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**MOTHER MARY XAVIER:**

**THE LADY AND HER LEGACY**

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ARCHIVES



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GOOD NEWS?

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#### DEDICATION

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not see reality in terms of the world. She was ready to give to give to the  
those of others. She was ready to give to give to the

truth and beauty. Sister Xavier had a firm grasp upon her identity as woman.  
(Perhaps this is why because as a child, she was blessed among men-  
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She was a woman of deep faith with a unique spirituality that embraced both  
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community in that it was a "place for God."

## INTRODUCTION



Who is this lady? Who is Mother Xavier? What kind of a young woman was the twenty-year-old novice? Who was this novice of 1894? What were some of her principles, ideals, gifts, and talents to be called forth for the proclamation of the GOOD NEWS?

She was a woman of spirit and commitment, mature enough to make free and conscious decisions. Margaret Mary Haggerty, Sister Mary of St. Francis Xavier, understood the call of the woman religious to be "a call to ministry in the mission of the Church to the world. . . ." This woman was risk-oriented and did not see security for herself as a high priority. She appreciated her gifts and those of others. She was ready to give as well as to receive graciously. In truth and humility, Sister Xavier had a firm grasp upon her identity as woman. (Perhaps this was nurtured because as a child, "she was blessed among men--six brothers.) She was graciousness-personified and hospitality was one of her surnames.

She was a woman of deep faith with a unique spirituality that embraced both solitude and community. Her "contemplative side" and her "action side" were as united as Siamese twins because she knew that either without the other was incomplete. She created her own "space for God" and she nurtured her community so that it was a "place for God".

A prophetic woman of the Church is one who is aware of her full participation in the Church and her responsibility for all of its members. . . and Sister/Mother Mary Xavier was a prophetic woman of the Church. She was, too, a woman of vision who pondered her roots in the Gospel and the spirit of her Founders-- Father Basil Moreau and Mother Mary of Seven Dolors--and then read the "signs of the times". Such readings for her were seen in the total development of the person, e.g., education of mind, formation of spirit, and attention to physical needs. In reality, she was a woman given to holistic spirituality.

She was a woman of evangelization. She evangelized by who she was and by what she did. She evangelized by who she was in relationship to her God, to herself, and to others. Her prayerfulness as a person met you first. Then her gentle, firm spirit followed. She was gracious, hospitable, integrated, convinced, sharp, and inspiring. She evangelized by what she did. She did "make a difference for the sake of the Kingdom" as a woman religious, as a leader. Her integration of the theology of her day with her talent and ability in the producing of plays, pageants, and other events, revealed the mysteries and devotions relevant to the people of the day and the prayer forms of her times.

Much of this assessment will be manifest as we take a closer look at MOTHER MARY XAVIER--THE LADY AND HER LEGACY.

## MOTHER MARY XAVIER--THE LADY AND HER LEGACY

On the sixth of July, 1874, twin daughters were born to Denis Haggerty and his wife, Mary Barry, in the city of New Orleans. One twin was named Margaret Mary Alacoque; the other Ellen Bernadette. Both were baptized on August 2, 1874, at St. Michael's Church by Reverend Michael Coughlan, Pastor. Ellen died at age two, but Margaret remembered her twin and spoke of her often.

Margaret Mary was named for her paternal aunt, Sister Margaret Mary Haggerty, a member of the Marianites of Holy Cross who served as the Provincial of the Louisiana Marianites from December 26, 1895, until her death on April 16, 1899.<sup>1</sup>

When she was eight years old, Margaret was sent to boarding school in Franklin, no doubt a help to keep her femininity among her six brothers--Thomas, later a Jesuit priest, Edward, Denis, John J., Joseph J. (lost on the Lusitania as it sank in the Irish Sea), and Patrick F. Her love of music was fostered at this early age, and she was wont to say in her later years, "My aunt (Margaret) saw to it that I practiced for hours, while the other children played." No one could envision that this talent would be of such value when her flair for pageantry, choir music, and other musical productions would be the talk of New Orleans.



When her school years in Franklin were finished, Margaret was enrolled at St. Simeon's Select School for Young Women and Girls, a New Orleans finishing school conducted by the Daughters of Charity. The effects of this educational opportunity were incalculable--both on her own life and the lives of others--primarily the students at the Marianite institution known as the Academy of the Holy Angels and concurrently on the Louisiana Marianites in their formation and educational endeavors. Moreover, this impact was unending as it extended to the parents, relatives, and friends of the students as well as to the people of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, the City of New Orleans, and even beyond the State of Louisiana.

Because of her birth in New Orleans and the connections that she made while at St. Simeon's, Sister Mary Xavier knew many notables. These never failed to perform for her and to assist her in her ministry whenever she requested it. And often she did, especially in calling upon them to utilize their gifts in collaborating with her in various endeavors for the sake of the Kingdom.

Margaret Mary, or Maggie, as she was known, accompanied her Aunt Margaret, the Louisiana Provincial, to France for the 1891 General Chapter of the Marianites. She wrote about this later in a letter to her niece, Sister Mary Loyola Haggerty, after receiving her copy of the just published life of MOTHER MARY OF THE SEVEN DOLORS by Canon Etienne Catta and Anthony Catta:

*The book has been in my hands almost continually--it is very dear (Mother Xavier's underlining) to me for two reasons: first, I knew our venerated Mother; saw her and spoke to her at the Mother House in LeMans during the General Chapter of 1891. My aunt, Mother Mary Margaret, took me with her on that trip. I witnessed the deep affection of my Aunt for Reverend Mother Seven Dolors, and I shared in that affection. When I received the Holy Habit, our venerated*

*Mother wrote me a four page letter; and also when I made my Profession. I was seventeen years of age the summer I speak of.<sup>2</sup>*

Thus it was that Margaret Mary met and personally knew Leocadie Gascoin, Mother Mary of the Seven Dolours, the first Superior General of the Marianites of Holy Cross. This treasured friendship was kept up through correspondence until the death of Mother Foundress in 1900. No doubt, too, this early contact with our foundational roots had its influence on her obvious devotion to both Father Basil Moreau and Mother Mary, those most responsible for the beginnings of the Congregation of the Marianites and the Family of Holy Cross. The second reason for loving the book is, as she stated to Sister Loyola,

*. . . because you spent seven years translating the French into English. How Father Heston can give you the credit of only (underlined three times) typing its pages, I cannot see. Where does truth and justice come in?<sup>3</sup>*

When she returned to New Orleans following this overseas visit, Margaret Mary consulted with and was advised by her spiritual director, Father Bernardus Klaphake, CSSR, to pursue her call to enter the Marianites of Holy Cross; and as anticipated, he wrote her letter of recommendation for acceptance into the Congregation.

Her entrance date was September 16, 1893. She received the Holy Habit and the name of Sister Mary of St. Francis Xavier on February 22, 1894. Following a novitiate of two years, Sister Mary Xavier commuted to Holy Name of Mary School for the next two years. To do this she had to travel a considerable distance and cross the Mississippi River from New Orleans to Algiers:

She knew what it was to leave the gentle peace of the downtown convent home to embark at an early hour on the old Third District ferry, and to travel with the companionship of a chattering orphan in the cold winter blasts and the heat of the summer sun. Through



rushing lines of west-bank workmen, she had made her way to engage in teaching and developing the youthful musical talent of Algerians.<sup>4</sup>

She made her final profession on August 28, 1895; and in 1897, only two short years after this profession, she was appointed Superior of Holy Name of Mary Convent in Algiers. She remained there for the next twenty-two years. When she had complained in a letter to Mother Mary of the Seven Dolours about her being assigned to so important a position when she was so young (twenty-three) and so lacking in experience, Mother Foundress' answer was, "If age and experience are all that is wanting, both will come with the years."<sup>5</sup> And Sister Mary Xavier met this challenge with creditable efficiency as a spiritual leader, as an organizer, and as an educator.

In spite of her youthful years, her superiors recognized qualities of leadership that led them to appoint her not only as superior of the convent but also as principal of the school. She quickly gathered some of the outstanding teachers of the Community and set to work to make Holy Name of Mary an excellent educational establishment. The school comprised eight grades of elementary school, four years of high school, and a commercial class of two years. The Marist Fathers, who staffed Holy Name of Mary Parish, quickly became her staunchest supporters, under the pastor, Father Thomas Larkin, S.M.

When Father Francis Georgelin, S.M., produced the history of The Catholic Church in Algiers in 1948, he wrote:

In speaking of the schools during Father Larkin's administration and of their success, it should be remembered that a great deal of credit was due to one of his faithful co-workers, Mother M. Xavier, herself a great organizer. This energetic woman labored in Algiers for 20 years, always working in cooperation with the clergy of the parish and always showing herself more than devoted to her work.<sup>6</sup>



At this time the Honorable Martin Behrman, Jewish by birth and a native of Algiers, was the Mayor of New Orleans. He lived in Algiers on the West Bank of the City, not far from Holy Name of Mary Church, Rectory, and School. It has been said that the Mayor consulted Father Larkin about many things concerning politics and that Sister Mary Xavier advised Father Larkin to such an extent that they became known as "The Triumvirate"--Behrman, Larkin, and Xavier.

Many public and church functions were planned by Sister Mary Xavier. One of the most spectacular was the fiftieth anniversary of the parish in 1912. There are still extant a few programs of the affair, and the prominent people who honored the occasion were many. Of the list of younger children who took part in the extravaganza, some are still living, and they continue to remember the part that they played in the celebration.

Because Sister Xavier lost a sister-in-law in early years of marriage, her brother Patrick was left with three little girls. Sister took the children, Mayme, Marguerite, and Frances to board at Holy Name of Mary along with some other children, and they remained there until they left to pursue their respective careers. Mayme and Frances are still living. Marguerite is deceased, but she left memories with two of her children, Patsy and Bill Bosworth, who have shared with us some pictures that we have of their great-aunt Maggie. Bill is a priest and he gave the homily at Mother Xavier's funeral.

In 1920, Sister Mary Xavier was transferred to St. John's in Franklin, Louisiana. There, both with the elite of the town and with the poor, she received the same response that she had in Algiers--a figure to be admired and loved. During this time (1920-1927) she showed once again outstanding leadership. She revitalized the Academy. She organized the Sodality of Our Lady due to the seeds that had been planted at St. Simeon's where she belonged to the Children of Mary. She initiated St. John's Auxiliary for financial endeavors, and she did this with little effort because she had attended St. John's Academy as a child and already had many friends in Franklin. Besides obtaining funds to help defray expenses of the Convent and the Sisters, the group helped all poor children to receive medical and surgical care. Additional recollections of the 20's in Franklin are gleaned in a 1948 letter from Charles A. McCarthy:

*Sister Mary Xavier. . . was noted for her diplomacy and splendid ability in conducting the Academy. . . her Jubilee celebration of St. John's Academy is still talked of after twenty years. . . Sister Mary Xavier was a most capable administrator, having brought St. John's safely through the most trying years of the history from a financial viewpoint. The convent took on a more modern atmosphere during her time. . .<sup>7</sup>*

When the General Chapter Election of the Marianites of Holy Cross took place in the summer of 1927, Mother Mary Liguori Mazaret was chosen as Provincial of the Louisiana Province. However, she felt that she was not a public relations person, and so she only consented to take the position as Provincial if Sister Mary Xavier Haggerty be recalled from Franklin to take the position of Assistant Provincial, Local Superior of the House and Principal of the Academy of the Holy Angels. Sister Mary Xavier left her beloved Franklin and assumed her new position with alacrity and yet with some bit of heartache.

No sooner had she settled in with a room on the third floor of the Academy than she took a view of the physical plant. She was appalled when the large parlors were unlocked (never done, except to dignitaries) and discovered in the large parlor, the shutters tightly closed, a rough wooden pine floor, covered by a rug. The period red velvet chairs and sofas were hidden under white linen dust covers and arranged around the periphery of the room in straight rows. A single light bulb hung suspended from the high ceiling. Easels were strategically placed in the room holding pictures of long-demised popes and other ecclesiastical prelates. When Sister Xavier saw this, she remarked, "WHERE'S THE CORPSE?"

