

HOLY CROSS IN PHILADELPHIA: 1856-1865

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When documents emerging from Vatican II asked religious communities to study the charism of their founders and return to that charism as a guide in their renewal, the Sisters of the Holy Cross did so willingly. Studying Father Moreau's writings and their history, they found that he said little about ministry but did much. They determined, perhaps simplistically, that "response to need" encompassed that aspect of charism which dealt with mission and ministry.

A study of the missions begun and continued, or begun and ended, by the Sisters of the Holy Cross reveals that "response to need" was in most cases the governing criterion. Such certainly was the reason for the initial mission to the North American continent. Termination of a mission, however, was due to a variety of factors. Insufficient personnel frequently contributed to the closing of a school or the withdrawal from an apostolate. Sometimes the Sisters left when the nature of a mission changed.

The Philadelphia schools conform only in part to this pattern.

They were opened because a definite need was seen. Their closing,
however, resulted from the desire of Father Edward Sorin to bring all

American establishments under the jurisdiction of Notre Dame - or
somply the Lake, as it was so often called.

When John Nepomucene Neumann became Bishop of Philadelphia in 1852, the diocese included the eastern half of Pennsylvania and the state of Delaware. The dearth of Catholic schools caused him great concern. His interest, however, went further than mere erection of schools. Not undeservedly, he has been called the father of the parochial school system, I for he was the first bishop to strive to establish a school in every parish of his diocese. So well did he succeed that he increased the number of schools twentyfold. For teachers he brought into his diocese a number of teaching orders, among them the Sisters and Brothers of Holy Cross. 2

At his request, therefore, four sisters were sent in the summer of 1856 to make a foundation in Philadelphia where they opened a school for boarders and day scholars "on the new plan of Industrial Schools." A parochial school was opened in January, 1857, in St. Paul's Parish, one of the largest in the city, where the sisters taught the girls and the Brothers of Holy Cross, the boys. Two years later, the sisters began to teach the girls in St. Augustine's School and again the brothers taught the boys. The brothers also taught in Assumption School. All of these schools flourished from the beginning despite the panic of 1857 and the turbulent conditions of the Civil War. From all except escept St. Augustine's, the sisters were summarily snatched in March of 1864. The brothers had already begun their departure in December of 1863.

There seems to be no reason internal to the schools why these religious should have been withdrawn. All were flourishing in the mid-1860s and all continued to exist well into the twentieth century.

The first school established in Philadelphia was the House of the Immaculate Conception, an industrial school and later also a select school or academy. It gave as its founding date September 24, 1856 when the sisters were withdrawn from the Manual Labor School in New York City because of a "disagreement between the superiors in Indiana and the Bishop of New York" and were sent to Philadelphia and Susquehanna. (They remained in the latter place only two years.) It was earlier in that same year, however, on July 18, that the Council at Saint Mary's, responding to a request from Bishop Neumann, had named four sisters to begin the foundation in Philadelphia.

When the sisters reached the city, they obtained hospitality from the Sisters of the Good Shepherd while they sought a place to open their school. They found and rented two houses on Filbert Street between 17th and 18th Streets, 5 and fitted them up for a manual labor and day school. A contemporary flier classifies the House of the Immaculate Conception as an industrial school for young girls under the direction of the Sisters of the Holy Cross. Its object was "to give young girls of middle and poorer classes an opportunity of receiving an education to fit them thoroughly to fulfill the duties of the station in which Divine Providence had placed them. . . . In order to give the pupils. . . the full advantage of an English education  $\zeta$ as opposed to a Latin or classical education, to instruct them in the duties of their Holy Faith, and above all, to guard them, under the eyes of religion, during the most critical period of life (from 13 to 18) as well as to teach them the different female trades, such as Mantua-making, Plain Sewing, Tailoring, Making Flowers, Vestments

for the Church, Embroidering, the use of the Sewing Machine, etc., the Sisters propose to keep them under instruction for three years with an entrance fee of 50 dollars." Boarders wanting to stay only one year paid the full fifty dollars. Day students were charged only three dollars per quarter. French lessons were six dollars a quarter and lessons in making artificial flowers were ten. The same flier solicited work for the school. It also bore the endorsement of Bishop Neumann: "We believe this Institute will effect great good, and is much needed in our Diocese. We, therefore, recommend it to the Chergy and Laity of the city of Philadelphia." 6

Work for the girls was solicited wherever possible. At first, old customers in New York continued their orders. Possible wealthy clients in Baltimore were approached as well as those in Philadelphia. Public advertisements asked for work and priests were asked to place orders for vestments. Work was also done and sold in some salesroom – just where was never made clear. If work for individual customers became too heavy, such "store work" was put aside for a time to concentrate on customers' work. Sometimes when work was slow, pupils from the Industrial School who were deficient in education, were sent to the day school there at Immaculate Conception "until more pressing demands for work would require their assistance."

This establishment grew so rapidly that space soon became a problem. To make matters worse, they had to vacate one of the houses on Filbert Street. To help them ease the resultant crowded condition, the owner of the other house allowed them to take down partitions in the upper story and to make the adjoining stable habitable - all, of course,

at the expense of the sisters and an additional rent of \$120 each year.  $^9$ 

A larger place was essential. When Father Sorin made the Visit in February of that year, the decision had been made to purchase a new place. That summer the sisters found property and a house in West Philadelphia. This new House of the Immaculate Conception suited them well in many respects. 10 The lot was bounded on the north by Robin Street, on the east by 39th then called William Street, and on the south by Pine. The sorth-south block was only half the normal Philadelphia block because Robin, running only between 39th and 40th, cut in half the north-south block between Pine and Spruce. It was a property, therefore, approximately 175 feet by 90. There was no other house in the block. 11 It offered many of the advantages of rural living. Trees grew so thickly in the garden that some of them had to be removed to allow the others to grow. 12 A grape arbor offered fruit and shade. 13 Both hogs and chickens were kept 14 and a fence was erected to conceal from view the poultry yard and whatever empty barrels were kept. 15 Later a board walk was laid in the yard for easier walking 16 and a water sluice on the northwest corner to prevent the collection of stagnant water. 17 Soon after they moved there, they erected a small lattice shrine to the Blessed Mother. 18

