"But these were men of mercy, whose godly deeds have not failed: good things continue with their seed. Their posterity are a holy inheritance, and their seed hath stood in the coverants". Ecc. 44, 10-12.

Glorious is the day that has dawned for this fair City of Natchez and the illustrious State of Mississippi, which constitutes the territory embraced in the Diocese of Natchez. Months of far sighted planning and sacrificing industry are today brought to a climax in this fitting commemoration of the erection, one hundred years ago, on the 28th day of July, 1837, all of this vast area, then but forest primeval, into a Diocese of the Holy Catholic Church. It is but fitting that we should celebrate in a mood of admiration and thanksgiving the courage, hardships and achievements of the men and women of God, who during this century of religious development left imbedded in the very soil of this State material and spiritual footprints that will endure to the end of time. Well may the heart of him, who today presides so ably over the destinies of this Diocese, throb with exhilarating emotion, as from the eminence of
God's altar he looks out over this distinguished assembly of ecclesiastical and civil dignitaries, this legion of devoted priests, brothers and sisters, this representative throng of men and women of his own and other faiths, who have come to rejoice and join with him in the solemn act of thanksgiving for the uncounted blessings, which the bountiful God has poured out over this beautiful portion of the Southland. Our hearts expand with his as we chant the hymn of praise, caught from the lips of the inspired singer: "Great are the works of the Lord: Fought out according to his wills. His work is praise and magnificence: and His justice continuith for ever and ever" (Ps. 110, 3-4)

Catholicity in Mississippi did not begin one hundred years ago; it dates back to those romantic days in 1541, less than fifty years after the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus, when that courageous Spanish cavalier, Hernando de Soto with a small band of brave followers, cut a trail through forest, swamp and Indian preserves from Tampa to the banks of the Father of Waters. With that expedition of exploration there were a dozen missionaries, eight seculars, two Dominican Fathers, one son of St. Francis and a Trinitarian. If
they did not celebrate Holy Mass it was because they had lost their equipment of sacred vestments and vessels in an encounter with the Indians, but surely they offered to God other acts of worship, as for the first time they gazed upon the mighty stream that divides a continent as it pursues its course southward for two thousand miles, from the tiny spring that gives it birth in the distant north to the great gulf. One year later, May 27, 1542, their leader lay sick unto death in his tent. He confessed his sins, asked pardon of his companions, charged them with solicitude for the conversion of the Indians and commended his soul to God. Amidst the chant of the De Profundis his body was consigned to the bosom of yonder mighty river, whose silt enshrouds his body in everlasting embrace. Impoverished and leaderless, his followers headed their way to Mexico, never more to return. Thus in a melancholy note/the first episode of Catholic Life in Mississippi.

The Second Episode, seems to have

The second episode seems to have One hundred and thirty years passed before white man again set foot on Mississippi soil. This time the approach was from the north, the leadership was French, the mission pacific, symbolized by the spotless, peace-breathing fleur de lys and
the standard of Salvation, the Cross. Continuing where Joliet and Marquette had left off, at
the confluence of the Arkansas and the Mississippi, La Salle in 1682 explored the great river
to the gulf of Mexico. On March 29, of that year Father Zenobius Mambre, Augustinian Recol-
lect, celebrated Mass among the Natchez Indians. The founding of Biloxi in 1699 by Iberville
brought Father Bordenare and the Jesuit Father Du Ru, who celebrated Mass daily and conducted
other services, that hallowed the soil and enveloped the early traditions of Mississippi in
an arena distinctly Catholic. From the seminary in Quebec there came Fathers de Montigny,
Davien, Dubuisson and St. Cosmo to evangelize the Indians and minister to the spiritual needs
of the white colonist. Natchez became a French outpost in 1716 under Bienville. But the
Indians, though often friendly at first, had no natural inclination to embrace Christianity.
Father St. Cosmo was put to death at Donaldsonville, Fr. Dupoisson was massacred at Ft.
Rosalie, the site of Natchez, Fr. Souel and his faithful negro servant on the Yazoo near the
present site of Vicksburg. Father Anthony Senat was burned at the stake, May 20, 1736, just
two hundred and one years ago. Thus was the soil of Mississippi also crimsoned and sanctified
in the blood of men, who gave their lives for the sacred cause of truth and holiness.

UNDER THE UNION JACK AND THE FLAG OF CASTILE.

The beginning of the century which preceded the erection of the Diocese of Natchez witnessed the reduction of the garrison, the dwindling of the civil population to a small group of traders and trappers and an ever growing fear of Indian outrages. During the British occupation from 1763 to 1779 the incoming settlers were naturally non-Catholics. For fifty years - 1729 to 1779 - there are no catholic records and no trace of priestly service.