The following week, the interior decorators were called in, and herein is an eyewitness account of a student boarder who presently is a Marianite Sister:

*The frescoeing on the ceilings was tinted pale blues and pinks, walls were painted white, an inlaid hardwood floor followed, and next a beautiful crystal chandelier hung from the ceiling. Drapes soon made their appearance from the ceiling to the floor with shimmering underdrapes of sheerest material. The outdoor wooden blinds were folded back. Gone were the dust covers, and the chairs were arranged in informal groupings. A large baby grand piano stood in one corner, a full-length mirror in a credenza stood against the wall, and the scatter rugs of velvet, mediterranean blue, covered the floor. All this was set against a beautiful marble mantel piece which held silk flowers under glass-covered domes.<sup>8</sup>*

The Academy chapel is another example of her effectiveness in turning her attention to the physical plant. The eye witness continued:

*The original paint, floor and floor covering were found to be totally out of harmony with the 30's and 40's. A German church designer, Rudolph Compte, was called in, and the Chapel of Our Lady of Seven Dolors was completely renovated. In the Academy building, the living quarters of the boarders were totally remodeled. The classrooms were then refurbished. Thus the almost one-hundred-year-old buildings were again in excellent condition.<sup>9</sup>*

Next Sister Mary Xavier's attention turned to the students. At that point, there were only forty girls in the high school and fewer than one-hundred-fifty in the elementary division. In her concern for recruitment of students, Sister Mary Xavier sought means of funding for scholarships. Together with the St. Margaret's Daughters, she planned her first May Festival. Proceeds from this successful first May Festival at Holy Angels Academy were used to extend scholarships to the five Marianite-conducted Elementary Schools then operating in various areas of New Orleans. When these young ladies accepted the scholarships, their friends followed them, and AHA (the Academy of Holy Angels) was well on its way to growing by leaps and bounds. The next year's May Festival brought added funds, and this fact led to Sister Mary Xavier extending scholarships to other Catholic Elementary Schools within the limits of the City of New Orleans.

As principal at the Academy of the Holy Angels, Sister Mary Xavier revitalized the curriculum offered there; and she undoubtedly was greatly influenced by the curriculum which she had experienced at St. Simeon's Select School. The very word "Select" suggested and later proved that it was a finishing school. Looking into the Archives of the Daughters of St. Vincent de Paul, who conducted the school, one learns that not only was it a finishing school, but it was the finishing school of their several finishing schools in the country. An advertisement in THE TIMES-PICAYUNE on April 17, 1897, as well as the HISTORY OF ST. SIMEON'S indicate the richness of the curriculum.<sup>10</sup> In the 1900-1901 "Catalogue of St. Simeon's Select School" one finds a listing of the extensive educational opportunities offered beyond the basic courses.<sup>11</sup>

In a HISTORY OF ST. SIMEON'S, N.O., Kate Lancaster records that:

The Ursuline Nuns had at that time (1860's) a monopoly of the education of the daughters of the wealthy French planters, but St. Simeon's now entered the list and claimed the daughters of the wealthy American section. The Academy opened with pupils whose family names were then most prominent and distinguished in New Orleans and have since become illustrious in the history of Louisiana.<sup>12</sup>

Mother Xavier's father was a cotton broker, and his cotton business was located at the corner of Orange and Chippewa Streets--in the midst of the Irish Community and the heart of the City where he owned extensive property. . . And one of her contemporaries in the Boys' section at St. Simeon's was Brigadier General Allison Owen, an exemplary Catholic who was architect of Notre Dame Seminary, the New Orleans Public Library at Lee Circle, the Court House at Tulane and South Broad and more structures than one can count.<sup>13</sup>

The closing section of THE HISTORY indicates some possible influence on Mother Xavier's own spirituality, when the chronicler records that St. Simeon's will. . .

. . . continue to teach to the coming generations that will gather around her portals, "The Emblem" of old Simeon's--the Cross--that has ever blazoned forth to each and everyone of her pupils--this thought: *"By this and this alone, thou shalt conquer."*<sup>14</sup>

A General Chapter Election in 1932 named Sister Mary Xavier Haggerty as Provincial. Despite the burden and responsibilities of the Province now in her hands, she continued to actively concern herself with the Academy of the Holy Angels, training many of the students for oratorical contests and personally supervising the concert band. She herself hired the band director; and in later years, thanks to her, AHA had the first all-girls marching band in New Orleans. Her own love of and involvement in music led her to arrange for an outstanding choral director, Rev. Robert Stahl, S.M., a professor and director at Notre Dame Seminary, to handle the training of the Sisters' and Novitiate choir.



At about this same time, Religious Education classes for public school students were inaugurated in the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine program. No sooner had this program begun, when Mother Xavier drafted the services of two highly qualified priests in the Archdiocese to teach Catechetics to the Sisters. Later, when the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine Training Program was being held at Holy Angels, she wrote shortly before Christmas, 1942:

*I have just opened your envelope, and, while I appreciate very much your wishes for God's blessing on our Christmas and the New Year and Your Excellency's personal gift to our library fund, I cannot accept your contribution to the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine Training Program at Holy Angels. I consider it a privilege to have Holy Angels one of the Confraternity Centers, not only because of the advantages for the Catholics in this section of the City, but our own novices and postulants follow and derive the benefits of these courses, so I feel sure you will pardon my returning the other check.<sup>15</sup>*

Ever mindful of the religious education of the students, Mother Xavier was not only concerned about the instructions that they received concerning doctrine, but also relative to the practice of their faith and the encouragement of religious piety. In April, 1942, she related to Archbishop Rummel that,

*On Sunday, May 23, we will have a very elaborate demonstration of the Rosary (a 15-decade living rosary) to replace our customary May procession. It has been my aim this session to impress the pupils with the importance of having the family Rosary; and I am using this means to make a more lasting impression on them and their parents, who will witness this demonstration. . . It will be a very unique and beautiful demonstration in honor of Our Blessed Mother.<sup>16</sup>*

A typical example of her goodness in affirming the goodness of others is found in her letter of August 17, 1943, when she says, among other things:

*The quiet of retreat affords me an opportunity to tell you how deeply I appreciate not only the time consumed by Your Excellency's Canonical Visitation of our Community, but also the great ease with which it was conducted and the great joy which came into each Sister's life as a result of the privilege of her individual, personal interview with you.<sup>17</sup>*

Her awareness of God's goodness as the source of affirmation had enabled Mother Xavier to write on September 3, 1943, following receipt of the official report:

*My heart is filled with joy and appreciation over the report of Your Excellency's Canonical Visitation of our Community. With a deep sense of reverence and gratitude to Almighty God, by Whose grace this favorable condition exists, I rejoice that Your Excellency found fidelity, regularity and loyalty existing among us. . . Now that Your Excellency really knows the community and some of my difficulties, it gives me renewed courage and energy to continue the work. It has always been my policy never to speak of my community troubles, even though many times I have felt crushed under the weight of them.<sup>18</sup>*

Whether it was her love of the Church and its ministers, or the fact that her brother was a priest, or her own apostolic spirituality and zeal, for some reason, or all of these, Mother Xavier was always most cooperative with the clergy. Due to the fact that a number of the new pastors had either been educated by the Marianites or had worked with them in parishes, Mother Xavier as Marianite Provincial, found it difficult to say "No" to the numerous requests for "just a couple of sisters". The proximity of the Provincial House and her presence at numerous public functions made it even more difficult to refuse a request for Sisters to open a new and much-needed school. So often, the repeated plea of the new pastors was, "Just give me two Sisters, please, just two." Of course, the two increased to three and four, and five, etc.

As this rapid expansion of new Church parish schools took place and Mother Xavier undertook the task of staffing these, she realized the concurrent need for recruitment of subjects. She actively interested herself in this task, and she encouraged the Sisters to become actively involved in the efforts to pray for vocations and to witness the joy and goodness of their vocations. As she traveled throughout the State of Louisiana during visitations, she took time to



to talk to the students about religious vocations in assemblies, in classrooms, and in private conversations with individuals. She had mentioned to Archbishop Rummel that, "These visits afford me the opportunity to survey the field for possible vocations"; and she asked his prayers "that the Holy Spirit may guide and direct me to perform this duty according to God's Holy Will". . . <sup>19</sup> Young ladies from the Marianite High Schools throughout the State began to come to the Novitiate in increasing numbers. She shared the results of her efforts during visitations with the Archbishop in a letter of May 7, 1944:

*The prospects for vocations are encouraging. In Plaquemine, four girls asked for private interviews. Opposition on the part of the parents will prevent two from entering at present. In Ville Platte, I interviewed nine--one, or possibly two, may be for this year. In Eunice, two are vocation-minded. In Opelousas, eleven were interviewed; but only two or three are for immediate entrance. A young lady from Orange, Texas, a pupil of the school two years ago, came to Opelousas for the express purpose of making arrangements with me for entering this summer. In Lake Charles, there are two decided vocations. There are no prospects in Franklin, Morgan City, or Houma. In all, I hope for about twelve candidates.*<sup>20</sup>

Her efforts were not limited to Louisiana, for on March 23, 1947, she wrote to Archbishop Rummel and asked him to write a note certifying that two Marianites (Srs. M. of St. Aloysius and Canice) would have His Excellency's authorization "to travel to England, France, Holland, Belgium, and Ireland where they hope to recruit subjects for their religious community--the Sisters Marianites of Holy Cross in Louisiana, U.S.A."<sup>21</sup> She repeated this process for several years.

The challenge of augmenting the ranks of the Community was successfully met by Mother Xavier, "for nearly half of the members of the Province in this centennial year (1948) date their entrance from the time Mother assumed the reins of government."<sup>22</sup>

But it was not just a question of increasing in size, for Archbishop Rummel wrote to Mother in 1948 that the Community has grown to be "a spiritual and educational edifice which stands out prominently in the history of the Church in the Deep South." And in the same letter, he added,

*Not only has your Community grown in point of numbers, but it has also developed a religious spirit whose depth and sincerity are sources of genuine edification and inspiration, all of which give evidence of that heavenly grace which constitutes the essential element of true progress.*<sup>23</sup>

No doubt this progress was due in part to Mother Xavier's own background and her vision of what education and religious life should be as well as to her efforts to provide initial and ongoing formation for her sisters. Beginning in the mid-1920's and up to this period, the Sisters received their higher education from Loyola University, but the rapid expansion of both elementary and high schools necessitated the Sisters' education to be not only broadened, but hurried along. Thus she sent some Sisters to San Antonio for the academic year to study at Incarnate Word College and Our Lady of the Lake College. She also sent those that already had undergraduate degrees to Tennessee with the Sisters of Loretto for additional professional training. Others attended St. Louis University, and a few were sent to St. Mary's School of Sacred Theology in Indiana, while a larger group was enrolled at Notre Dame University in succeeding summers. Every summer Mother Xavier would let the Archbishop know what educational opportunities her Sisters were having. For example, on July 2, 1952, she wrote:

*. . . In Graduate work, we have five Sisters at Notre Dame University, two in the Sacred Theology course at Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, six at Saint Louis University; seventeen at Incarnate Word College, San Antonio. In Undergraduate studies, at Loyola University we have twenty-five and here at Holy Angels one hundred Sisters, totalling in all 171 studying this summer--46 in Graduate work and 125 in Undergraduate work.*<sup>24</sup>

When writing to Mother Xavier on July 10 of the same year, the Archbishop stated:

*May I compliment you upon the very elaborate educational program that you have planned and are carrying out for your Sisters during the coming summer - I dare not add the word "vacation"! I am confident that the results of this program will be hailed with gratitude by Pastors and the parents of children entrusted to your care. May God bless the program with success and console you in its results!*<sup>25</sup>

Despite the fact that she was the Spiritual Director of the Sisters, making visits to the many convents, arranging obediences or appointments for the following year after interviews with each one, Sister continued to invest her energies and her exceptional God-given talents in the productions of annual religious pageants. For the twenty years of her provincialship, each pageant begun in the embryo stage, escalated into massive productions known throughout the City of New Orleans for their professional and inspirational qualities. The scenery, the lighting effects, and the costuming were of the finest quality. The scripts and the overall effectiveness were truly an outstanding means of evangelization as well. Witness some of the titles of these annual productions: "THE MYSTERY OF LIFE", "CANTICLE OF LOVE", "LOURDES", "MYSTERY OF FAITH", "THE SHEPHERD OF HIS FLOCK", "FORWARD WITH CHRIST AND HIS CROSS", "BECAUSE BY THE HOLY CROSS", "THE THIRD DAY", "BORN IN BETHLEHEM", "SONG OF TEKAKWITHA", "FATIMA--A TORCH TO THE WORLD", AND "A CANTICLE OF PRAISE".

