

Souvenir of the FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY THE SISTERS OF MERCY KANSAS CITY

TO HIS EXCELLENCY, our beloved Bishop, the Most Reverend Thomas Francis Lillis, D. D., Bishop of Kansas City, to the Right Reverend and the Very Reverend Monsignori, to the Very Reverend and Reverend Clergy of the Diocese, to the citizens of Kansas City, to our benefactors, and friends, for their kind and devoted interest at all times in our Order, in our institutions, and in our schools, and for their untiring generosity and helpfulness in our spiritual and temporal necessities, the SISTERS OF MERCY express deep and sincere APPRECIATION.

MOST REVEREND THOMAS FRANCIS LILLIS Bishop of Kansas City

WE who know from personal experience the benign influence of Bishop Hogan are glad to lay our humble tribute of praise at the feet of him whom the Church appointed to bring the Order of Mercy to Kansas City to sow the seed in fertile soil wherein the works of Mercy, service to the Poor, to the Sick, and to the Uneducated could be furthered.

MOST REVEREND JOHN J. HOGAN

First Bishop of the Kansas City Diocese

REVEREND JOHN P. PRENDERGAST Pastor of Holy Cross Church, Chaplain of St. Agnes Academy former Motherhouse and Novitiate of the Sisters of Mercy of Kansas City

RIGHT REVEREND A. J. CLOHESSY

Pastor of St. Marys Church, Chaplain of St. Marys Academy Independence, Missouri

VERY REVEREND MONSIGNOR J. W. KEYES Pastor of St. James Church Chaplain of St. James School

VERY REVEREND MONSIGNOR J. N. V. MCKAY Pastor of St. Peters Church Chaplain of St. Peters School

VERY REVEREND J. J. KEEGAN, V. S. Pastor of Holy Trinity Church Chaplain of Holy Trinity School

REVEREND FRANCIS E. BITER Pastor of St. Ann Church Chaplain of St. Ann School

REVEREND J. R. HENNESSY Pastor of St. Patrick Church Chaplain of St. Catherine Hall, Home for Business Women

REVEREND A. F. RADWICK Pastor of St. Stanislaus Church Chaplain of St. Stanislaus School

MOTHER CATHERINE McAULEY

The Institute of Our Lady of Mercy, organized in 1827 became a religious Congregation when Catherine McAuley and two companions made their perpetual vows, December 12, 1831. The Rule was approved May 3, 1835, and confirmed by Gregory XVI, June 6, 1841.

When Mother McAuley was left an heiress to an immense fortune, she felt she must show her gratitude to God by doing something for the poor. She had the crosses, the conflicts, and the misconceptions which wait upon all great enterprises ; her work was a plant whose growth was in and of the Church. She wished at first to build a school for poor girls and her architect built a convent ; she engaged a few ladies to help her teach and behold, she and her companions were being trained in the Presentation Convent to found an Order. This Order of Mercy spread rapidly through Ireland and within a short time it was to be founded in almost every part of the world.

Mother McAuley lived the life of a Sister of Mercy for only ten years. How short the time, yet how wonderful the work of that mighty mind, of that expansive heart. She devoted her wealth, her exertions, and her life to the alleviation of human misery, for she knew that in making people happy she made them good. Urged by love, she gave herself and all that she possessed without any reserve to God; and she deemed the honor of serving Him and His poor

more than a sufficient reward for her immense and unceasing labor. Her one desire was to spend herself and she spent in the service of the poor.

What wonder then that such valiant woman and magnetic spirit should gather around her many kindred spirits, and that in the brief period of ten years, during which she presided over her community, hundreds should flock to her standard! What wonder that her spirit of mercy should propagate itself beyond her fondest dreams to foresee that her children among the choicest of flowers of the flock of Christ should now be numbered not by hundreds but by the hundreds of thousands! And need we marvel that her children should be called blessed by millions of the faithful in every quarter of the globe from northern Ireland to southern Africa?

The distinctive feature of the Order is that its works are the "works of Mercy." The Sisters of Mercy are engaged in the laborious duties of instructing the ignorant in schools and academies, visiting the sick and imprisoned, working in hospitals and orphan asylums and in homes for the protection of women of good character, and wherever there is a need they are engaged in performing all the other works of mercy. The Sisters make perpetual vows, observe choir duties, spend six or seven hours daily in spiritual exercises and a number of days yearly in retreat. They labor first for their own sanctification, then for the salvation of others. Their spirit is the spirit of Mother McAuley and that spirit is poetically expressed in her own beautiful lines: "Sweet, mercy, patient, mild and kind, Softens the high and lifts the fallen mind, Knows with soft hand, an even rein to guide, Nor yields to fear, nor knows exactly pride. Not soon provoked, it easily forgives, Is all to all, and with a look relieves, Sweet peace it brings wherever it arrives, Removes our pains, and crowns with joy our lives."