The house itself had three stories and probably an English basement with a front portico that was subsequently enclosed with lattice on the northeast side "to prevent the pupils from being seen from the street." Over the years adaptations were made in the interior to accommodate growth and change. In the best of traditions, partitions

were erected, removed and erected again; doors cut through and doors covered up.  $^{20}$  One room sometimes served several purposes.  $^{21}$ 

The neighborhood itself was half rural. West Philadelphia in those days, especially that far south of Market Street seems to have been an attractive area. Only one bridge connected it with the original city at Market. The streets were wide, most of them unpaved and tree-lined. Traffic was light and leisurely. A few blocks north on 39th, or William Street, Anthony Drexel and his son-in-law built their mansions. Southward about two blocks, along the Darby Road, was Woodland Cemetery, an area of circular drives and wooded areas, encompassing 80 acres along the Schuylkill where the original mansion of William Hamilton stood. East of the cemetery along Darby Road was the Blockley Almshouse erected on property even more extensive than the cemetery and enclosed by a high wooden fence. Almost the entire area is at present occupied by the campus of the University of Pennsylvania.

In June of the following year, 1858, an advertisement in the diocesan paper, The Catholic Herald and Visitor, informed the people of the city that the sisters had moved to this new property "more suitable for the wants of the Institute." They begged their friends and the community at large not to forget that the support of the children depended entirely on their daily labor. Any amount of work would be gratefully accepted and executed at "the most moderate terms." To the previous list of skills was added that of shirt-making. Persons who lived at a distance could leave their commissions at the Orphans

Store in the Simes Building at 1203 Chestnut Street or with the Sisters at St. Paul's. If neither of these places was convenient, a note could be sent to the House in West Philadelphia and the work would be called for and delivered. The same issue called attention to the fair that would be held for the school beginning on September 27, 1858, and expressed the hope that the "charitable ladies of the city" would help the sisters. There were many such fairs throughout the years.

The sisters needed all the help they could get. For this new property they had agreed to pay \$16,000 but they had not reckoned on the financial crisis of 1857. That "great depression in almost every branch of trade and industry" was more severe in Philadelphia than in any other city in the Union. It began when the Bank of Philadelphia closed on September 25 and before the middle of October, there was a "general suspension of labor" in mills and factories. The streets were full of unemployed men, and demagogues demanded that the city issue paper money. The effects of this panic were not so severe as anticipated, however, because of the charity of the wealthy and the unusual mildness of the winter. <sup>26</sup>

For Immaculate Conception, the financial situation was especially precarious not only because of the depression but also because of the newness of the establishment. In the previous three months, a number of pupils had been admitted but they were not yet sufficiently skillful to earn enough money to support themselves. The sisters made the first payment of \$2000, but there seemed to be no other source for the balance "except the inexhaustible treasury of Divine

Providence."<sup>28</sup> When Mother Angela made the Visit in September of 1857, she remained three weeks to assist the sisters prepare for a fair to help pay off the debt. (At that time the house contained 18 sisters, 2 postulants, and 47 manual labor students from the ages of 9 to 25.)<sup>29</sup>

Poverty continued to plague the establishment during its existence. It was often difficult to obtain sufficient work to support it. The local council determined, therefore, that during July and August those children who had friends would be sent away for vacation. 30 Conditions did not improve. In January there was not enough work to employ all hands. Efforts were made to increase the number of day students  $^{31}$  and Mother Angela suggested sending all the children away. This time, because too few of them had homes to go to, the sisters decided to wait another month to see if more work might be procured. Apparently, affairs improved because there was no more talk of sending the girls away. In October of 1858, when Father Sorin made the Visit, the house had a debt of over \$17,000, most of it for the house and property, but several thousand to merchants. Collections were taken up in the parishes, the strictest economy was practiced and cash was paid as much as possible. 32 The directresses of St. Paul's and St. Augustine's were to ask their pastors to send work to the industrial school, and in each place a sales case was to be erected to exhibit work from the school. 33 Fairs were held every year.

Even the diet suffered restrictions. Corn bread was substituted for wheat at breakfast, corn meal being less than half the price of wheat flour, and bread was baked at home. Yet the sisters feared that the meals were "not strengthening enough for persons so constant at work" and directed that meat be served more often and tea at dinner. Pancakes were to be served more frequently in order to save flour. Even four years later corn bread was served twice a week for supper and pudding only once but when wheat flour was used a better quality was to be procured. The council also decided to discontinue the purchase of "confectionaries" and other articles that could be made at home such as soap and candles.

Special occasions, however, continued to call for special treats. For Christmas of 1863, for instance, "candy apples and other confectionaries" were to be obtained to ornament a Christmas tree "for the amusement of the children." One of the hogs was killed for fresh meat and the kitchen made sure there were vegetables and fruit for the Christmas dinner. 41

Any real prosperity continued to elude the school. Greater and greater efforts were made to obtain work for the girls. The approach of war in January and February of 1861 caused great agitation and suspension of work in Philadelphia, so much so that work was solicited from Baltimore and the January collection in the parishes was postponed. To compound the difficulty, Immaculate Conception was asked to dispose of vestments and religious articles from the industrial

school which had just been closed in Chicago. Prudently, the sisters decided that the responsibility for the goods which remained unsold would rest with the authorities at Saint Mary's and Notre Dame, 43 Even when the amount of work became greater, expenses exceeded their income. Prices were high. During the last quarter of 1860, for instance, the amount spent for essentials like food, fuel and clothing was nearly \$600, all but \$70 of it being for food. 44

