their respective missions. When the Presentation Sisters left for parish ministry in St. John's, they left a generous supply of catechetical materials of films, tapes, charts and file-cards used in their correspondence ministry centred at Windsor.

Sr. Camozzi had much experience in the catechetical field as the religious education consultant at St. Anne's parish in Penticton, BC, where she had served as religious education consultant and coordinator of CCD from 1971-1981. Sr. Hartman, also a teacher, had been her assistant. Like the other Sisters in a new mission, they began to become more acquainted with the families and students. On account of the distances between towns, they travelled by camper van for sleeping overnight on extended trips. They visited families in areas along the Great Northern Peninsula in St. Anthony, Griquet, Roddington and Englee, Springdale, Pilley's Island, Loon Bay, Too Good Arm, Horwood, Durrell, Botwood, Lewisporte, Boyd's Cove and Twillingate.

The Sisters assisted catechists at Botwood where dedicated church leader Marian Gill lived. The Sisters also served the areas of Boyd's Cove, Lewisporte and Springdale. By special request, Sr. Hartman, a musician, gave guitar lessons to some students in the Bishop's Falls area. On May 2, 1982, the Sisters hosted a hootenanny at which 14 young budding guitarists entertained parents and students.

To assist families with special needs, the Sisters prepared the simple supplementary courses, illustrated with black and white pictures by Sr. Patricia Flynn and Bruce Murphy. Sr. Camozzi wrote the teaching section and Sr. Hartman the questions. The Sisters obtained copyright permission to use the material from five different publishing companies. The Sisters prepared five lessons about First Communion; five lessons on Confirmation; a booklet entitled *Know Your Church*, which described on church furnishings, baptismal font, sacred vessels, altar and its appurtenances, and parts of the liturgy of the Eucharist; a booklet entitled *Jesus, the Saints and You*, which contained stories from the life of Jesus and from the lives of saints, dealing with morals of right and wrong; *The Jesse Tree* contained symbols of the Old Testament with stories based on the Prophecy of Isaiah II:1 and *Journeying in the Catholic Faith* contained 128 pages of lessons on Catholic beliefs. Some pastors found this an excellent guidebook for instructing converts. One pastor, requesting 10 extra copies for many converts, wrote, "Sister, they're getting out of hand."

In the fall of 1982, Sr. Anita Hartman wrote of the highlights of the Bishop's Falls mission, which was published in Summer 1983 issue of *The Field at Home*:

... Our mission is now in its second year. Sr. Camozzi and I came here at the request of Bishop Faber MacDonald to take over the Correspondence Work from the Presentation Sisters and to extend the religious education work of the Clarenville SOS. Now, our two missions are offering Religious Instruction, either by classes or correspondence lessons, to all the children of the Grand Falls Diocese who do not have the privilege of attending a Catholic School. One thing we try to do during the year is to visit the home of each family of our correspondence students. Because miles of forest separate one settlement from

another, we use a camper van for our travels.

During the winter months because unpredictable weather makes travel difficult, we change our schedule. I teach piano and guitar lessons in Bishop's Falls while Sr. Camozzi keeps up with the correspondence lessons. The forty music students who come by weekly bring new interest into our home. Their Christmas Hootenanny held in the Lion's Hall was filled to capacity with cheering families and friends.

On January 14th, all our activities were suddenly interrupted. The phone rang at 7:30 a.m. Harry Stone, our next door neighbour, startled us with, "Sister, have you been listening to the news this morning? The Exploits River is rising fast; it may soon flood the roads! We've decided to leave town now; thought we'd let you know. ..."

Srs. Camozzi and Hartman departed Bishop's Fall's in June 1983 and Sr. Zampese was assigned to continue the work of the two Sisters in the western missions. Sr. Barton returned to Clarendville that fall and replaced Sr. Zampese in the eastern missions. From September of 1983 until June 1984, Sr. Zampese made several extended trips to help and encourage some parents in the missions of Bishop's Fall's and Norris Arm as well as conducting several vocation workshops and speaking to high school students in those areas. In 1984, she was assigned as Novice Director in Toronto and Sr. Ready took responsibility for the western missions.

