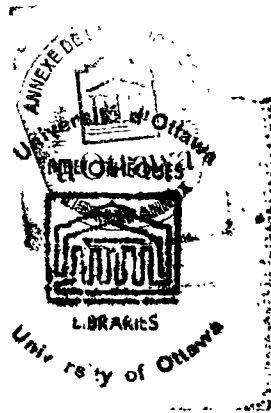


THE BIRTH AND GROWTH OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE
SISTERS OF ST. MARTHA OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

by Sister Mary Ida, C.S.M.

Thesis presented to the Faculty of Arts
of the University of Ottawa through the
Institute of Psychology as partial ful-
fillment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Arts.



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CURRICULUM STUDIORUM

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Sister Mary Ida, C.S.M., born Mary Jeanette Coady
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INTRODUCTION

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July 17, 1916 is a date of some importance in the history of Prince Edward Island, for on that day there was founded by Henry Joseph O'Leary, Bishop of Charlottetown, a religious congregation which was destined to exert considerable influence on its development. It is the purpose of this study to organize the facts relating to the foundation and subsequent development of this congregation, namely, The Sisters of St. Martha of Prince Edward Island, and to point out what contribution it has made to Christian education in every field of endeavour over a period of approximately four decades. Education is understood in its true concept as taking in the whole compass of human life, emotional, spiritual, intellectual and moral, individual, domestic and social, in accordance with the teachings of Pope Pius XI.¹

The fact that the Congregation is now approaching the fortieth year of its continuous development and that no publication has yet been issued concerning its activities, with the exception of a brief vocational pamphlet, makes it necessary that an historical account of its life be written, especially since many of the data concerning its foundation are scattered and not readily accessible. Moreover, the availability of an organized work will answer the requests of the members themselves as well as of others who are

¹ Pope Pius XI, Christian Education of Youth, in Five Great Encyclicals, New York, Paulist Press, 1939, p. 65.

interested in obtaining an authoritative account of this organization. It is especially important, too, for the purpose of verification, that the history be written while members of the original band are still living.

The principal sources of data for this study were the Archives of the Congregation, as well as those of the individual houses. Here were found official letters and documents relating to the activities of the Congregation, sisters' records, circular letters of the Mothers General to the sisters on the missions, minutes of meetings, copies of the Constitutions, financial statements, annals, school registers, school reports, sisters' memoirs, and newspaper clippings. Two other very valuable sources were the Diocesan Archives in Charlottetown and the Community Archives of the Sisters of St. Martha at Bethany, Antigonish, Nova Scotia, where were obtained copies of letters directly concerned with the foundation and early development of the Congregation. In the legislative library in Charlottetown were found issues of daily papers which furnished items useful in the compilation of this history.

The work is divided into five chapters. The description in Chapter I of the foundation and early development of the Congregation is followed in Chapter II by the story of a decade of expansion during the episcopate of Bishop Louis O'Leary. The widening of its activities under the guidance of Bishop Joseph A. O'Sullivan, as unfolded in Chapter III,

is continued in Chapter IV which covers the episcopate of Bishop Boyle, when the Congregation reached the peak of its development.

It is the aim of Chapter V to show to what extent the Congregation has fulfilled the purpose of its existence. Each work that it has undertaken in the various fields of its activity is examined in the light of the teachings of Pope Pius XI concerning Christian Education, and is shown conclusively to have made a very real contribution to the educational life of the diocese.

CHAPTER I

THE FOUNDATION OF THE CONGREGATION

Before attempting to carry out the purpose of this study, as outlined in the introduction, it is expedient to present data on the province of Prince Edward Island with regard to its setting, its history, its people and their occupations.

1. Historical Background

Prince Edward Island, the smallest of the Canadian provinces, lies in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and is separated from the mainland by Northumberland Strait, which varies from nine to twenty miles in width. The province is extremely irregular in shape, and deep inlets and tidal streams divide it into three approximately equal parts. It is less than one hundred and fifty miles long and from four to twenty miles wide.

According to the opinion of the best historians, it was first discovered on June 30, 1534, by Jacques Cartier who described it in his journal as "a land low and plane and the fairest that may be seen, full of goodly meadows and trees."¹ The aborigines called this island "Abegweit," meaning "Cradled in the Waves," but during the days of French occupancy it was known as Isle St. Jean.² With the fall of Louisburg in 1758 it

¹ A.B. Warburton, A History of Prince Edward Island, St. John, N.B., Barnes, 1923, p. 12.

² Idem., p. 17.

became a British possession and because of confusion with St. John's, Newfoundland and St. John, New Brunswick, it was decided in 1798 to change the name to Prince Edward Island in honour of Edward, Duke of Kent and father of Queen Victoria.³

The province contains 1,400,000 acres of land, eighty-five per cent of which is intensively cultivated so that the economy of the province is largely agricultural. The growing of potatoes has become an Island specialty, along with dairying, lobster-fishing, and canning. The silver fox, once synonymous with the name Prince Edward Island, is no longer a factor in the economy of the province.

Prince Edward Islanders derive almost entirely from French, English, Scotch, and Irish stock. The present population is 106,000, the Catholic element forming somewhat less than fifty per cent.

The Diocese of Charlottetown embraced in 1913, the year when this study begins, not only the province of Prince Edward Island, but the Magdalen Islands as well. In 1946, however, the latter group of islands was officially annexed to the Diocese of Gaspé by a pastoral letter of His Excellency Albini LeBlanc, Bishop of Gaspé.⁴ The appointment of a new

3 A. B. Warburton, op. cit., p. 197

4 Charlottetown, Diocese of, Year Book, 1946, p. 30.

Bishop, Henry Joseph O'Leary, to the See of Charlottetown on January 25, 1913,⁵ effected changes which have contributed greatly to the spiritual life of the Diocese.

2. A Bishop-Founder, Henry Joseph O'Leary

Henry Joseph O'Leary was born in Richibucto, New Brunswick, May 13, 1879. His father was Henry O'Leary, a merchant ship owner, and his mother was also an O'Leary - Mary O'Leary. Even in his early years Henry showed that brilliance of mind which was to characterize him in his college years. He studied for an arts degree at St. Joseph's College, Memramcook, and in 1897 he entered the Seminary in Montreal. He was ordained priest on September 21, 1901, and that same fall went to Rome to further his studies at the University of Propaganda, receiving there two years later the degree of Doctor of Divinity. He then studied at the University of Apollonaris for his doctorate in Canon Law. During summer vacations he travelled extensively in the Holy Land and in various European countries, becoming proficient in French and Italian languages. On his return to Canada he was named assistant, and later pastor at Bathurst. There on January 25, 1913, at the early age of thirty-three, he received word of his appointment to the Bishopric of

⁵ Archives of the Congregation, Mount St. Mary's, Charlottetown.

Charlottetown, the second-oldest English-speaking diocese of Canada.⁶ He was consecrated in the Sacred Heart Church, Bathurst, New Brunswick, where he had been pastor, and arrived in Charlottetown on May 28, 1913, to assume his episcopal duties.⁷

One of the many tasks awaiting the new Bishop was the reconstruction of the Cathedral, which had been destroyed by fire as preparations were being made for his arrival. As the new edifice was being built, simultaneously in 1913 and 1914 a three-storey wing was being added to the Bishop's residence, which, rumour said, was to be a convent for sisters who would take charge of the domestic duties.⁸ This rumour was later confirmed when the Sisters of St. Martha of Prince Edward Island took up residence therein.

When Bishop O'Leary came to the Diocese, he found working therein three different religious Communities. The Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame conducted seven convents, all devoted to teaching; the Grey Nuns of Quebec had charge of the Charlottetown Hospital and St. Vincent's Orphanage; and the Little Sisters of the Holy Family had the care of the domestic

⁶ Archives of the Congregation, Mount St. Mary's, Charlottetown.

This biographical sketch was copied from The Western Catholic, Edmonton, issue of March 6, 1938, p. 1-3.

⁷ Reception to Bishop O'Leary, news item in The Charlottetown Guardian, issue of May 29, 1913, p. 1, cols. 1,2, and

⁸ Personal interview with Mother F. Loyola, September 5, 1954.

work at St. Dunstan's College. The Bishop was determined, however, to add a fourth Congregation, an idea which his predecessor, Bishop James Charles MacDonald, had also conceived, but which, owing to ill-health, he was obliged to abandon.⁹

3. New Diocesan Needs

New needs were arising and the Bishop decided that the time had come for the establishing of a Congregation especially devoted to home interests. Monsignor Peter F. Hughes, parish priest of Edson, Alberta, who was Bishop O'Leary's secretary in 1914, states very clearly His Excellency's purpose in founding a diocesan Congregation:

When it was a question of enlarging the scope of the work of the sisters in the diocese, it was often necessary to make several appeals to the communities engaged in work on the island to obtain the sisters necessary for such development. With such an arrangement His Grace¹⁰ foresaw that there never could be any great development even in the existing institutions, and man of vision that he was, he realized that the work of the Church required much expansion with a corresponding increase in the number of sisters occupied in such work. So it was that from the very beginning he thought of a Community such as your own, which would engage in every form of work - teaching, hospital, works of charity, etc....¹¹

⁹ Archives of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Martha, Bethany, Antigonish.

¹⁰ Bishop O'Leary later became Archbishop of Edmonton.

¹¹ Personal Correspondence of the Author, Letter of Monsignor P. F. Hughes, dated September 23, 1954.

Bishop O'Leary was amazed to learn of the large number of young girls who were leaving the province every year to enter different religious Communities and labour in other dioceses. Concerning this matter he wrote: "It is a great pity to see this soil so fertile in vocations furnish subjects to the United States and elsewhere, and be forced to import others for diocesan works."¹²

Accordingly, in the year following his consecration he communicated successively with the Sisters of St. Martha at Antigonish, Nova Scotia, the Sisters of St. Joseph at Peterborough, Ontario, the Sisters of Hotel Dieu of St. Joseph at Chatham, New Brunswick, and the Sisters of St. Joseph at St. Paul, Minnesota, with a view to establishing a diocesan branch in Charlottetown.

Reverend H. P. MacPherson, St. Francis Xavier University, wrote that he had discussed the matter with the Superior of the Sisters of St. Martha, but that she could not consider sending Sisters to Charlottetown at that time.¹³

The Bishop of Peterborough, Most Reverend M. J. O'Brien, answered the inquiry by reporting the result of a council meeting of the Sisters of St. Joseph. The Community agreed to send three sisters to open a Novitiate, but would not consent to

¹² Bishop Henry J. O'Leary, Letter to Mother M. Stanislaus, dated September 6, 1914, in Diocesan Archives, Charlottetown.

¹³ Reverend H. P. MacPherson, Letter to Bishop O'Leary, dated April 24, 1914, in Diocesan Archives, Charlottetown.

undertake domestic work as the sisters were not trained for such work and they feared that it would be detrimental to their receiving subjects.¹⁴

The reply of Reverend James Reardon, St. Paul, Minnesota, was not any more reassuring as Bishop O'Leary was not able to accept the conditions under which the Sisters of St. Joseph would make a foundation in Charlottetown. They were willing to make an educational foundation, but could not assume the domestic duties at the Bishop's residence, since the carrying on of such work was not in accordance with their constitutions.¹⁵

Sister Walsh, Superior, Hotel Dieu of St. Joseph, Chatham, in correspondence with Bishop O'Leary stated that she could not give a definite answer to his appeal for sisters until she had more information on certain points.¹⁶ There is no further communication in the Charlottetown files on the matter.

Nothing daunted, the Bishop continued his quest, now through an intermediary. In his difficulty he turned to Mother St. Catherine of Sweden of Notre Dame Academy, Charlottetown, who besought the intercession of her provincial, Mother St.

¹⁴ Bishop M. J. O'Brien, Letter to Bishop O'Leary, dated August 25, 1914, in Diocesan Archives, Charlottetown.

¹⁵ Reverend James Reardon, Letter to Bishop O'Leary, dated August 25, 1914, in Diocesan Archives, Charlottetown.

¹⁶ Sister Walsh, Letter to Bishop O'Leary, dated May 14, 1915, in Diocesan Archives, Charlottetown.

John Baptist de Rossi, a native of Antigonish Diocese. The reply of the latter was most heartening, embodying as it did the fulfilment of the Bishop's desires. Since it states the conditions under which the Prince Edward Island postulants were received into the Novitiate of the Sisters of St. Martha, Antigonish, it is given here in full:

At last I have good news to give you for your kind Bishop. The final result of my three pilgrimages in his behalf - one to the Bishop of Antigonish, one to the Rector of St. F. X. College, and the third to the Sisters of St. Martha - is that the Mother Superior of the latter institution has just been in to tell me that she will be ready to receive His Lordship Bishop O'Leary's three postulants as soon as he will be ready to send them. She would prefer young women between twenty-five and thirty years of age.

The Rector of the College, who has the highest esteem for Bishop O'Leary and is most anxious to oblige him in this matter, told me that there would be no expense connected with the stay of Bishop O'Leary's postulants in the Novitiate here. The novices are trained in different sorts of work according to their aptitudes and the use the Community intends to make of them. The service they render in the care of the house, in cooking, laundry work, mending and making soutanes and vestments, nursing the sick, etc., is supposed to cover the cost of board. The postulants, however, are supposed to provide their own clothing.

The Mother Superior said that a little later she hoped to be able to make room for more than three, but at present, owing to the crowded condition of the house, it would be impossible to do so.

The sisters could not entertain the proposition of opening a Novitiate in Charlottetown now from lack of a sufficient number of suitable subjects to inaugurate the work, but the Mother Superior promises that when the Charlottetown Sisters have made profession, an experienced and competent person will be sent with them to direct and form them so that their Bishop's views may be carried out as perfectly as possible.

The Mother Superior further added that she thought it preferable that the Charlottetown postulants should not know their future destination, but should enter, as do

the others, with a disposition to leave themselves entirely in the hands of their Superiors. I do not know whether this suggestion be practicable or not, but I mention it since it was offered. Her desire is to make them feel perfectly at home and she would not wish them to be regarded as strangers.

I wish you would explain to our good Bishop that the reason why the sisters cannot spare three competent sisters for his work now, is that they are at present rendering a service of that kind to the Archbishop of Toronto. I understand that more sisters are wanted there, but none are yet ready to go. When they can be sent to Toronto, room will be made in the Novitiate here for any additional subjects that our Bishop wishes to send. The Mother Superior finds this a small number to begin with.¹⁷

Mention is made in the above letter of three postulants whom the Bishop had ready to place, but it seems that only two left for Antigonish on January 4, 1915, after a few weeks' stay at Notre Dame Academy:¹⁸ Miss Teresa Murray, born at Tyrone, Lot 65, P. E. I., June 27, 1887, daughter of Bernard Murray and Bridget Hagan; and Miss Rose McQuaid, also of Tyrone, Lot 65, P. E. I., born May 21, 1895, daughter of Francis McQuaid and Bridget Croken. Both of these young women were from a mission parish attached to Kelly's Cross parish, of which Reverend Thomas Curran, D.D., was pastor. Dr. Curran was keenly interested in the foundation of the Congregation and gave the Bishop every encouragement and support.