In 1934 Mother Xavier had seen to the erection of the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes on the grounds of the Academy of the Holy Angels, and she used this Grotto as the centerpiece of her 1937 "LOURDES" pageant. THE ANNALS OF

THE CONGREGATION OF THE SISTERS MARIANITES OF HOLY CROSS states

that

. . . the Tenth Pageant of Holy Angels Academy was presented to thousands of spectators who, say the Chronicles, "were held spellbound by the solemnity of the performance". This pageant was a creation of Mother Mary of St. Francis Xavier, Provincial Superior of Louisiana, who had long cherished the hope of one day being able to present the Apparitions of Lourdes, the deep religious theme of which would be a tribute of love and devotion to the Immaculate Queen of Heaven. . . Those scenes were brought to a climax by a magnificent "Procession of the Pilgrims" bearing lighted torches to the famous Basilica ablaze with lights. The entire audience remained standing while the performers sang the beautiful Lourdes hymn and the Credo, as an expression of their profound faith in Catholic revealed truths.<sup>26</sup>

Always having a great love for the missions, in honor no doubt of her patron St. Francis Xavier, Mother urged in all of the schools, participation in the Holy Childhood and in the Catholic Students Mission Crusade. We read in the 1931 Chronicles that

. . . the pupils of all our schools of the Louisiana Province are outstanding in generosity toward the missions; we note that they are usually listed among the first in the Annals of the Propagation of the Faith. They are also very conscious of their duty to "instruct the ignorant"; all the Children of Mary belong to the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine and, under the direction of their teachers, devote themselves to the religious education of the children in rural areas.<sup>27</sup>

Then in a letter of February 21, 1944, Archbishop Rummel wrote to Mother Xavier:

*Reverend Father Lohmann has just forwarded to me a report of the Christmas Pageant for our Missions. The net result amounted to \$4,000.00, of which sum sixty percent or \$2,400.00 have been assigned to the Diocesan Mission Fund. May I thank you again most cordially for the conception of this project, which in very truth was entirely due to your inspiration and initiative. I am confident that the financial result will please you, but your main compensation will be the realization that you have given unprecedented stimulation the missionary spirit in New Orleans by dedicating the Pageant to the work for the Propagation of the Faith abroad and at home. . .*<sup>28</sup>

As she planned for the next pageant, she wrote to the Archbishop on September 12, 1944, "Nothing would please me better than to be instrumental in establishing this annual pageant for the benefit of the missions."<sup>29</sup> The next year, on March 31, 1945, Archbishop Rummel wrote:

*The "SONG OF TEKAKWITHA" stands as a beautiful interpretation of a simple saintly life, which may well serve as a model to the youth of America. . . I am confident that your audiences carried away with them an abiding reverence for religion and a new understanding of the hardships under which the early missionaries made converts and the early converts persevered in the practice of the true faith.*<sup>30</sup>

There were other efforts to spread the GOOD NEWS. Another significant one was the production of "ON BRAVE WINGS" in 1949. Archbishop Rummel wrote on October 7:

*Then, may I congratulate you upon the very beautiful and inspiring pageant entitled "ON BRAVE WINGS", which depicted so graphically and so impressively the missionary life of St. Francis Xavier in Japan.*

.. 31

Pageantry was not, however, the only outlet for Mother's gifts. Many students were trained by her for oratorical contests. Working closely with Father Daniel Lord, S.J., the great "apostle of youth", she inspired the girls of the Academy to take an active part in the Sodality conventions (Summer School of Catholic Action) held in New Orleans each year.

In 1936, living quarters for the Sisters became a priority. The "white house" (former novitiate in the earliest days of the Marianite Community in New Orleans) was demolished to make room for a modern brick building with eighteen bedrooms, baths, an office and bed room for the Provincial. On the first floor a large community room, an extra-large dining room, a kitchen, and a smaller dining room for the boarders filled out the building. St. Joseph Hall, as it



became known, was built under Mother Xavier's careful supervision and was dedicated on October 14, 1936.

As the Marianites approached their 100th Anniversary in the New World and especially in Louisiana, Mother Xavier planned a celebration of spiritual and cultural excellence. The high point of this Centennial Celebration as well as its closing would center around the celebration of the Eucharist--the highest form of Thanksgiving. She included in the planning the "CANTICLE OF PRAISE", an extravaganza that would incorporate all of the Marianite Schools of Louisiana. The music for the occasion was composed by Dr. Ernest Schuyten, professor of music at Loyola Conservatory of Music and was performed by Loyola's Symphonic Orchestra under his direction. The Marianite Sisters provided the choir for the festive occasion. Many notables attended the Civic Reception at the Municipal Auditorium which preceded the pageant. "A capacity throng heard Mayor deLesseps S. Morrison (Mayor of the City of New Orleans) express gratitude for the works of the Marianite Sisters and commendation for Catholic education."<sup>32</sup>

As early as January 15, 1947, Mother Xavier had already been into planning and organizing for the Centennial Celebration. At this time she advised Archbishop Rummel of her initial efforts and especially of having asked Mr. Arthur J. De la Houssaye, "one of our lawyers here in New Orleans, to act as General Chairman".<sup>33</sup> The reason that she selected him was:

*... because of my association with the family since early childhood. Their home in Franklin is directly across from the convent where I was sent as a boarder at the age of eight years. All the boys and girls of this family have been taught by our Sisters. I do not know of anyone else who would take a greater interest in a celebration for the Marianites than Mr. De la Houssaye. . . (and)*

In the midst of the multiple plans and tidbits which she shared with her friend, the Archbishop, in this same letter, one finds this insight into her values:

*... It seems a long time off to begin these preparations, but when you consider how we become so engrossed in the activities of the year I thought it better, while I have a little quiet, to get this organized. I consider the organization of any undertaking the most important part of the work.<sup>34</sup>*

This "CANTICLE OF PRAISE" was Mother Xavier's final pageant, and it surpassed all of the others in its scope. The pageant did not give Marianite history in detail, "but tended more to offer what its name implies, a canticle of praise to God for His blessings upon the work of the past one hundred years rather than an expose' of the Community's achievements."<sup>35</sup> The Prologue presented five beautiful dances, representing the Magnolia, a Rose garden, the Azalea, the Water Hyacinth, and the Wisteria; then all of these groups together, four hundred in all, presented a colorful Louisiana garden. The participants were selected from the Marianites' ten high schools throughout Louisiana.

This Prologue was followed by a celestial setting that caused one spectator to comment, "That's the closest I will get to heaven." It provided the historic panorama of the Community in Louisiana, and each school was represented by its Guardian Angel, while Holy Angels had its group of approximately four hundred angels. The Community Angel and the Centennial Angel narrated most of the history; and each school's Guardian Angel gave the history of its own school.

The high plane of excellence of the Celebration was acknowledged in these words of His Excellency, Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel:



*Your pageant was simply magnificent in conception and execution. It not only portrayed most brilliantly the story of your Community's growth and development, but also presented on a very high level the spiritual and cultural ideals which your devoted Sisters instill into the minds and hearts of their pupils. . .*<sup>36</sup>

The main function in the three-day observance of the one-hundredth anniversary was a solemn pontifical Mass of Thanksgiving, sung by Archbishop Joseph Francis Rummel at St. Louis Cathedral. Most Rev. Jules B. Jeanmard, Bishop of Lafayette, presented a "stirring sermon". . . The choir for this occasion was composed of the Notre Dame Seminary Choir and Holy Angels Academy students accompanied by Cathedral organist Elise Cambon and directed by Father Stahl. "A banquet commemorating the centennial, attended by more than 800 persons, including delegations from all communities where the Marianites have schools, was held Wednesday afternoon at the Roosevelt hotel."<sup>37</sup>

Another banquet--for the many special religious guests, particularly members of the Holy Cross Family whose presence Mother Xavier felt would heighten the joy of the Centennial Days--was served to them and to the numerous Marianites gathered for the Centennial Celebration. The centenary closed on Wednesday, April 15, "with a Solemn Pontifical Mass of Requiem at the Academy Chapel, (offered by) Most Rev. L. Abel Caillouet, Auxiliary Bishop of New Orleans, for the deceased Marianites of the State and their benefactors."<sup>38</sup>

In a letter of congratulations on the Centennial Celebration of the coming of the Marianites of Holy Cross to Louisiana, Most. Rev. Jules B. Jeanmard, then Bishop of Lafayette, among other sentiments, had this to express:

*Arnaudville will have special reason to rejoice. . . celebrating the return of your Sisters after an absence of twenty-nine years. . .*

*All this is by way of telling you, dear Mother Xavier, with what joy and enthusiasm we, of the Diocese of Lafayette, will enter upon the festivities which will mark the centennial of the coming of your Community to Louisiana. May I add, even at the risk of offending your modesty, that the most flourishing of these years have been the last twelve, under your wise and capable administration.<sup>39</sup>*

In his letter of September 24, 1948, Archbishop Rummel acknowledged receipt of and offered praise for:

*. . . your kind favor of August 18, 1948, in which you most graciously forwarded to me a copy of MARIANITE CENTENNIAL IN LOUISIANA . . . which I welcome as a very important contribution to the history of Catholicity in the Deep South and specifically in the Archdiocese of New Orleans. . . The story is likewise an augury of what your devoted Community will continue to accomplish in the years to come, for I know from personal observation and experience that the spirit of zeal, generosity and sacrifice which characterized the pioneers still lives on as a splendid tradition among the members of your spiritual family.*

*May I, therefore, congratulate you and the unnamed author upon this excellent achievement. . . Much of the credit naturally belongs to you, who have given the inspiration and encouragement for this work.<sup>40</sup>*

Earlier it was mentioned that Mother Xavier's youthful trip to LeMans had undoubtedly influenced her devotion to the Founders. She took advantage of every opportunity available to encourage prayer to our venerated Father Founder, Basil Antoine Marie Moreau. In her August 1, 1948, letter to Archbishop Rummel, who was then threatened with blindness, she wrote:

*I have in mind something that may surprise Your Excellency, that is, during the next retreat we are going to do intense praying to our Father Founder, Very Reverend Basil Moreau, for the restoration of your sight. Please dear Archbishop, as you know there is no cure without faith, cultivate a devotion to Father Basil Moreau and unite with us in reciting the prayer during these days. . .<sup>41</sup>*

Then on April 16, 1951, her letter stated:

*. . . I am delighted to hear of Your Excellency's successful operation, and am deeply grateful to you for the message from the hospital. All during the Octave of the Solemnity of Saint Joseph Your Excellency has shared especially in our prayers. . . I have asked the prayers of the Sisters on the missions I have visited; also, I have mentioned it in letters to our Reverend Mother and to Mother Rose Elizabeth. Both*

*Mothers, I am sure, are having their Sisters everywhere in France and Indiana offering fervent prayers for the successful outcome of Your Excellency's two operations.*<sup>42</sup>

In this August 1, 1948, letter, Mother Xavier shared information concerning the cause for Father Founder's beatification:

*The cause. . . is progressing so satisfactorily that we are hoping for its accomplishment next year. Your Excellency will be happy to know that several miracles have been wrought right here in Louisiana--one in Morgan City and one in Franklin. In addition to these, there have been countless favors received that are outstanding. We cannot recall any instance where the first-class relic was applied that improvement or cure did not follow. . . Reverend Mother (Odile Richard) and Father Cousineau are both very much impressed with the great number of favors granted through Father Moreau's intercession here in Louisiana.*<sup>43</sup>

October 17, 18, 19, and 20 were highly significant days for Catholics in the Archdiocese of New Orleans and likewise for the Marianites of Holy Cross involved in **THE EIGHTH NATIONAL EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS** which the City hosted in 1938. Mother Mary Xavier worked very closely with Archbishop Rummel in much of this, but particularly as a member of the Executive Committee for the **SCHOOL COMMITTEE** directing the activities of young people and as an Executive Committee member of the **CHORAL MUSIC COMMITTEE**. It was especially as a member of this latter group that Mother encouraged participation in the contest being held to select an official congress hymn. When the entries were judged anonymously by a special committee of judges, "the hymn chosen was a poem composed by Sister Norbert O'Brien, a member of the Sisters Marianites of Holy Cross, then stationed at St. Francis de Sales school in Houma, Louisiana. It was titled, 'Hosanna, Glory, Praise be Thine'."<sup>44</sup>

When the main altar used for the Congress in City Park Stadium was dismantled, the double crucifix was divided; one side went to Notre Dame Seminary, and the

other went to Mother Mary Xavier and was placed in the dining room of AHA where it remains to this day. This gift was made by the Archbishop in appreciation of Mother, her Sisters, and students' outstanding contributions to the Congress and no doubt in gratitude for many other benefits through the years.