In a letter of June 28, 1984 to Sr. Zampese, Archbishop Penney of St. John's continued to have a keen interest: "I wish to acknowledge your letter of June 15th, 1984, and to thank you for the condensed annual report of your Correspondence School of Religion. You should feel great satisfaction at the catechizing you have provided to many who otherwise would not have had this benefit. Your pastoral work, too, was an immeasurable source of support for all those who used the opportunity of your presence and ministry."

Fr. Ron Bromley, director of religious education, added his support in a letter to Sr. Zampese on June 15, 1984: "Please convey to your sisters in Clarendville that we know that they are doing a great work. We feel unable to assist them as adequately as we should like in their specific work of teaching, other than to give them moral support and encouragement. Tell them that they are the experts at this work. We, as pastors, can only help them find the souls."

CATECHISTS AND CHANGES APLENTY, 1984-1990

In the spring of 1984, Sr. Mary Jackson came from Edmonton to organize workshops to acquaint catechists with new methods of teaching the *Canadian Catechism*. Over the years as supervisor of Religious Education for the Edmonton Catholic Schools, Sr. Jackson had played a prominent part as coordinator and instructor in the catechism workshops, preparing over 2,000 catechists from Edmonton and from other dioceses in Canada and in the U.S.

Margaret Bromley, an instructor at the Clarenville Trade School, obtained permission from the school board for Sr. Jackson to use her classroom. In the workshops, Sr. Jackson demonstrated teaching methods, lesson planning and lesson aids as pictures and films. She handed out outlines to assist the catechists in making their own lesson plans.

By request of pastors, Sr. Jackson also instructed teachers and catechists at King's Cove, Southern Harbour, Long Harbour, to six parent catechists in Botwood, and to catechists in several other western missions. Upon a request by a minister, she spoke about prayer to give to the United Church congregation at Shoal Harbour. At the request of school principals, she also gave some talks on Catholic teaching to high school classes at their integrated schools.

On September 29, 1984, Fr. Michael Walsh in charge of the Clarenville mission church, commissioned 16 parent-catechists, including one man in preparation for the Sunday school classes, beginning on October 7. Margaret Adey volunteered to be the first religious education coordinator. Mrs. Len Singleton continued as secretary to report the progress of the school. Sr. MacLellan acted as resource person to the teachers and a substitute teacher.

After almost five months' experience of catechism classes, Sr. Jackson, now a judge with Marriage Tribunal of the Edmonton archdiocese returned in February 1995 for almost two weeks to assist the catechists with the classroom difficulties. During her February visit, by request, Sister gave an equally appreciated talk on the annulment of marriage.

The Sisters had encouraged Marie Meagher, a resident in Terra Nova National Park, to become a catechist and help teach the children of other families living within the confines of the park. She wrote of her experiences in an article of *The Field at Home* published in the April 1984 issue:

Owing to some strange coincidence, Terra Nova National Park has found itself harbouring a majority of resident families of the Catholic faith. Because of this, it is little wonder that conversation among the mothers often focused on the problem of getting the children to complete their religion correspondence lessons. Encouraged by Sr. Margaret Ready, SOS, the idea of getting the children to do their lessons together eventually blossomed into the formation of our "Thursday Sunday School". Now, after a year and a half of trials and tribulations, we've been asked to "tell the world" about our experiences.

This September, 1983, eight children, including a boy from the nearby community of Charlottetown, began gathering in one of the park homes every Thursday after school. Two mothers, Therese Fulton and myself, led the classes and occasionally other mothers would drop in bringing a very welcome plate of sweets.

Because four of the children were working at level four of the correspondence course, we used it as a basis for our course outline. It contained suggestions for celebrations and group activities that provided excellent material for our classes. The children liked especially dressing up as people in Jesus' time and acting out various parables. We carried this a step

further by writing our own scripts and re-creating the life of John the Baptist. Before long, we found the children were better able to grasp the meaning of scripture. Jesus and His disciples had become "real" persons to them. Later, with the drama of the Passion, it was amazing to see the sorrow in the eyes of the children as they watched their Friend, Jesus, die on the Cross.