¹⁷ Sister St. J. B. de Rossi, Letter to Mother St. Catherine of Sweden, dated September 9, 1914, in Diocesan Archives Charlottetown.

¹⁸ Sisters' Records, Archives of the Congregation, Charlottetown, 1915.

In regard to the wish of Mother Stanislaus, the Superior referred to in the previous letter, that the Island postulants "should not know their destination," Bishop O'Leary wrote that the young ladies already knew that they were destined to work in Prince Edward Island, and that although it might have been better if this knowledge had been kept from them, he did not think it would make very much difference.¹⁹

Bishop O'Leary's anxiety in regard to the stability of his first postulants was greatly relieved when a letter from Mother Stanislaus assured him of their happiness and of their giving promise of becoming excellent sisters.²⁰

On the Feast of the Sacred Heart, June 11, 1915, these two Island postulants received the Holy Habit and their new names, Sister Mary Clare (Teresa Murray) and Sister Mary Bernardine (Rose McQuaid).²¹ They were joined on August 20, 1915 by Sarah Farrell, Surgeon, and on October 21, by Deliva Cahill, Alberton,²² both of whom spent a few weeks at Notre Dame Academy before leaving for Antigonish.²³

In his eagerness to have his new Congregation established

¹⁹ Bishop O'Leary, Letter to Mother Stanislaus, dated January 7, 1915, in Diocesan Archives, Charlottetown.

²⁰ Mother M. Stanislaus, Letter to Bishop O'Leary, dated January 23, 1915, in Diocesan Archives, Charlottetown.

²¹ Sisters' Records, Archives of the Congregation, Mount St. Mary's, Charlottetown.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

in Charlottetown, Bishop O'Leary seemed to have given little thought to the gradual formation necessary for religious life. As early as April 12, 1915 he wrote Mother Stanislaus for information in regard to the approximate date when the sisters would be ready to return to the Island.²⁴ Although at the time he concurred with the expressed wish of Mother Stanislaus that they should not leave until they had completed their Novitiate, impatient of delay he wrote again before the expiration of this period: "I am anxious to have a beginning made by the sisters, as there is a splendid future before them here, and the sooner they commence the better."²⁵ His desires were to be realized in the very near future.

4. A New Congregation, 1916

After further correspondence²⁶ and a visit made to Charlottetown by Mother Stanislaus,²⁷ it was decided to make the foundation at St. Dunstan's College after the Diocesan Clergy Retreat.²⁸ The Memorandum of conditions under which the

²⁴ Bishop O'Leary, Letter to Mother Stanislaus, dated April 12, 1915, in Diocesan Archives, Charlottetown.

²⁵ -----, Letter to Mother Stanislaus, dated May 12, 1916, in Diocesan Archives, Charlottetown.

²⁶ -----, Letter to Mother Stanislaus, dated June 3, 1916, in Diocesan Archives, Charlottetown.

²⁷ Reference is made to this visit in a Letter to Dr. MacDellan, Rector of St. Dunstan's College, dated June 13, 1916.

²⁸ Rev. G. J. MacLellan, Letter to Mother Stanislaus, dated June 18, 1916, in Diocesan Archives, Charlottetown.

Sisters of St. Martha took up work in the diocese is preserved in the Chancery files:

1. It is the expressed and understood intention that the Bishop of Charlottetown has in view the establishing of an independent branch of the Sisters of St. Martha, said branch to be entirely independent of the Sisters of St. Martha of Antigonish.
2. The Sisters of St. Martha of Antigonish agree to send a sufficient number of professed sisters to take charge of St. Dunstan's College, namely ----- The Bishop of Charlottetown agrees to send to Antigonish a subject for every professed sister whom the Sisters of Antigonish send to Charlottetown.
3. When the subjects sent by the Bishop of Charlottetown shall be considered sufficiently formed and experienced, and in sufficient number to begin a diocesan branch of the Community, they shall all return to the Diocese of Charlottetown, and all the Antigonish Sisters shall return to Antigonish. The Superioress shall, however, remain in Charlottetown until another competent Superioress shall be found to take her place, and at least one sister from Charlottetown shall remain to replace her in Antigonish until she returns. ²⁸
4. All expense connected with the sending of subjects to Antigonish and the bringing of the Sisters from Antigonish shall be borne by the Bishop of Charlottetown. ²⁹

A glance at the above conditions is sufficient to convince the reader that it was not the hope of financial gain that induced the Sisters of St. Martha of Antigonish to cooperate with Bishop O'Leary in the founding of a new Community. Not satisfied with giving the Island postulants a thorough training in their own Novitiate in Antigonish, they were willing to give

²⁹ Diocesan Archives, Charlottetown.

further proof of their charity by sending three of their best sisters to Charlottetown to aid in the difficult task of making a beginning.

On July 16, 1916, Mother M. Stanislaus, accompanied by Sister M. St. Hugh, Sister Joseph Agatha, and the four Island novices, left Antigonish and arrived in Charlottetown via boat from Pictou the following evening. They were met at the wharf by the Bishop's coachman, John Wood, and were taken directly to St. Dunstan's College where they established a temporary Novitiate in the convent attached.³⁰

In September of that year six postulants joined them, five of whom persevered to receive the Holy Habit on March 19, 1917 at a ceremony held in St. Dunstan's College Chapel, presided over by Bishop O'Leary.³¹ The names of the new novices were:

Sister M. Augustine (Trainor)
 Sister Philip Neri (McCarthy)
 Sister Mary Anthony (Haughey)
 Sister Frances Joseph (Kelly)
 Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart (Cummings)

On the same morning the two senior members of the Community made first profession of vows.³² This was the first public ceremony of pronouncing vows held on Prince Edward Island and it made a great impression on all privileged to attend. It

³⁰ Mother M. Stanislaus, Annals, 1917, in Mount St. Mary's Archives.

³¹ -----, Novices, 1918-1930, in Mount St. Mary's Archives.

³² -----, First Profession, 1917-1932.

was written of in the college magazine, Red and White, thus:

On March 19, 1917, the students, through the kind invitation of Mother Superior, were granted the much appreciated and rare privilege of being present at the religious profession of several postulants and novices in the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Martha.

It was a marked day in our calendar for it was the first time in the history of Prince Edward Island that such a ceremony was held in the province, and S. D. U. may well feel proud that its chapel was the scene of such a holy and glorious sight. It was the first time that many of us were present at such a ceremony, and it was all so strange to us that the solemnity of the occasion and its import quite pervaded us.

We unite with the friends of the privileged ones in prayerful wishes that their religious life will be blessed with the gift of joyful years.³³

September, 1917, brought another class of postulants, six of whom received the Holy Habit on January 5, 1918, the day on which Sister St. John made First Profession.³⁴ On July 23 of the same year three more young ladies received the Holy Habit and Sister M. Bonaventure pronounced temporary vows.³⁵

The little Community was growing in numbers and the first branching out from the parent stem was destined soon to take place. On January 6, 1918, Bishop O'Leary saw the fulfilment of his cherished dreams when the Sisters of St. Martha entered the new wing at the Bishop's Residence and took over the domestic duties thereof, as well as the sacristy work at the

³³ Religious Ceremony at St. Dunstan's, editorial in Red and White, Vol. 8, No. 3, issue of May, 1917, p. 64.

³⁴ Mother M. Stanislaus, Sisters' Records, 1918, Mount St. Mary's Archives.

³⁵ Ibid.

Cathedral.³⁶

The number of postulants joining the Community was not, however, commensurate with the program the Bishop was waiting to put into effect. Accordingly, at his behest³⁷ Mother Stanislaus and a companion made a tour of the province in the hope of swelling the ranks of the recruits. This visitation of the parishes revealed another side of the picture, for it was very evident to the canvassers that not every priest in the diocese favoured the withdrawal of the French Communities and their replacement in the diocesan institutions by sisters totally lacking in experience. One parish priest, Reverend Stanislaus Boudreault, tried to turn them away from the Rectory when they arrived at nightfall, even turning the horse and carriage toward the road. Mother Stanislaus in her own quiet, firm way said that it was not fitting for them to travel further at that hour. And remain they did.³⁸ This was not a question of friction between the French and the Irish because Prince Edward Island never experienced such; it was simply the outcome of a sense of loyalty to Communities of Sisters who had laboured in the diocese for many years and who had endeared themselves to all, regardless of nationality.

³⁶ Mother M. Stanislaus, Annals of the Congregation, 1918, in Mount St. Mary's Archives, Charlottetown.

³⁷ Bishop O'Leary, Letter to Mother Stanislaus, (no date), in Diocesan Archives, Charlottetown.

Mother M. Stanislaus, Annals of the Congregation, 1918, in Mount St. Mary's Archives, Charlottetown.

The purpose of the tour, however, was not defeated. In September, 1918 three young ladies who had been most successful teachers applied for admission to the Novitiate at St. Dunstan's College. The Bishop lost no time in securing their entrance into the Novitiate at Antigonish so that they would be able to further their studies at St. Francis Xavier University, since at that time the sisters did not attend the classes at St. Dunstan's. On the completion of their term as postulants he wrote to the Bishop of Antigonish:

I shall be very grateful to you if you will be kind enough to admit the three young ladies mentioned, namely: Helen Cullen, Laura Driscoll, and Laura Mullally to the Novitiate of the Sisters of St. Martha. We hope that they are the nucleus of a body who will teach in many of our country districts.³⁹

By thus giving expression to his desire of having the sisters teach in the rural schools throughout the province, the Bishop gave evidence that this was one of the projects he had in mind in establishing a religious Congregation. Up to this time, however, the educational qualifications of the subjects did not guarantee the realization of his desires, so it was with feelings of joy that he saw these three young ladies clothed with the religious garb on June 8, 1918, and receive their new names: Sister Frances Loyola (Cullen), Sister John Baptista (Driscoll), and Sister Mary Alfred (Mullally).

³⁹ Bishop O'Leary, Letter to Bishop Morrison, dated May 9, 1918, in Diocesan Archives, Charlottetown.

The last of the Islanders to make their Novitiate in Antigonish were: Eileen MacPhee (Sister Mary Paula), Teresa Walsh (Sister Mary Teresa), and Annie Walsh (Sister Mary Aloysius).

First death.- In 1918 the dreadful Spanish influenza raged throughout the North American continent, and in the month of October the whole Island province was hard hit. The Sisters of St. Martha of Antigonish again came to the rescue, and sent to St. Dunstan's College a trained nurse, Sister Mary Bernard, who did wonderful work among the faculty and students. Reverend James Charles MacGuigan, then newly ordained, was one of her sickest patients, and to this day Cardinal MacGuigan gives her the credit of saving his life. Sister Mary Bernardine, one of the two pioneers, was seriously stricken; tuberculosis developed, and she died December 20, 1919, the first of the band to go home to God. It was difficult to lose such a promising subject, but she gladly offered the sacrifice of her young life for the nascent Community. Her body having taken on the dark colour of the influenza victims, she was buried in the parish cemetery on the afternoon of her death. (Her remains were later removed to the Motherhouse cemetery plot at Mount St. Mary's). Pontifical Mass of Requiem was offered in the Cathedral on Monday morning, December 22, 1919.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Mother M. Stanislaus, Annals of the Congregation, 1920, in Mount St. Mary's Archives.

The death of one member of a Community ordinarily does not create a very serious problem. But when the number of sisters is small, and the work involved is of a laborious nature, as was the case at St. Dunstan's College, then the problem assumes a more serious aspect. On coming to St. Dunstan's the sisters found the facilities for institutional housekeeping very primitive and working conditions most undesirable. The kitchen departments were dark, dingy rooms in a deep, damp basement, with floors of rough, broken cement. Pots for cooking had to have holes stopped with dough, and laundry facilities were sadly lacking. Mother Stanislaus used a personal gift to defray the expenses of a new floor for the scullery where the lizards used to play.⁴¹

The college authorities seemed unwilling or unable to give any relief, and any request for better equipment provoked hostility, no allowance being made for the fact that very young novices were trying to do the work formerly done by strong and experienced women. To make conditions still worse, the Rector, Reverend G. J. MacLellan,⁴² seemed very unfriendly towards Mother Stanislaus and did not hesitate to make it known that the Island Community would be better off without outsiders in control.⁴³

The situation became more serious in the fall of 1919. A new residential building, constructed on the campus through

41 Interview with Mother F. Loyola, September 5, 1954.

42 Monsignor MacLellan is now Vicar-Capitular of the Diocese

43 Interview with Mother F. Loyola, September 5, 1954.

the munificence of Sir Charles Dalton⁴⁴ and named Dalton Hall in memory of him, was ready for occupancy. This brought an influx of post-war students so that a registration of 270 overtaxed the facilities of the culinary department, and for a time it seemed as if none of the young sisters would persevere. Mother Stanislaus notified the Superior General in Antigonish, Mother M. Faustina, who came to Charlottetown, looked over the situation, and interviewed the Bishop. The effect was electric. Immediately new steam equipment was installed and a group of girls from the Magdalen Islands was engaged to assist with the domestic labours.⁴⁵ From that time on conditions steadily improved so that visitors today seeing the campus dotted with modern buildings with the most up-to-date equipment would have great difficulty in visualizing the St. Dunstan's of thirty-five years ago.

5. Property Acquired

When plans were inaugurated for the improvement of conditions at St. Dunstan's College, as mentioned in the previous section, provision was also made for the expansion of the convent facilities. However, after considerable discussion it was decided to purchase the Long property across the railway track

⁴⁴Sir Charles Dalton was the founder of the fox industry in P.E.I.

⁴⁵Mother M. Stanislaus, Annals of the Congregation, 1920, in the Archives of the Congregation, Mount St. Mary's.

from the college grounds, and facing Mount Edward Road, with a view to establishing the Motherhouse and Novitiate there. Miss Mary A. Monaghan, Charlottetown, a generous benefactress of the Community, donated the twelve thousand dollars requisite for the purchase of the property,⁴⁸ which, at Mother Stanislaus' request, was named Mount St. Mary's in honour of that Immaculate Mother to whom the Superioress had always had recourse in the difficulties inherent in beginnings.

