

XMAS AT GREAT U. S. CATHOLIC CENTER

Washington, Dec. 1.—With representatives of almost a score of the great religious houses of the world gathered about her in their homes of study, the Catholic University of America at Washington provides perhaps the most varied symposium of the picturesque old customs of Christmas-time to be found in America.

AT THE FRANCISCAN MONASTERY Most elaborate and perhaps most impressive of all the ceremonies is that at the Franciscan Monastery, Mt. St. Sepulchre. Here Christmas-time brings forth a scene that is unique in America. It is the enactment, faithful in every detail, of the exact observances which at the same time are held on the other side of the world in the Holy Land itself, where the original Christmas took place.

As midnight approaches on the eve of the great festival, hundreds will climb the ascent to Mt. St. Sepulchre for the ceremony, as hundreds on the same eve will wind their way through crooked, narrow streets to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. On the stroke of 12 the solemn High Mass will begin, the ancient formula, the venerable chants duplicating those of the Old World.

On the altar in the center of the great monastery church, as the celebrant ascends the steps, there will repose an exquisite little image, life-size, of the new-born Saviour. It lies there only at Christmas, as does its double which at that other Mass far away is reposing on the altar at Jerusalem.

All the stately beauty of the plain-song chants, sung by the whole community, scores of priests and brothers in their picturesque habit will mark the Mass itself. Then, the Sacrifice over, the celebrant will come down from the altar bearing in his arms the image of the Babe, resting on a white pillow. Behind him will form the procession—the officers of the Mass in their vestments, the monks, two by two in their rude brown garb, then the congregation. Now the cortege, headed by the image of the Saviour of the world whose birth it commemorates, will slowly circle the interior of the church to the entrance of the Grotto of Bethlehem, singing hymns as it goes.

At the Grotto steps the celebrant will slowly descend, followed by as many as may. For the passage is small and the grotto, a replica of that in the Holy City, is tiny. Arrived at the manger, again a duplication of that in Jerusalem, the little image will be deposited tenderly and reverently on the wisp of straw which covers the plain little niche, there to remain until Epiphany, when with equal solemnity it will be borne back to the church proper and then laid away until another Christmas.

While this elaborate ceremony is proceeding, in half a dozen other houses of religious Orders other midnight Masses will be in progress. At the stately Dominican College of the Immaculate Conception there will be the chanting in unison by the whole community of the magnificent old notes of Matins, before the Mass begins at 12. Toward the end of the ceremony priests and brothers again will join in chanting Lauds.

At the Paulist College there will be a midnight Mass and the entire community also will join in the solemn plainsong chant. The old Christmas carols will mingle with the more stately music. But here the solemn religious ceremonies of the day will give way in the evening to a typical American Christmas night, fittingly reflecting the nationality of the first great Order of distinctively American origin. There will be a "party" at which all will be fun. It will be the charge of the students, who will enact a skit of their own writing and take turns at aiming jests at everyone present. The "party" is held annually, and there is an unwritten law that on this night the faculty, from the Superior down, may be made the

butt of a thousand jokes with impunity to the jesters. It is a night gleefully prepared for and awaited by the whole community, faculty and student body alike.

A more purposeful note is added by the fact that the friends of the college who are invited include as many converts to the Church as may be gathered together, in keeping with the special mission of the Paulists—the bringing of the Faith to the non-Catholic.

THE MUSIC OF THE FATHERLAND Germany's splendid choral Christmas-masses will be recalled at the house of the Friars Minor Conventual, which has more foundations in Germany than in any other country. Here, at the Mass there will be sung the hymns of old, all translated into English save the great masterpiece of the German choral writers, "Stille Nacht."

A beautiful bit of charity, brought with them as a sacred tradition of their order, will be enacted at the house of the Fathers of the Atonement. It is the caring for the "Brothers Christopher," famous at the motherhouse at Graymoor, New York, and transplanted to the house of studies at Washington, even though meager facilities almost forbid the practice. The "Brothers Christopher" are wayfarers who, going nowhere in particular, stop in as the guests of charity at houses of the Fathers of the Atonement. There they are provided with food and otherwise cared for, in return for which they perform various kinds of labor for the religious. At Graymoor, when winters are particularly bitter, Christmas sees as many as 100 or 175 of these men at the monastery. They have been dubbed "Brothers Christopher" by the members of the Order because St. Christopher, renowned in story, is the patron of travelers. They are devoted to their benefactors. Some have remained with the Fathers for years, and there are never fewer than 25 or 50 at Graymoor.