At the beginning and end of each class, the children took turns saying a prayer they had composed. By the end of the year, they had become experts at spontaneous prayer. We also taught and reviewed traditional prayers. For example, during one class, we stressed the importance of the Rosary; the children sculptured a model rosary from play dough, and learned which prayer was represented by each bead.

Therese, a music teacher, played her guitar for our hymns; soon a hymn-sing became part of each class. There were times when music became a form of bribery for the children would hurry through their assignments so there would be time for their favourite hymns!

We tried to incorporate the suggested celebrations every third or fourth class and children usually arranged the entire ceremony. They filled wine glasses with juice, shared some special food, read a passage from scripture, sang a hymn; then joined in a hymn of thanksgiving. I will always remember when they celebrated the meaning of the Last Supper. It began with the cooking of unleavened bread, then washing of the feet, followed by a re-creation of Jesus breaking the bread and sharing it with His disciples. The children soon sensed that this scene is re-created at Mass and learned why the mystery of the Eucharist is so significant in our religion.

I hope I have not gone overboard and given the impression of a smooth-running project. For, alas, there were days when the sun shone brightly beckoning all outdoors. On one such occasion we had the inspiration to move the class outdoors. We spent the afternoon seated around a snow-fort where the children had wanted to play. They sang hymns, said a prayer of thanks for the glorious scene around us, read a poem about the beauty of nature and told a story of the struggle of a pioneer community to build a church. Later, watching their beaming faces as they drank hot chocolate, we were confident that we had passed on an important message of our faith - that God is ever-present in our everyday lives.

Advent brings the task of getting the children to organize for their turn at preparing the liturgy for the Sunday Mass at Cull's Harbour Church. As Christmas approaches, because it becomes harder to keep the children sitting still, we usually let them use their energy in planning a Christmas celebration. Last Christmas, the children invited their parents, Sr. Ready and our Pastor, Fr. Larry George to one of the homes for carols, a snack and an adaptation of the Nativity. This year, they made the miracle of Christmas come true by acting out their own version of The Little Drummer Boy. Even pre-schoolers joined in the excitement by becoming "Baa", the sheep, and "Humpy", the camel.

We are confident that we have, to some measure, provided some religion experiences the children can draw from; they can now more readily envision the theme contained in the scripture passages. Answering questions has, therefore, become a less difficult task for both child and parent. Most of all, we've tried to keep our religion class an enjoyable experience. It's a far cry from my memories of catechism class - memorizing questions 27, 28 and 29 on page 11 and waiting for everyone to recite the answers.

The insecurity we had in beginning the teaching program centered around our fear that we might not know enough about our religion. Through experience, we learned that the one essential was to enjoy working with the children. They guided us and as long as we held their attention, they did learn. Sr. Ready not only encouraged us, but also provided us with excellent material. What we found exceptionally good was a series of lessons, *Jesus, the Saints and You*. It had self-contained lessons suitable for ages 5 to 13 with activities ranging from colouring to discussion questions.

Presently, my time is consumed with the pending arrival of another child. Therese,

therefore, is braving it on her own. I will dearly miss the enthusiasm of the children for their religion, something we grown-ups rarely exhibit or possess. I hope my ramblings will serve a purpose, to entice other communities to organize similar programs. We would like to share in some of their experiences if they have such a program.

With the departure of Srs. Zampese and Mossey in 1984, new Sisters arrived at Trinity Place. Sr. Brigid Knopic, a retired nurse, who had served in the summer ministry program in 1983, at Holyrood, came to Clarendville in mid-October 1984 to help for a year. Sr. Knopic visited families, especially the sick and seniors in their homes as well as at the Clarendville Rest Home. She also assisted Sr. Barton with the sacramental preparation of children at workshops in the Whitbourne missions.

In September 1984, Sr. Eileen Gallagher, a teacher in High Level, Alberta, assumed Sr. Ready's area of the Gambo missions stretching from Wesleyville to Charlottetown. To become acquainted with this new territory, Sister Gallagher interested parents to accompanying her on visits to families. From the first venture to the missions, she decided to recruit parents and qualified teenagers as catechists in their areas. Delighted with the cooperation from parents in Cull's Harbour and in St. Vincent's [Dover], she was impressed with the initiative of these catechists in planning liturgies, especially during the Christmas and Easter seasons.