Ever the gracious lady, Mother Xavier never ceased to express gratitude for favors received and services rendered. Examples of this abound. Observe that her letter of December 23, 1949, not only gives evidence of her courtesy and graciousness, but also give insights into her spirituality and her appreciation of spiritual reading:

*The mail yesterday brought me the treasured renewal of Your Excellency's Spiritual Book Associates gift for Christmas. I can never express in mere words my appreciation of this remembrance because each word in each one of these spiritual books is as a magic finger setting the fibers of brain vibrating like harp strings and evoking different notes from the sounding board of our soul. Some of them prepare my soul to suffer anything; others, to desire nothing but union with "our All" and there are those that teach us how to live and how to die. It is the best thing in the world to have something of this sort as a point in the day; far too few people know and use this secret or it would soon become their greatest solace. And what is best of all about this gift, it is shared by all of us. . . <sup>45</sup>*

Mother Xavier had been elected Provincial in 1932 and reelected for a second term in 1938. Thus her administration as Provincial should have ended at the expected General Chapter of 1942--which never took place due to the Second World War. In a letter from the Superior General, Mother Mary Julien (LeRoux), dated March 5, 1942, and not received in New Orleans until August of that year, the progress of the war was sketched and the extension of powers was advised:

*I hope, dear Mother, you received from Reverend Albert F. Cousineau, C.S.C., copy of the indult giving you the authorization to admit to temporary and perpetual Vows and to govern the Province without*



*submitting things to us, as long as the hostilities last. Let us continue to pray that this terrible war will soon come to an end and that there will be lasting peace.*<sup>46</sup>

In the meantime, His Excellency, Most Reverend Amleto Giovanni Cicognani, Apostolate Delegate to the United States wrote Mother Mary Xavier from Washington, D.C., "enclosing the indult from the Sacred Congregation of religious, which had been requested by Mother Mary of St. Julien." This indult validated "the power which Reverend Mother General and her Council had given to Mother Provincial in a previously quoted letter of October 16, 1939." Actually, she was thus empowered to continue with this special authority "as long as the forced separation from the General House lasts."<sup>47</sup> On May 16, 1943, she had written to Archbishop Rummel:

*I can assure Your Excellency that I am very, very happy that you are going to make this visitation this summer. I think it is the logical time, as my term of office expires July 22, 1944. I have almost finished my visitation of the houses, and can sincerely affirm that I have found a very fine community spirit everywhere. I can say with all sincerity that, although perfection has not been found everywhere, I have experienced not the least resistance to any recommendations. I have every reason to be grateful to God and my community for the peaceful years I have had during my administration and the wonderful spirit of cooperation and obedience that has prevailed among the Sisters.*<sup>48</sup>

Finally, Mother Mary of St. Julien announced in a Circular Letter the prospect of a General Chapter being held in the Spring of 1946:

*War prevented us from holding our General Chapter at the regular time, and we obtained from the Sacred Congregation of Religious the prolongation of the powers of all the officers elected by this assembly. Although the world conflict is over, sailing is still too dangerous to allow our American Sisters to cross the Ocean presently. We expect it to be possible next Spring; but as nothing is certain, we cannot appoint the day.*<sup>49</sup>

And when the appointed day came in August, 1946, Mother Xavier was asked to continue in office for a third term, in spite of the fact that her health had

prevented her from making the Ocean trip to the Chapter. In a letter to Archbishop Rummel some time after this reappointment, she stated,

*The only reason I did not insist upon a change in 1946 was because at that time there was so much talk about general union that I felt it was going to go into effect. I knew that if there were union with Indiana, I was the logical one to effect the change in this Province. So many of the Sisters in Louisiana were hopeful of the union being effected, and looked forward to a brighter future. The old General Superior, Mother Julien, even went so far as to say she would be perfectly satisfied to have the Generalate in Indiana. Knowing that these were her sentiments, everybody felt elated thinking union was in sight.*

*I would like Your Excellency to stress the necessity of this general union with the government in America when conversing with our Reverend Mother M. of St. Odile. This is the way the Fathers of Holy Cross have advanced, and it is the only way that the Marianites will advance also, if France becomes a province and the government is in America. All communities at the present time (1940's) need strong governments to enable them to cope with the educational problems confronting them today. . . She (Mother Odile) should know also that Bishop Jeanmard also strongly favors the union. . .*

*Your Excellency could mention. . . that in 1946 Your Excellency wrote us suggesting that we either become an independent community or become integrated with the Indiana community. . . The Indiana community of Holy Cross Sisters will hold its General Chapter in 1950. Mother Rose Elizabeth does not know the sentiments of all of her Superiors. She knows the sentiments of some. Those to whom I spoke were in favor of the union, and I think the majority would be in favor of it, if the question is brought up at this time. Your Excellency can realize the stimulus that this would prove to our Sisters to know they had a strong government back of them. I do not, by any means, infer that our government in France has proven a hindrance to us. Reverend Mother has been most understanding and sympathetic and has graciously and readily granted all permissions.<sup>50</sup>*

In this same letter, she added, "I, myself, feel the Community here is entitled to have a younger Provincial. I have had sixteen years Provincialship and many, many years Superiorship antecedent to those years."<sup>51</sup> She added further on, "This seems to me the logical time for me to step out of my office and to let a younger person take up the reins. I have mentioned this to Reverend Mother, but she does not favor it." And again on May 20, 1948, similar feelings were revealed in her words to Archbishop Rummel:

*I have on several occasions asked Reverend Mother to relieve me of the office of Provincial, but it was of no avail. She feels quite sure that I can carry on for several years more. As I have, with all sincerity, made my representations I will leave myself in God's hands. I am mentioning these points because of my last letter to Your Excellency asking you to speak to Reverend Mother (Odile) about union, which I know now would be useless.<sup>52</sup>*

For six more faith-filled and challenging years following the Chapter of 1946, Mother continued to give of her extensive talents and unbounded enthusiasm to God's call to leadership. Finally, relief came when the General Chapter Election in 1952 named Mother Mary Adrian Collins as the new Provincial.

Mother Xavier had long had it in mind to retire to Ocean Springs, Mississippi, a small city about two hours away from New Orleans. Ocean Springs was a place of peace and quiet that she had often singled out when she needed a refresher period. The Marianite Convent there faced the Gulf of Mexico--with its gentle waves lapping at the shores. Through the years, Mother Xavier had often sent the Sisters teaching at AHA to Ocean Springs during the summers for a change of atmosphere. Boarders from AHA who did not go home during summer months also were privileged to spend some of their summer vacation at Ocean Springs. Each summer the Sisters attending summer school in New Orleans were treated to a bus trip and picnic in Ocean Springs--an event eagerly awaited and enthusiastically enjoyed, particularly the swimming in the Gulf. Mother Xavier also invited others to enjoy the atmosphere, especially if they were recuperating from surgery or other illness.

For the next eleven years, Mother lived out her days in prayer and meditation surrounded by loving Sisters who were engaged in teaching at nearby St.



Alphonsus School and enjoying the occasional visits of others who came to see her and profit by her wisdom and care.

In 1963 declining health forced Mother to retire to the Provincial House in New Orleans--Our Lady of Holy Cross. The property on which this building was located in Aurora Gardens, Mother Xavier herself had accepted as a gift from the Earnest Norman family on July 17, 1947, and she had already initiated plans for its use. As early as April 10, 1945, in a letter to Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel, Archbishop of New Orleans, Ernest B. Norman wrote, "I am pleased to enclose herein revised plan of the property on Aurora which has been under consideration by Mother Xavier and your Excellency, for the establishment of a Novitiate and for educational purposes."<sup>53</sup>

In prayer and patient suffering, she spent the next two years there at this beautiful spot which she had been most instrumental in obtaining for the Congregation. Mother Mary Hilary, her Provincial and her protegee, saw her gradually slipping away. With a final blessing from the Chaplain and surrounded by her Sisters praying at her bedside, Mother Mary Xavier took her last breath at 4:15 p.m. on September 16, 1965. It was more a fading away than a dying. It seemed a coincidence that Mother began her celestial life on the very date, September 16, that she began her religious life seventy-two years earlier. This fact was noted by her niece, Sister Mary Loyola Haggerty, who also wrote in Mother's Obituary that "her death broke a strong link in the chain forged with the entrance of her father's three sisters into the Congregation of the Marianites of Holy Cross 108 years ago."<sup>54</sup>

Mother was waked in the Chapel of Holy Angels Academy, where she had spent the greater part of her life. The Eucharistic Celebration was presided over by her grand-nephew, Reverend William Bosworth. Bill does not recall what he said in his homily, but when he thinks of his Aunt Maggie, he remembers most that "she was a saintly individual who was very devout". Father Bill feels so strongly about this that he believes that the Congregation might promote her cause for sainthood some day. Significantly, too, Bill commented that his Aunt Maggie was "a lady of her time".

Leaving her beloved Academy, Mother's funeral cortege moved across the Mississippi River on the Greater New Orleans Bridge to Our Lady of Holy Cross for burial in the Mausoleum. Although Mother had often requested that she be buried in Ocean Springs, this was not to be. It seemed appropriate that she be interred on the beautiful site of the 40-acre tract of land at Aurora Gardens whose acquisition by the Community had been one of the crowning joys of her administration. This property has served the Marianites of New Orleans well as the Provincial House, the Novitiate, and the College of Our Lady of Holy Cross. Today it continues to serve not only the expanding College but also as the headquarters for the Marianites of the North American Continent.

Remembrances of Mother Mary Xavier are many, and they embrace above all her great love for her Maker, her profound commitment to the mission of the Church, and her deep respect and obvious love for the clergy--all of which she left as a heritage for her Sisters. She had outstanding love for Mary and for St. Joseph, and her prayerful life left an indelible impact on her Marianite Community. Not only did her life-style center around her prayers of Rule and

the daily horarium, but also through the hours spent in prayerful communion in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Great, too, was her devotion to the Holy Spirit. She once shared with a little novice that she never did anything without first invoking the Holy Spirit. Demonstrating this fact, she placed her hand over her heart while saying, "O Holy Spirit, sweet guest of my soul, abide in me and let me ever abide in thee." We can see her death as the continuation of a prayerful pilgrimage toward the beginning of eternal life. As I recorded in

#### JUST A SEED,

While still a novice, I greatly benefited from personal contact with Mother Xavier, who, among other influences, introduced me to one of the greatest spiritual treasures of my life--devotion to the Holy Spirit. She shared with me that she never did anything--have an interview, write a letter, answer the telephone, or whatever--without invoking the presence of the Holy Spirit. I had never attended a Catholic School and thus my religious education/formation was meager. Mother Xavier decided that I needed a foundation in Scripture and theology and sent me to St. Mary's School of Sacred Theology at Notre Dame--where she, at Sister Madeleva's invitation, had two Marianites in attendance at the first school of theology in the nation from its beginning in 1942 until the late fifties. My experiences there greatly influenced all that the Lord has allowed me to be, to become, and to do since then.<sup>55</sup>

Among the many other things for which Mother Mary Xavier will be remembered, especially significant was the care of her Sisters, the physical plants which she revitalized, and the advancement of the education of the Sisters--including the College Department at Holy Angels being recognized by the State Department of Education of Louisiana and Baccalaureate Degrees being conferred for the first time in 1942. Widespread, too, is the memory of her for her outstanding pageants and their contributions to the cultural and religious life of the City of New Orleans. Equally widespread are the remembrances of those whose lives have been impacted by the quality of education which she called forth at Holy Angels and in other Marianite schools.