The house on the fifty-acre property was old, but the site was excellent for a Novitiate. Every economy was practised and every effort was made to procure as much of living as possible from the farm, for there was no source of income to defray living expenses, the few sisters at the college and Bishop's residence receiving only six dollars a month in accordance with an agreement entered into with the authorities when the sisters took over the domestic work.⁴⁹ The cramped quarters and meagre equipment of that first year's residence led to numberless amusing, if not pathetic situations, but these experiences developed in the aspirants a spirit of resourcefulness and a sense of humour which stood them in good stead later on.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was offered for the first

⁴⁸ Mother M. Stanislaus, Annals of the Congregation, Mount St. Mary's Archives, 1920.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

time at Mount St. Mary's on the Feast of St. Anne, 1920, in the parlour of this ninety-year old farmhouse. When a new wing was built the following year, the chapel was moved to a larger apartment under the new roof.⁵⁰

6. New Developments

The encouragement given the nascent Community by the provision of a new home was soon overshadowed by the news of the transfer of their episcopal founder to the Archdiocese of Edmonton. It was a bolt from the blue for the Sisters of St. Martha, whose hearts were saddened at the thought of losing him whom they revered so much, and upon whom they leaned so heavily. However, it was with feelings of the deepest gratitude that they learned that his successor in the Episcopal See was to be his own brother, Right Reverend Louis J. O'Leary, then Auxiliary-Bishop of Chatham, New Brunswick. Bishop O'Leary was installed as Bishop of Charlottetown on November 10, 1920.

a) New Constitutions drawn up.- One of the first tasks undertaken by the new Bishop was the drawing up of a set of Constitutions for the Community in conformity with the 1918 Code of Canon Law; in this he had the advice and assistance of Mother Berchmans of the Sisters of Charity at Halifax, from whom he received a copy of the Constitutions of that Congregation.⁵¹

⁵¹ Interview with Mother F. Loyola, September 5, 1954.

⁵⁰ Mother M. Stanislaus, Annals of the Congregation, 1921.

The most valued treasure in the Archives at Mount St. Mary's is this original copy in Bishop O'Leary's own neat handwriting, with the motto, "Amor et Labor," inscribed on its title page. May our fidelity in their observance show our gratitude to their compiler! The following four novices pronounced first vows according to these Constitutions on April 13, 1921:⁵²

Sister Frances Loyola (Cullen)
Sister John Baptista (Driscoll)
Sister Mary Alfred (Mullally)
Sister Mary Paula (MacPhee).

b) First General Council elected.- In order to organize the Community and Novitiate on a canonical basis, Bishop O'Leary asked that an election be held on July 29, 1921. The seventeen professed sisters, all with temporary vows, assembled and voted for the continuance of Mother Stanislaus as their Superior. Sister Mary Clare was elected Mistress of Novices and the following the members of the first General Council:⁵³

Sister Mary Clare, 1st Assistant
Sister Mary Paula, 2nd Assistant
Sister M. St. John, 3rd Assistant
Sister M. Faustina, 4th Assistant.

Bishop O'Leary communicated the results to Mother Faustina at Antigonish,⁵⁴ and received a reply to the effect that Mother Stanislaus could not be permitted to remain longer on Prince Edward Island, the expansion of their own works requiring her services

⁵² Sisters' Records, 1921, in Mount St. Mary's Archives.

⁵³ Sister M. Faustina, Minutes of the General Chapter, 1921, in Mount St. Mary's Archives.

⁵⁴ Bishop O'Leary, Letter to Mother Faustina, dated July 29, 1921.

at home. The Bishop, feeling the hopelessness of the situation, urged Bishop Morrison to use his influence on behalf of the infant Community,⁵⁵ but the latter's reply dispelled forever any hope of retaining the services of Mother Stanislaus.⁵⁶ There was nothing to do, then, but to face the situation with perfect trust.

c) A new Superior.- The sisters assembled again on August 8, when a letter from Bishop O'Leary was read appointing Sister Frances Loyoka Superior for one year,⁵⁷ which choice was confirmed for five years at the election held the following year, August 8, 1922. Sister Mary Clare, who had been elected Mistress of Novices, felt unequal to the task and asked to be relieved of this office. Her position was taken by Sister Mary Paula.

The time had now come for the return of Mother Stanislaus to her own Community, having been allowed to remain two years longer than the three years first promised. She had given herself unstintingly to the work on the Island, and only when the secrets of heaven are revealed will the true measure of her heroic labours and lasting influence be known. When

55 Bishop O'Leary, Letter to Bishop Morrison, dated July 31, 1921, in Diocesan Archives, Charlottetown.

56 Bishop Morrison, Letter to Bishop O'Leary, dated August 5, 1921, in the Archives at Bethany, Antigonish,

57 Bishop O'Leary, Letter to the Sisters of St. Martha, dated August 7, 1921, in Mount St. Mary's Archives.

she had gone from them, the little band of nineteen professed and six novices must have leaned more closely than ever on Divine Providence and striven with greater earnestness to become true spouses of Christ in accordance with the teachings and example of their first Superior. In the annals of Mount St. Mary's, under the date August 10, 1921, is recorded the following:

Mother M. Stanislaus left for Antigonish this morning, and the feelings of the sisters can better be imagined than described. Although we had known for some time that she was very likely to go, yet we drove away the unwelcome idea, and for some inexplicable reason, after July 29th even those who before had believed her going almost certain, hoped against hope. But the parting came, and God in His goodness seems to have given a marvellous strength to us all. Mother Stanislaus has indeed been a mother to her spiritual daughters, sharing their joys and sorrows, always kind and thoughtful, even to the minutest details, leading them in her gentle way to love God and be generous in His service. Her shining example of self-sacrifice will long be for them a guide. During her five years on the Island she laboured courageously, meeting with many difficulties that cannot be discussed now, but perhaps in the future some hand may write of them for the edification of the Community. Yet many of her trials were known to God alone.

Summary

The Congregation is an outgrowth of the earnest desires of Bishop Henry Joseph O'Leary to establish a Community that would be especially devoted to meeting diocesan needs. The many difficulties which accompanied his early efforts were finally overcome through his own determination and the generous assistance offered by the Sisters of St. Martha of Antigonish. The temporary Motherhouse and Novitiate established at St. Dunstan's

College was moved to Mount St. Mary's in 1920. In the following year Mother Mary Stanislaus, the first Superior, returned to her own Community, leaving the young Congregation to conduct its own affairs under the Superiorship of Mother Frances Loyola. At this time the members numbered nineteen professed and six novices. The various works which they were soon called upon to undertake will be treated of in the next chapter.

CHAPTER II

A DECADE OF EXPANSION, 1921-1931

Ordinarily with the growth of any religious Community comes the assuming of new responsibilities, and in this respect the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Martha was no exception. Although in 1921 the members numbered only nineteen, scarcely more than were needed to carry on the works already undertaken, yet force of circumstances compelled them to make immediate preparation for the management of a rural school, the Charlottetown Hospital, St. Vincent's Orphanage, and a Home for the aged. The Diocesan Centennial Year brought further opportunities of assisting in diocesan works. A new system of voting in the Congregation was introduced and the education of the sisters fostered.

1. Kinkora School

That it was the intention of the Bishop-Founder to establish the Sisters of St. Martha in different rural schools throughout the province has already been referred to. The first step in the development of his plans was taken in 1920, when he negotiated with Reverend Matthias J. Smith, pastor of Kinkora, a prosperous rural parish thirty-five miles from Charlottetown. Father Smith was in wholehearted agreement with the Bishop's plans, at the same time obtaining permission for the sisters to take over the domestic duties of the parochial

house.¹

Arrangements having been satisfactorily completed with the Department of Education, the sisters agreed to begin their new work at the opening of the school year, August 16, 1921. The old C. M. B. A. hall, moved to the Church grounds and completely renovated, was to serve as a present abode for the sisters until such time as a suitable convent could be erected.

In the meantime Bishop Henry O'Leary was transferred to the Archdiocese of Edmonton, and his brother successor strongly opposed the sisters' keeping house for the parish priest.² This idea, then, had to be abandoned to the great disappointment of the pastor. Thus it was that only three sisters formed the first band who left for Kinkora July 30, 1921, two to teach in the district school, and one to serve as the convent housekeeper.³ The following year another sister was sent to teach music. They were well received by the people of Kinkora who were happy in the thought that their children would now have educational advantages hitherto undreamed of. The passage of the years has proved that they were not disappointed in their expectations. The loyal, devoted service

1 Mother F. Loyola, Annals of the Congregation, 1921, in Mount St. Mary's Archives.

2 Ibid.

3 Sister Mary Alfred, Annals of Kinkora Convent, 1921.

rendered by these religious teachers soon brought requests for admission from far and near⁴, but it was not until 1935 that an opportunity came for the expansion of their services. This will be treated of in the next chapter.

2. The Charlottetown Hospital

The next work claiming the attention of the Sisters of St. Martha was the management of the Charlottetown Hospital. This institution had been operating since October 23, 1879, when it was entrusted to the Grey Nuns of Quebec by Bishop McIntyre, the third Bishop of Charlottetown.⁵ Beginning with twelve beds in the former residence of the Bishop, the work gradually expanded and a new building was erected on Dundas Esplanade in 1890.⁶

In 1913 the American College of Surgeons began its work of rigid inspection of hospitals, setting up standard rules and regulations. The medical staff of the Charlottetown Hospital, anxious to keep step with the great developments and progress in all lines of medical endeavour and hospital management felt that the opportunity had come to have two matters of

4 Sister M. Alfred, Annals of Kinkora Convent, 1922.

5 John C. MacMillan, The Catholic Church in P.E.I., Vol. 2, p. 402.

6. Ibid.

major importance to the people of Prince Edward Island attended to: a maternity department in the hospital and a training school for nurses. Up to this time all obstetric patients had to be treated in their homes, and this, coupled with the fact that there were only a few nurses in the whole province, made obstetric practice a trying ordeal. Accordingly, the Chief of Staff of the hospital, Dr. S. R. Jenkins, and the Secretary of Staff, Dr. W. J. P. MacMillan, tried in vain to impress upon the Superior the necessity of expanding hospital services in these directions. It was left to the Bishop to force the issue, with the result that in 1918 a maternity department was opened, and in 1920 a training school for nurses.⁷

The first superintendent, Sister St. Bertha, gave the nurses-in-training excellent teaching despite the fact that she had a very meagre knowledge of the English language.⁸ The English texts she used may still be seen at the hospital with inter-linear French translations, bearing silent testimony to the heroic efforts she had made in the preparation of her lessons. Her recall to the Motherhouse in Quebec was deeply regretted by the members of the medical staff who placed little confidence in the teaching ability of her successor. Accordingly, at a staff meeting the doctors passed a resolution that more and better

⁷ Personal Correspondence of the Author, Letter of Dr. W. J. P. MacMillan, dated August 27, 1954.

⁸ Ibid.

teaching must be provided for the nurses. This was much resented by the Local Superior who asked that it be deleted from the minutes.⁹ Relations became more and more strained, and in May, 1924, the Superior General of the Grey Sisters wrote the Bishop of Charlottetown to the effect that the sisters had accepted certain changes at the Charlottetown Hospital merely by way of trial, and that they could not carry these on to the satisfaction of the medical authorities. Since the Congregation lacked English-speaking subjects, and no French sisters could be spared to take up special studies in preparation for this work, it was deemed advisable to recall the sisters to Quebec, but not before July 1, 1925 in order to enable the Bishop to put into effect necessary plans for their replacement.¹⁰ One of the conditions exacted by the Grey Nuns when they took over the administration of the hospital was that they would reserve the right of recalling their subjects when they found it necessary to do so. This was approved by Cardinal Taschereau, Archbishop of Quebec, and Right Reverend Peter McIntyre, Bishop of Charlottetown.¹¹

The momentous decision made by the Grey Nuns entailed great responsibility for the Bishop of Charlottetown, who found himself under the necessity of providing for the management

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Sister Ste. Christine, Letter to Bishop O'Leary, dated May 8, 1924, in Diocesan Archives, Charlottetown.
¹¹ Grey Sisters, Contract with the Bishop of Charlottetown, dated November 24, 1890.

of a hospital with only one trained nurse in his new Community of religious. There was no time to be lost in idle speculation, and as soon as arrangements could be made five sisters were sent to prepare for hospital work, one to St. Martha's Hospital, Antigonish, for nursing, two to St. Joseph's Hospital, Glace Bay, one for nursing, the other for laboratory technique, and two to Milwaukee, one for hospital administration and the other for x-ray technique.¹²

A disastrous fire at the Charlottetown Hospital on November 21, 1922 had so badly damaged the wooden structure that it was the unanimous opinion of the medical staff that it could no longer be used, even when repaired, as a permanent hospital. Accordingly, it was moved across the street and a modern brick building was erected on the old site.¹³ When the Sisters of St. Martha were ready to take over the administration of the hospital, they were faced with the difficulty of transferring from the old and organizing the new.

Again the Bishop sent an urgent appeal for assistance to the Sisters of St. Martha in Antigonish, reminding them of their promise to assist in hospital work.¹⁴ The Superior replied that the depleted staffs of their own hospitals rendered them

¹² Mother F. Loyola, Annals of the Congregation, 1924, Mount St. Mary's Archives.

¹³ Bishop O'Leary, Circular Letter to the Priests of the Diocese, dated November 29, 1922, in Diocesan Archives.

¹⁴ -----, Letter to Mother Faustina, dated Feb. 25, 1925, in Diocesan Archives.

unable to give prolonged assistance, but that two sisters would be sent to assist in the organization of the new hospital and prepare for the official opening which was scheduled for early in September.

Sister Mary Paula had completed her training in administration by this time and was placed in charge. A person of broad understanding and of great personal charm, she was admirably fitted for the responsibility which fell to her so early in her religious life. Besides, the training she received in Milwaukee gave her a good insight into best hospital practices, which stood her in good stead across the years.

Although the sisters felt themselves incapable of carrying on the efficient work of their predecessors, yet they bolstered their fainting spirits by often recalling, "I can do all things in Him Who strengtheneth me," and their faith and obedience were amply rewarded. With the aid of secular help they were able to carry on until the sisters in training had completed their courses and had taken over the supervision of the various departments.

3. St. Vincent's Orphanage

June 25, 1925, the day that saw the Grey Nuns withdraw from the Charlottetown Hospital, witnessed their departure also from St. Vincent's Orphanage, an institution which had been in operation under their care since August, 1910. In

In that year a farm of about eighty acres of excellent land was purchased by the Episcopal Corporation at the earnest insistence of the priests of the diocese.¹⁵ As the frame dwelling on this property was small, plans were put into effect for the construction of a brick building which would provide institutional care for about one hundred orphans. In the meantime the small building functioned as an orphanage, and on October 5 the names of the first two orphans appear on the register. Two days later four more names were inscribed, the number gradually increasing so that by November 13 twenty-five children had found shelter within its walls. In 1914 the present building was ready for occupancy,¹⁶ and the former building was converted into a very fine school.