Life at the school, however, continued to follow the same pattern. An old but undated set of rules shows that the routine resembled in many particulars that of religious life. Those rules "sufficiently simple and yet easy to be observed by young people of that age" were nonetheless "sufficiently religious to form to regular and pious habits everyone following them for any length of time." The first year, dedicated to the Holy Angels, was considered one of probation and was devoted to "acquiring to perfection" plain sewing, cooking, and "the various items of household of which they must have, at least, an ordinary knowledge." After this year, which consisted of a full twelve months, the students were to be examined and either sent home or definitely admitted to a branch of the school. There were three general branches, millinery, tailoring and dressmaking, each under the separate direction of a sister "perfectly qualified" for the art she taught. At the end of the first year, too, students received the uniform of the school which consisted of a purple dress with a cape, and a straw bonnet lined with silk. A medal of the Immaculate Conception on a blue ribbon was worn around the neck. All was not darkness and deep purple, however. In April of 1862, the Sisters agreed that the girls be allowed to wear hoops "because they contributed "to the neat appearance of the toilet of a young girl." Calico workdresses were the daily wear. Students prepared for their reception of the uniform by a good confession and fervent communion because they belonged to the "Blessed Mother of God for at least three years." Once they were definitely admitted, they participated in all the instructions, both spiritual and material, and they professed "unlimited obedience to the sisters having charge of their labor and general conduct."

The daily schedule also resembled in many ways that of the sisters. The girls arose at 5:00, dressed and made their beds until 5:40 when they had morning prayer and meditation before Mass at 6:00. Breakfast was served at 7:00. When the weather was extremely cold, however, they rose at 6:00, studied from 6:30 to 7:30 when they had breakfast. A period of work from 7:30 to 11:00 was followed by half an hour of writing before dinner at 12:00 with recreation in common until 1:00. Catechism class at 1:00 was followed by a reading class and resumption of their employment. This afternoon work period lasted until 6:00 with a fifteen minute break at 4:00 for "luncheon." From 6:00 to 7:00 they studied. At 7:00 supper was served. At 7:30 they returned to class for another hour and at 8:30 said evening prayer and retired at 9:00

There were variations in this routine. Every Saturday after dinner, the girls wrote their letters which were then corrected. They were rewritten on Sunday morning and mailed. Their "notes" or grades were supposed to be kept regularly by the sisters who had charge

of the students and were read to them every week - whether publicly or privately is not made clear. A few years later the students were examined quarterly and a bulletin containing an account of their conduct, progress, application, etc., was sent to their parents or guardians following each examination. The sisters themselves had a "class" or faculty meeting every Sunday afternoon at 1:00.

A semi-religious prayer life was also planned for the girls. When rising, they were greeted with the words "Holy Mary, conceived without sin," to which they replied "pray for us." The same ejaculation was repeated at night. At 10:00 a.m. they interrupted their work to recite the Rosary together and at 3:00 the Litany of the Blessed Virgin. On Wednesdays and Saturdays they attended an hour of catechetical instruction and on the first Sunday of every month they went to confession. They were to strive to "become models of virtue particularly of obedience, modesty, industry, promptitude and fidelity in the discharge of all their duties without forgetting to acquire what is esteemed everywhere, an open and cheerful countenance, cleanliness and attention to the wants of others and mutual regard."

The individual prayers and devotions were those followed in every school staffed by the Sisters of the Holy Cross. The girls were enrolled in the Children of Mary and followed the prescribed devotions. The list of ejaculatory and other prayers was everywhere identical. The three aspirations to Jesus, Mary and Joseph which were afterwards added to the night prayer of the sisters, "O Sacrament most holy. . .,"

the short rhymed prayer to the Guardian Angel, and the Memorare were among the ones prescribed by Mother Angela when she mad eht Visit on May 13, 1859.

Such was the regimen planned for the girls at the Manual Labor School. Despite the poverty and the regulations, not too unusual for that day, the school continued to attract attention and the interest in the sisters and in their work continued to grow.

Father James Dillon, CSC, living at St. Augustine's, was a frequent visitor at the House of the Immaculate Conception, even using its stationery. He described to Father Sorin an experience he had had there. In the spring of 1860, just before the opening of the select school, Father Dillon brought to West Philadelphia Dr. Daniel William Cahill, Irish priest, lecturer and controversialist, the darling of the Irish people and the bane of the Irish hierarchy. "On alighting from the carriage," Father wrote, "the Doctor was taken very much by surprise with the reception that Mother Liguori had prepared for him. On either side of the entrance passage were ranged the pupils in their beautiful uniforms and all looking so happy. . . . We then went into the parlor, where all of the children crowded around him, and he made them all feel so happy. They then sang a few beautiful verses and sang them well. Then a short play 'Two Days in the Country' was acted in the most formal manner and therefore most interesting. . . . " They concluded with a few verses composed especially for the occasion. 52

One week after the outbreak of war, on April 21, 1861, the local council decided to open at Immaculate Conception on May 1, a select school, or academy, for both day and resident students. 53 Many wealthy families subsequently moved to West Philadelphia so that their daughters could attend the school, which quickly numbered about 40 resident and 100 day students. Boarders came from outside Philadelphia, too: from Camden, Fort Lee, Trenton and Gloucester City in New Jersey; from New York City, from Baltimore and Wilmington, even from Virginia. Most of the students listed in the matriculation book, however, came from Philadelphia and the areas of Pennnsylvania immediately surrounding it.