Sr. Ready assumes the western missions

In replacing Sr. Zampese in the western parishes of Bishop's Falls, Grand Falls, Windsor and Norris Arm, this necessitated long trips for Sr. Ready, who often stayed with the Presentation Sisters at Windsor and Bishop's Falls. In preparing more parents as catechists, she accepted the task of distributing and correcting the correspondence lessons, extending her territory to serve more families. Ann Haggett of Glovers Harbour wrote an account in *Our Diocese* in the summer of 1986:

Religion - is a touchy subject in today's modern society! Church-going may be something rare; yet it is something special to those who continue their Christian beliefs. There are those who continue their worship wherever there is a possible chance. Among those of whom I speak are the Roman Catholic residents of Glovers Harbour and Leading Tickles, ministered to by Rev. Brian Colbert of Immaculate Conception Parish, Grand Falls, and Sr. Margaret Ready, SOS, Religious Ed. coordinator and instructor. The Catholic religion is going strong in this small outport community. Liturgical celebrations for all R.C. residents - young and old alike - are held in Mr. and Mrs. Gregory Cook's home. The atmosphere is unique, each giving and receiving with open heart and mind. The closeness of this small group is beyond belief.

With the help of Sr. Ready, we formed a Sunday School in the fall of 1985. Here, the Catholic children learn to appreciate their Christian Catholic heritage, the Bible, and the great mystery of life and death. The Religion Education Program is going well; hopefully, it will continue to do so.

We, the Christian Community, extend our special thanks to Fr. Colbert and Sr. Ready for their help, their listening and understanding. We believe that it takes people like them to make religion what it should be - a special belief and awareness of one's own self in God and in mankind.

Certificate Day held in Clarendville

Beginning in their first year in Clarendville, the Sisters presented certificates annually to the correspondence students, who had completed the 20 lessons of their courses. In 1985, the Sunday school teachers continued this ceremony on their first closing day of June 9, 1985. Before the last blessing, Fr. Michael Walsh, assisted by the respective teachers, presented the certificates to 88 of

the 100 students, who had attended weekly classes. This ceremony was followed by a pot-luck supper in the beautifully-decorated church hall. Sr. Magdalen O'Brien, Editor of *Our Diocese*, who attended the celebration, wrote an editorial in the newspaper's issue of June 1985: "I thought how neatly some parents and adults can turn the tables around and allow children to help them develop their unexplored talents. I marvelled at the self-confidence the children had developed as a result of out-of-class teaching at an unusual hour on an unusual day. Real reciprocity, I call it, teachers and students respecting each others' expertise. I came home thinking that these students were indeed blazing a new trail towards establishing and solidifying good wholesome family relationships grounded in the basic unity of society - the family!"

Departure of Sr. Barton, 1987

On July 12, 1987, a surprise party was held for Sr. Barton, who was appointed to Regina to write a history of the Sisters' four correspondence schools. Fr. Gary Walsh, pastor of St. Francis Xavier parish of Long Harbour of the St. John's archdiocese, with some parents and correspondence students paid a surprise visit to Trinity Place. An account of this visit was published in the August 1987 issue of *The Monitor*.

Fr. Gary Walsh celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving in the Sisters' Chapel and in his homily recalled the Parable of the Sower and the Seed as the most appropriate in describing the catechetical work of Sr. Barton during her 10 years in Newfoundland. Sister, a native of England, had come to Canada in 1920 and entered the Sisters of Service in 1927. Father congratulated her on this 60th anniversary year of her service in the SOS.

Following the Mass, a presentation was made to Sister on behalf of the parents and students she had served in the Long Harbour Missions. The parents had prepared a delicious buffet supper during which Sr. Barton expressed her thanks for "this delightful generous surprise." She said how much she had loved her time in beautiful Newfoundland and regretted having to leave. She felt very enriched by her students and by the dedication and faith of their parents and pastor.