When the Sisters of St. Martha took over the management of the institution, the total enrolment was ninety-three.¹⁷ Although there have been as many as 125 children enrolled, the usual number is about eighty-five. The task of providing proper care for the children has always been a matter of much concern to those in charge, but one in which a financial problem was never involved. God has certainly placed in the hearts of the Catholic people of Prince Edward Island a large share of

15 Sister John Baptist, St. Vincent's Orphanage, 1935, p.1.

16 Sister Ste. Elizabeth, Annals, 1914, St. Vincent's Orphanage Archives.

17 Sister John Baptist, op. cit., p. 1.

His own great love for the little ones. Whether crops failed or prices slumped, the orphans have never wanted, and this despite the fact that remuneration is ordinarily received for less than twenty-five per cent of the children. Apart from this income and small government and city grants,¹⁸ totalling even today only four thousand dollars,¹⁹ the orphanage has ever depended for its support on the voluntary contributions of the people.

In 1930 Reverend Father Arsenault, pastor of Mount Carmel, originated a plan whereby the orphans were given a pleasant summer vacation in the rural homes of his parish.²⁰ The example of his parishioners was followed so that today nearly every child spends at least part of the summer vacation in the country.

In regard to the education of the children, it has been the practice of the Community to do its utmost to provide good teachers. Music and drama form an important part of the school curriculum, so much so that at provincial musical and drama festivals the children of St. Vincent's Orphanage usually secure prizes. Manual training for the boys and sewing lessons for the girls are part of the regular program.²¹

18 Sister M. Henry et al., Financial Statements, 1925-195

19 Ibid., 1953.

20 Sister John Baptist, op. cit., p. 2.

21 -----, Annual Report, 1953, Mount St. Mary's Archives.

The priests at St. Dunstan's College take special interest in the children and do much to foster their spiritual growth, while their recreational life is fostered by the various societies which function within the city.

Regardless of the fact that children placed in an orphanage receive tender care from those whose lives are dedicated to this service, the fact remains that an institution does not and cannot take the place of a real home. In view of this fact, every effort is made to place children who are for adoption in suitable homes. In recent years the trend is towards foster homes rather than institutions, the children being placed in families of their religious affiliation throughout the community. Those who subscribe to this procedure maintain that in an institutional setting the emotional and social development of children is somewhat retarded, whereas membership in a family group and inclusion in a community enable them to lead a fuller life.

This matter has already been given some consideration in Prince Edward Island by those interested in social welfare work, but whether the plan will be ultimately adopted lies at present only in the realm of possibility.

The concern of the Catholic people of the province for the welfare of the orphans has been briefly outlined. Its care for the aged poor will next be considered.

4. Sacred Heart Home

When Mrs. Owen Connolly presented her home and its beautiful site for the use of the Charlottetown Hospital in 1890, she made provision for a certain number of destitute within its walls.²² This good work was carried on by the Grey Nuns of Quebec until the fire already referred to damaged the building in 1921. It was then found necessary to transfer the old ladies in their care to temporary lodgings in a house which the Bishop named St. Francis Hostel, and which was given to the care of the new Congregation.²³

The crying need of a home for the poor and aged had long called forth longing desires on the part of many of the clergy and of the people. The charity of the diocese, so great in caring for the sick and the orphans, had never extended itself to the poor and aged, even though the Provincial Home was absolutely incapable of meeting this need. Accordingly, in a circular letter of November 29, 1922, addressed to all the priests of the diocese, the Bishop made known his intention of converting the old hospital into a home for the poor and aged, which would be placed under the care of the Sisters of St. Martha,

²² Sister Mary Paula, Annals, Charlottetown Hospital, 1925.

²³ Ibid.

and named the Sacred Heart Home.²⁴ Thus it may be seen that the fire in the Charlottetown Hospital, which was regarded at the time as a terrible calamity proved to be nothing more than a blessing in disguise.

Within fifteen months after it opened its doors, August 24, 1925, the Home was filled to capacity, one hundred and twelve,²⁵ thus emphasizing the great need there was for such an institution. Fifteen dollars a month was all that was asked for board and lodging, and that only from those who were able to pay. No needy person was refused admission because of lack of financial means, even though it was at the cost of much sacrifice that this service was maintained. Through donations from benefactors and with a solute trust in God Who never forsook them in their needs the sisters were enabled to dispense His mercies to the destitute poor, many of whom would otherwise have been compelled to spend their declining years in utter misery.

This was before the days of Old Age Pensions, but even today the guests at the Sacred Heart Home are charged at a very low rate so that they will be able to enjoy, even in a small measure, the pleasure of possession so deeply imbedded in every human heart.

²⁴ Bishop O'Leary, Circular Letter to Priests, dated November 29, 1922, in Diocesan Archives.

²⁵ Sister M. Aloysius, Annual Report, 1926, in Mount St. Mary's Archives.

Is it possible to transplant the aged without breaking their spirits? Through personal interviews the author has learned that those who are at the Sacred Heart Home through choice would not think of returning to their former way of life. Nearly all others who have been placed there contrary to their wishes have become quite at home in the congenial atmosphere, while the remaining few at least find life tolerable. It can be safely asserted that all appreciate the fact that not only are their physical needs being well taken care of, but they are given every opportunity of deepening their spiritual lives and preparing for a happy eternity.

5. The Diocesan Centennial Year

To detail chronologically the events of each succeeding year would become monotonous. The year 1929, however, is of special interest in the history of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Martha.

a) Consecration of the Basilica.- The major event scheduled to mark the Diocesan Centennial Year was the consecration of the Cathedral Church on July 26, raised in this year to the rank of a minor basilica.²⁶ The preparations for and the carrying out of the ceremonies, as well as the care of the visiting prelates, entailed a great deal of work for the sisters, who

²⁶ Mother F. Loyola, Annals, 1929, in Mount St. Mary's Archives.

were proud to have part in this historic ceremony, climaxing as it did a century of effort and achievement for the honour of God and the advancement of the interests of Holy Mother Church.

When the consecration ceremonies were over, Bishop O'Leary invited his distinguished guests, the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Cassulo, his secretary, Monsignor Buzotti, Archbishop Henry O'Leary, and Monsignor James Charles MacGuigan to spend a week at "Allamor", the summer home of his brother at Grand Tracadie, P.E. I. Unable to secure the services of a chef, with great reluctance he asked for sisters, believing that the granting of this request would seriously interfere with other Community activities. The Superior was happy to accede to his wishes and sent two of her best cooks. In the record of this event as found in the annals appears the following: "It was a source of great joy when the Papal Delegate asked for the recipe of the spaghetti served at supper this evening. The Boston Cook Book and Sister Anna Marie deserve the credit."²⁷

b) Two Religious Communities come to Charlottetown.- To celebrate the Centennial Year in a permanent way Bishop O'Leary invited the Redemptorist Fathers to open a new mission in Charlottetown. The sisters cared for them at the

27. Mother F. Loyola, Annals, 1929, in Mount St. Mary's Archives.

Charlottetown Hospital until their rectory accommodations were ready.²⁸ Their coming to Charlottetown has meant very much in the spiritual lives of the Sisters of St. Martha who since that time have had the benefit of their spiritual direction and advice. For all these blessings they are indeed grateful to Almighty God.

The Sister Adorers of the Precious Blood were also invited to establish a monastery in Charlottetown during the Centennial Year. The Island Community was thereby given a splendid opportunity of exercising charity by assisting them in the solution of many difficulties inherent in the making of a new foundation.²⁹ They were thus enabled to show their gratitude for what a sister community had done for them in their early struggles.

c) Illness and death of Bishop O'Leary.- The strain of the consecration ceremonies was too great for the beloved Bishop of the diocese, whose ill-health had been for some time a source of grave anxiety to all. Early in September, 1929, he went to Montreal for treatment,³⁰ and later to his brother's home in Dayton, Ohio, to recuperate. In making preparations

²⁸ Sister M. Paula, Annals, 1929, Charlottetown Hospital Archives.

²⁹ Mother F. Loyola, Annals, 1929, Mount St. Mary's Archives.

³⁰ Ibid.

for his return journey he became suddenly ill and died on July 8, 1930.

The death of him who had in so fatherly a manner fostered the growth of the young Community during most trying years was a severe blow. In her last conversation with him before he went to Montreal, the Superior General asked him what virtues he wished to see stressed in the Community. "Charity in the Community," he said, "and for yourself, courage."³¹ Did he have a premonition that she would soon be without his fatherly counsel?

Bishop O'Leary was born in Richibucto, New Brunswick, August 8, 1877. He graduated from St. Joseph's University, Memramcook, with a B. A. degree when he was but seventeen. He finished his philosophical and theological courses in Montreal Grand Seminary and received the degree of Doctor of Divinity at the early age of twenty-one. He then went to Rome to further his studies, and after having received his doctorate in Canon Law he was ordained in the Basilica of St. John Lateran on Holy Saturday, 1900. He offered his first Mass in the chapel of the Canadian College on Easter Sunday.

On returning from Rome he served as secretary to Bishop Barry of Chatham, and soon was named Chancellor of the Diocese.

³¹ Mother F. Loyola, Annals, 1929, in Mount St. Mary's Archives.

From 1903-1904 he served as spiritual director for the pupils of St. Michael's Academy and for the Sisters of Hotel Dieu, thereby gaining an experience of much use to him later. In 1914 he was made Bishop of Hierapolis and Auxiliary Bishop of Chatham. In 1920 he succeeded his brother as Bishop of Charlotte-town.

The external development of the Congregation during his episcopate has already been considered; of great importance also was the internal growth during this period.

6. Voting by Delegates First Introduced

The system of voting by delegates was first used in the Congregation at the General Chapter of 1927, thirteen delegates attending. The results of this election were as follows:³²

Mother Frances Loyola,	Superior General
Sister Mary Paula,	1st Assistant
Sister M. St. John,	2nd Assistant
Sister M. Aloysius,	3rd Assistant
Sister M. Faustina,	4th Assistant
Sister M. Teresa,	Treasurer General
Sister M. Faustina,	Secretary General

According to the Constitutions of the Congregation the General Chapter is composed of:

1. The Superior General
2. Former Superiors General
3. The members of the General Council

³² Sister M. Faustina, Minutes of the General Chapter, 1927, Mount St. Mary's Archives.

4. The Secretary General
5. The Treasurer General
6. Local Superiors in office, whose houses comprise at least twelve professed sisters who belong to that house.
7. One delegate from each of these houses elected by the sisters of that house.

For the election of delegates to the Chapter, all professed sisters, even those of temporary vows, have a vote, but only professed sisters of perpetual vows may both vote and be considered eligible as candidates. Houses not having at least twelve professed religious are grouped in such a manner that each group will send to the General Chapter two delegates, that is, one local superior elected from the local superiors of the group and one sister, who is not a superior, elected from among the professed sisters of perpetual vows belonging to the group. Each group must comprise at least twelve professed religious and twenty at the most.³³

7. Religious and Secular Training Fostered

The inadequacy of their numbers and the enormity of the work entailed in the proper management of the seven houses committed to their care left the sisters very little opportunity for the furtherance of their education. Besides, the Community was always struggling for financial adequacy during those early years. However, the first Superior General, Mother

³³ Constitutions of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Martha of Prince Edward Island, pp. 37-39.

Frances Loyola; made valiant efforts at the cost of untold sacrifice to carry out an educational program that would enable many of the sisters to do their work more efficiently and equip others for teaching service.³⁴ Courses in pharmacy technique at Dalhousie University, in dietetics at Hotel Dieu Hospital in Campbellton, and in catechetics at the London School of Catechetics resulted in an enlargement of the scope of the work of the Congregation, while the courses given at Kinkora convent school made sisters eligible for admission to Prince of Wales College and Normal School so that they could qualify as teachers.

As the works of the Community expanded, the need for a revised Directory became increasingly evident. Before Mother Stanislaus left for Antigonish in 1921 she had had a book of customs drawn up, but it was not complete and in some cases at variance with established usages, based as it was on one lent her by the Superior of the Sisters of Providence, Springfield, Massachusetts.³⁵ Accordingly, at the meeting of the General Chapter in 1927 steps were taken to bring about the realization of this project. In the meantime letters were sent from the Motherhouse from time to time directing the sisters on customs to be observed and giving admonitions on religious deportment.

³⁴Mother F. Loyola, Annals of the Congregation, 1924-1930, Mount St. Mary's Archives.

³⁵ Personal Interview with Mother F. Loyola, September 5, 1954.

Correspondence courses in Christian Doctrine and in Church liturgy were inaugurated, all designed to deepen the spiritual life of the sisters, lest in their efforts to fulfil the secondary end of the Congregation the primary end be lost sight of, namely, to become true spouses of Christ and to aid one another in the work of their perfection. In this connection the Community was fortunate in having as its head a Superior with a marked combination of holiness and intelligence. By circular letters, visitations, and private interviews she impressed upon the sisters that their active life must ever be nourished by the contemplative life of prayer - a conviction deeply rooted in her own philosophy of life. She made the first formal visitation of the Community in 1928, and in the circular letter which followed are found earnest exhortations to the sisters to walk the way of perfection:³⁶

If we earnestly endeavour to practise charity and silence, we shall do much not only for our own sanctification and towards the fulfilment of our obligation to strive for perfection, but we shall draw down upon our Community the choicest blessings of God. It will grow in numbers, obedience and humility will reign, and in it will be found that holy peace which the world cannot give....

It must have been a source of great consolation to her to find after the death of Sister Mary Alfred on April 15, 1926, evidence from her notes of the efforts she had made towards self-sanctification, and this discovery must have compensated in some measure for the loss sustained in the death of one of

³⁶ Mother F. Loyola, Circular Letter to the Sisters on the Missions, 1928, Mount St. Mary's Archives.

the best teachers of the Community, and that at a time when teachers were sorely needed:

In the beginning of my illness, May, 1924, my Divine Spouse and I made a contract in which He promised to forgive me all my sins, to give me the grace to leave my class without worry or anxiety and to submit cheerfully to all the inconveniences of illness. On my part I promised to obey cheerfully every prescription of the doctor and infirmarian, and to show no signs of impatience or sadness.