The conquest of Baton Rouge and Natchez in 1779 restored Spanish Sovereignty and in 1789 three missionaries arrived from the Irish seminary in Salamanca - Fathers William Savage, Gregory White and Constantine Mc Kenna, who founded the Church of San Salvador in the heart of Natchez. For a decade of years under the kindly rule of the Spanish authorities the Church seems to have prospered, but progress was checked again by the departure of the priests and many of their flock, when on March 30, 1798 Spain recognized the claim of the
United States to the Mississippi Territory.

**UNDER THE AMERICAN FLAG.**

For a period of forty years-1798 to 1837-the scattered Catholics of Mississippi were favored only casually by visits of priests from New Orleans. On January 7, 1802 they formed "The Roman Catholic Society of Natchez" and bought from the U. S. Government for $500.00 the very site on which stands today the beautiful Cathedral and Bishop's House. The Church then erected was destroyed by fire in 1832 and not rebuilt until ten years later. Among the visiting priests of those days was Father Anthony Blanc, who later became Bishop of New Orleans, whence he greatly aided the foundation and development of this Diocese.

**THE NEW ERA DAWNS**

July 28, 1837 is the important date in the catholic annals of the U.S.A. which today we commemorate. On that day, upon the recommendation of the hierarchy assembled in the Third Provincial Council of Baltimore, Pope Gregory XVI established by formal decree three new dioceses - Nashville, Dubuque and Natchez. This important administrative act augured a new
of progress for the Church in America and demonstrated her faith in Divine Providence, in the courage and zeal of her missionary forces and in the staunch religious quality of the faithful. The first Bishop of Dubuque found in his vast jurisdiction but two small churches and one priest; the first Bishop of Nashville found in Tennessee not a single priest and only an unfinished shell of a church; when Bishop John Mary Joseph Gheeranus of the Society of St. Sulpice reached Natchez in 1841, on the 18th day of April, he found neither church, nor residence, nor definitely attached priest, but two visiting priests, a few hundred Catholics and forty six thousand square miles of prairie and woodland, constituting the area of his spiritual jurisdiction. President of St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore, distinguished for his piety and learning, twice sought for episcopal honors in the East (Boston and New York), this man of God accepted the call of the Holy See to dedicate his apostolic zeal and administrative ability to the foundation of a new diocese on the very horizon of civilization. Ceaseless labor, never ending sacrifice, fatiguing journeys on horseback, by wagon and by boat, personal poverty and ever present vexing financial problems characterized his administration
of eleven years. When he died in Fredericksburg in 1852 after the first Plenary Council of Baltimore, of which he had been the Chief Promoter, he could review with the mind's eye the material landmarks of his labors - completed churches in Natchez, Jackson, Sulphur Springs, Vicksburg, Yazoo City, Port Gibson, Bay St. Louis, Pass Christian, Biloxi and partly completed buildings in at least four other places; St. Mary's Orphanage for girls under the devoted Daughters of St. Vincent de Paul, founded in Natchez in 1847; and best of all, thirteen zealous priests devoted to the cultivation of the Lord's new vineyard.

Thus were laid the foundations of an enduring structure, the conception of which might have seemed presumptuous in those pioneering days, when highways were winding trails, when centers of population mere clusters of cabin homes often menaced by Indian surprises, when the catholic population was but a number of scattered families wrestling with poverty, disease and the oft' trying whims of fickle nature. The Psalmist tells us that: "Unless the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it" (Ps. 126, 1). The early history of the Diocese confirms the inference, that if the Lord give the inspiration and His blessing,
they labour not in vain that build in faith and prayerful confidence.

CONSTANT PROGRESS.

It hardly comes within the purview of a sermon, even if time permitted, to recite in detail the history of an institution and of all the characters, that shared in its development through an hundred years. Moreover, with wise forethought and generous industry, His Excellency Most Reverend Bishop Gerow has written a fascinating story of the Diocese of Natchez, a work which should become the cherished possession of every household in Mississippi. But we seem justified in reviewing at least the outstanding characteristics of the chief shepherds of this illustrious see, all of them men of distinction, ability and truly apostolic ideals.

Bishop Chasche was preeminently the Pioneer. He laid the foundations not only of religion’s unfailing handmaid, it was he who in 1847 brought the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul to establish St. Mary’s Orphanage for girls. Bishop Van de Velde of the Society of Jésus, one time President of St. Louis University,
subsequently second Bishop of Chicago, may be styled the FOUNDER OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION in the Diocese. Within the two years of his regime (1853-1855) he introduced to Bay St. Louis and the Sisters of St. Joseph and Brothers of the Sacred Heart; he would have established a college for boys here in Natchez, had the Society of Jesus been able to supply a faculty.