East-West catechetical territories divided

With Sr. Barton's departure, the entire West-East territory of the Grand Falls Diocese from Pilley's Island, Windsor Parish; to Upper Island Cove, Harbour Grace Parish; was divided between Srs. Ready and Gallagher. Although it was an immense territory for the Sisters to cover, it was made possible and workable by the new volunteer catechists, who distributed, taught and corrected lessons the lessons. The new catechists lived in the areas of Cull's Harbour, Terra Nova National Park, St. Vincent's, Triton, Old Shop, Lewisporte and Norman's Cove.

To encourage the catechists and to attract new volunteers, the Sisters spent 25% of their time on the road, visiting and assisting parents and catechists. From 1987, they made greater efforts to prepare volunteer catechists, loaning teaching aids and instructing the use of films, videos, tapes and charts.

In 1988, Sr. Mary Harding joined the Trinity Place Sisters in October 1988. Although her most recent appointment had been as superior of the retired Sisters in Toronto, Sr. Harding had acquired vast experience in postings at the Regina and Fargo catechetical missions. In addition to correcting lessons, she also led the singing at services in Clarenville at the Clarenville Rest Home, the correctional centre and at Dr. Cross Memorial Hospital.

Departure of Sr. MacLellan, 1990

While pleased with the appointment of Fr. Wayne Cummings as a full-time pastor solely for the Clarenville parish, many parishioners were saddened with Sr. MacLellan's posting to Toronto as

Superior of the retired Sisters. Under the headline of Clarenville Catholics Losing Treasure This Monh, an article in the June 26, 1990 issue of the *Clarenville Packet* stated:

... During the past ten years, Sr. Rita MacLellan has lived up to the name and ideals of her congregation by being a shining example of loving service not only to Catholics but also to anyone in need of care and concern in this community.

Sr. Rita has been deeply involved in the religious education of our young people, instructing them in Christian principles and preparing them for the Sacraments here in Clarenville and in other rural areas of Newfoundland.

In addition, she has visited the elderly and sick, welcomed new families, held liturgical services and generally knit the few and scattered Catholics together in a loving community of faith.

Although small in stature, Sr. Rita has a large and generous heart. She is well known for her quick sense of humour and infectious laughter as well as her remarkable inexhaustible energy for doing things pertaining to God.

Sister will be sorely missed by her Sisters, Srs. Ready, Harding and Gallagher, as well as by many people who have been touched by her sincere generosity of spirit and love. The Catholics of Clarenville bid Sr. Rita a fond farewell. As we cannot repay her for all the love she has so freely given to us during her time here in Clarenville, we thank her with humility.

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FAREWELL TO CLARENVILLE, 1992

When Sister General Helen Hayes attended the annual Grand Falls diocesan meeting in 1982, she alerted Bishop MacDonald that the Sisters could not remain indefinitely in Clarendville, suggesting that the diocese prepare to continue the Sisters' ministry of reaching and teaching religion to rural youth. Ten years later, the Sisters' time for departure had come.

In response, Bishop MacDonald announced that John Paddick, a teacher and principal of Notre Dame Academy, Grand Falls for 25 years, as the diocesan coordinator of the ministry formerly held by the Sisters. Under the change, Mr. Paddick would coordinate resource materials from a central office, while each parish would be asked to have catechists in each local community to oversee the program of religious education on the local level. A month before the announcement, Mr. Paddick was introduced to the range of correspondence work on a visit to Trinity Place with Bishop MacDonald and Leo Lewis, religious education coordinator for Grand Falls. A member of the Knight of Columbus, Mr. Paddick had been active in his parish, serving on the parish council and as a lay reader. He planned to retire from teaching in June 1992 just when Bishop MacDonald was looking for someone "to create a plan to fill the vacuum made by the departure of the SOS." On July 2, he arrived at Trinity Place to pack his small truck with the Sisters' donation of boxes of texts, audio visuals, filing cards, a set of shelves and other basic materials. In the November-December 1992 issue of *Our Diocese*, Mr. Paddick reported that he was continuing the method used by the Sisters in ministering to the needs of their correspondence families through home study programs.

To soften this Sisters' sadness of leaving Clarendville, friends planned special celebrations and the opportunities for the Sisters to say good-bye to their many friends.