I knew not whether I am going to recover permanently; neither do I care. Death will be as acceptable as health. My part will consist in perfect conformity to God's holy will in regard to my health and in exact obedience to my Superiors. My motto will continue to be, "I can do all things in Him Who strengtheneth me."³⁷

Sister Mary Alfred pronounced her perpetual vows on her deathbed one month before the expiration of her temporary vows. Pontifical Requiem Mass was celebrated by her uncle, the late Archbishop Sinnot, and she was buried in Mount St. Mary's cemetery, the first to be laid in the Motherhouse plot.³⁸

Summary

The first matter occupying the attention of the first General Council was the acceptance of Kinkora School. The withdrawal of the Grey Nuns of Quebec from the Hospital and Orphanage entailed much preparation on the part of the Sisters of St. Martha who were called upon to take over the administration of these institutions, as well as a Home for the aged. The Diocesan Centennial Year gave the sisters an added opportunity

³⁷ Mother F. Loyola, Annals, 1926, Mount St. Mary's Archives.

³⁸ Ibid.

of assisting in other phases of diocesan endeavour. It brought to Charlottetown two new religious Communities, but it also brought the illness and subsequent death of the beloved Bishop. While efforts to improve the sisters in efficiency were being carried on, a constant vigilance over the Community's religious life was maintained. Its growth under a new Bishop is considered in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

GROWTH UNDER BISHOP JOSEPH A. O'SULLIVAN, 1931-1944

On coming to the See of Charlottetown in 1931, Bishop O'Sullivan manifested his interest in the Sisters of St. Martha by making the inauguration of a campaign for a new Motherhouse one of his first official acts. With the opening of a social welfare department and the establishment of religious vacation schools he further extended the works of the Congregation. The opening of a senior high school in Kinkora and of a new rural school in Tracadie Cross marked further educational advances, while Western Hospital, Alberton, brought hospital facilities to rural areas. During his episcopate the work of the Congregation was carried beyond the diocese. An extensive educational program better prepared the sisters, now numbering forty-five, for their specialized works.

1. Campaign for a New Motherhouse

Bishop O'Sullivan gave undeniable testimony of his interest in the Diocesan Congregation by making his first pastoral an appeal for strong support in its charitable works and an introduction of a campaign for a more suitable Motherhouse and Novitiate.¹ He authorized the sisters to make a house-to-house canvass in the parishes on behalf of their building fund, placing

¹ Bishop Joseph A. O'Sullivan, Pastoral Letter, 1931, in Mount St. Mary's Archives.

his personal subscription of one thousand dollars at the head of the list.² The continued depression prevented the campaign from being the success anticipated, but the visits of the sisters to the parish homes was invariably much appreciated. In the annals are recorded touching anecdotes which show how the good people considered these beggars as bearers of benisons to their homes. The cordial support and cooperation of the pastors, nearly all of whom were struggling with their own economic difficulties, was most heartening. After the first year the sisters did not make any direct appeal, but by means of bequests and voluntary donations the fund had become sufficiently enlarged in 1939 that the Superior General was able to write in one of her circular letters to the sisters:

We are beginning now to look forward with assured hope and certainty to the actual building of our long desired and sorely needed Motherhouse. Our Bishop says that we shall have sufficient funds to begin construction very soon. Let us keep on hoping and praying and planning.³

These hopes were for the present doomed to disappointment. The permission to build was cancelled when World War II broke out.⁴ This decision on the part of the Bishop has since been a source of regret because it would have been much cheaper to build in 1940 than at any time since, and at a time when good pre-war materials were still available. However, force

2 Mother F. Loyola, Annals of the Congregation, 1931, in Mount St. Mary's Archives.

3 Mother M. Paula, Circular Letter to the Sisters, dated February 2, 1939.

4 -----, Annals of the Congregation, 1940.

of circumstances almost compelled the Bishop to revert to his former decision.

At midnight on March 9, 1942, Mount St. Mary's was shaken to its very centre. A bomber flying back to base experienced serious difficulties, and, thinking he was immediately over Northumberland Strait, dropped his load of bombs, many large and a few small. The white expanse below him, however, was not the strait, but a field adjacent to Mount St. Mary's. Fortunately, but one small bomb exploded, and no very serious consequences ensued. Fifteen years more were to pass before the hopes of the Congregation were realized.

2. Social Welfare Department

When Bishop O'Sullivan in his first pastoral appealed for strong support in the charitable works of the Congregation, as referred to in the last section, he had especially in mind the poor and unfortunate in the city of Charlottetown. For them nothing had as yet been done in a systematic, organized way. It is true that for fifty years the Charlottetown Hospital had been carrying on in an unostentatious way the noble work of rendering much free service to the poor who came within its walls, as well as to outside cases in need. This latter activity, however, was carried on in a more or less desultory fashion until October 1, 1931, when a Social Welfare Department was organized to meet local conditions and given the name of

Social Service.⁵ The establishment of this service filled a long-felt want in providing nursing care in the homes at little or no cost. By this means, as well as by its educative and preventive influence, it made lighter the demands upon the hospital wards.

A qualified nurse graduate, who had taken a special course in social service, was added to the personnel. She assisted one of the nursing sisters in the visitation of the sick throughout the city and in caring for the patients coming to the out-patients' department for minor treatments.⁶ Members of the Catholic Women's League offered their services for the making and repairing of clothing for distribution among the poor, while the various firms throughout the city gave generously of food and clothing.⁷

Two rooms in the Charlottetown Hospital, equipped with desks and filing cabinets, were placed at the disposal of the social workers for the interviewing of relief cases. The hospital remained their headquarters until 1942 when the Episcopal Corporation made more spacious apartments available, in which a comfortable setting was arranged for a girls' club

5 Mother M. Paula, Annals of the Congregation, taken from Social Service Department, news item in the Charlottetown Guardian, issue of September 26, 1931.

6 Sister M. Camillus, Records, Social Welfare Department, 1932.

7 Ibid.

and sewing centre.⁸

As time went on the many social problems resulting from war conditions made the need for a better trained personnel an urgent necessity. This need found expression in a letter of the Bishop of the diocese addressed to the Superior General:

...The time will soon come when we will be faced with proposals to bring other social agencies here, and if we are not properly organized, we will have to step aside.

If you have any likely novices, we might consider sending them to Montreal or elsewhere for special courses. This would mean going without their religious habit, if they went to, say, The Royal Victoria Hospital, for the Montreal ecclesiastical authorities would not approve of any nuns attending any but a Catholic institution there, and, as far as I know there is no Catholic institution in Montreal qualified to give a suitable course. But if you picked the right nuns, I feel we could permit them to go for a six months' course without detriment to their vocation....⁹

The result was that two professed sisters enrolled at the Toronto University School of Social Work in September, 1943.¹⁰ On their graduation two years later, these sisters, the first trained social workers employed in the province, put into effect a more expansive program. Reorganized under a Board of Directors on March 18, 1948,¹¹ the Social Service became known as The Catholic Social Welfare Bureau, taking

⁸ Ibid., 1942

⁹ Bishop O'Sullivan, Letter to Mother M. Paula, dated February 5, 1943.

¹⁰ Mother M. Paula, Annals of the Congregation, 1943, Mount St. Mary's Archives.

¹¹ Sister John of the Cross, Records, Catholic Social Welfare Bureau, 1948.

the form of a Multiple Function Agency according to standards set down by the Canadian Welfare Council. In the following year it was constituted a Child Welfare Agency.¹² More spacious apartments again became a necessity, and commodious dignified offices were provided in August, 1950, by St. Dunstan's Basilica parish.

Although the greater part of the work undertaken by the Catholic Social Welfare Bureau is confined to the city of Charlottetown, whose present population is approximately 18,000, yet the placement of children in foster homes, as well as the follow-up service maintained, brings the social workers to every section of the province.

The amount of good, both temporal and spiritual, that this agency has already accomplished for the poor and sick in Charlottetown, both Catholic and Protestant, is beyond calculation. Still greater achievements will there be as it gathers momentum and all its possibilities are revealed.

3. Religious Vacation Schools

Having shown his paternal interest in the poor of his flock, the Bishop's next concern was for the spiritual welfare of the youth of the diocese. In June, 1935, he erected the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine in all parishes.¹³

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Bishop O'Sullivan, Circular Letter to the Priests, dated June 3, 1935.

Great impetus was thereby given to the teaching of catechism since diocesan catechetical examinations were henceforth to be an annual event. This in turn gave birth to the religious vacation schools, which, since 1936, have played an important part in the spiritual lives of the children.

The teaching sisters of the Congregation, who had received special training in catechetical work, cooperated with the pastors of the various parishes to which they were invited in attempting to carry out a diversified program of religious education.

The best known pedagogical methods were utilized to give the children the happiest sort of introduction to the study of their religion. To explain the prayers in a simple manner, to interpret sacred pictures, to lead the children in sacred music, to recount biblical stories and lives of the saints in a way that would interest the children, to dramatize sacred history, to develop an understanding love for the Mass, to conduct project work, to promote and supervise recreation and games - all this, in addition to explaining simply the lessons of the catechism, constituted the program of the religious vacation school. Parents were willing to make heroic sacrifices in order that their children might enjoy the advantages of two weeks of daily religious education and teaching, while the sisters themselves found in such vacation schools an outlet for true missionary zeal.

One very noticeable effect of the religious vacation schools was that they made the people of the parishes in which they were held very education-conscious. They brought requests for sisters to teach in the district schools,¹⁴ but requests that could not be immediately granted. The people of Kinkora parish petitioned in 1941 that provisions be made for the teaching of Grade XI, and as the sisters had already been established there for twenty years, their request received first consideration.

4. Kinkora Senior High School

For fourteen years the sisters had been living in a temporary convent. An opportunity for a more commodious residence presented itself in 1935 when a fine property of ninety acres of land, in close proximity to the school, was for sale for six thousand dollars. The sisters, on the urgent insistence of Bishop O'Sullivan, made the purchase, borrowing the money from the Episcopal Corporation,¹⁵ and assuming the obligation of the payment of both principal and interest. The resale of eighty-one acres of land on the following day for twenty-three hundred dollars enabled them to make such alterations and additions as were necessary to convert the building

¹⁴ Mother M. Paula, Annals, 1940, Mount St. Mary's Archives.

¹⁵ Sister M. Catherine, Annals, 1935, St. Stanislaus Convent Archives.

into a suitable convent, in which they took up residence on August 20, 1935.¹⁶ The converting of the old convent into a well-equipped classroom for the accommodation of senior pupils from all over the parish was but the matter of a short time, so that at the beginning of the next school year it was ready to function in its new capacity.

In order to meet ever-increasing educational demands it became evident in 1941 that provision must be made for the teaching of Grade XI. The convent was enlarged to provide for extra classroom space, for laboratory and library facilities, as well as for the accommodation of boarders. On September 9, 1941, the convent opened its doors to its first Grade XI class, comprising twenty-four pupils from various parts of the province.¹⁷ In 1952 a large modern six-room school with a ten-foot basement was built, a credit to the people of Kinkora parish and a monument to the pastor now deceased. At the moment the work of adding two new classrooms to house Grades XI and XII is in progress, so that in 1955 there will be seven teachers and about one hundred and seventy pupils, including music pupils who come from other districts.

Kinkora, however, has always been a difficult school in which to teach, as is often the case in strictly Irish

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

Catholic settlements. Rivalries and jealousies among the pupils themselves and among their parents make much heavier the burdens of the teachers who must be constantly on their guard lest they be accused of showing favoritism. The contrast was very evident when the next school was opened in a strictly Catholic Scotch settlement in 1942.

5. Tracadie Cross School

August 15, 1942, marked the opening of the second school accepted by the Congregation.¹⁸ In the parish of Tracadie Cross there were seven school districts, each with its own one-room school in which Grades I-X were taught by the same teacher, not an uncommon situation in many rural schools throughout the province. The result was that many youths of fifteen and sixteen were leaving school with scarcely more than a primary education, because under existing circumstances only the bright pupils could ever hope to pass the provincial examinations for admission either to Prince of Wales College and Normal School or to St. Dunstan's College High School.

For some years this was a matter of grave concern to the pastor, Reverend Kenneth MacPherson, who saw that the only solution to the problem was a central school which the senior pupils of the parish could attend. This would relieve congestion

¹⁸ Sister John of the Cross, Annals, 1942, Tracadie Cross Convent Archives.

in the district schools and at the same time enable the teachers to conduct their classes more efficiently. When he made known his plans to the Minister of Education, he did not at first get the cooperation he expected because at that time the Department of Education was already considering much larger units of administration, and did not consider Tracadie Cross as a suitable centre. However, after a couple of years when no further steps were taken by the Department, Father MacPherson presented his case again and obtained permission to open a convent school. As the district school had but one room, the credit union room in the parish hall served as an additional classroom for the senior pupils of the parish until the new school was completed.

The high cost of building material during the war years necessitated the postponement of the erection of a convent for a few years, the sisters being thus obliged to take up residence in apartments in the parochial house. October 30, 1950, saw the blessing of the new convent¹⁹ which provided accommodation for boarders as well as additional classroom space. The enrolment soon increased from twenty-five to ninety, making it necessary for the Community to supply four teachers, one of whom teaches music and directs the children's and the

¹⁹ Sister M. of Lourdes, Annals, Assumption Convent, Tracadie Cross, 1950.

men's choirs.

The children of Tracadie Cross are exceptionally musical, and since they have not had until recent years opportunities for the development of this talent, they are highly appreciative of what is being done for them. The words of praise directed to them by one of the adjudicators of the provincial musical festival held in Charlottetown on May 4, 1954, struck a very responsive chord in their hearts:

This choir gave us the most polished performance of the afternoon - a fine choir - a good tone - clear, bell-like, well managed and controlled, good feeling for the rhythm, with words clear and significant. This choir sang with verve and zest - an excellent performance.²¹

As a result of this recognition of their talents by an expert in the field, they were encouraged to excel in all phases of the school program, and it is hoped that the realization of their potentialities will help to destroy the inferior complexes which grip the pupils of this school.

In the same year as Tracadie Cross school was accepted, the opening of another school was postponed in favor of carrying the work of the Congregation farther afield.

6. First Mission Outside the Diocese

In the archives at Mount St. Mary's may be seen many letters from Bishops and Priests, both of Canada and of the

²¹ Earle Terry, Report, in Provincial Musical Festival, 1954, Charlottetown.

United States, requesting the Sisters of St. Martha to establish foundations in different dioceses. The vastness of the work already undertaken, however, and the many possibilities revealing themselves at home, prevented acceptance, even though some of the offers were most inviting. Even the Bishop-Founder's request for sisters to work in the Edmonton archdiocese had to be refused.²²

In 1941 the Jesuit Fathers of Regiopolis College, Kingston, Ontario, appealed for four sisters to take charge of the dietary department and for a nurse who would act as infirmarian.²³ At the time it did not seem possible that the request would be granted, but when the Rector, Reverend Francis MacDonald, visited Prince Edward Island the following year and laid his urgent request before the Bishop, the latter became intensely interested. The need of supervision seemed to be so great that it was difficult to do anything else but accede to the Rector's wishes. The Superior General and one of her assistants visited Regiopolis and the decision was made.