This select school at Immaculate Conception became a school of which the Congregation was proud. It was "well equipped with Philosophical and chemical apparatus, maps, charts, etc." Like all the other academies founded by the Sisters of the Holy Cross, it followed as much as possible the curriculum at Saint Mary's Academy, Notre Dame. The system of emulation among the students at Saint Mary's was adopted for the girls in West Philadelphia. 56

The daily schedule of prayer and recreation was very similar to that of the industrial school, classes and study taking the place of vocational work. Spiritual reading was held in the evenings — whether for the select school children only is not clear — but on Monday nights a conference was held to note whatever might have been "found defective in the student and measures taken to correct it." On Tuesday evenings a "reunion" of the pupils was held, of which group is not specified, at which time the rules of the establishment were read in their presence. 58

From the beginning, the new institution created problems in space and personnel. For instance, a fence was deemed necessary in the back yard to separate the playground of the children of the industrial school from that of other schools in the house, the day and the select schools. Despite this apparent segregation, pupils of both the industrial and the select school did mix. They went on a spring excursion and picnic togeher and sometimes pupils of the select school were directed to use their afternoons between class and study to sew for the house. Sisters doubled as teachers in the day and the select boarding schools. Sister Claudine, for example, finished teaching in the select school at 2:00 and was directed to make her Particular Examen at that time and say Vespers so that she could teach in the day school from 2:30 till 4:00 - and superintend the cleaning of the house on Saturday. Lay women also taught, presides or helped with the domestic chores.

Distribution of premiums at the end of each year caused a real problem, and prizes usually had to be awarded on separate occasions to each school because of the lack of sufficient space. Wherever and whenever they were held, the distribution of premiums and the exhibitions were always big affairs to which parents, friends, and often the general public were invited. A program was always presented involving as many students as possible, and the work of the students was exhibited. In the best Holy Cross tradition, refreshments were served to everyone.

The House of the Immaculate Conception, while the most ambitious of the schools, was far surpassed in number of students by the parochial schools of St. Paul's and St. Augustine's. The parish at St. James the Greater in West Philadelphia was newer and the school much smaller.

In early January of 1857, Holy Cross was placed in charge of a "magnificent school" in St. Paul's Parish, one of the largest in the city. Located on Christian Street between 9th and 10th, the school had an enrollment of approximately 400 girls taught by the Sisters of the Holy Cross and 250 boys taught by the Brothers of Holy Cross. The original contract called for the sisters to receive \$100 each. Here the sisters also taught in the Sunday school, which one account says numbered about 1500. This number might seem excessive, but Brother Ignatius, the superior of the brothers, writing to Father Sorin in March of 1859 about his failure to obtain permission for a children's Mass, said: ". . . it is a fearful thing to see that out of 12 or 1400 who are supposed to be capable of receiving the Sacraments probably not more than 200 understand the nature of the Sacraments. . . "66

The sisters' school gave "general satisfaction." Father Sorin found it "tolerably well conducted" when he made the Visit, and Saint Mary's records say that it was noted for its good discipline. It never seems to have had financial difficulties. 67

Conflicting reports, however, exist about the brothers' school. "Everything is progressing very well. . . ," one brother wrote.

Father Haran, one of the curates, was well pleased at the examination when he presided and "spoke highly" about the school 68 and "everything here, relating to the school is progressing very well." There is better order in our school at present than I have ever seen," Brother Ignatius wrote. 70 On the other hand, Father James Dillon, who was associated with the brothers in their school work and lived with them at St. Augustine's, wrote to Father Sorin that he had "no faith at all" in the school. The pastor did not like the "onus of getting funds for the salaries." Brother Ignatius had much the same complaint. In fact, the account at Saint Mary's says that the school was closed because the pastor refused "obstinately to give or promise a fixed salary such as the Brothers received in other establishments."/3 The priests, Brother Ignatius maintained, thought they had done their duty to the children simply by having the brothers and sisters "among them." He had tried to have a children's Mass on Sunday mornings and the bishop had seemed well disposed but the pastor had refused. A further source of annoyance was the fact that the pastor broke up their Society of St. Joseph because he seemed to want "the paltry sum" the brothers had collected. Apparently, the pastor also wanted more than the three brothers who were sent to him.

There was also friction between the brothers and the sisters, although how long this state of affairs existed is not clear. It might have been just a passing conflict. In the summer of 1859, Brother Bernard Jsoeph complained to Father Sorin about the conflict over dates for the closing exhibition. Because their tickets for July 13 were already sold, the sisters wanted their program to be

first, at least five days before the brothers'. In fact, the sisters even wanted the brothers to postpone selling their tickets until after July 13. To make matters even worse, the sisters wanted to use the brothers' classroom for a week or two beforehand. If this were done, Brother said, the brothers would not be able to give an exhibition because "as soon as the girls' school is dismissed the boys will dismiss themselves." If the brothers, however, had their program on July 7, the sisters could have the school to themselves. The sisters, he complained, would not listen. Earlier they had written to Father Sorin for an acceptable date, he fussed, "just as usual throwing us behind the curtain."<sup>74</sup> Brother Ignatius resolved the crisis by presuming permission to set and keep his date for July 7. Brother Bernard also wrote to Father Sorin that the board was very poor, much worse than at Notre Dame or Chicago. "I spoke to Sister Ursula [the superior] about [it]," he wrote, but "she seems to pay no attention to it. I do not give you merely my own sentiments but those of the other Brothers," he assured Father. 75 Just what Sister Ursula could do about the food for the brothers is not known.

Some time in 1861, the sisters opened a select school in St.