Sisters bid farewell

On June 7, the parishioners of Little Heart's Ease, and Gooseberry Cove gathered after mass to demonstrate their affection for the Sisters and to express their sadness at the Sisters' leaving. Over the years, the Sisters have taken a particular interest in helping to develop the faith life in this area through the religion program, sacramental preparation, liturgical prayer and ministries and were instrumental in helping them obtain funding for much-needed renovations at the Gooseberry Cove church. During the past year, the Sisters trained and encouraged coordinators to continue the catechetical program on the local level. At this farewell supper, the First Communion class presented Srs. Gallagher and Ready with a personal gift.

During mass at Southern Bay on June 8, certificates were presented to all students, who had completed the correspondence course that year. At the pot-luck dinner, Fr. Cummings remarked: "As I have come to know these Sisters, I sense that they not only minister to you but they truly love you." At the supper's conclusion, Charlene Quinton, a Grade 10 student, who had been enrolled in the correspondence course since kindergarten, presented a gift.

At a mass of thanksgiving for the Sisters in Port Union on June 10, Fr. Kevin Barker, pastor of St. Joseph and St. Patrick parishes, reminded his parishioners that the Sisters had given much of their gifts and talents to many children in the parish with their religious instructions. On that occasion, Fr. Cummings from Clarendville, Fr. Hynes and Presentation Sisters from Plate Cove, joined Fr. Barker in honouring the Sisters.

An account of a farewell at Our Lady of Fatima parish in Clarendville was published in the July 1992 issue of *Our Diocese*.

June 30, 1992, marked the end of an era in the history of the Diocese of Grand Falls. On that date, the Sisters of Service officially closed their school for the religious education of our youth through correspondence courses. These courses were offered to our youth who do not have access to the religious education offered in our Catholic Schools. Since 1975, the Sisters have operated their school from the town of Clarendville. Over the years, a total of fifteen Sisters have served in this ministry. In June, only Sr. Eileen Gallagher and Sr. Margaret Ready remained to close the school.

The Sisters have touched the lives of many people. Over the last two months, several communities of our parish have gathered to bid farewell to the Sisters. Through such events, we celebrate the work of all the Sisters who have served us and we demonstrate our gratitude and affection.

On May 3, parishioners in Clarendville celebrated a special liturgy after which all were invited to the basement-hall of the church for a potluck lunch. We were especially blessed to have with us Sr. Frances Coffey, Superior General of the Sisters of Service. She travelled from Toronto for this occasion for which we were truly grateful. Mrs. Camilla O'Shea, chairperson of the Parish Council, set the tone of the celebration by stating that "we gather to show our love and affection for the Sisters of Service."

In his address to the gathering, Father Cummings, our parish priest, praised the work of the Sisters. He high-lighted their special charism "to go to places that normally do not have the regular services of a resident parish priest or Catholic school. These Sisters, who represent the Church, bring a presence of the Church to those who probably feel left out or neglected when it comes to regular care by the Church. These Sisters demonstrate that the Church really cares for these people." Fr. Cummings, who is one of the Pastoral Leaders of our diocese, also mentioned that earlier this year, at a meeting of that group, a special liturgy, reception and banquet were held to honour the work of the Sisters of Service. At that time, Bishop Faber MacDonald, in the name of the Diocese, officially thanked and praised the accomplishments of the Sisters.

For the people of Clarendville, the presence of the Sisters has been a real blessing. It was from here in Clarendville that they carried out their ministry in the diocese, but they have also ministered here among us. They have enhanced our faith-life and have been an integral part of this faith family. All the Sisters who have lived here have been our friends. They have served us in countless ways and have loved us. That is why we have this celebration as a way to show our love for them. We asked Sr. Coffey to convey this message to all her Sisters in religious life who have become a part of our lives. As the lunch came to a close, the Sisters were given a personal gift as a token of our appreciation.

Farewell letters of appreciation

The Sisters received the following expressions of appreciation from the Catholic Women's League:

In compliance with a motion passed by the Provincial Council of the Catholic Women's League of Newfoundland and Labrador in Convention at Grand Falls/Windsor, June 6, 1992: A bouquet of Sincere Thanks to you and your religious Sisters for the tremendous contribution you have made in the effort to preserve our Christian Faith.

It was with deep regret that the League learned of your decision to leave Newfoundland. It would seem that your services are needed now more than ever. However - God knows best!