May that spirit thrive and prosper!

May it ever inspire her children!

May it inspire still others to follow in her footsteps.

MOTHER CATHERINE McAULEY

Foundress of the Order of Mercy 1831 - 1937

MOTHER MARY CARMELITA, R. S. M.

Mother General of the Sisters of Mercy of the Union

FIFTY YEARS IN KANSAS CITY

MOTHER AGNES

Fifty years ago two Sisters of Mercy, Mother Agnes Dunn and Sister Mary Edmund Whelan gave up the convent home in Louisville, where they had entered the Order of Mercy, received their religious training to serve the poor, the sick, and the uneducated, to accept an obedience from their superior and to comply with the request of the late Bishop Hogan to establish the Order of Mercy in Kansas City, an undertaking which was to make them known as courageous pioneers with simple faith and an abiding trust in the Providence that sustained them. Mother Agnes (died January 19, 1899) and Sister Mary Edmund (died January 26, 1937) arrived in Kansas City in July, 1887. Their destined home, a residence at 512 E. Sixth Street, which they were to open as a home for employed women, was occupied by a family and was not ready to receive them. During the summer months the Sisters stayed at Bishop Hogan's home, 412 W. 12th Street, waiting for the family to vacate the house and making plans to begin their arduous

work. By September the home, poverty-stricken and almost destitute of furnishings, was ready for occupancy. On September 8th it was opened as St. Joseph's Home for Girls. At seven o'clock Bishop Hogan said a Mass of Thanksgiving in the little Chapel at which Mother Agnes, Sister Mary Edmund, and two or three lay people assisted. The good Bishop obtained the first Altar on which Mass was said in Kansas City for the Chapel and he also supplied the vestments and other necessities for the Mass. A week later two boarders applied. The Sisters were so grateful for the prospects of a little income that they offered to do their laundry. By December, twelve girls were boarding in the home and the work of the Sisters of Mercy was under way.

For four years, Mother Agnes and Sister Mary Edmund governed the home hoping for more Sisters from their former motherhouse in Louisville, but owing to the shortage of Sisters and lack of funds necessary for travel, the Louisville house could give no help. Bishop Hogan, devoted friend and counsellor of Mother Agnes, advised her to put the Kansas City house under his jurisdiction and make it independent of Louisville. This arrangement in accordance with the rules of the Mercy Order, was agreeable to the Louisville community and to Mother Agnes, and in 1891 the home was made the mother-house of the Sisters of Mercy in Kansas City.

SISTER MARY EDMUND

The history of the Sisters of Mercy in Kansas City is a story of pioneering through dire poverty and hardships in a new field with vast opportunities for growth and expansion; it is likewise a prophecy of a victory for humanity, for service to God's creatures has been the guiding motive of the Order. The establishment of a motherhouse and novitiate wherein members could be trained for this service has been the means of making the Order of Mercy a part of Kansas City for it was the only Religious Congregation to devote its service exclusively to this city.

First Convent of Mercy in Kansas City

On April 1st, 1891, the first postulants entered: Miss Alberta Bates of York, Nebraska, known to the World as Sister Mary Alexis; Anna Cavanaugh, Sister Mary Sebastian (deceased 1893); Mary Killgallon, Sister Mary Carmelita, both from Wilkes Barre, Pa.; and Elizabeth DeLaney, Sister Margaret Mary from Covington. At present Sister Margaret Mary and Sister Mary Carmelita are stationed at St. Agnes Academy; Sister Mary Alexis is stationed in Omaha where she is a member of the Provincial council at the Provincial House. These three Sisters helped to pilot the community through the cradle days. Their zeal for the glory of the Divine Master and love for the souls of their fellow men have traced shining paths throughout the city.