On July 31, 1942, one trained nurse, Sister Mary Stanislaus, who was appointed Superior, accompanied by four sisters, left for Kingston to open the first "foreign mission."²⁴ It is

²²Henry Joseph O'Leary, Archbishop of Edmonton, Letter to Mother F. Loyola, dated August 16, 1930, in Mount St. Mary's Archives.

²³Mother M. Paula, Annals, 1941, in Mount St. Mary's Archives.

²⁴Ibid.

not likely that the Community will accept any other offers for the undertaking of domestic work outside the province. It realizes that more than ordinary intelligence and training are needed for the carrying on of such works in institutions with the efficiency expected of those who have consecrated their lives to God. The old theory that any one at all can do domestic work has long since been exploded. Any one can do it, but in any way at all. Again, the great majority of girls applying for admission to the Congregation today express their wish to nurse or teach or do social welfare work; and since it has been the policy of the Community to place subjects in work for which they are best fitted and in which they will be the happiest, it is going to be increasingly difficult to meet the demands of domestic work.

However, the sisters who have been sent to Regiopolis College have always been very happy there. The unflagging interest taken by the Jesuit Fathers in their spiritual and temporal welfare has ever been most encouraging, and has called forth their best efforts. Although there has been from the first a staff of five sisters, the nurse was allowed to remain only three years, as the opening of a new hospital in 1945 required her services at home.

7. Western Hospital

The scarcity of doctors throughout rural areas is a problem that has to be faced in every Canadian province, and one which in the opinion of medical men themselves will never be solved until the need for rural hospitals is satisfied.

The people of Western Prince County, Prince Edward Island, had for many years realized that a hospital was the only solution to their difficulty of retaining the services of medical men, but the financial problem involved in the construction and equipment of a modern hospital was ever a deterrent factor. In 1945 an opportunity presented itself for the making of a modest beginning in this direction when a commodious hotel in the small town of Alberton, the centre of this area, was for sale. This structure, known as Albion Terrace Hotel, was ideally located on a sloping elevation, with sufficient grounds for future expansion. The matter was brought to the attention of the Bishop by the pastors of the rural parishes in this area, and the purchase was made by the Episcopal Corporation. Simultaneous with the renovation of the building was the construction of a new wing. When the remodelling was complete, the Sisters of St. Martha took over the management of the institution, admitting their first patient on January 5, 1945.²⁵ On the

²⁵ Sister M. of Lourdes, Annals, Western Hospital, 1945.

official opening of the completed structure on August 18, 1948,²⁶ a new milestone was reached in the evolution of hospital service in Prince Edward Island. Tastefully furnished and equipped with all the modern essentials for surgical, medical, and obstetrical cases, the Western Hospital, providing forty beds and twelve bassinets, is a credit to the people of West Prince who gave the undertaking their generous support.

The first campaign for funds in 1945 was not the financial success expected due to the fact that the non-Catholics of the town were not so cooperative as was anticipated. This was much to be regretted because they formed the major portion of the population of the town of Alberton, and were, on the whole, in a better position to give generously. With the idea of the hospital itself they were in whole-hearted agreement, but were opposed to its management by a religious group. The chief leader of the opposition was the local druggist, John Waugh, a man of considerable influence in the town.²⁷ When he gave as the reason for his attitude that "the next thing the Pope will be here," he was not stating the real basis of his problem. Further investigation revealed this. He could not conceive of a sisters' hospital operating without a pharmacy, and this he felt would effect his financial ruin. Accordingly,

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Personal interview with Sister M. of Lourdes, September, 1954.

at a meeting of the hospital officials a resolution was adopted to the effect that a pharmacy would not operate in the hospital, and that all prescriptions would be referred to the local druggist. This created a different atmosphere and won the support of Mr. Waugh and many of his adherents. Although the matter of prejudice is still a factor to be reckoned with, prayer and Christlike charity to all, irrespective of creed, have broken down the barriers to a considerable extent. The majority of the non-Catholics are proud of their hospital and contribute generously to its support.²⁸

The Sisters of St. Martha now own the institution, the transfer having been made from the Episcopal Corporation by Bishop Boyle on April 18, 1954,²⁹ just before he left for Rome. The original debt of approximately one hundred and sixty thousand dollars has been reduced to twenty thousand, so that two years more will see its complete liquidation.³⁰

The external works undertaken by the Congregation during the Episcopate of Bishop O'Sullivan have just been considered. Important as they are in themselves, their fruits will depend greatly on the preparations made by the sisters for the undertaking of these works. It will be necessary, therefore, to take

²⁸ Personal Correspondence of the Author, Letter of Sister M. Angela, Superintendent of Western Hospital, dated November 12, 1954.

²⁹ Interview with Mother F. Loyola, September, 1954.

³⁰ Interview with Sister M. Angela, August, 1954.

a glance at the interior of the Congregation to discover the forces that are operating.

8. Internal Growth

At the General Election of 1933 Sister Mary Paula was elected Superior General of the Congregation, a post which she held for the next twelve years.³¹ As administrator of the Charlottetown Hospital for the previous eight years, she gained an experience that admirably prepared her for the new responsibilities she was called upon to assume.

Although the spiritual development of the sisters was ever her first concern, she left nothing undone, in so far as the finances would permit, to raise the standard of education in the Community. With this in mind she strove to postpone the opening of new houses as long as possible so that the efforts and energies of the Congregation could be concentrated on the attainment of greater efficiency in the works already undertaken. Thus it was that nine years had elapsed from the time of her appointment until another mission was opened.

During her incumbency intensified courses in music were taken by all who could profit by them so that two of the sisters received diplomas in music from McGill University.³² To encourage and promote Gregorian chant in the Community and

³¹ Sister M. Faustina, Minutes of the General Chapters, 1933.

³² Mother M. Paula, Annals, 1941, in the Archives of the Congregation.

in the diocese, she sent sisters to Pius X School of Music in New York and to Dr. Ronan's School of Music in Toronto.³³ This was the beginning of a program which has become more extensive with the passing years, and which was instrumental to no small degree in bringing an appreciation of Gregorian chant to many parochial choirs.

Before 1934 no sisters had attended Prince of Wales College and Normal School, but Mother Paula was well aware that many sacrifices would have to be made if the Community were to fulfil one of the very purposes of its existence, that of teaching in rural schools throughout the province. Accordingly, September 1934 saw the first sisters enroll in courses that would lead to a teacher's license. Four years later they were granted a similar permission to join the classes at St. Dunstan's College. These concessions have done much to raise the tone of the Community and to swell the number of recruits. Every effort has since been made to take advantage of these educational opportunities so that eleven sisters have since obtained degrees and many others have gone from these institutions to take specialized courses in the different works of the Community.

Bishop O'Sullivan firmly believed in keeping in the vanguard of progress and gave Mother Paula every encouragement and support in her efforts to advance her sisters. When he left the diocese in 1944 to become the Archbishop of Kingston, he left institutions staffed with qualified musicians, teachers,

³³ Ibid., 1934-1945.

nurses, musicians, dietitians, and technicians.

Summary

During the thirteen years of Bishop O'Sullivan's episcopate there was a marked growth in the development of the Congregation. The inauguration of a campaign for a new Motherhouse was a source of encouragement and stimulation, but its erection was postponed owing to the intervention of war. New activities were provided in the operating of a social welfare department and of religious vacation schools. The opening of a senior high school in Kinkora and of a new rural school in Tracadie Cross marked progressive steps in the educational field, while a new rural hospital brought increased hospital facilities. The care of the dietary department and infirmary of Regiopolis College, Kingston, Ontario, brought the work of the Community beyond the diocese. The attention given to the education of the sisters, now numbering eighty-eight, in preparing them for their specialized works received the encouragement and support of Bishop O'Sullivan. The progress made during the episcopate of his successor, Bishop Boyle, will be considered in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

GROWTH UNDER BISHOP JAMES BOYLE, 1944-1954

The ten years of Bishop Boyle's episcopate is an important decade in the history of the Congregation. The establishing of a school and nursing station in Lennox Island reservation marks the first organized attempt to better the condition of the Indians. The opening of three other rural schools and the renovation and enlargement of the Charlottetown Hospital greatly expanded the work of the Congregation. While the Community sustained a severe loss in the death of Mother Mary Paula, the Marian Year, 1954, brought very signal favours.

1. School and Nursing Station in Lennox Island

The official opening of a school and nursing station in Lennox Island on September 13, 1948¹, marked the inauguration of the first organized attempt to promote the spiritual, cultural, and economic betterment of the Indians, a people whose history is intimately bound up with the early history of the province. When Jacques Cartier reached its shores in 1534, the Micmacs were in full possession and remained so for the next one hundred and twenty-five years. During the period of French occupancy they learned to live on friendly terms with the white man, and all were converted to Christianity. Along with the French they boldly resisted the attacks of the English

¹ New School and Nursing Station in Lennox Island, news item in The Charlottetown Guardian, issue of September 14, 1948, p. 1, col. 4.

invaders, but with the fall of Louisburg in 1758 the province became an English possession. After the English occupation and the consequent deportation of the French Acadians, the lot of the Indians became a difficult one. The province was divided into sixty-seven lots, distributed to favorites of the crown, and settled by English, Irish, and Scotch inhabitants.² In the distribution the Indians were entirely overlooked, although as aborigines they had a perfect right to share. Soon, too, they lost even their means of living, which had been for the most part hunting and fishing. As time went on they became objects of charity and made a precarious living by selling baskets and home handicrafts.

The first example of interest in the welfare of the Micmacs is found in the will of Lady Louise Augusta Wood, daughter of Lieutenant-Governor Fanning, who during his term of office as governor of the Island, 1786-1805,³ acquired large tracts of land, 2513 acres, which he left to his daughter who married a Colonel Wood of England. In her will dated May 5, 1870, she directed that the land be sold and one-half the proceeds set aside for the benefit of the Indians. Inexplicably the will was lost sight of until 1910, when the ancient parchment was

2 Alexander Warburton, A History of Prince Edward Island, St. John, N.B., Barnes, 1923, p. 121.

3 Ibid., p. 480.

discovered in the attic of the court house in Charlottetown. A trustee board was set up under the chairmanship of Hon. A. E. Arsenault, a retired judge, and settlement was made with the provincial government who in the meantime had sold the land. The small annual income of eight hundred dollars from the Lady Wood Estate has since been used for the benefit of the Indians.⁴

Since 1910 Judge Arsenault has been the indefatigable friend and advocate of these first inhabitants. The plans which he formulated for their economic betterment and which time and time again he presented to the Department of Indian Affairs in Ottawa received for many years no consideration. In spite of repeated rebuffs he persevered in his persistent campaign and only after thirty-five years did he see the triumph of his efforts.

After a survey of Lennox Island, which had been purchased for the Indians in 1875 by the Aborigines Protective Society,⁵ the Federal Department put into effect an extensive building program which included a three-room school, convent, nursing station, community store, agent's residence, rectory, power house, and forty new homes. On its invitation the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Martha sent one registered

⁴ Personal Correspondence of the Author, Letter of A. E. Arsenault, dated September 10, 1954.

⁵ Ibid.

nurse and two teachers, while the diocese supplied a resident priest, who is the principal of the school.

Although the educational set-up is outside the jurisdiction of the provincial Department of Education, the same curriculum has been adopted so that the pupils may on the completion of Grade X be prepared to enter Prince of Wales College High School or St. Dunstan's. Apart from the regular courses on the curriculum, instructions are being given to both children and adults in home nursing, home economics, crafts, music, and horticulture. Intensive training in the ways of more healthful living has already produced gratifying results, and it is to be expected that the high rate of mortality which has prevailed among them will soon be considerably reduced.

The Federal Department has been most lavish in supplying the Indians on this reservation, fifty families, with all they need to make a good living. Every effort is being made to make these facilities redound to their utmost advantage so that they will become not only economically independent, but men and women of whom the province will be proud.

2. St. Thérèse's School

The next school claiming the attention of the Congregation was in a rural area about thirty miles from Charlottetown. The increased interest in education resulting from the parochial school in Tracadie Cross parish led some of the people of the

neighbouring parish of St. Theresa's to consider the possibility of a similar arrangement for their parish. The time seemed ripe for just such a change. St. Theresa's district school was closed owing to lack of sufficient pupils, and three of the other six schools of the parish were in charge of non-licensed teachers,⁶ the Department of Education having been obliged during the war years to issue permits even to those of Grade X standing in order to keep in operation many primary schools which would otherwise have been vacant.

When the matter of a convent school was brought to the attention of the pastor by the parishioners themselves, Father Croken saw an indication of the possible fulfilment of his own plans for such a program⁷, but which he had hesitated to release to a parish just emerging from the shadow of debt. By a written contract with the parish the Congregation pledged itself to provide for the furnishing of the convent and for the continued upkeep of the interior⁸, thus putting into effect a recent change in the policy of the Community with regard to the establishment of future convents in the rural areas.

The new school and convent, which with the permission of the Bishop were constructed on the parish farm, were

⁶ Personal Correspondence of the Author, Letter of Rev. Basil Croken, dated Dec. 30, 1954.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ The Sisters of St. Martha, Contract with Reverend Basil Croken, pastor of St. Theresa's parish, dated April 25, 1948.

officially opened on September 22, 1949. During the six years that have elapsed the change effected in the attitude of both parents and pupils towards education is phenomenal. At the moment seventeen of the graduates are attending college or receiving higher education in other institutions.⁹ Various factors have contributed to this increase of interest other than the fact that the teachers themselves are dedicated to their work. St. Theresa's parish is not a wealthy parish, and the very fact that many sacrifices must be made to keep the school plant in operation brings into relief the truth that education is costly, and with the majority of people, financial cost is an index of value. Again the keen competition that a central school affords and the increased facilities that a convent school provides are conducive to optimum interest, and tend to cultivate in the pupils a desire to utilize to their maximum their potentialities.

Already the school is overcrowded and additional classrooms a necessity. Just what will be done about this situation cannot now be foreseen. There is a possibility that the Department of Education will grant permission to add Grades XI and XII, but until this matter is definitely settled there will be nothing done in the matter of expanding present facilities.¹⁰

9 Personal Correspondence of the Author, Letter of Sister Margaret Marie, principal of St. Theresa's School, dated December 30, 1954.

10 Ibid.

3. Fort Augustus School

The next school opened on August 12, 1954, marked a departure from the regular type of school conducted by the Congregation.