Paul's Parish in a building on Christian Street between 8th and 9th streets. The Catholic diocesan paper printed an advertisement for the new school. The academic year began on the first Monday of September and ended in July; it was divided into two sessions of five months each or four quarters of eleven weeks. Besides English and French, the curriculum included "History, Grammar, Geography, Arithmetic, Algebra, Rhetoric, Astronomy with the Use of Globe, Natural Philosophy,

Polite Learning, Botany, Music, Fruit and Flower Making, Plain and every variety of Fancy Needle Work." The terms per quarter were reasonable. The primary class cost four dollars; the second, five; and the first class, six. French lessons were three dollars and music eight. Lessons in the making of fruit and flowers were three. 76

Although the religious of Holy Cross went to St. Augustine's at Fourth and Race streets in 1859, they did not begin the parochial school. The Sisters and Brothers of Holy Cross were simply the first religious to teach there. The parish itself is one of the oldest in the city. Construction of the church began in 1796 with President George Washington, Commodore John Barry and Stephen Girard among the prominent residents who made contributions. It was the largest Catholic Church in the city and was entrusted to the Augustinians. A school was there as early as 1813 but was staffed by lay teachers. In the years immediately before the arrival of Holy Cross, there was again a patochial school there, and again taught by lay teachers. The Book of Establishments and Conditions of Foundations at Saint Mary's states under date of July 25, 1859, that five sisters were employed to teach in the parochial school there for \$1000 a year. The brothers received the same amount. Almost immediately the sisters took advantage of the original agreement and opened a select school, which they named Academy of the Holy Cross. The brothers started a manual training school. The initial agreement also allowed in each school an annual "pay exhibit," or program at the end of the year when all students performed and their work was displayed. The agreement also permitted the sisters to hold an annual festival for

supplementary income, and granted both schools permission to sell books and stationery.

Here too there seems to have been some initial difficulty, although none is recorded in the archives of the sisters. An undated letter of Father Sorin to an unnamed correspondent, probably a sister, complains of "those good Rev. F. A." and their "fine promises" when in reality nothing "was prepared." Father Dillon assured Father Sorin in April of 1860 that the fathers were "leaving nothing undone" to meet all the demands. Carpenters were working on schoolroom partitions. Whatever the critical problem might have been, it did not last long. The enrollment climbed rapidly. The sisters' house not only supported itself but was able to send \$800 or \$1000 each year to Saint Mary's.

The curriculum of their select school at 224 North Fourth Street resembled that of St. Paul's. The sessions were the same length, the curriculum was the same with the addition of painting in water colors. Nothing extra was charged for French or needle-work, to which "particular attention was given." In 1863, the course of instruction was advertised as embracing "every useful and ornamental branch requisite for young Ladies." The enrollment eventually reached 70.

If the sisters presented an annual exhibition in each school, no record of any exists. The <u>Catholic Herald and Visitor</u>, however, does give a lengthy account of one given on February 13, 1862, by the

brothers. The exhibition itself and the "creditable manner in which the boys acquitted themselves bore eloquent testimony to the careful training which they had received at the hands of the Brothers of the /sic/ Holy Cross." Two boys discussed the "Shape of the Earth"; Patrick McKenna sang "The Dearest Spot on Earth." Twenty-five little boys sang "On the Field of Glory" and one recited a humorous poem. Two boys did a dialogue entitled "Little Philosopher" and two others did "Yankeeism." The "best combination of the evening" was the group in a play called The Bobbler. James Bray concluded the program by singing "O Columbua the Gem of the Ocean" and "St. Patrick's Day" at which the audience applauded so loudly he could scarcely be heard. 81

A parochial school was also opened by the sisters in St. James Parish, the church of which was located on the southeast corner of 38th Street and Chestnut, just a few blocks north of Immaculate Conception. The account at Saint Mary's says only "at the same time." If the phrase really refers to the foundation immediately preceding, then the date would have been the spring or summer of 1861 when the select school was opened at Immaculate Conception, <sup>82</sup> a date seemingly confirmed by the account of the regular Visit made by Father Sorin on April 23, 1861, which states that he visited not only the bishop but also the pastor of St. James. However, the Catholic Directory mentions no school there during any of the war years. The reason for that neglect might be the small number of students - only 75 - and the fact that the sisters probably lived at Immaculate Conception and walked the few blocks to St. James. There are only a few passing references to the "parochial school" in the extant council minutes of

the House of the Immaculate Conception, mainly about the poor discipline which should be remedied and about the assignment of Sister Isabella there on a part-time basis to replace Sister Michael so that she could write. No details of classes or other assignments are given. There was always a friendly relationship with that parish. The pastor assured the Sisters in 1858 that he would use all his efforts to increase the day school at Immaculate Conception and Father Connor, a priest of that parish, was their ordinary confessor. Sisters took up collections in the parish and girls went to St. James for their First Communion classes.

From all of these schools the sisters were snatched in mid-March, 1864. The brothers' schools were broken up a bit earlier. For another year St. Augustine's managed to survive pressure from Indiana, probably because of the strength and protection of Father Stanton.

The brothers, Father said, left Philadelphia "very reluctantly, for they were well pleased in it, were giving great satisfaction and doing an immense amount of good." The scene which Father gives of the departure of the sisters is heart-rending. Writing on March 10 to Mother Liguori, the former superior at Immaculate Conception, later provincial, who had left the States in 1862 and returned to France, he said: "I am glad you were not here to witness the painful scene at West Philadelphia last Monday March 77 of your poor sisters signing over and delivering up their own establishment and everything in it, and going home with nothing but their habits. The scene was most distressing and was one of the most painful acts of the Bishop's

life. . . . 'They were dragged away from me' are the words of the Bishop." The Big Book of Accounts at Saint Mary's is equally poignant. "They had paid \$9,000 on the house but were required to leave everything behind for the Sisters of the Good Shepherd." They did take with them "the philosophical apparatus and a set of Goldsmith's Animated Nature" which Sister Claudine subsequently took with her when she was assigned to Holy Angels Academy in Logansport. The sisters always regretted "being obliged to give up these schools, all of which were very successful."

In July, 1865, the brothers and sisters left St. Augustine's too, while Father Stanton was in Rome. Father Mark Crane, his assistant in Philadelphia, writing to Mother Liguori absolved them from any blame. "I must say of these good sisters who have been with us for the last six years that they deserve praise instead of blame. In one word, they are good religious. . . . [Emphasis his] If you were here to see our good children for the last few days, it would bring tears from your eyes. The heart would be hard indeed that could not feel for them in parting with those whom they learned to love as if they were their mothers."