Perhaps their struggles through poverty and toil whetted these pioneers' desire to help the poor. Undaunted, they labored zealously forward, and in 1893 they were ready to build a new addition to the home which when completed accommodated seventy-five girls. When the little community numbered eight, Bishop Lillis who was the pastor of St. Patrick Parish, asked Mother Agnes to supply teachers for St. Patrick School at Eighth and Cherry. Desiring to share in one of the greatest works for which the Order was founded, education, Mother Agnes complied with the Bishop's wish and accepted the school which at that time was one of the two or three parochial schools in the city. Living conditions at the home for girls were overcrowded to the extent that the Sisters who were assigned to the school had to use vacant classrooms for sleeping quarters, and since the building was no longer adequate for the needs of candidates for the community, Mother Agnes, through the advice of Bishop Hogan, looked for property in the Northeast—the city seemed to be growing in that direction—for a site for a novitiate. She

selected the grounds on which St. Agnes now stands, but owing to arduous work, heavy responsibility, and worry, Mother Agnes' health was fast failing, and before she could complete the business transaction for the purchase of the property, she was called to her eternal reward. Mother Agnes died for her ideal, the founding of her Order in Kansas City, wherein her Sisters might engage in its many works: visiting the sick and imprisoned, working in hospitals, in orphanages, and in homes for the protection of women, teaching in schools and academies, and performing all other works of mercy. At the time of her death, January 19, 1899, the home for girls was free from debt, St. Patrick School was flourishing, and sufficient money was in reserve to purchase the property for the new motherhouse.

Sister Mary Edmund succeeded Mother Agnes as superior. She purchased the property which Mother Agnes had so much desired and built the first wing of St. Agnes Academy. She lived to see the community grow and prosper with the city. During her forty-nine and one-half years of service to God, to the Church, to humanity, she lived through a period of labor and privation; she lived to see the Order which she had helped to pioneer represented in Kansas City in the following institutions: Holy Cross School, 5106 St. John Avenue; Holy Trinity School, 4010 E. 10th Street; St. Michael School, 2415 Brighton; St. James School, 3941 Tracy Avenue; St. Stanislaus School, 6808 E. 18th Street; St. Peter's School, 6400 Charlotte Street; St. Ann's School, 10113 Lexington Avenue; and St. Catherine Home, 1026 Forest Avenue, which continues the work begun at St. Joseph Home.

In 1910 in view of the necessity of general organization, the Superiors of the three Mercy foundations in the Kansas City Diocese, which were all established about the same time, were led to consider the means best adapted to give uniformity to the three novitiates and stability to the growing congregations. Acting under the advice of Bishop Lillis, and with his active help, a plan for the unification of the three houses under one superior with a council was proposed to the Holy See at Rome. On July 2, 1911, Pius X granted a Decree for the consolidation of the three houses as a diocesan congregation with St. Agnes the motherhouse; thus all the institutions conducted by the Sisters of Mercy in the diocese, St. John Hospital, St. Peter School, and Convent of Mercy, Joplin; St. Mary Academy, Independence, became a part of the amalgamated organization. The Order of Mercy was the only congregation with a motherhouse and novitiate in Kansas City from 1891 to 1929, at which time, superiors of all foundations of Mercy in accordance with the wish of the Head of the Catholic Church, Pius XI, proposed to their communities a generalate in the United States. A chapter for the purpose of obtaining the opinion of the Sisters on the matter was held in each house with the result that more than half of the members of the greater number of the houses were in favor of general government. These chapters resulted in the consolidation of more than 5,000 Sisters of Mercy representing more than half the communities in the United States. The novitiate of the Kansas City house was transferred to Omaha in July, 1930, when the Diocesan Sisters of Mercy lost their identity as a diocesan community and took membership in the western province of the Sisters of Mercy of the Union. The province numbers more than 700 members; the organization conducts colleges, academies, high schools, hospitals, orphanages, homes for the aged, homes for employed women, and sanatariums in the middle west and western states.

St. Agnes Academy Chapel

Turning their gaze in retrospect to fifty years ago, the Sisters of Mercy who are now stationed in the various institutions which their Order conducts in the city and in the diocese

see in Mother Agnes and in Sister Mary Edmund with their early members the fulfillment of a prophecy for future greatness; they see in them the leaders of a vast troop of soldiers marching steadily forward in the great works of Mercy—the service of the poor, the sick, and the uneducated with the underlying principles of “What you did unto one of these, the least of My little ones, you did unto Me”; “I was sick and you ministered unto Me”; and “I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth” ever before them.