When Reverend Theodore Butler was appointed pastor of Fort Augustus parish in 1949, his first concern was for improved educational opportunities for the youth of the parish. A central school seemed to him the most satisfactory solution of existing problems. He had in mind, however, a larger unit of administration so that all the children of each of the nine districts of the parish would be taught in one central school. In the other parochial schools only the pupils of the senior grades in the outlying districts were admitted, the district schools continuing to operate for the benefit of the lower grades. There were already existing in the province two such larger units of administration, but comprising from twelve to fifteen school districts. As Fort Augustus parish was not willing to conform to all the stipulations with reference to the larger unit, it would not ordinarily come under the regular larger unit of legislation, even though an amalgamation of a number of school districts were effected.¹¹ The Minister of Education, however, realizing that the request of this group of districts was a worthy one, used the authority

¹¹ Personal Correspondence of the Author, Letter of Lloyd W. Shaw, Deputy Minister and Director of Education, P.E.I., , dated January 10, 1955.

granted him and gave his permission for the amalgamation.¹²

To accommodate the present enrolment of seventy-eight and allow for future growth a building which will provide six classrooms, recreation rooms, library and laboratory facilities,¹³ is now in the course of construction. The second floor will be finished interiorly when, as is anticipated, Grades XI and XII are added. The new convent which will provide for the accommodation of boarders will be built within the present year when six sisters, including a music teacher, will complete the staff. At present the sisters are living in the parochial house.

Pending the completion of the school, the parish hall has been converted into temporary classrooms. Up to the present only six of the nine schools have amalgamated¹⁴, but it is hoped that with the functioning of the new school and with bus transportation provided by the parish, the other three potential members of this larger unit will forget their differences and cooperate in a parish endeavour which cannot but reap a rich harvest of returns.

4. Grand Tracadie School

The idea of a central school for all the children of the parish has long been a subject of much discussion among

¹² Island, Prince Edward, The School Act, Charlottetown, The Department of Education, 1952, p. 7.

¹³ Personal Correspondence of the Author, Letter of Reverend T. Butler, dated January 3, 1955.

¹⁴ Ibid.

the priests of the diocese, but anticipated opposition from the people was ever a deterrent factor. It was left to the pastor of Fort Augustus parish to take the initiative, and although he did not receive full cooperation, the success of the venture was sufficiently encouraging to induce the pastor of the neighbouring parish of Corran Ban to formulate similar plans. The difficulties, however, which were to beset his path were more real than at first apparent.

The first opposition came from Bishop Boyle,¹⁵ who, although very much in favour of central schools as such, or of any movement that would tend to raise the standard of education in the diocese, did not think that the time was ripe for the execution of this project. Corran Ban was a very small parish, embracing only four school districts, with the Catholic element in the minority. Although the cost of constructing the school would be the concern of all the ratepayers of the amalgamated districts, the convent would have to be built by the Catholics alone. The Bishop felt that since no preparation had been made by way of a building fund, it was not advisable to place additional burden on the parish until it was free from debt. However, he did make a concession, which met the approval of the pastor and the Sisters of St. Martha. By granting

¹⁵ Personal interview with Mother F. Loyola, with whom the Bishop had discussed the matter, April, 1954.

the sisters permission to drive a car, he obviated the immediate necessity of erecting a convent, since Corran Ban is but ten miles from Charlottetown.

The next form of opposition came from the people themselves, not so much from a financial standpoint as from the undesirability of having the central school in an area which was not central. But since the Church is in Corran Ban, the convent when built will be located near, and this necessitated the erection of the school in this area. The opposition, however, was not in the majority, but the supporters had a margin not sufficiently substantial to warrant the carrying of the plan to completion. The upshot was that a tentative program emerged. Two sisters are now teaching in Grand Tracadie district school, which is being attended by all the pupils of this district and those of the senior grades of two of the other three districts, Corran Ban and Millcove.

The Department of Education did not oppose in any way the original plan, owing to the scarcity of teachers and the consequent difficulty of keeping many small schools in operation. It is paying sixty per cent of the tuition and fifty per cent of the transportation costs of those pupils who go from the two outlying districts.¹⁶

¹⁶ Personal Correspondence of the Author, Letter of Rev. O. P. Wood, pastor of Corran Ban parish, dated January 3, 1955.

This is the only school of the Congregation in which the sisters do not give religious instruction. It is felt that every precaution must be taken, for a time at least, to ensure the cooperation of the non-Catholic parents, many of whom have already expressed their satisfaction with the present arrangement. The pastor's views in regard to the success of his program is well expressed:

The present system is working smoothly, but a central school at Corran Ban must be the outcome. We must "make haste slowly" because the situation here, mixed as it is from a denominational point of view, is a very delicate one. However, with the success already achieved, I feel sure that it will not be long before the stiffest block of opposition is melted down, and all will see the light shining through the darkness and will understand. The calm and serenity that now prevail give no indication of the storm that has passed. But the countless meetings, the spurious arguments, the destructive criticisms were all a part of the warp and woof that go into the making of any new scheme worth while.¹⁷

The opening of four schools during the episcopate of Bishop Boyle has just been discussed. The attention given during this period to another matter of much importance in the Congregation, the care of the sick, will next be considered.

5. New Pavilion in Charlottetown Hospital

When the Catholic Hospital, built in Charlottetown to replace the structure destroyed by fire, officially opened

¹⁷ Ibid.

its doors on September 24, 1925, it was hailed as a modern institution of the first class. Nor did any person foresee that the passage of but a quarter of a century would necessitate the expenditure of one million dollars¹⁸ to enable it to meet the demands for increased bed capacity and to keep pace with the enormous advances in medical and surgical science. Yet such was the case. The official opening on February 21, 1950, of a completely renovated and modernized original structure and a new pavilion introduced a new era in the administration of this historic institution, now regarded as one of the finest in the Dominion. From decoration along the lines of colour therapy to the addition of the latest equipment for diagnostic and therapeutic x-ray, the new building is designed to provide the utmost in health care for the people of the province for many years to come.

Because it is a non-profit hospital, and because it has given more than two million dollars' worth of free care since the brick building opened in 1925,¹⁹ it could not pay the huge debt it had contracted. In its hour of need it turned to the people it had served for nearly three-quarters of a century, and it was not disappointed. When Bishop Boyle launched

¹⁸ Personal Correspondence of the Author, Letter of Sister M. of Good Counsel, Superintendent of the Charlotte-town Hospital, dated January 3, 1955.

¹⁹ Ibid.

his first campaign for funds in 1952, placing as his objective three hundred thousand dollars, the amount needed to liquidate the first bank loan, each of the fifty-three parishes and missions in the diocese organized itself for active participation in the fund-raising program, so that the objective was over-reached by seventy-five thousand dollars.²⁰ The Bishop, commenting on the success of the campaign in a sermon preached in the Basilica following the announcement of the results, said in part: "So long as this spirit of faith and charity animate our Catholic people, this land already so favoured by God will continue to be the object of His benedictions."²¹

The Charlottetown Hospital was very soon to suffer a severe loss in the death of her to whose "vision, planning, and energy it will long remain a monument."²²

6. Death of Mother Mary Paula

The encouragement given the Congregation in the latest provision for the expansion of its services to the sick and dying was deeply overshadowed by the news of the fatal illness of Mother Mary Paula, who for twenty years had been most intimately associated with this institution. Mother Paula was one of the pioneers of the Community and her life-story forms one of

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Bishop Boyle, Bishop Proud of the Success of the Campaign, article in the Charlottetown Guardian. (Clipping)

²² -----, Eulogy on the Occasion of Mother Paula's Funeral, February 4, 1952.

the most brilliant chapters in its history.

Born in Georgetown, Prince Edward Island, September 8, 1892, Mother Paula was the second youngest in the family of Captain and Mrs. Hugh McPhee. During her early years she attended the town school where she laid the formal foundations for a lifetime of study. But perhaps more significant was the education she received in her home. There she imbibed the wisdom, spirit and culture of an eminently Catholic family. There her youthful mind was moulded by the strong character of her Irish mother, and her outlook on life broadened by her sea-captain father. After matriculation she attended Prince of Wales College in Charlottetown, obtained a teacher's license, and taught some years in Georgetown school.

Her oldest brother, John, having been killed in active service in World War I on July 29, the Feast of St. Martha, she resolved to consecrate her life to God in the Island Community. She received the postulant's veil in Antigonish on January 16, 1919, and her holy habit and religious name on August 10, 1919. On April 13, 1921, she made first profession of vows in St. Dunstan's College chapel, Charlottetown. In August, 1921, she was appointed Mistress of Novices, following the return of the first Superior, Mother Mary Stanislaus, to her own Community in Antigonish. When the Sisters of St. Martha took over the administration of the Charlottetown Hospital in 1926 she was appointed Superior and Superintendent. Here she

remained for eight years, guiding, promoting, and encouraging the work of the various departments and of the auxiliary activities of the hospital.

A higher duty was thrust upon her in 1933 when she was elected Superior General of the Congregation. Apart from her devotion to the spiritual and temporal needs of her religious daughters, Mother Paula will be especially remembered for her interest in and encouragement of Church music, her zeal that all churches and chapels should be becomingly fitted up and adorned in accordance with the decrees and decisions of Holy Mother Church, and her desire to promote better knowledge of religion among the young people of the diocese. During her term of office the Community opened a new convent in Tracadie, Western Hospital was founded, and the first mission outside the diocese was established.

After her second term as Superior General she returned to the Charlottetown Hospital where she remained until illness forced her to retire in June, 1951. Her death on February 2, 1952, at a comparatively early age, when to her other endowments time had added experience, was a great loss to the Community. May the memory of her zeal for God's glory and her faithfulness to the Holy Rule remain with us as a precious legacy to sustain and inspire throughout the years to come!

Pontifical Mass of Requiem was offered in St. Dunstan's

Basilica on February 4, 1952, after which her mortal remains were laid to rest in the Community cemetery.²³

It is most fitting that the final section of the four chapters devoted to the study of the birth and growth of the Congregation should be concerned with devotion to Her who is the Patroness of all religious Communities - the Blessed Virgin Mary

7. The Marian Year, 1954

The sisters of the Congregation rejoiced when the Holy Father called on Catholics throughout the world in his immortal encyclical, Fulgens Corona, to make 1954 a Marian Year. Love of the Blessed Virgin was ever an outstanding virtue of its first Superior, Mother Mary Stanislaus, who made every effort to plant firmly in the hearts of the sisters devotion to this heavenly Queen. She named the Motherhouse Mount St. Mary's in her honour, and as the sisters go out to their missions from its portals they take with them that ardent desire to do all for Jesus through Mary. With feelings of gratitude and joy, then, the sisters undertook to follow the recommendations of the Sacred Congregation of Religious regarding their particular part in this great year. Love lent inventiveness and truly amazing were the tributes of affection.

It is not intended to mention here all that was done

²³ Sisters' Records, Mount St. Mary's Archives.

by the sisters, individually or collectively, to honour the Mother of God during the past year. Nor indeed is it necessary or even possible to do so. The mention of but a small number of the contributions can well reveal the Marian spirit of the Congregation.

In a circular letter of January 5, 1954, the Superior General called on the sisters to practise great kindness and charity, especially toward other members of the Community, in honour of Mary most Amiable, to offer daily some small penance or sacrifice, and to recite the Marian Year prayer and Magnificat daily. Additional books on Mariology were added to all the convent libraries, and frequent spiritual readings in common on some phase of Marian devotion became part of the regular program. A marble statue, a truly artistic representation chosen with the recommendations of the Holy Father in mind regarding Christian art, was placed in the Motherhouse chapel, while a beautiful outdoor shrine became a place of daily pilgrimage.

As a special Marian Year project the Community sent two sisters to the Catholic University, Washington, to study techniques of working with children of retarded mentality. The Community plans to develop this neglected phase of education and do more for these afflicted little ones.

To assist in a spiritual way the Catholic poor of Charlottetown, two retreats, conducted by the Redemptorist

Fathers, were held at Mount St. Mary's for two groups of mothers, clients of the Catholic Welfare Bureau. The sisters doing welfare work made more frequent visits to prisoners and to the aged in government institutions, distributing religious articles and reciting the Rosary with them. These visits of the sisters are always appreciated. Generous money contributions were given to the poor, and six students, poor but deserving, were given free board.

Special efforts were made by the teachers in our schools to instil into the hearts of their charges a great devotion to the Mother of God. In each school dramatic presentations prepared by different classes helped to foster this devotion and to give knowledge of our Lady's recent apparitions. One group won first place in the provincial musical festival for the singing of the Latin hymn, Salve Regina, which was repeated in the city auditorium at the Concert of Stars. Perpetual Rosary, in which both children and sisters participated, was offered on the first Saturday of each month as well as on various feasts throughout the year.

In all the houses of the Congregation triduums and special closings marked the termination of this holy year. The Novices' presentation of a drama on Our Lady of Guadalupe was a final tribute of love to Her called by our present Holy Father the Hope of America.²⁴

²⁴ Personal Correspondence of the Author, Letter of Mother F. Loyola, dated January 10, 1955.

Although the Congregation was the recipient of many favours during the Marian Year, it was called upon to endure a heavy cross in the death of the beloved Bishop Boyle. Having taken seriously ill on his way to Rome to attend the canonization ceremonies of Pope Pius X, he entered the hospital of St. John and St. Elizabeth in London where he died on June 3, following a surgical operation. The depth of his deep spirituality and his great love of God's holy Mother was revealed in a remark so brief, yet so meaningful, that he made shortly before he expired, "It is good to die in the Marian Year." 25

Summary

The progress made in the educational and hospital fields was greater during the episcopate of Bishop Boyle than in any of the three preceding periods. Of special interest to the Congregation was the work it undertook for the benefit of the province's most neglected people, the Indians. The establishing of a school and nursing station on Lennox Island reservation, the opening of three other rural schools, and the

25 Bishop John R. MacDonald, Eulogy on the occasion of Bishop Boyle's Funeral, June 15, 1954.

Bishop MacDonald visited Bishop Boyle shortly before his death.

renovating and enlarging of the Charlottetown Hospital will contribute much to the welfare of the diocese. The death of Mother Mary Paula, one of the pioneers of the Congregation, to whom it owes much of the prestige it now enjoys, was a distinct loss to the Community and to the diocese. The Marian Year offered countless opportunities of showing love and devotion to the Mother of God, under whose protection the Congregation, now numbering one hundred and thirty-eight members, is placed. The next and final chapter will point out the contributions of the Sisters of St. Martha to education in Prince Edward Island.

CHAPTER V

FOUR DECADES OF EDUCATIONAL EFFORT

In the four preceding chapters the birth of the Congregation and its gradual development over a period of four decades have been discussed at some length. This final chapter will attempt to point out that in every field of endeavour, whether among its own members, students, orphans, the sick, the poor, or the aged, it has contributed greatly to the advancement of education within the province, that is, education understood in its true and proper sense, as stated in the introduction to this thesis.