Why were these schools closed so prematurely? Sister Eleanore in her book On the King's Highway syas simply, "Because of difficulty with Bishop James Frederic Wood. . . Father Sorin closed all these schools in 1864." As late as 1958, the archivist at Saint Mary's was still repeating this reason. Oral tradition in the Congregation tended to support this thesis - had Father Sorin not

withdrawn the sisters, they would have become a diocesan community. The subsequent history of the Marianites in the East does not support this thesis. Their foundations in New York and Louisiana maintained their French connection. Moreover, Father Sorin always spoke well of Bishop Wood. In March of 1863, he wrote of relying "most explicitly" on Wood's sense of justice and in November Sorin still considered the Bishop "too pious and judicious" to be deceived. 89 Years later when the sisters were attempting to establish a TB sanitorium in Germantown, Pennsylvania, Father remembered the bishop fondly. Writing to Sister Claudine he said, "I have never changed my sentiments of profound esteem and veneration for that dear old admirable prince of our sacred hierarchy in the U. States. I am acquainted with him over 30 years and always loved him dearly. . . . Circumstances once forced me to leave his diocese. Time has justified the step." $^{90}$  The sisters who were withdrawn remembered the bishop as saying "that it was like tearing his heart out to give up the Sisters of the Holy Cross."91

No, the schools were closed because of the struggle over jurisdiction between Indiana and Le Mans. Father Stanton, who suffered through the turmoil, believed that Father Sorin wanted to prevent France from setting up a province in the East. The Cattas say that the facts confirm this interpretation. There seems to be no other that will fit and Sorin himself boasted that he had closed these schools. He had opposed bitterly the loss of Louisiana to French control 3 and summarily withdrew the sisters from New York in October, 1856. He reopening of the latter mission by the

General Chapter of 1860 and its exclusive dependence on France became Sorin an obsession.

Ironically, it was Sorin himself who contributed in a very immediate way to the cohesiveness of the eastern missions that could have been the rich soil in which to plant an eastern province. The community-owned house, Immaculate Conception, served in Philadelphia the same function that academies usually served in other cities. It became the center and meeting place of the sisters in the area. When Father Moreau made the Visit in 1857, he ordered that at least one sister from each of the eastern houses, which were then Immaculate Conception and St. Paul's in Philadelphia, St. Joseph's Male Orphan Asylum in Washington, D. C. and the school in Susquehanna, were to meet at Immaculate Conception during the octave of Christmas for a three-day retreat. In February of 1861, Sorin continued this tradition by directing the two parish schools - St. Augustine's had opened in the meantime - to open a joint bank account with Immaculate  $\frac{95}{100}$  and during his Visit in April, he ordered for the last Saturday of every month a regular meeting at Immaculate Conception of the two chief sisters from St. Paul's and St. Augustine's with the superior and her assistant from West Philadelphia. 96 At this monthly meeting the sisters were to discuss all the important affairs of each house as well as "such changes as did not require reference to Saint Mary's." Also "nothing out of the ordinary" was to be done at any of the other establishments "without consulting the superioress" of Immaculate Conception because such was "the order of all well regulated communities that where there are two or three houses

of this kind, there is one in particular on which the others depend."<sup>97</sup> When Sister Euphrosine was directress at St. Paul's and asked permission to rent a house for the select school in that parish, Father Sorin wrote that he had no objection provided that "in the council established at West Philadelphia of the two directresses [St. Paul's and St. Augustine's] and the Mother [Immaculate Conception], it is approved."<sup>98</sup> Moreover, in the summer of 1861 the annual retreat for the sisters in the East was held at Immaculate Conception.<sup>99</sup> That year the sisters also came from Baltimore where in 1859 they had opened an orphanage, a select school and a parochial school in St. Patrick's Parish. Other annual retreats might have been held in West Phiadelphia, but there is no record of any.

Other provincial-like functions were also performed in Philadelphia. The habit was given there five times between the opening of the school and the end of 1862 - and this despite the sentiment expressed on the first such occasion that this would not be an "adopted rule." Professions were made, usually in St. Paul's Church, and witnessed by the Bishop of Father Sorin. In all, sixteen women received the habit and sixteen were professed, not necessarily the same individuals. Occasionally applicants were received as postulants.

By their support of the men and women of Holy Cross and by their devotion to them, especially to Mother Liguori not only when she was the superior in West Philadelphia but even after she left for France, the Augustiniand inadvertently afforded these religious a local

source of strength. There exists a rough draft of a report which Mother Angela made to Father Sorin about the situation at St. Augustine's, which still remained open. It was dated July 29, 1864.

"The Augustinians," she said, "make the Sisters' task easy and light by their zeal and devotedness to the Religious welfare of the children." The difficulties she was experiencing there would cease, she was sure, if several of the sisters whom she named were removed the their replacements were told not to consider Father Stanton as their L[ocal] S[superior]..." A complaint made earlier in the letter reinforces this charge. "...Obedience, Poverty, Mortification and Religious discipline are altogether disregarded...how very useless it would be for me to reprove disorders which have no doubt taken their sense in the independence this house has had from superiors since nearly two years..."

It was undoubtedly this spirit of independence - and dependence - which prompted the sending of Sister Euphrosine as directress to St.