When I was in the process of doing research on Mother Xavier's early life, I contacted Monsignor Henry C. Bezou. He had been Superintendent of Education for the Archdiocese of New Orleans for twenty-five years (1943-1968), and for the vast majority of these he knew well and worked much with Mother Xavier. His first comment was, **"SHE WAS AN EXTRAORDINARY PERSON--A LADY TO THE FINGERTIPS--VERY CULTURED, LOVED FINE THINGS, VERY COMPETENT"**. . . and he quickly added, "She was easy to dialogue and plan and implement with; she had great initiative. For example, her personality was greatly responsible for the acquisition of the property in Algiers". . . "I would compare her to Monsignor Wynhoven; she was the 'female Wynhoven' of the Archdiocese."<sup>56</sup> Then, in Mother Xavier's defense and support, he stated,

*A few others thought she was a bit aggressive and ambitious, but that's ridiculous. She just saw a need and pursued it. I have/had the greatest respect for her. I always found her very gracious. She had a great admiration for and appreciation of the Archbishop. She was the first to show appreciation of my being named to the position of Superintendent. She was very cooperative with pastors needing sisters for their schools. . . She maintained her strong influence even after she left office as Provincial Superior. As Superintendent I found her always very cooperative and the Marianite schools very competent. The Marianite Community thrived under her direction. I often publicly said/wrote that the Marianites operated the most schools and had the most pupils and most teachers of any religious community.<sup>57</sup>*

Truly, Mother Xavier left a considerable legacy to those whose lives she touched as well as to those whose lives have been and will be affected by this gifted lady and her extraordinary life's work. All who really knew her are in agreement that **"THE GENUINE SECRET OF HER SUCCESS, HOWEVER, LAY IN HER PROFOUND SPIRITUALITY, HER UNFLINCHING TRUST IN GOD, AND HER DEEP UNDERSTANDING OF HUMAN NATURE. . ."**<sup>58</sup>

## LIVING WITNESSES

I have introduced you to a lady--a woman of spirit and commitment, a woman of vision, a woman of evangelization, a prophetic woman of the Church, and above all, a woman of faith.

Before closing, I would like to share some of the testimonies given to this lady and to the legacy which she left by some of those to whom I posed the question: "WHEN YOU THINK OF MOTHER XAVIER, WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER?"

Mother Mary Xavier was thoroughly human, with her faults and failings, and expectedly, there were those who responded to the question with comments such as, "I don't think you would publish what I have to say". . . or . . . "You wouldn't want to hear what I remember". . . Some few have painful memories which seem to override any other memories which they might have, but there were also those who began their response with similar comments, but continued their response, realizing that there were other things to remember. . . Some even admitted that they now know that some of the painful ones existed because Mother Xavier was trying to bring out the best in them. . . "She expected perfection and the results were tearful, but it also meant that you tried harder the next time because it was expected of you". But the overwhelming number of respondents were very positive and decidedly affirmed the introduction that I have given you and the observations which I have made about Mother Mary Xavier and her life's work.



Very often the response was that she was. . . "a great lady". . . very cultured, very refined, very well educated, gracious, compassionate, kind, firm but gentle and understanding. . . sensitive to me and my family. . . always appreciative of whatever was done for her. . . always having something to say when you met her. . . always a woman of welcome and hospitality. . . An incident was recalled in which Mother Xavier greeted an unknown and obviously afflicted woman who asked to see her with the "same cordial hospitality as she would greet the Archbishop", bringing her into the parlor and sitting down to listen to her very attentively.

Frequently, the living witnesses spoke of her great influence in their lives. . . Not only did she manifest her many talents but she exercised a tremendous talent for calling forth the talents of others. . . A witness given time and again was. . . "She was SHEER GIFT TO ME. . . more than any other persons responsible for nurturing, affirming, and encouraging my call to religious life". . . She knew each person's talents and gave opportunities and encouragement to develop them. . . Because of who she was, I am what I am today. . . She. . . gave me confidence when I literally had none. . . fostered the little talent I had so that I accomplished more than I ever dreamed about. . . was not only my spiritual leader, but also my inspirational leader--always encouraging, sometimes prodding me to develop to my fullest potential. . . She motivated, challenged us, strove for excellence herself and inspired, even demanded excellence in others. . . Her attitude was expressed well in these words: "Whereas she exacted discipline, she also inspired self-confidence and offered encouragement along the way, not only did she reprimand when the occasion warranted it, but also commended when such praise was merited. . . she expected and encouraged each

student (and each Sister) to realize her full potential". . . Mother Xavier was a perfectionist, but she was also able to admit her limitations and her mistakes. . . Memories exist of her humility. . . as when through some misunderstanding a Sister had been reprimanded and later Mother went to ask forgiveness for the unjust reprimand. . . Also noted was her sense of loyalty to her Community and her Sisters, yet her sense of justice where there was an injustice to correct is something I will always remember. . . She is remembered as a strong and courageous personality that intimidated a few, inhibited some, but filled most with a kind of reverential awe, respect, or admiration. . . Perhaps the most common feeling expressed was that of gratitude. . . appreciation for her personal influence on their individual lives and for the many benefits which we as a Community have today because of her.

Over and over again they spoke of her as . . . a woman of vision. . . future-oriented. . . futuristic. . . forward-thinking. . . a woman ahead of her times, especially regarding the educational opportunities and holistic development that she gave the students and the Sisters. "She instilled in me a sense of values-- integrity, judgment, self-discipline, stamina--spiritual, mental and physical--all of which she possessed herself and which I strive even today to realize to the best of my ability". . . Recalling the spirit of AHA as she knew it more than half a century ago, one former student remembered those days when "Mother Xavier seemed to give the institution its life and breath". . . That was also true of the Louisiana Marianites, as expressed in this remembrance: "She was a person of great foresight. . . many of the ideas being promoted today in the Community could have been found embedded in her thoughts and policies. . . An example given was the idea of affiliates interested in the Community. . . Some of those



first affiliates are still with us; in fact, some are the (golden) jubilarians of this year. . . "If Mother Xavier's policies and insights had been fully accepted and implemented, Vatican II would have happened twenty years earlier". . . One former student summarized it by saying. . . "I feel that it can fairly be stated that she was the personification of 'charisma' long before that priceless quality became so well recognized and greatly appreciated as it is presently. She was dynamic--she was dynamite! Mother Xavier represented a composite of leader, educator, counselor, disciplinarian, psychologist, fund-raiser, and yes, even a politician and a charming one, but FIRST and FOREMOST SHE WAS A VERY DEVOUT AND EXTREMELY DEDICATED MARIANITE (all caps hers). Mother Xavier was truly an inspiration spiritually as well as intellectually". . . One Sister's fondest memory is what her mother always said, "If Mother Xavier had been a man she would have been either Pope or President."

Yes, she was a woman of faith, a woman of prayer. . . She was first and foremost a remarkable woman of God. . . A response most often given when asked what they remembered about Mother Xavier was how deeply spiritual and prayerful she was. . . Mother Xavier shared with us her prayer life, her deep spirituality, her life of faith and trust in God. . . She was a valiant woman who lived for the greater glory of God and inspired others to do likewise. . . She provided us with wonderful Jesuit retreat-masters who saturated us with the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. . . "Over and above her natural talents and abilities was a spiritual side that expressed itself in her great love for souls, a burning zeal that longed to bring others to Christ. . . a zeal evidenced even after she had retired--still instructing converts in Ocean Springs". . . She was a true evangelizer. . . with a faith that expressed itself in her life of love for God

lived out in her love for others--her Church, its leaders, her Congregation, its members, in significant ways and in seemingly insignificant ones. That she valued the dignity of the person over the Rule was testified to a number of times. One that I shall recall as an example is that of a novitiate companion of mine who was expected to be present for the Community Christmas retreat during the time of the Korean War. Her brother was to be shipped overseas and asked that she seek permission to come home for what may be his last Christmas family gathering. In spite of customs and rules existing at that time, Mother Xavier gave the permission, indicating that it might be her brother's last Christmas at home. It was, for he was killed the following year in early December.

It is impossible to attempt to evaluate Mother Mary Xavier's total contribution not only to the institutions blessed by her personal leadership, but also to all whom she touched during her lifetime and in the years that followed. Over and above all that may be on record, there are so many intangibles that cannot be measured. . . Perhaps these words of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow best sum it up for us:

*Lives of great men AND WOMEN all remind us,  
We can make our lives sublime,  
And, departing, leave behind us  
Footprints on the sands of time.*

Mother Xavier's indelible footprints are there as they will ever be--at Holy Angels, at St. John's in Franklin, at Holy Name of Mary in Algiers, wherever she has set foot, but above all her marks are there in the minds and hearts and spirits of the Marianite Sisters, her family, her friends and former students, the institutions and all those with whom Mother Mary Xavier has walked the journey of her life.<sup>59</sup>

She was. . . a lady that brought a presence. . . a presence that made a difference. . . and a lady whose legacy continues to provide a presence. . . that makes a difference in an ever-changing world.

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## NOTES

1. Marianite Centennial in Louisiana--1848-1948 (henceforth MCL). New Orleans: Marianites of Holy Cross Provincial House, privately printed, 1948, pp. 70-71.
2. Archives at Our Lady of Holy Cross (henceforth AOLHC) in New Orleans, Louisiana: Mother Xavier's Box, handwritten letter to her niece, Sister Mary Loyola Haggerty, M.S.C., from Ocean Springs, Mississippi, St. Teresa Convent, July 24, 1959.
3. Ibid.
4. MCL, p. 181.
5. Ibid.
6. The Catholic Church in Algiers, Rev. J. Francis Georgelin, S.M., STL, Edited by Rev. Charles J. Brogley, S.M., MA. New Orleans: privately printed, 1949.
7. MCL, pp. 276-277.
8. Sister Mary Pascal Lump, M.S.C., personal interview and written memories of Mother Mary Xavier during Sister's (Margie Lump's) school days and personal experiences of material recorded. New Orleans, Louisiana: January, 1988. . . *The flowers had been fashioned by orphan girls from St. Mary's School in Carrollton, a small town in itself, north of New Orleans. This school in Carrollton was conducted by the Marianites of Holy Cross for young girls, mostly orphans. Large hand-woven tapestries hung from the high ceilings. These bear the name of Annie Taafe--herself an orphan from Carrollton who later came to live at Holy Angels. These magnificent and colorful tapestries are still extant and are presently in the home of a Marianite relative.*
9. Ibid., and . . . *At this time, Reverend Mother Julien, the Superior General, sent from France two magnificent free-standing brass caldelabra lights. These were placed on either side of the altar--which had its natural wood replaced with an off-white highlighted with gold leaf. The floors were replaced with hard wood, the heavy bulky pews were removed, and modern comfortable seats took their place.*
10. Archives of Marillac Provincial House (henceforth AMP), Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, St. Louis, Missouri: File of St. Simeon's Select School for Young Women and Girls in New Orleans--History of St. Simeon's, Kate Lancaster.
11. Ibid., see Addenda for "Catalogue of St. Simeon's Select School" information.
12. Ibid., History of St. Simeon's, p. 3.



13. Monsignor Henry C. Bezou (henceforth MB), former Superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese of New Orleans, personal interview. New Orleans, Louisiana: April, 1988.
14. AMP: History of St. Simeon's, p. 5.
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16. Ibid., April 27, 1943.
17. Ibid., August 17, 1943.
18. Ibid., September 3, 1943.
19. Ibid., March 22, 1944.
20. Ibid., May 7, 1944.
21. Ibid., March 23, 1947.
22. MCL, p. 292.
23. RCANO, April 15, 1948.
24. Ibid., July 2, 1952.
25. Ibid., July 10, 1952.
26. Annals of the Congregation of the Marianites Sisters of Holy Cross--1841-1941 (henceforth ACM). LeMans, France: privately printed, 1947, p. 310.
27. Ibid., p. 293.
28. RCANO, February 21, 1944.
29. Ibid., September 12, 1944.
30. Ibid., March 31, 1945.
31. Ibid., October 7, 1949.
32. Congressional Record--Proceedings and Debates of the 80th Congress, Second Session. (henceforth CR): "Church, Civic Leaders Join in Tribute to Nuns", Extension of Remarks of Hon. Hale Boggs of Louisiana in the House of Representatives, United States of America, Thursday, April 22, 1948. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1948.
33. RCANO, January 15, 1947.
34. Ibid. . . and AOLHC: Additional information concerning the manifold preparations and activities surrounding the Centennial Celebration for which

Mother Xavier provided not only the inspiration and organizational skills but also other multiple talents, including her outstanding hospitality, can be found in Marianite Saga Continued--1940-1982, Sister Joel Sperier, M.S.C., New Orleans: Unpublished manuscript of the Annals of the Congregation of the Marianites of Holy Cross, 1987, pp. 231-244.