With the arrival of Christmas, the Fathers do their best to provide cheer for their strange guests. There is always an entertainment, and such of the "Christophers" as have some small attainment at acting, legordem or dancing add their bit. Little gifts—pipes, tobacco, handkerchiefs—are given out, and there is a Santa Claus. A playlet given by the children under the tutelage of the Sisters has become a tradition.

MEMORIES OF A SCOTTISH XMAS At other religious houses at the University there will be those who this year will look back on happy little customs they have seen enacted at Yuletide but must now forego. At St. Anselm's Priory, for instance, where the English Benedictines have just established themselves, there will be the Christmas Mass and tea in the afternoon, but the seven members of the community who recently came to this country from Scotland will miss the great time-honored festival of their own land. They will see only in memory the colorful procession that annually forms outside St. Benedict's at Fort Augustus, Scotland, and in stately array takes its way to the Crib in the church, where, formed in the traditional semicircle, the whole community sings the beautiful strains of "Adeste Fideles" in plainsong. They will not grieve the country folk who have come from forty miles around, many on foot, to attend the annual ceremony; to receive Communion by the hundreds and to partake of the monks' hospitality in a great family gathering afterward. At the humble frame house at the University where another great foundation is in the making, there will be only the semblance of these things, but there will be reverence and goodwill and confident hope that future years will see the fine old tradition of a Scottish Christmas flower at the new house.

SHADOW OF SPANISH CUSTOMS Again, at the Claretian College the handful of Fathers who have only recently begun to build an institution at the University will have but a shadow of the colorful Yule ceremonies so dear to Latin hearts. A bit wistfully they tell of the tambourines and castanets that accompany the carols at the midnight Masses their Spanish hands have had for centuries; of the elaborate Crib in the homes, and the miniature Bethlehem villages with houses, paths, people, animals, and sometimes even running brooks.

But there will be carols sung at the Claretian College, and one of the most beautiful of the ancient customs will be kept—the "kissing of the Babe." There will not be the hundreds of faithful to troop past the priest and salute the little image as he holds it in his hands after the quaint fashion in Spain. But the members of the community, though few in number, will file by their Superior on Christmas morn and deliver the traditional salutation.

THE MARYKNOLLERS Meantime, at two houses at least, thoughts will be turned to the customs of other lands in a different spirit. They are the houses of the Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America, or "Maryknollers," and of the Holy Cross Fathers. At the first there will be reminders of the bizarre, outlandish ways of the Chinese, of chili-like faith, strange garb and the ardor of the convert.

Weeks before, letters of greeting and Christmas good wishes will have been sent to the Maryknollers laboring among the yellow race.

AT FOREIGN MISSION SEMINARY The Foreign Mission Seminary of Holy Cross, the Mission thought will be duplicated, but with the emphasis here on India, where the Holy Cross Fathers in America have their chief mission interest. At least one member of the community, Father Dominic, of pure Bengalese blood, will recall the Christmas days where the India missioner labors—the hard-pressed priest hearing the confessions of the natives; the gathering of the faithful for midnight Mass, the measure of rice brought by each and the banquet of rice and a sparing portion of meat afterward, served on banana leaves and eaten with the hands.

Thoughts of Christmas in another corner of the world will be strong in half a dozen other houses at the University. Yet for all their diversity, they will have the great, compelling common bond of service planned or already performed in the interest of the Babe whose nativity all honor. Each observance, whatever its origin or however strange, will focus at each house in the solemn Mass, the universal tribute to the new-born Christ.