Augustine's after St. Paul's was closed. If ever a sister was loyal to Father Sorin, it was Sister Euphrosine. She seems to have kept every letter he ever sent her - even the envelopes. He, however, did not seem to keep the ones she wrote to him. From this one-sided correspondence we can learn much of the division and deception - and desolation - that began to afflict the sisters in 1862 when Father Charles Moreau began his ill-fated Visit. In fact, she scribbled on a letter from Father Sorin: "1861 - beginning of troubles and divisions caused by Father Chas. Moreau"; and to a letter of September 5, 1862, is attached the penciled note "time of the affair and

letters to her are an amazing mixture of encouragement both material and spiritual, complaints about the infrequency of her letters, protestations of continued devotion — and gossip. They are full of instructions such as "Burn This" or "For You Only." When Bishop Wood forbade any correspondence with Indiana except through his hands, she wrote a long account of the situation in a small copy book and smuggled it out through the intermediary of a secular. Sister Euphrasia, who had been the local superior at St. Augustine's, was sent to St. Ambrose's Academy in Michigan City, a move Father Stanton excoriated in a letter to Sister Charles in April, 1865. "I deeply regret that so good and competent a Religious should for acting conscientiously and honestly and always by my advice and direction should be banished to the penal settlement of Michigan City." 103

It was in 1862 that conditions in Philadelphia really began to deteriorate. The Chapter of 1860 that had reopened the New York house had also named Sister Liguori as Provincial of the Indiana Province of Sisters. She was replaced at Immaculate Conception by Sister Ascension, whose conduct in New Orleans as visitatrix for Father Sorin had been disruptive and disgraceful and who went with Mother Angela to Le Mans in 1863 to urge Father Moreau to hasten the establishment of the generalate in Indiana and to Rome for the same purpose. Eighteen sixty-two was the year Father Charles Moreau made the Visit, the year when Father Sorin forced the sisters to take sides — to be for him or for Father Moreau, 104 though perhaps not is so many words. The provincial council, however, refused to discuss

the matter; and after the annual retreat, all but a few of the sisters gathered at Saint Mary's signed a declaration to Father Moreau, renewing in his hands their vows and "their obligations of inviolable fidelity to the Constitutions and to the Rules they had received from him." 105

It was in September of that year too that Bishop Luers appointed

Father Sorin the "one and only Superior" of the sisters. Because

Mother Liguori, torn between her love and devotion to Father Sorin,

and her obedience and reverence for Father Moreau and the Constitutions, would not accept this order, the Bishop considered her as dismissed from office. 106

With her assistant she left for Canada and subsequently for France, where she was joined by ten others. As she went through Philadelphia on her way north, she was refused hospitality at Immaculate Conception, of which she had been one of the founding group and superior for three years. So bad were the divisions which had arisen among the sisters!

Father Stanton summarized the situation succinctly when he wrote to Mother Liguori in France on the day before the sisters left Philadelphia in 1864. "There seems to be a disposition for a long time past to render things in these Houses unpleasant and disagreeable. Everything was kept in a state of fermentation, and fuel was added by secret and extraordinary documents from headquarters in Indiana. . . . I blame Father Sorin for the whole of it. This would never have taken place without him. . . ."107

Perhaps it was the chapter of 1863 which forced the exodus. That body discussed petitioning Rome for the canonical erection of

of two provinces, one for France and one for America. Father Drouelle suggested Paris as the residence for the French Provincial, but disagreement rose over the location of the American provincial house. Father Rézé, until then provincial of Canada, wanted neutral territory and Father Séguin suggested Philadelphia. Sorin had closed the house in New York City in 1856 because it was not subservient enough to him but depended on France. New Orleans had been lost to him when the chapter of 1857 created a separate vicariate for Louisiana with Father Patrick Sheil as Vicar. Could he allow the same thing to happen in Philadelphia? In February, 1863, Father Moreau had convoked a general chapter of Marianites to meet in Philadelphia in March. One delegate was Sister M. Elizabeth (Lilly), superior at Saint Mary's. She never received the notification because Bishop Luers forbade the delivery of letters and telegrams convoking the chapter. The failure of Sister Elizabeth to attend meant that the chapter was canceled.

If the chapter that met and the one that did not forced the issue, passage of the First Conscription Act in March, 1863, gave Sorin the excuse he needed — especially when it was reinforced by a letter from Father Moreau directing him to make sure the brothers were not compelled to bear arms as soldiers. That December, Sorin began withdrawing the brothers from the schools. When they reached Notre Dame, however, they were not sent to Canada to escape the draft but simply reassigned because Father Carrier had obtained from the Secretary of War a verbal promise that the brothers would be exempt from the draft. Furthermore, Father Stanton wrote that December to Father Sorin offering to pay the \$300 exemption for any brother who

would be drafted. Other pastors, he said, would be willing to do the same. 109 On that letter, Bishop Wood wrote, "I fully concur in the sentiments expressed by Father Stanton." Referring to the withdrawal of the brothers, he continued: "I am still more surprised at this disregard of obligations, voluntarily incurred. . . . The pretext for this act of injustice no longer exists."

On January 7, 1864, Father Moreau had written the Prefect of Propaganda: "Until the month of August, the time for the general retreat, allow Father Sorin as well as the two other vicars in America to continue to govern the houses founded by them, without paying any further attention to the Sisters. At the time of the retreat, erect the three vicariates into one sole province with headquarters in New York, comformably to the desire of the general chapter, and on this occasion appoint a Provincial from outside the actual vicars."

The sisters were recalled on March 11. The next council meeting at Saint Mary's rearranged the obediences of some twenty sisters, Most of them had been at Philadelphia.

On January 22, 1865, Bishop Luers wrote to the Provincial, who was again Mother Angela, saying that he was convinced that as long as St. Augustine'e was kept open there could be no peace in the community at Notre Dame. He requested her to close the school and recall the sisters at the end of the scholastic year. He assured her that Bishop Wood had perviously told him the sisters could go home any time Luers should require them to do so. In answer to this letter, Sister Claudine wrote to Bishop Luers that spring expressing

her "total disapprobation of its closing," particularly when there was not a shadow of justifiable reason." The schools were doing well spiritually and financially, she assured him; the sisters were regular in attending their religious exercises. "During the unsettled state of the Community the sisters tried to keep quiet and in peace." She could never give her "consent to have this mission destroyed and taken from the community." 111

Nevertheless, the sisters were withdrawn from St. Augustine's too. Father Stanton was in Rome. He had been willing to take the whole matter to the Sacred Congregation, but from communications he received he thought it would no longer be necessary. Once the withdrawal was completed, his assistant Father Crane could only accept the fact.