35. MCL, p. 313.
36. Ibid., p. 319.
37. CR.
38. Ibid. . . and in MCL, pp. 317-318, among the distinguished guests were:  
From the New York Generalate--The Very Reverend Albert F. Cousineau, C.S.C., Superior General of the Congregation of Holy Cross.  
From Montreal, Province of Quebec, Canada--The Very Reverend William F. McGinnis, C.S.C., Provincial Superior, Anglo-Canadian Province, Fathers of Holy Cross.  
From Precigne, Sarthe, France--Our Reverend Mother General, Reverend Mother Mary of St. Odile, M.deS.C., Sister Mary of St. Cajetan, M.deS.C., First Assistant General; Sister Mary of St. Veronica, M.deS.C., General Treasurer.  
From Holy Cross, Indiana--Reverend Mother M. Rose Elizabeth, C.S.C., Superior General of the Sisters of Holy Cross, St. Mary's Convent, Holy Cross, Indiana; Mother M. Una, C.S.C., Provincial Superior of the Mid-Western Province, Sisters of Holy Cross.  
From Montreal, Province of Quebec, Canada--Mother M. Elizabeth, C.S.C., and Sister M. Patricia, C.S.C., Sisters of Holy Cross representing Mother M. Maximilienne, C.S.C., Superior General of the Canadian Community of Holy Cross.
39. MCL, p. 222.
40. RCANO, September 24, 1948.
41. Ibid., August 1, 1948.
42. Ibid., April 16, 1951.
43. Ibid., August 1, 1948.
44. The Catholic Action of the South. New Orleans: November 17, 1938, p. 13. . . (and also) . . . The Eighth National Eucharistic Congress--New Orleans, Louisiana October 7, 18, 19 and 20, 1938. New Orleans: The Hope Haven Press, 1941, p. 159f.
45. RCANO, December 23, 1949.
46. MCL, p. 105.
47. Ibid., pp. 105-106.
48. RCANO, May 16, 1943.

49. MCL, p. 122.
50. RCANO, undated letter, but according to years mentioned in letter, it was written sometime after 1946 and before 1950.
51. Ibid.
52. Ibid., May 20, 1948.
53. RCANO, April 10, 1945.
54. AOLHC: In Memoriam, Obituary of Mother Mary Xavier Haggerty, M.S.C., written by Sister Mary Loyola Haggerty, M.S.C. LeMans, France: Congregational Archives, privately printed, 1965.
55. Just A Seed, Vivian M. Coulon, M.S.C. New Orleans: privately printed, 1977, p. 26.
56. MB.
57. Ibid.
58. Sperier, op. cit., p. 116.
59. Living Witnesses: Verbal and written "Memories of Mother Xavier" from her Marianite Sisters, members of her family, her friends and former students. New Orleans, Louisiana: 1988. (Now in AOLHC). All who have contributed their memories are gratefully remembered, but especially those who took extra time to share, write, tape or telephone what they think of when they remember Mother Xavier:

Isabel Geheeb, Jane Viscardi Woodruff, Clara Binet Creppel, Sister Lucy Marie Caillouet, M.S.C., Sister Mary Michael O'Shaughnessy, O.P., Sister Mary Tranquilla Binet, M.S.C., Sister Winifred Cunniffe, M.S.C., Sister Mary Finian O'Donovan, M.S.C., Sister Francesca Petrowsky, M.S.C., Sister M. Barbara Andersen, M.S.C., Sister Cor Mariae Foley, M.S.C., Sister Janet Bodin, M.S.C., Jeannette de Gravelles Piette, Sister M. Monica Stelly, M.S.C., Sister Rosemary Hoppe, M.S.C., Elaine M. Louviere, Sister M. Raymond Landry, M.S.C., Sister Mary Owen Quintana, M.S.C., Sister Mary Damien Nacol, M.S.C., Sister Jane Dardenne, M.S.C., Sister Mary Gerald Lewis, M.S.C., Sister Mary Theo Noel, M.S.C., Sister Mary George Pusateri, M.S.C., Sister Joan Barry, M.S.C., Sister Mary Kelly, M.S.C., Sister Consuelo Champagne, M.S.C., Rev. William Bosworth, Patricia Bosworth, Dotty Ganen, Ernest Norman, Jr., Sister Mary Bernardine Hill, M.S.C., Sister Mary Eleanor Strehle, M.S.C., Sister Mary Edmund Schexnaildre, M.S.C., Sister Mary Columba Walsh, M.S.C., Sister Madeleine Sophie Hebert, M.S.C., Sister Mary Pierre Babin, M.S.C., Regina Arnaud, Sister Mary Paschal Lump, M.S.C., Sister Mary Leo Cavell, M.S.C., Sister Mary David Hecker, M.S.C., Sister Mary Andrew Songe, M.S.C., Sister Mary Martin Hecker, M.S.C., Sister Elizabeth McLoughlin, M.S.C., Sister Margaret Mary Dolly, M.S.C., Sister Mary Charles Clement, M.S.C., Sister Mary Germaine Buckingham, M.S.C., Sister Mary Laura Melancon, M.S.C., Sister Mary Eulalia Boudreaux, M.S.C., Sister Mary Alberta Foley, M.S.C., Sister Margaret LaFleur, M.S.C., Sister Rita Hardy, Rev. Robert Stahl, S.M.

## **ADDENDA**

1. FROM THE HAGGERTY-BOSWORTH FAMILY ALBUM
2. INFORMATION ON ST. SIMEON'S SELECT SCHOOL.
3. CENTENNIAL SOUVENIRS.
3. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

APPENDIX

1. FROM THE HAGGERTY-BOSWORTH FAMILY ALBUM

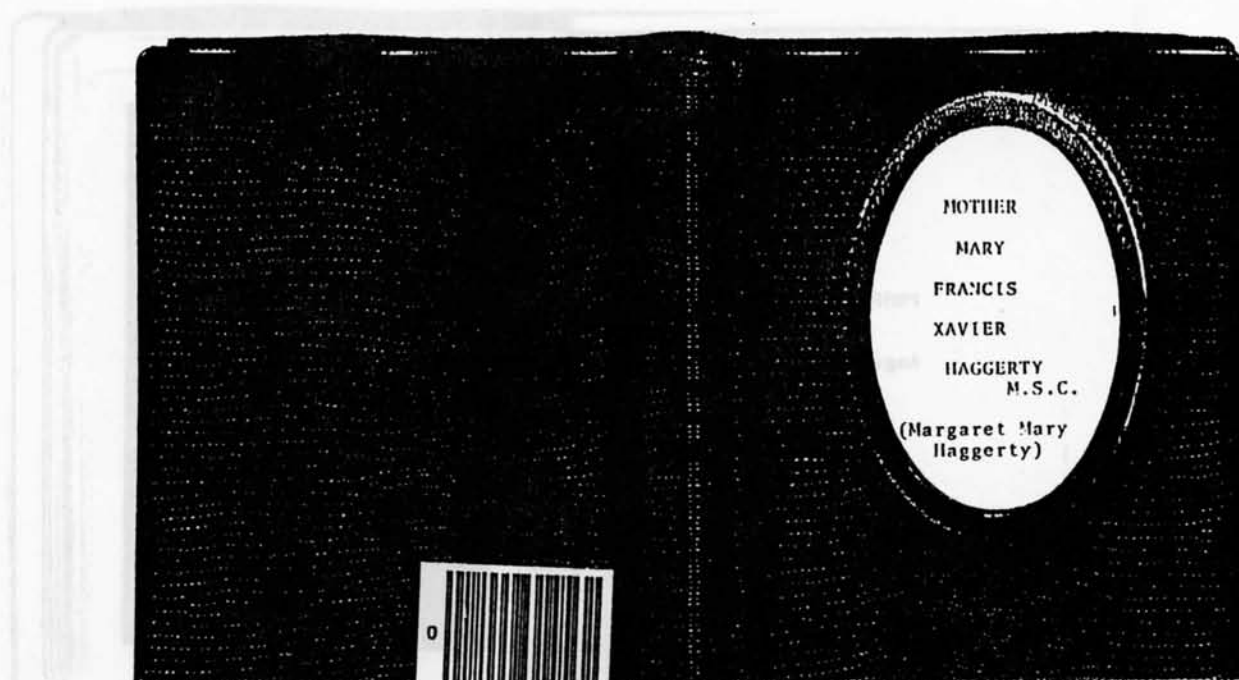
2. INFORMATION ON ST. SIMON'S SELECT SCHOOL

3. CENTENNIAL SOUVENIR

**FROM THE HAGGERTY-BOSWORTH FAMILY ALBUM**

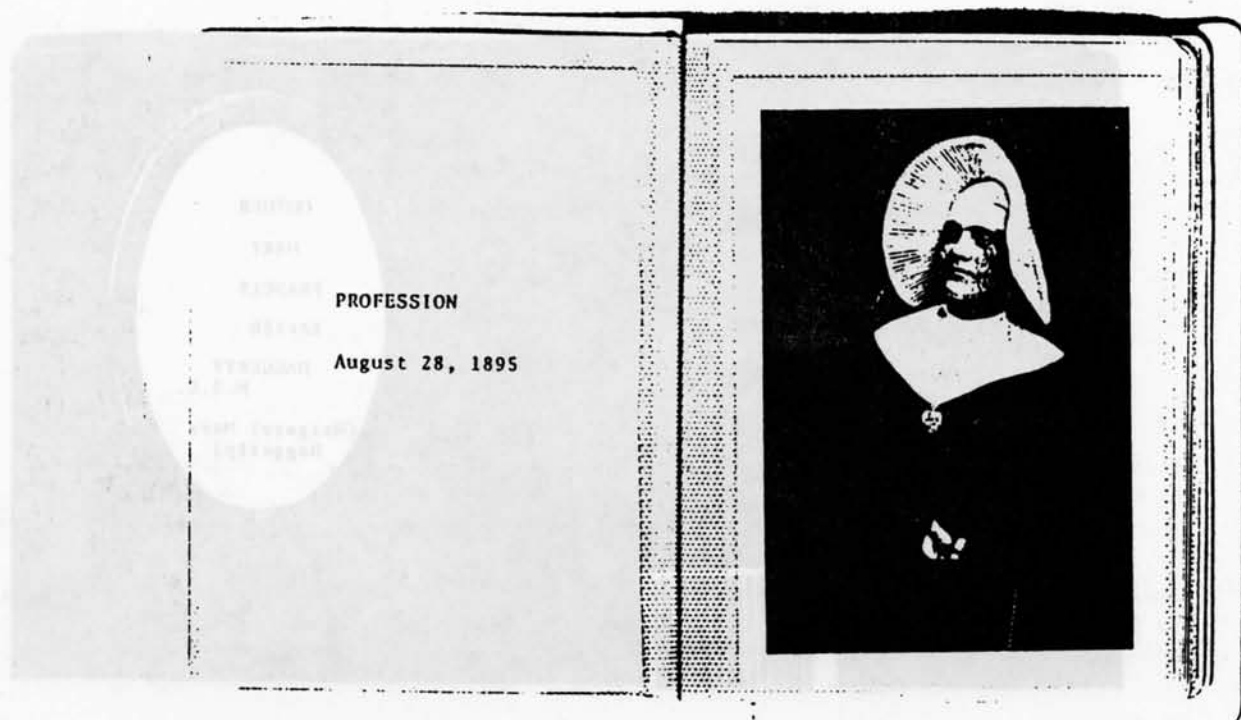
4. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



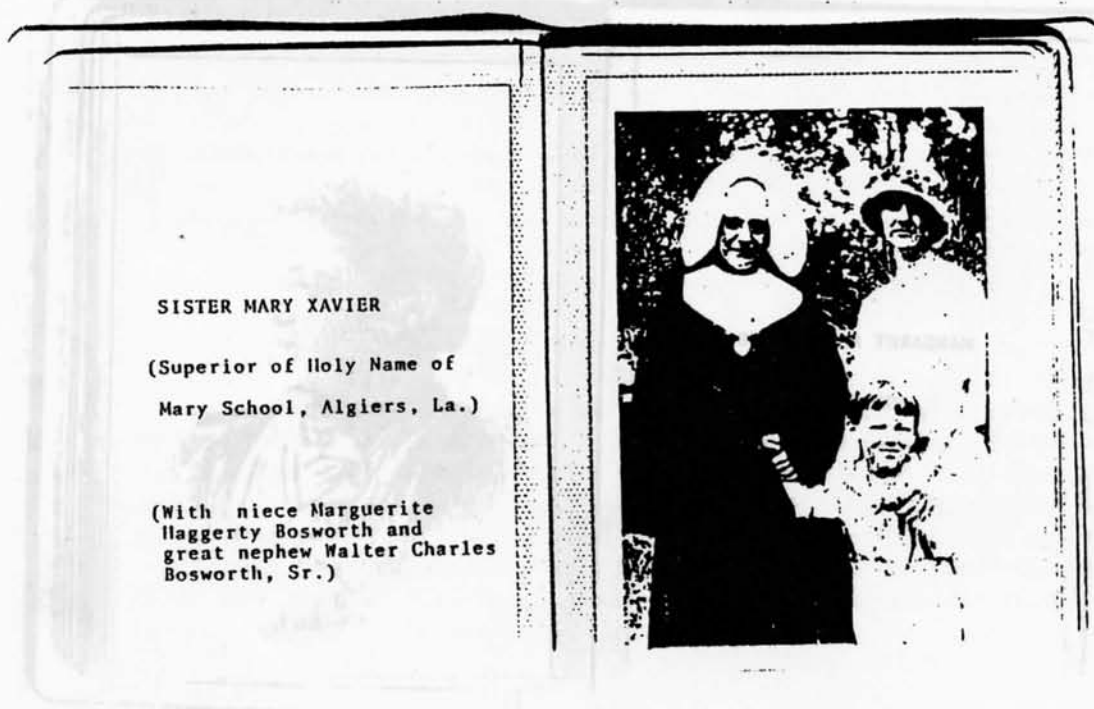


FROM THE HAGGERTY-BOSWORTH FAMILY ALBUM





FROM THE HAGGERTY-BOSWORTH FAMILY ALBUM



MOTHER MARY XAVIER  
PROVINCIAL OF HOLY  
CROSS LOUISIANA PRO-  
VINCE 1932-1952



FROM THE  
FAMILY ALBUM



LOCAL SUPERIOR OF  
OCEAN SPRINGS CONVENT

1950's

RETIREMENT  
PROVINCIAL HOUSE OUR  
LADY OF HOLY CROSS  
NEW ORLEANS, LA.