1. Education within the Congregation

Before considering what has been the contribution of the Congregation through its external works to educational growth within the province, it seems fitting that its contribution to the development of its own members should receive first consideration, since with but two exceptions all are native-born.

When the Bishop-Founder, moved by his zeal for the greater glory of God, undertook to establish a diocesan Congregation in Charlottetown, he realized that with a religious novitiate functioning within the province more young women would be attracted to the religious life, a state in which they would have the grave obligation to strive for Christian perfection. This special work of education in the way of perfection

is the keystone in the accomplishments of any Community, for it is "as if to matriculate in perfection that the postulant applies at the cloister door."¹

The Superiors of the Congregation were blessed in having from the first the canons of the Code of 1918 to guide them in the formation of its members. In the years before the Code many Communities were forced by pressure of circumstances to allow novices to teach and take up other exterior activities. Any temptation to do so by the present Congregation in its difficult pioneer days was precluded by the very definite regulations of the Church after 1918. Inspired by the example of their holy Ordinaries, the Superiors have been most anxious to follow exactly all regulations regarding religious, and have from time to time taken courses in canon law, dogma, and liturgy that they might understand all in the light of the best interpretation. The proximity of St. Dunstan's University to the Motherhouse is of incalculable benefit to the sisters, as the priests of the faculty have ever been most zealous in giving regular courses in religion to the postulants, novices, and junior professed.

Although the spiritual formation of the members has always been placed first in importance, the necessity of the best professional training has never been overlooked, even at

¹ Reverend A. Motte, Obedience, Westminster, Maryland, Newman Press, 1953, p. 64.

the cost of great sacrifice. Perhaps it is precisely because its various works have been founded on sacrifice that the Congregation has been able to contribute much to the educational enrichment of the diocese.

2. Contribution through External Works

In order to have an adequate appreciation of what have been the contributions of the Congregation to the field of education, it seems necessary to consider what each individual work has contributed to that field:

a) St. Dunstan's College.- The first work undertaken by the Sisters of St. Martha in the diocese was the domestic work at St. Dunstan's College in 1916. Although this still remains an important part of their contribution to the welfare of the college, they have with the passage of the years entered upon other phases of college activity, so that today the high school, commerce and extension departments, and library are further scenes of their labours. The opportunity to cooperate in a work so beneficial to the rural population as that carried on by the extension department in its promotion of adult education is especially prized by the Community, since better education for rural people was the earnest desire of its founder. At the first Diocesan Rural Conference, which was held at the college in 1952, three members of the Congregation presented papers and took part in the various discussions.

The enrolment of two Sisters of St. Martha in the college courses in 1938 had important educational implications, since it served as a wedge opening the way for the admission of young ladies to the privilege of a Catholic college education. Since then they have enrolled in ever increasing numbers so that today St. Dunstan's is recognized as a co-educational institution. Besides providing institutional care for the female students, members of the Community give special lessons in home economics to supplement the courses offered at St. Dunstan's. When the plans formulated by Bishop Boyle shortly before his death for a ladies' residence in connection with the college² have been finalized and the building becomes a reality, full courses leading to degrees in home economics and nursing education will be offered. Of course, in this regard much will depend on the policy of the newly consecrated bishop, but it is expected that he will cooperate in the furtherance of a project of such vital importance to the diocese.

The appreciation of the faculty of what the sisters have done towards the promotion of Catholic education at St. Dunstan's is reflected in the tribute paid to them by the Rector, Right Reverend R. V. MacKenzie, in his annual report

² Bishop Boyle, Letter to Mother P. Loyola, dated March 27, 1954, in Mount St. Mary's Archives.

In this letter Bishop Boyle submitted his plans for the approval of the sisters.

at the closing exercises of St. Dunstan's College on May 24, 1954:

I wish to give public expression here of gratitude and a deep sense of obligation to the Sisters of St. Martha who for the past thirty-seven years have contributed so much in almost every field of our endeavour to the welfare of St. Dunstan's College. Their assistance and cooperation have always been generous and self-sacrificing, and they have exemplified true charity in very many ways. They receive little reward therefor, nor do they seek it; their hope is a reward for their exemplary charity in the world to come. They may even have to wait for a hundred years³ to get another thank-you, but it is given very sincerely now.⁴

b) Rural schools.- The school at Finkora given to the charge of the sisters in 1921 has grown considerably across the years and has set the pace in many respects for other Catholic schools. The parochial school established there in 1935 for Grades IX and X was the first of its kind in the province, while the opening of a Grade XI classroom marked the first time that such a course was taught in a Catholic school outside St. Dunstan's. The idea of a parochial school has found such favour in the diocese that many other parishes have since adopted it, and the Department of Education has repeatedly voiced its approval.

Professionally, the sisters who teach in the seven schools of the Congregation meet the standards set by the secular

³ St. Dunstan's College celebrated its one-hundredth anniversary in 1954.

⁴ Rector's Report in The Charlottetown Guardian, issue of May 25, 1954, col. 3, p. 5.

authorities, but, what is of much more importance, they are deeply imbued with the idea that all true education must lead to God. Consequently their philosophy of education is designed to form men and women whose purpose in life will be directed to the love of God and of neighbour.

Apart from the regular courses of the curriculum, much attention is paid to the cultural value of music, drama, and art. The low ebb to which music had fallen in the majority of the districts might be due in part to the lack of interest in cultivating this talent when the radio first came on the scene and to the fact that during the depression years there was no money to support these cultural subjects. As a mark of appreciation of the work done by the Community in furthering musical education, two of the sisters were granted scholarships for advanced study in music by the Provincial Musical Festival Committee of 1954.

One of the indictments against modern education frequently heard in rural areas is that it is the primary cause of many vacant farms. Consequently much care is exercised by the sisters not to educate the boys and girls away from the farm, but rather to educate them to appreciate the advantages of farming as a way of life. Moreover, through better education they will learn how to improve their economic and social status, and thus to build a strong rural community, the background of any nation.

c) St. Vincent's Orphanage.- Since true education is concerned with the whole man, the corporal and spiritual works of mercy meet in the field of education. Yet in some of the works undertaken by the Community the corporal is seen more clearly blended with the spiritual than in others. This is especially true in regard to the care of the orphans. If the work of the sisters in the public schools is of much importance, how much more important is that of those who in the orphanage must assume in great measure the obligations laid upon parents, to whom the work of education belongs by nature.

In a previous chapter mention was made of the great charity exercised by the Catholics of the province toward the children of St. Vincent's Orphanage; hence providing for their physical well-being does not ordinarily involve much sacrifice on the part of those in charge of the institution. But to form Christ in these little ones much more is required than mere attention to their physical needs. Their intellectual, spiritual, and moral training is a matter of grave responsibility for those concerned.

Institutional environment does not tend to lend itself ideally to the effective training of children. For this reason much attention is given at St. Vincent's Orphanage to the creating of a homelike atmosphere, one in which the little children will have that feeling of belonging so necessary for their present happiness, and so essential, too, if the good seed which

is sown is to bear fruit, especially after they have left its sheltered walls. The policy of the institution has changed considerably during the past decade. Much more liberty has been allowed the children in an effort to guard against the danger of overprotection which inhibits their full development and which tends to produce fatal consequences in their later lives.

There still remain many problems to be solved in regard to the best manner of caring for the orphans, many of whom are mentally retarded or physically handicapped. However, it can be safely asserted that the lives of the many hundreds of children who have passed through this institution during the past twenty-nine years have been educationally enriched as a result of the tender care received during their most impressionable years.

d) The Charlottetown and Western Hospitals.- In the whole plan of organization of a hospital the central figure is the patient, and the reputation of a hospital stands or falls depending on the care the patient receives. In sisters' hospitals, however, the care of the sick means much more than the alleviation of bodily suffering. Beneath the wretched disguise of disease and pain the nursing sister sees the image of Christ, an image which she must cause to grow brighter and brighter through good example and Christlike charity. Thus to be faithful to her essential duty, the nursing sister, while ministering to the bodily needs of her patient, must strive to prepare

his soul for a more effective operation of divine grace.

Of the two hospitals which the Community operates, the Charlottetown Hospital presents opportunities for more direct teaching since it conducts a school of nursing with a registration of more than seventy students. The methods of nursing education have changed greatly since the school first opened its doors almost thirty years ago. Even the change in title from "training school" to "school of nursing" is indicative of the stress now being placed on complete education rather than on technical skills alone. The Sisters of St. Martha have striven perseveringly to give to their student nurses the best possible education so that each graduate would be in truth a supernatural nurse "who thinks, judges, and acts consistently in accordance with right reason, illumined by the supernatural light of the example and teaching of Christ."⁵ "Minimis Mihi" is the motto of the school - ,a thought to keep before the mind of the nurse that she is nursing a member of Christ's Mystical Body, "for as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to Me."⁶

⁵ Pope Pius XI, Christian Education of Youth, in Five Great Encyclicals, New York, Paulist Press, c1939, p. 65.

⁶ St. Matthew, XV, 40.

e) Social Welfare Bureau.- This social agency had a very modest beginning in 1931, when a social welfare department was opened at the Charlottetown Hospital and given the name of Social Service. Over the years it has greatly expanded its services so that today as a multiple-function agency it ministers in a much more effective way not only to the poor and needy of Charlottetown and surrounding areas, but to any person, regardless of religious affiliation, seeking assistance that it is able to render.

The main purpose of this welfare agency is educative - to help people solve their own problems and make adjustment to life, and not merely to give out food, clothing, and fuel, as many of the clients would like to believe. It does this, too, in generous measure,⁷ as the need arises, but its chief work is one of rehabilitation.⁸

The opportunity for doing much more good abounds. To meet the demands of the ever-increasing numbers who come to the bureau for assistance, more social workers are sorely needed - workers trained under Catholic auspices and in Catholic philosophy, who will use the techniques and tools of modern case work, but cover all with the mantle of Christ's charity.

⁷ Sister Mary Henry, Child Welfare, news item in The Charlottetown Guardian, issue of January 27, 1955, p. 12, col.5. More than ten thousand dollars' worth of clothing was given out during the past year by the Bureau.

⁸ Catholic Social Welfare Bureau, Constitutions, Article 11, Charlottetown, 1948.

f) Sacred Heart Home.- Another important phase of welfare work that the Congregation has been carrying on for nearly thirty years is that of caring for the aged poor. Although from a natural point of view this work has not the same appeal as that of caring for the young, yet the work of bringing peace and contentment in the evening of life to many who would otherwise be deprived of it is one which is most rewarding to those engaged in it.

Many who first come within its walls are weighed down with a sense of their utter helplessness and frustrated by the feeling that they are no longer wanted. Under the educative influence of those especially trained in this work, they soon learn to adjust themselves to their new surroundings and to make the most of the time still allotted to them. Here for the most part free from many of the distractions of the world, surrounded by those who have their interest at heart, and within the very shadow of the Tabernacle it is easy for them to learn the greatest of life's lessons - how to prepare for a happy eternity, which is the ultimate end of all true education.

Summary

Through its operation of a religious novitiate within the province, and through its continued development of its members, all but two of whom are native born, the Congregation has

done much to foster educational growth in Prince Edward Island. By means of its external works, too, among the students, the orphans, the sick, the poor, and the aged it has over a period of four decades been a vital force in the educational life of the diocese.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In the Introduction was stated the purpose of this thesis, namely, to organize the facts relating to the foundation and subsequent development of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Martha of Prince Edward Island, and to point out what contribution it has made to Christian education in every field of its endeavour.

Chapter I opened with a brief historical description of the province, followed by a biographical sketch of the Bishop-Founder, Henry Joseph O'Leary. It then traced the various steps leading up to the foundation of the Congregation at St. Dunstan's College, Charlottetown, in 1916, and its development under the guidance of Mother Mary Stanislaus of Antigonish during the next five years.

Chapter II unfolded the story of the development which the next decade brought, when the young Congregation, then functioning on its own, took over the administration of a rural school, hospital, orphanage, and a home for the aged. Its internal growth during this period was emphasized.

The expansion of the works of the Community during the episcopate of Bishop Joseph Anthony O'Sullivan was dealt with in Chapter III. In succession were considered the campaign for a new motherhouse, the opening of a social welfare department, of religious vacation schools, two rural schools, a rural hospital, and the first convent outside the diocese. The attention given to the education of the sisters was detailed.

Chapter IV was concerned with the episcopate of Bishop James Boyle, which was marked by further expansion of the rural school program and hospital endeavour, by attempts to better the condition of the Indians of the province, by the death of Mother Mary Paula, one of the pioneers of the Congregation, and by the celebration of the Marian Year.

Finally a full chapter rang the keynote of this report: the contribution of the Congregation to education in Prince Edward Island. From modest beginnings marked by the cross and hard work, the pioneer band of sisters, trained by the Sisters of St. Martha at Antigonish, and piloted in the early years by Mother Mary Stanislaus, grew and flourished. Today the Congregation numbers 138 members who in seven rural schools, a college high school, extension and commerce departments, a school of nursing, an orphanage, a welfare Bureau, two hospitals, and a home for the aged are labouring zealously to promote the cause of Christian education in Prince Edward Island, a work for which it was especially founded.

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APPENDIX 1

ABSTRACT OF

The Birth and Growth of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Martha of Prince Edward Island.¹

The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Martha of Prince Edward Island was founded on July 17, 1916, by Henry Joseph O'Leary, Bishop of Charlottetown. To organize the facts relating to its foundation and subsequent development and to point out its contribution to Christian education over a period of four decades was the purpose of this study. The principal sources of data were the Archives of the Congregation, those of the diocese, and those of the Sisters of St. Martha at Antigonish, Nova Scotia.

The story of the foundation and early development of the Congregation as told in Chapter I was followed in Chapter II by an account of a decade of expansive growth during the episcopate of Bishop Louis O'Leary. The Community activities were further extended under the guidance of Bishop Joseph A. O'Sullivan, as described in Chapter III, but it was in Chapter IV, which covered the episcopate of Bishop James Boyle, that the Congregation reached the peak of its development. At the close of this period it numbered 138 members, who were labouring in seven rural schools, a college high school, commerce and extension departments, a school of nursing, two hospitals, an orphanage, a home for

¹ M.A. Thesis presented by Sister Mary Ida, in 1955, to the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ottawa, 112 pages.

the aged, and a social welfare bureau.

Finally a full chapter rang the keynote of this report: the contribution of the Congregation to education in Prince Edward Island. Each of the works of the Congregation was examined in the light of the teaching of Pope Pius XI concerning Christian education, and was shown conclusively to have contributed most effectively to educational growth in the diocese, a work for which the Congregation was specifically founded.