May our Patroness, Our Lady of Good Counsel, be with you always wherever you choose to do God's work.

Sincerely,
Bridget Oliver,
Provincial Secretary

A letter received on July 7 from Fr. Frank Aylward, pastor of St. Patrick's, Tilting, Fogo, stated:

Some time ago, Fr. Cummings delivered to me some religious materials from you. I sincerely thank you for these. Certainly, they will be very useful to me, especially in Confirmation and other sacramental instruction. I am also very grateful for the convert instruction material.

With the possibility of a non-denominational education system in this province, materials such as these are most helpful. Thank you, Sister and thanks to all the Sisters of Service.

Your assistance to me in the past and this assistance will not be forgotten. I hope that your years spent in proclaiming the Gospel in this Diocese were happy and Spirit-filled and I trust that your new assignment will be just as fruitful.

It is difficult to express the thanks that is due for all the hard work and dedication rendered to me and the parishes that I served. Thank you very much, Sister, and all the Sisters of Service. May God grant you an abundance of His Choicest.

A letter of gratitude from the Sisters to all dear friends and benefactors:

As we Sisters prepare to leave Clarendville, we thank and praise God for all the blessings He has given to us. We are grateful to the people of Clarendville and to all those throughout the Grand Falls and St. John's Dioceses with whom we have been privileged to associate. We thank Bishops Faber MacDonald and Alphonsus A.L. Penney, for their continued support, kindness, generosity and encouragement. Thanks also to many zealous Pastors, especially those who served Clarendville in our early days and supported us in our new venture: Fathers B.J. McCarthy, Kevin Barker, the late Larry George, Michael Walsh, Aloysius Antle and Wayne Cummings. We are grateful for their help, encouragement and cooperation. For other pastors who supported our first venture in the Grand Falls Diocese, we thank Msgr. John Hogan, Fathers M. Hynes, Len Kelly and E.T. Bromley. We also remember gratefully priests in the western sector of the Diocese Fr. Leo Burke of Bishop's Falls and Fr. Michael Ryan. A special mention to Fr. Kevin McKenna, S.J. for his advice and great assistance in a variety of ways, also to the Director of Religious Education, Fr. Ron Bromley, for his ongoing support. We gratefully remember the Pastors of St. John's Diocese in whose territory we were privileged to serve: Fathers Linus Coady, F.J. Terry, Gordon Walsh and Gary Walsh. We are grateful to many Religious Coordinators for their help with retreats in preparing correspondence students for Confirmation.

We express very special thanks to the Superior Generals and many Sisters of each of the Congregations of The Sisters of Mercy and Sisters of the Presentation in St. John's and in their convents throughout Newfoundland. Their generous hospitality, support and sisterly friendship will always be a dear and precious memory to us. We thank the Catholic Education Committee, especially Dr. Tracey and Mr. Kearsey for their initial assistance in 1975. We are very grateful to the Catholic Church Extension Society and the Knights of Columbus for their financial assistance.

We are grateful for the friendliness and generosity shown to us by so many friends in Clarendville and elsewhere. Especially do we recall the many kind acts of our neighbour, Mr. Aubrey Reid whom we gratefully named "Mr. Fixit". We came to count on Mr. Fred Bittner for our annual Christmas tree. He was also generous in sharing a goodly portion of his garden produce with us. The CCWA always surprised us at Christmas with a generous box of delicacies. We gratefully remember our Christmas invitations to our good friends the B. Russell's, Mrs. Susie Singleton and Mrs. Harvey.

Our benefactors are many and very important to us. It would take a large book to record them all. We wish we could say a hearty "thank you" to each one. What we can and will do with all our heart is to ask God to bless each one in His own generous way. We hope that all our benefactors will be happy to know that at our request, the Holy Eucharist is offered every month in each of our SOS houses across Canada for the welfare and intentions of each of our benefactors.

At this time of "farewell", we are reminded of the saying that, "You never really leave a place you have grown to love, but leave a part of yourself in that place and take part of it with you.." So be it!

In the words of St Thomas More we ask our many friends to please: Pray for us, as we will pray for you, that we may meet again merrily in heaven