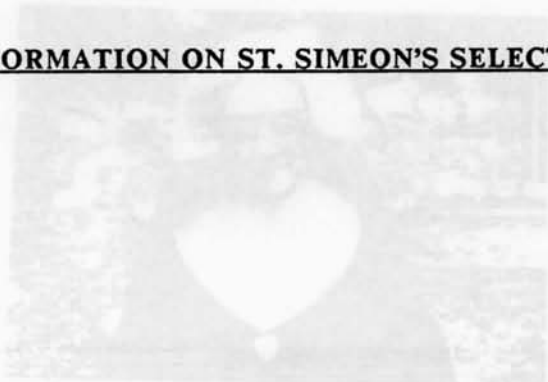
1964





MISS MARY ANN  
BORN IN 1874  
DIED IN 1914  
AGE 40

**INFORMATION ON ST. SIMEON'S SELECT SCHOOL**

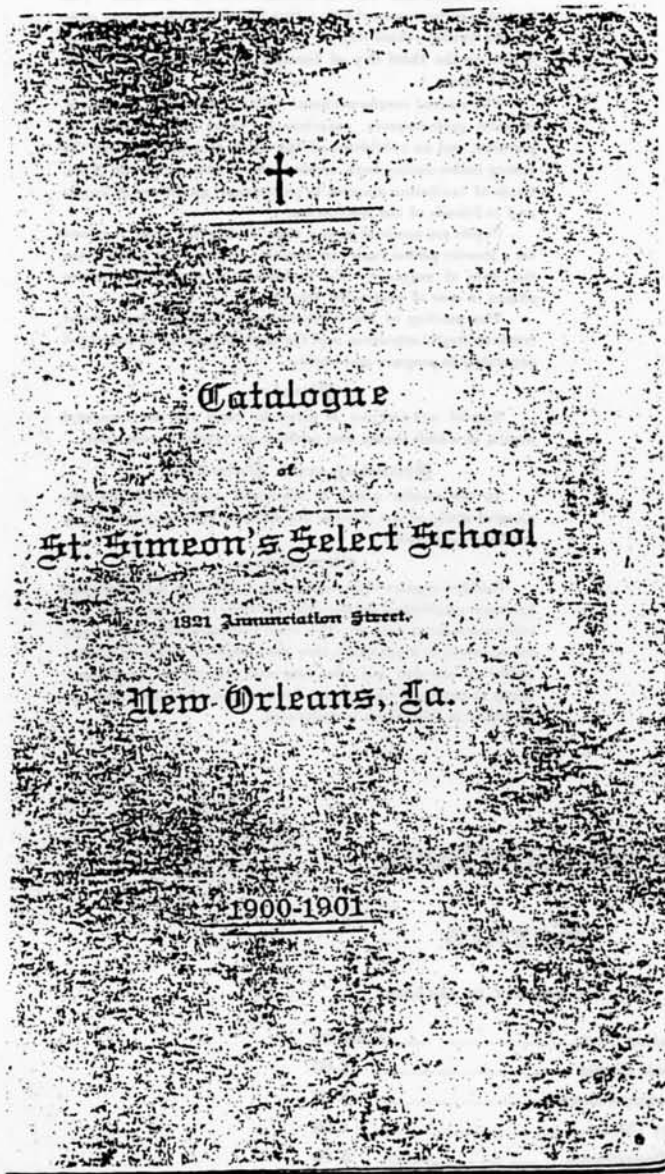


MISS MARY ANN  
BORN IN 1874  
DIED IN 1914  
AGE 40



MISS MARY ANN  
BORN IN 1874  
DIED IN 1914  
AGE 40

## INFORMATION ON ST. SIMEON'S SELECT SCHOOL

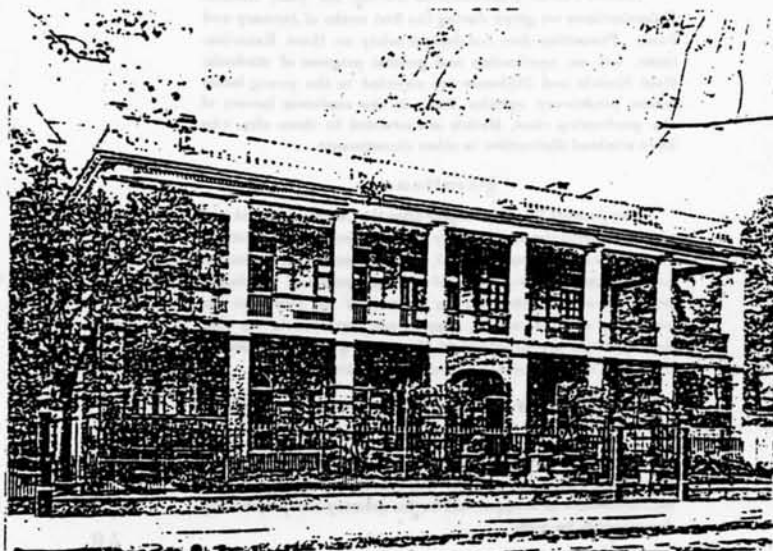


**ST. SIMEON'S SELECT SCHOOL**, No. 1321 Annunciation Street, New Orleans, Louisiana, conducted by the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, was opened March 17, 1860, and was incorporated a few years later, by the Legislature of Louisiana. The well ventilated, commodious School building is provided with all modern improvements and is thoroughly equipped, in every department with necessary apparatus for school work.

Pupils have at their service an extensive library to which they can refer at any time.

Whilst attending to the intellectual training of their pupils, and giving that polite education best calculated to fit them for society, the Sisters consider themselves bound to establish in the hearts of those committed to their care, sound Christian principles, and to teach them to walk in the path of Virtue and Religion.

Although the Institution is Catholic, members of all denominations are received, but for the sake of order and uniformity, all are required to conform to the exterior exercises of worship.



FRONT VIEW OF ST. SIMEON'S SELECT SCHOOL



## The Course of Studies

### The Primary Course

embraces: Reading, Writing, Orthography, History, Language, Letter-Writing, Arithmetic.

### The Preparatory Course

embraces: American Literature, Grammar, Rudiments of Rhetoric, Physical Geography, Physiology, Orthography, Modern History, United States History, Geography, Arithmetic, Algebra, Latin, French.

### The Academic Course

embraces: General Literature, Philosophy of Literature, Verification, Logic, Moral and Mental Philosophy, Geology, Church History, Rhetoric, Botany, History, Chemistry, Astronomy, Physics, Zoology, Mythology, Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Latin, French.

### Provision

is made for others who, on account of delicate health, or some valid reason, are unable to pursue the regular Academic Course. The honor of graduating is not attainable in this Class.

## INFORMATION ON ST. SIMEON'S SELECT SCHOOL

### Monthly Concerts

Each month the pupils meet in the concert hall where a programme consisting of Vocal and Instrumental Music, Recitations, and Exercises in Physical Culture is rendered, after which reports of conduct and application are read in presence of teachers and pupils. Monthly reports are sent to parents and guardians.

### Examinations

Besides Partial Examinations during the year, General Examinations are given during the first weeks of January and June. Promotion does not depend solely on these Examinations, but on application and general progress of students. Gold Medals and Diplomas are awarded to the young ladies whose proficiency entitles them to the academic honors of the graduating class, Medals are awarded to those also who have attained distinction in other departments.

### Vacations

The Annual Vacation begins after the Commencement and continues until the first Monday of September. The Christmas recess lasts from December 23rd, until January 3rd, inclusive. As the progress of the pupils and the organization of the classes depend to a great extent on the presence of the pupils at the beginning of each session, parents are requested to see that their children are in school at the opening of the Scholastic Year, and on the first day of the Second Term.

### Preparatory Collegiate Department for Boys

In this department which is intended to prepare boys for entrance into college, the same course is followed with minor changes as is appointed for the primary and preparatory departments for girls.

## Academic Year

The Academic Year is divided into two sessions. The first session begins on the first Monday of September and ends on the twenty-third day of December. The second session begins on the third day of January and ends on the fifteenth day of June.

The annual commencement with the awarding of medals, musical performances, exercises in vocal and physical expression, and an exhibition of the work accomplished by the young ladies during both sessions closes the Academic Year. Cards of invitation are sent to parents and guardians of pupils and to friends of the institution.

Pupils are received at any time during the year, but not for a shorter period than one session; charges are made from the date of entrance. No deduction is made for absence except in case of protracted illness.

The grading of the several classes in each department receives careful attention, and the pupil is placed and promoted according to progress and ability.

### Music

Special attention is given to vocal and instrumental music, in which theory and practice are carefully combined.

### Drawing and Painting

In the studio which is admirably adapted for the progressive study of Art, lessons are given in class or privately, as students may prefer.

### Literature

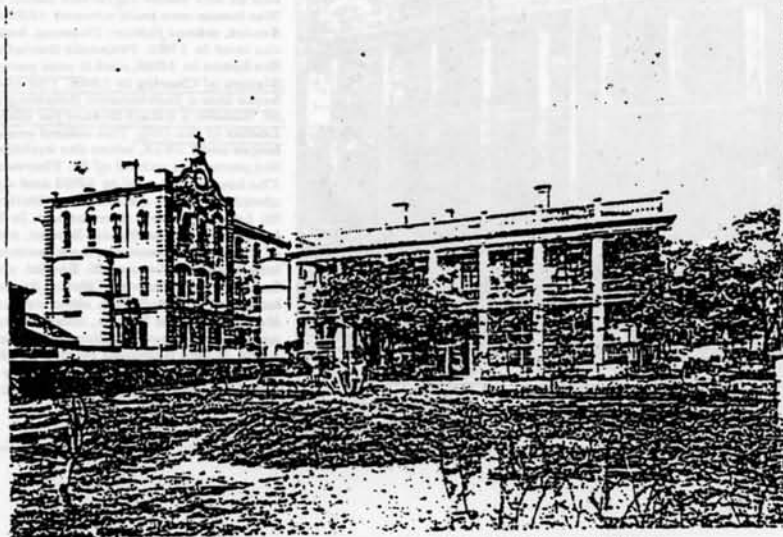
Besides regular class lessons in Literature a special class has been established for the critical study of Shakespeare and other prominent authors; this class the more advanced pupils are required to attend that they may acquire, not only correct habits of thought but also ease and fluency of expression, while at the same time a taste for the true, the good, and the beautiful in Literature is cultivated.

## Terms

### PAYABLE MONTHLY IN ADVANCE

Graduating Class .....	\$10 00
Academic Classes .....	8 00
Preparatory Classes .....	6 00
Primary Classes.....	4 00
Boys' Department.....	5 00
Instrumental Music.....	5 00
Vocal Music, (in class).....	1 50
Painting .....	2 00
Drawing .....	1 00
Elocution.....	1 00
Plain and Ornamental Needlework.....	1 00

Month commenced will be considered a month commencing deduction being made for absence.



SIDE VIEW OF ST. SIMEON'S SELECT SCHOOL.