There is an even deeper factor which contributed to the closings and to the eventual separation from France in 1869. Father Benoit, the Vicar General of Fort Wayne, who accompanied Bishop Luers to Saint Mary's, asserted that the divisions were caused by nationalities. If Sorin were the leading force, nationalistic feeling could easily be the reason why the movement for separation became so strong. From the time of his appointment to the American mission, Father Sorin was American. He wrote to Bishop Bruté: "Henceforth, I live only for my dear brothers in America. America is my fatherland; it is the center of all my affections and the object of all my thoughts." And this before he even set foot on American soil! Within a year after his arrival, he was preaching in English, even if

a bit haltingly, and after the first year the council minutes were kept in English. Those of the sisters kept the French for five more years. Writing to Sister Euphrosine at St. Paul's late in 1862, Sorin boasted: "They find me too American, too Irish, not French enough. For one who came here as a missionary and not as a Visitor, I have brought my French heart to the Americans whom  $\underline{I}$  love [Emphasis his] and for whom I have wished and will always wish all possible good. . . ."114 This was the period of great national expansion, when "Boosterism" as Daniel Boorstin describes it, was the prevailing spirit. Everything was growing. Every town had not just its churches and schools, but wanted its own newspaper, hotel, opera house and college. 115 In this atmosphere Sorin was at home; he foresaw the same expansion for the Catholic Church and wished to make Holy Cross an instrument. The great swell of nationalism created by the Civil War and the part played in it by the sisters, almost half of whom served at some time in the hospitals in the western theater, cannot be discounted. National feeling may not have caused the separation, but it certainly fed the fire. It was only in the Frenchspeaking sections of the country that the Marianites remained French.

In closing what can one say! Prosperous schools were recklessly closed, not because there was no longer any need for them, for other religious communities immediately assumed them, but because one Frenchman had perhaps become too American. In the Notre Dame Chronicles, there is a sentence written about Father Charles Moreau. It could as well be said of Father Sorin. "When a man [is] once roused to what he considers his duty, there is no knowing how far he will go."

## NOTES

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- 6. Original in Archives, Saint Mary's. (Henceforth ASM)
- 7. Council Minutes, House of the Immaculate Conception, West Philadelphia, Feb. 14, 1859. (Henceforth CM) Because the pages of this small book are not numbered, the date is always given.
- 8. CM Jan. 11, 1861.
- 9. CM Ap. 12, 1857.
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- 11. Atlas of West Philadelphia (Philadelphia: G. M. Hopkins & Co., Plate C.
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- 13. CM Dec. 19, 1863.
- 14. CM Oct. 6, 1861; Dec. 19, 1863.
- 15. CM Oct. 6, 1861
- 16. CM Nov. 16, 1862
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- 18. CM May 9, 1859.
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- For example, see CM Jan. 25, 1858; Oct. 28, 1858; Ap. 3 & 4, 1859;
   Dec. 14, 1859.

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- 29. CM-SM, Oct. 11, 1857.
- 30. CM June 28, 1857.
- 31. CM Jan. 17, 1858.
- 32. CM Oct. 2, 1858; Feb. 7, 1861; Oct. 4, 1863.
- 33. CM Nov. 13, 1859.
- 34. CM Jan 4, 1858.
- 35. CM-SM Oct. 11, 1857.
- 36. CM Oct. 11, 1858.
- 37. CM Nov. 15, 1858.
- 38. CM Sept. 28, 1862.
- 39. CM Sept 7, 1862.
- 40. CM Oct. 4 and 24, 1863.
- 41. CM Dec. 19, 1863.
- 42. CM Jan. 8 and Feb. 10, 1861.
- 43. CM Sept. 15, 1861.
- 44. CM Jan. 1, 1861.
- 45. CM Ap. 8, 1861

- 46. CM June 4, 1860.
- 47. CM Jan. 11, 1861.
- 48. CM Nov. 29, 1858.
- 49. CM Jan. 7, 1859.
- 50. CM Aug. 11, 1861.
- 51. CM Jan. 24, 1859.
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- 54. BBA, p. 124.
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- 57. CM Oct. 13, 1861.
- 58. CM Oct. 27, 1861.
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- 67. CM Oct. 2, 1858.
- 68. Brother Bernard Joseph to Father Sorin, July 3, 1859, IPA.
- 69. Brother Bernard Joseph to Father Sorin, June 9, 1859, IPA.
- 70. Brother Ignatius to Father Sorin, Nov. 24, 1859, IPA.

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- 77. See also Brother Kilian Beirne, CSC, From Sea to Shining Sea, (Valatie, N. Y.: Holy Cross Press, 1966), p. 130.
- 78. Father Dillon to Father Sorin, Ap. 13, 1860, IPA.
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- 80. <u>Ibid.</u>, XXXI, 35, Sept. 3, 1863, p. 3.
- 81. <u>Ibid.</u>, XXX, 8, March 1, 1862, p. 1.
- 82. BBA, p. 124.
- 83. CM May 11, 1862.
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- 90. Father Sorin to Sister M. Claudine, June 18, 1879. ASM.
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- 100. CM Feb. 18, and Sept. 10, 1857; Feb. 13. and Nov. 15, 1859; Oct. 19, 1862.
- 101. CM Sept. 18 and Nov. 13, 1857; July 29 and Dec. 10, 1861.
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- 107. Father Stanton to Mother Liguori, March 10, 1864, ASM.
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