JOHN A. McDUGALL The largely attended funeral of the late John A. McDougall, took place Sunday afternoon, Nov. 28th at 2 p. m. at St. John the Evangelist Church, Garston, where the Libera was sung, thence to the R. C. cemetery, Sudbury, where interment took place. Deceased leaves besides his sorrowing wife Katharine Grant, to whom he was married seventeen years ago, a young family of two sons, in America, and a devoted husband and father. Also one sister and three brothers, Catherine and Donald A., Glen Nevis, Ont., Christopher, Glen Robertson, Ont., and Alexander, Garston, Ont. The late Rev. Sister Mary Joseph of the Hotel Dieu, Cornwall, was a sister. Numerous Mass cards received were a silent and loving testimony of the esteem in which deceased was held. His brothers, Donald and Alexander, brothers-in-law, Wm. and Angus Grant and A. P. Kutchaw, Sudbury, with D. Chisolin of Coniston were pall bearers. The funeral Mass which Rev. Father Conliffe, Coniston, officiated was celebrated Monday morning at 9 a. m.

OBITUARY

SISTER M. ST. UNIS On the twelfth of December at the Mother House of the Holy Cross Congregation at St. Laurent the death occurred of Sister M. St. Unis, formerly Eva Cameron, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John A. Cameron of Alexandria, Ontario. The end came peacefully and quietly and was the close of a plucky and courageous struggle against a lingering disease which was borne with a gentle patience and a cheerful resignation to God's will.

Sister M. St. Unis was one of a large Catholic family, of whom the parents, three sisters and one brother still survive. Born in Alexandria in 1891, she made her earliest studies at the Separate Convent, from which she went to the High School, and later on spent a year as a boarder at Holy Angels' Academy at St. Laurent. She continued her studies at the Normal School, Ottawa, received her diploma, and heeding the call to the religious life, entered the Holy Cross community at the age of twenty-one, being one of the seventy-eight young women of sterling merit whom the small diocese of Alexandria has given as teaching Sisters to that Congregation.

After her profession she was sent to Renfrew where for eleven years she was a member of the separate school staff of that town. An exemplary religious and an ideal teacher, endowed with rare gifts of mind and heart, she was universally loved by the pupils who passed through her hands, and the influence she exercised on the youthful characters of the little ones with whom she came in contact is still evident in the loving memories they cherish of the self-sacrificing spirit which she inculcated much more by example than by word. Generous and kindly, she gave wholeheartedly of her talents and her labor in God's service she did much to deepen in others the faith, the hope and the love of which her daily life was a constant reminder and to her Sisters as to those whom she taught she ever radiated with gentle spirit of Him for whose sweet sake she had left all.

When her health began to weaken she was given a complete rest; in the spite of the best medical care no great improvement in her condition took place; and in September she returned to the Mother House at St. Laurent to prepare for the supreme sacrifice of her young life. God was to take her to Himself, and though she found His will hard for nature, she was ready to follow the call of Christ now as she had first followed the vocation of her Superior union with Him in religion. During her illness, she bore patiently the long days and tedious nights of weariness which made up the cross He had fashioned for her to carry; she had the tenderest of devotion to St. Theresa of the Child Jesus, and when the summons finally came to join the Master she went confidently and without fear to meet her God. Humbly speaking, her death was a great loss to the community which mourns her; her sunny disposition and her unflinching spirit of charity will be much missed by her sister-religious, and her death in the prime of life is but another instance of how different are the ways of God and men.

The funeral took place at the Mother House on December 14th, Right Rev. Mgr. French, parish-priest of Renfrew, receiving the body at the chapel door. The funeral Mass was sung by Rev. A. L. MacDonald, the parish-priest of Glen Robertson, while at the side-altars low Masses were said by Rev. J. J. MacDonell, Rector of the Cathedral at Alexandria, and Rev. A. Cameron, of Cornwall. Rev. Father Pauze, C. S. C., the chaplain of the community, Rev. D. J. McDougall, C. S. S. R., Rector of St. Ann's, and Rev. Father Cyr, C. S. C., assisted in the sanctuary. Among those in the chapel were her mother and sister, Mrs. J. A. Cameron and Miss Helena Cameron, formerly of Alexandria, now of Ottawa; Sister St. Vivian of Renfrew, her cousin; Mr. and Mrs. Ryan of Vankelee Hill; the

pupils of the Academy of Holy Angels, Saint Laurent, of which the deceased was a graduate, and the entire community together with novices and postulants. At the same time as the funeral service at Saint Laurent was being held, a Solemn Requiem High Mass, requested by the Separate School Board of Trustee, was sung in St. Francis Xavier Church, Renfrew, for the repose of the soul of the departed Nun who had given all the years of her teaching to the instruction of the children under their charge.