Much interest was shown during the spiritual observance of the Fiftieth Anniversary. The Rt. Rev. Bishop, the Monsignori, and the Pastors with their assistants from all the parishes in which the Order is represented took part in the celebration. The first event in the formal observance took place Tuesday, August 31, at 8:30 o'clock when Bishop Lillis celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving in the chapel of St. Catherine Hall, which was selected for the first event because the home for girls was the origin of the Order in Kansas City. The assistants to His Excellency were Rev. J. R. Hennessy and Rev. N. A. T. Connell; Rev. A. M. Tighe was the speaker for the occasion; the services closed with solemn Benediction given by Very Rev. Mons. Keyes with Rev. James E. Divine and Rev. T. J. Connelly Deacon and Subdeacon respectively. Wednesday morning at nine o'clock Rev. J. P. Prendergast was the celebrant of the Solemn Requiem Mass in the St. Agnes Chapel with Rev. Francis E. Biter, Deacon; Rev. J. M. Walton, Subdeacon; Rev. James Owens, Master of Ceremonies; Rev. T. F. Prendergast, speaker. The Mass was offered for the repose of the deceased Sisters of Mercy of the diocese. Thursday, September 2nd at 9 o'clock a Solemn High Mass was celebrated on the St. Agnes Campus for all living benefactors, friends, pupils, patients, alumnae, and occupants of institutions conducted by the Sisters of Mercy in the diocese. Very Rev. J. J. Keegan was celebrant; Rev. J. J. Doyle, Deacon; Rev. A. F. Radwich, Subdeacon; Rev. J. J. Murphy, Master of Ceremonies; Very Rev. Mons. McKay, speaker. The ceremony closed with Solemn Benediction given by Very Rev. Mons. J. W. Keyes; Rev. M. E. Coates, Deacon; Rev. Joseph Killgallon, Subdeacon. At the shrine of the Blessed Virgin on the South Campus where the Altar was erected, Sisters of Mercy, parents and pupils, benefactors, friends, Priests, and Religious of the city gathered to honor the Golden Jubilee of the Sisters of Mercy.

To our Sisters, heartfelt gratitude. We have followed you in your various charitable endeavors of Fifty Years. We have watched the growth of your Institution; we have seen the grain of mustard seed become a tree, and “the birds of the air,” namely, the poor, the sick, and the suffering, take refuge among its branches. We have seen the generous spirit which you have shown in your schools, and in your institutions in your work for God and for humanity. God speed, noble Sisters. “Prosperere, procedere, et regna.” The Saint Agnes Alumnae

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PROGRAM

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May His choicest gifts and graces Be poured down this day on thee!

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May the coming Fifty Years bring to the Sisters of Mercy the Happiness their unselfish
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Compliments of Centropolis Lumber Co. 7220 E. 15th St. BE. 0826

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Compliments of Hon. Judge Joseph J. Dougherty
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PROGRAM
Orchestra Under the Direction of Alvin Stevens
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Compliments of BILL KILTY Penthouse Broilers Hilland 7744 7503 Washington
BEnton 2884-5 SOLOMON STODDARD COMPANY, Inc. 6612 Indep. Avenue Real Estate -
Insurance - Loans
Joseph P. Rose Glenn E. Henderson ROSE & HENDERSON Funeral Home 15th and Jackson
Benton 0970 Kansas City, Mo.
J. L. HOULEHAN REALTY CO. Real Estate - Loans - Insurance
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Drs. Henderson, Eyesight Specialists
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Compliments of MRS. T. B. CAPPONI, Fine Food 4903 St. John Ave. BE. 9523
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LORIE BOOK STORE 4808 Independence Ave. BEnton 7651
Compliments of Lerner's Electric Shoe Shop Sam's Market, 5919 St. John King's Market
Northeast Realty Company Real Estate, Rentals, Loans 107 Hardesty Avenue Paul Waltermire
BE. 3519
Compliments of DR. D. B. ROBINSON Dentist 5400 St. John BEnton 2659
MACK'S HOME LAUNDRY 5018 St. John BEnton 7684 Mrs. L. E. McDaniel, Mgr.
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Sincere Good Wishes to THE SISTERS OF MERCY on
Their Fiftieth Anniversary Pupils of St. Stanislaus School
Compliments of Eureka Petroleum Company 917 East 19th Street
PROGRAM
Floor Show arranged through the courtesy of VIC ALLEN, Paragon Theatrical Agency and
WILLIAM J. MACK Kelly-Mack School of Dancing
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Best Wishes Manufacturers & Mechanics Bank BEnton 0345 Sheffield Station
Chrysler Plymouth LON'S CAR EXCHANGE WE TRADE Chestnut 4178 15th and Wabash
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RAMONA BAKERY Italian Bread 1303 Independence Ave. HARRISON 0796
12TH STREET BEER GARDEN Nick De Pasco

A FRIEND

To Mr. Albert L. Maillard, general chairman of the Jubilee Campaign, to all chairmen, co-chairmen, and committees, to Mr. George Goldman and coworkers at the Municipal Auditorium, to the citizens of Kansas City who have made the Fiftieth Anniversary a meaningful and beneficial occasion, the Sisters of Mercy are deeply grateful.