## INFORMATION ON ST. SIMEON'S SELECT SCHOOL

### CLASSICAL COURSE

Fourth Academic	Third Academic	Second Academic	First Academic
English.....3	English.....3	English.....3	English.....3
Mythology.....2	Word Analysis.....2	Logic.....2	Mental & Moral Philosophy.....2
History.....3	History.....3	History.....2	Church History.....2
Physics.....3	Astronomy.....3	Chemistry.....3	Versification.....3
Algebra.....3	Geometry.....3	Solid Geometry.....3	Trigonometry.....3
Latin.....4	Latin.....4	Latin.....4	Latin.....4

### ENGLISH COURSE

Fourth Academic	Third Academic	Second Academic	First Academic
English.....3	English.....3	English.....3	English.....3
Mythology.....2	Word Analysis.....2	Logic.....2	Mental & Moral Philosophy.....2
History.....3	History.....3	History.....2	Church History.....2
Physics.....3	Astronomy.....3	Chemistry.....3	Versification.....3
Latin.....4	Zoology.....3	Botany.....3	Geology.....3
Algebra.....3	Geometry.....3	Solid Geometry.....3	Trigonometry.....3
French.....4	French.....4	French.....4	French.....4

Note.—The figures indicate the number of lessons each week.

### First Preparatory

American Literature,  
Orthography, Grammar,  
Physical Geography,  
History (Modern),  
Physiology,  
Arithmetic,  
French.

American Literature,  
Orthography, Grammar,  
Rudiments of Rhetoric,  
Civil Government,  
Modern History,  
Arithmetic, Algebra,  
French.

### Second Preparatory

Orthography, Grammar,  
Studies in Literature,  
History,  
Geography,  
Arithmetic,  
French.

Orthography, Grammar,  
Studies in Literature,  
History,  
Geography,  
Arithmetic,  
French.

### Third Preparatory

Orthography, Grammar,  
United States History,  
Geography,  
Arithmetic,  
French.

Orthography, Grammar,  
United States History,  
Geography,  
Arithmetic,  
French.

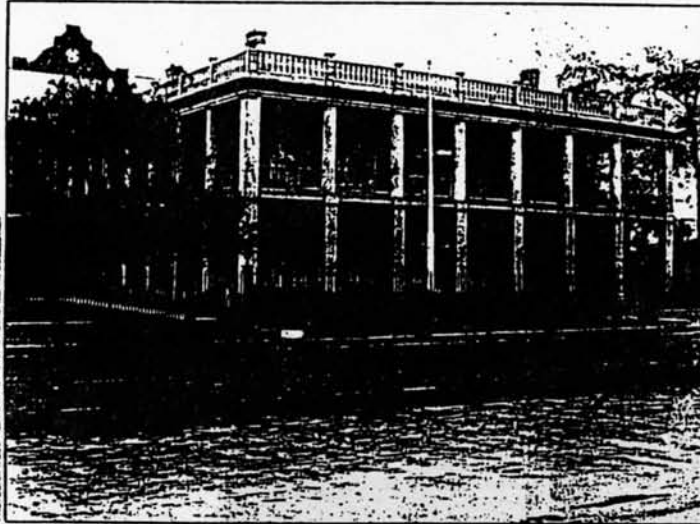
### Fourth Preparatory

Orthography,  
Language,  
Geography,  
History,  
Arithmetic,  
Letter Writing.

Orthography,  
Language,  
Geography,  
History,  
Arithmetic,  
Letter Writing.

Christian Doctrine, Reading, Composition and Penmanship are taught throughout the course.

## PICTURE FROM THE PAST



Mercy Hospital occupied the old Saulet plantation house at 1321 Annunciation in New Orleans from the founding of the hospital in 1924 until it relocated in 1953 to its present site at 301 North Jefferson Davis Parkway. The house was built around 1832 by Francois Saulet, whose father, Thomas, had purchased the land in 1763. Francois Saulet's heirs sold the house in 1859, and it was purchased by the Sisters of Charity in 1860. The nuns turned the home into a fashionable finishing school called St. Simeon's Select School for Girls and Young Ladies of the City. The school occupied the house until 1912, when the building became the parochial school of St. Theresa's parish. The house was sold in 1922 and operated for about a year as a mental institution known as St. Luke's Private Sanitarium. In 1923, it was bought by Leona Saulet Soniat, a descendant of the original owners. As a memorial to her late husband, Leonce M. Soniat, she gave the house to the Sisters of Mercy for use as a hospital. The building, situated between Melpomene and Thalia, stood vacant for a few years after the relocation of the hospital in 1953. It was damaged by fire in 1957 and demolished in 1959, giving way to the Schwegmann Brothers supermarket that still occupies the site. ■

## INFORMATION ON ST. SIMEON'S SELECT SCHOOL



*Mercy Hospital • New Orleans • 1924*

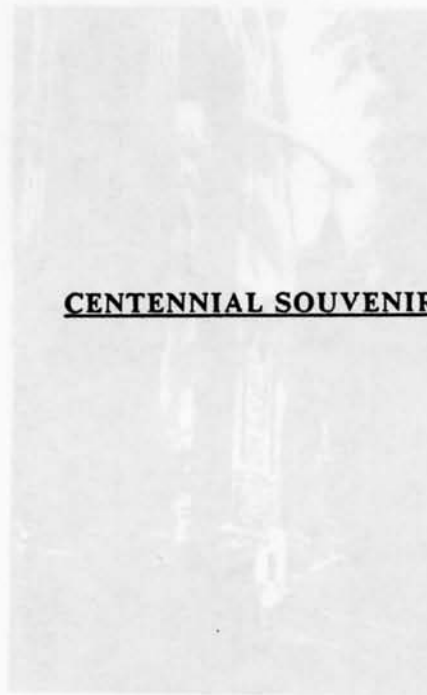
CENTENNIAL SOUVENIRS



Group of people standing together



Lake view from the observatory



CENTENNIAL SOUVENIRS

The view from the observatory

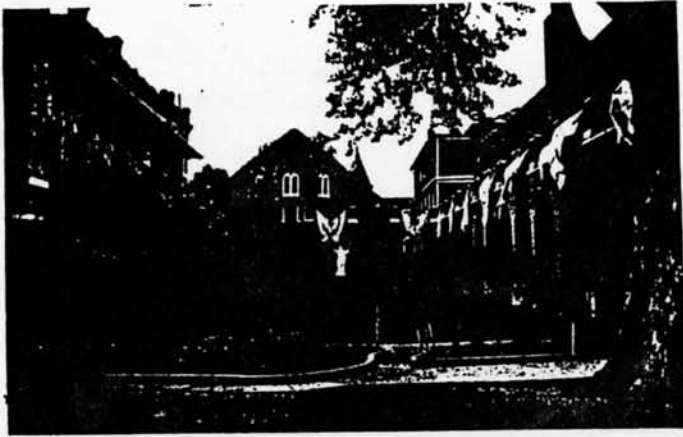


Group of people standing together

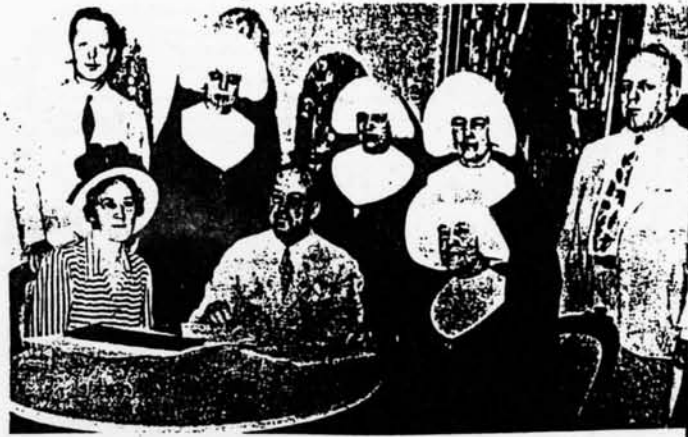


Exterior view of the observatory

# CENTENNIAL SOUVENIRS



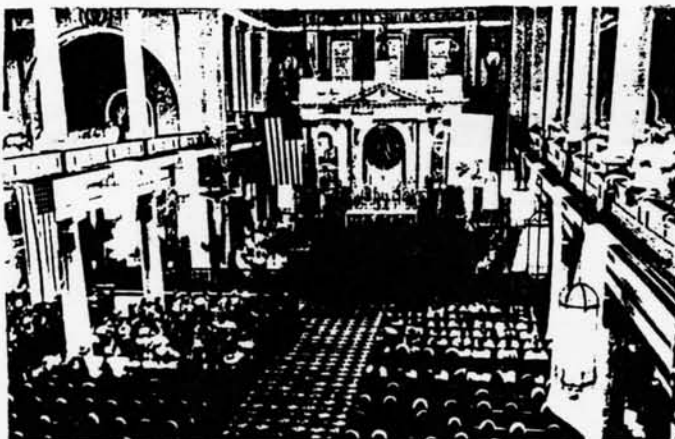
THE HEART OF THE PROVINCIAL HOUSE



Receiving the Norman gift



THE ROAD TO THE CHAPEL  
Provincial House

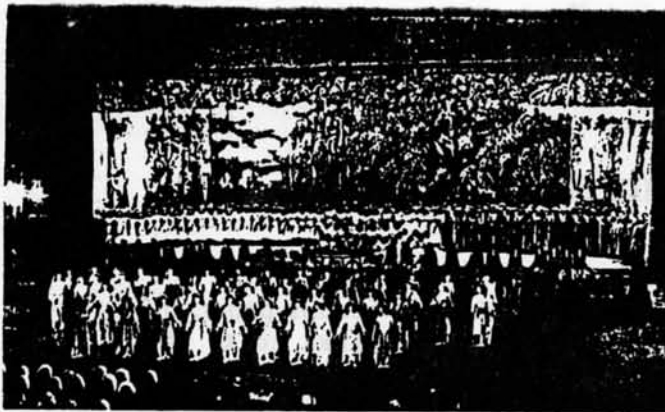


CENTENNIAL PONTIFICAL MASS  
St. Louis Cathedral

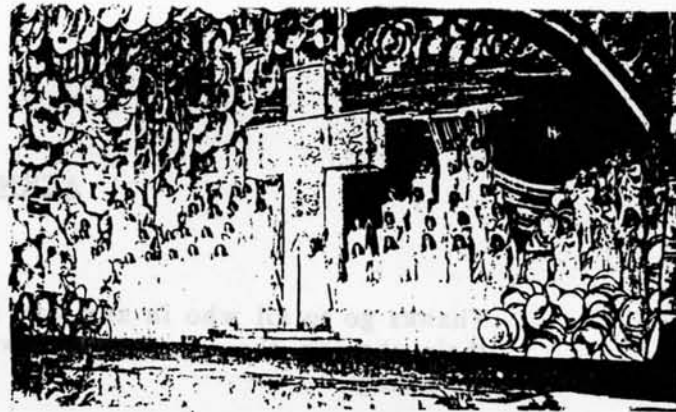


AFTER SOLEMN PONTIFICAL MASS





SCENE FROM PROLOGUE TO CENTENNIAL PAGEANT "A CANTICLE OF PRAISE"



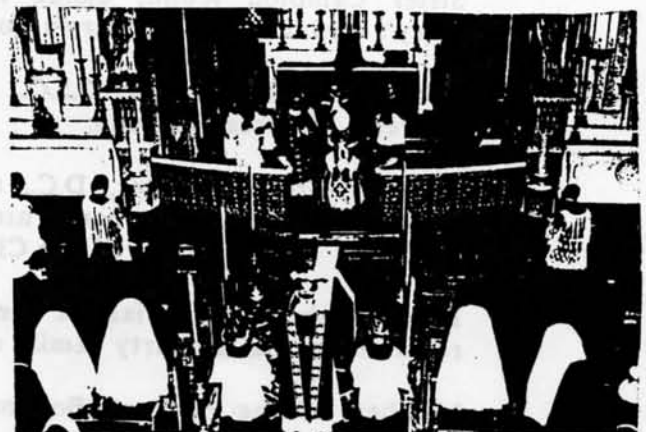
"CANTICLE OF PRAISE" — CENTENNIAL PAGEANT



REV. MOTHER MARY XAVIER, M.S.C.,  
Provincial Louisiana Province



INTERIOR OF CHAPEL OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS  
Provincial House, New Orleans



CENTENNIAL PONTIFICAL REQUIEM  
Chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows

## CENTENNIAL SOUVENIRS

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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