Surely such a life of labor will not go unrewarded: May He whom she served so generously grant her eternal peace.

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The Port Arthur subdivision most graciously joined with the Fort William subdivision in bestowing hospitality. The Port Arthur subdivision entertained at a most delightful luncheon in the Prince Arthur Hotel to some eighty guests, and the Fort William subdivision entertained at a dinner in the Avenue Hotel to some eighty guests.

DIED

McDUGALL.—At his late residence, Garson Road, on Nov. 5th, John A. McDougall, youngest son of the late Donald A. and Ellen McDougall, Glen Nevis, Glengarry Co., Ont., and beloved husband of Katharine Grant, second daughter of the late John A. and Mary Grant, Sudbury, Ont. Interment in R. C. Cemetery, Sudbury. R. I. P.

OLIVER.—At Canso, N. S., on November 28, 1925, Ellen Oliver, daughter of the late Patrick O'Sullivan and Frances O'Hearn, consoled by the last rites of Holy Mother Church, in her eighty-fourth year. Deceased leaves to mourn her loss one sister Mrs. Alice Mesgher of Prince Rupert, B. C., an only daughter, Mrs. Alice MacKenzie of Hazel Hill, N. S., and three sons, William of Canso, N. S., and Austin and Alfred of Boston, Mass. May her soul rest in peace.

NEW BOOK

"The Little Flower and the Blessed Sacrament." By Rev. Joseph J. Husslein, S. J. Illustrated, 60 cents. This is a very attractive book, profusely illustrated, at a price that permits the widest circulation. Lovers of Therese will use it to spread the story of her patron in the new light—her devotion to the Eucharist.

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I have come to serve! This is the ideal and programme of the Master's life. From Bethlehem to Calvary His days on earth were consecrated to the service of men. The lowly, the poor, the ignorant, the most forsaken were the privileged subjects of this divine mission.

Charity and kindness to all, but particularly the most needy form the burden of His message. He made that the test of Christian life. This doctrine He translated into action and sanctioned by miracles. Service to the sick, the poor, the ignorant, the outcast, prompted mostly all these manifestations of His divine Power.

The Sisters of Service are trying in the mission field to exemplify this teaching of the Master's life. To serve the most abandoned souls on the Prairies, to assist the immigrant in the perilous stage of his initiation to this totally new environment is their work.

To accomplish this missionary endeavor, vocations, more vocations and still more vocations are needed. Youth is the age of romance. Young women, does the high romance of service appeal to you? Is the Master inviting you to "come and serve with Him?" Correspondence is invited.

Sisters of Service, 2 Wellensley Place, Toronto.

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE

REPORT OF ANNUAL MEETING OF SAULT STE MARIE DIOCESE

The annual convention of the Catholic Women's League, Sault Ste Marie Diocese opened in the Knights of Columbus Hall in Fort William on September 11th at 10 a. m. The President Mrs. Hand, presiding. There were many delegates present. Mrs. Hand, Mrs. Sullivan, Dr. McCarthy of Sault Ste Marie, Mrs. Surtees, Mrs. Brown and Miss O'Neill of North Bay and Mrs. Green, Mrs. McTeague and Mrs. DeForest of Port Arthur.

The delegates were welcomed by the local president, Mrs. Morgans. At the afternoon meeting the hall was crowded. The meeting opened with the singing of "O Canada." Reports of the subdivisions in the Diocese were then read which told of much work done in a social way, instructive entertainments were given at their monthly meetings. A great pleasure was given the ladies present by Father Primateau of Port Arthur, he gave a delightful talk on character. Father McGuire of Fort William also spoke. He told of many little things the women of the League could do that would give joy to their coreligionists. Father Monahan, our chaplain, spoke on the great strength of unity and of the great good it would do for the women of the League.

The Officers elected for the ensuing year are: President—Mrs. Jas. Murphy, Fort William. 1st Vice President—Mrs. Racicot, Compey. 2nd Vice President—Mrs. Surtees, North Bay. 3rd Vice President—Mrs. Hickey, Sault Ste Marie. Secretary—Mrs. P. Smith, Fort William. Treasurer—Mrs. DeForest, Port Arthur.

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