To Bishop Elder, who ruled the Diocese for twenty three years (1851 to 1880) belongs the triple title of BUILDER, PATRIOT AND DEFENDER OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHURCH. Thirty churches and a dozen schools for white and Colored rose as by miraculous intervention in various parts of the State; the number of priests was increased from thirteen to nineteen; the catholic population from 10,000 to 12,500. During the War of the States Bishop Elder stood by the Confederacy. Was he not by birth, education and family tradition a Southerner among Southerners, a native of Baltimore, A patriot in public assembly and private intercourse, he was yet more a Samaritan with true priestly intuition who sensed the spiritual and physical needs of the departing soldiers and witnessed on the battlefield and in the hospital the unmerciful ravages of war on the torn bodies and harrassed souls of its victims.
Genuine churchman that he was, he protested the ruthless destruction of his church, residence and sacred vestments by northern soldiers and challenged the rights of the officer in charge to dictate official prayers for the success of the Union Army. Rather than yield, he submitted to imprisonment, while awaiting the answer to his appeal to the President and the Secretary of War. For seventeen days he endured the hardship of confinement in Vidalia. When he returned Natchez received him with jubilation and the ringing of church bells.

No less courageous was Bishop Elder, when in 1878 the fever plague demanded its toll of death among the priests, sisters and laity and barely spared the Bishop himself as he ministered to the fever stricken population of Vicksburg. An apostle after God's own heart, he was spared to dedicate another quarter of a century to pastoral labors. He was promoted in 1880 to the Archbishopric of Cincinnati, where until 1904 he bore with patience as well as honor the metaphorically thorn-lined mitre.

THE SECOND HALF OF THE CENTURY.

Beautiful is the title of the Cathedral Church selected by Bishop Chanche, when in 1842 he laid the corner stone of the edifice designed by the celebrated architect Reilly of New York,
"OUR LADY OF SORROWS". But there was also a bit of unconscious prophecy in the title. During four decades and for as many bishops the structure proved "a lady of sorrows" as each was confronted with the task of gathering funds and organizing plans to complete it. To Bishop Janssen was reserved the joy of consecrating in September 1886 this architectural gem, complete, beautified and financially unincumbered, to the glory of God and the patronage of the Mother of Sorrows. This prelate may stand out in the annals as THE APOSTLE OF THE INDIANS AND NEGROES; for the former he founded with the aid of Father B. J. Bekkers, Holy Rosary Mission at Tuckers, for the latter he established three schools during the eight years of his administration.

New Orleans was not ungrateful, when in 1888 it received the fartherly and cultured Bishop Janssen as its Archbishop. In his stead it surrendered the energetic pastor of St. Michael's Church in the so-called Irish Channel of the historic Crescent City, when the Holy See named Father Thomas Heslin Bishop of Natchez. Two former Bishops of Natchez, both elevated to Metropolitan rank, participated in his consecration, Archbishop Janssen as
consecrating prelate, Archbishop Elder as preacher. If we have given to Bishop Janssen the title of "Apostle of the Indians and Negroes", it seems that Bishop Heslin merits the title "Promoter of Colored Missions". Bishop Janssen concentrated his efforts on schools for Negro children; Bishop Heslin gave the Colored Catholics their first churches, six in number, and stabilized the work by calling in the Josephite Fathers, the Fathers of the Divine Word, the Sisters of the Holy Ghost and the priceless cooperation of Mother Katharine Drexel. The greatest growth in point of numbers marked the twenty-five year span of his administration. Reports indicate an increase of eighty percent in the catholic population-15,014 to 27,355 souls-while the parochial school registration increased ninety percent - 2107 to 3949-These reveal Bishop Heslin as an indefatigable shepherd, who knew also how to inspire others to labor unselfishly for the cause of Christ.

THE LAST QUARTER CENTURY.

To characterize the administrations of the sixth and seventh Bishops of Natchez would seem both superfluous and indelicate-Superfluous, because they are of the present generation
and their works stand out as Christ would have them stand out: "So let your light shine
before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven"
(Matt. 5,16)- Indelicate, because we fear to offend the modesty of him who now occupies the
throne of this venerable See. And yet the picture, which we have endeavored to draw in outline, would be but seventy-five percent complete, were we to omit these final touches, for
which we crave gracious indulgence.

Bishop Gunn was a member of the Society of Mary, renowned for his learning, devotion to
the Blessed Virgin, oratorical ability and untiring zeal. He was a firm believer in multiply-
ing outposts of catholicity throughout the State, to bring spiritual opportunities to
even the smallest settlements. Well may he be called "THE CHAPEL BUILDER" for in his time
(he ruled the Diocese nearly thirteen years) there were constructed thirty-three chapels and
churches and five schools. The Catholic Church Extension Society provided much of the money
necessary to carry on this intensive program. His long residence at Pass Christian made him
a familiar figure on the Gulf Coast, beloved by clergy and laity, by Catholics and non-Catholics
who mourned his rather premature death at the age of sixty-one. Like his predecessors he spent himself generously for Christ and His Church; he gave his all without stint to the flock committed to his care, he served well the country of his adoption by his patriotic oratory during the stirring days of the World War.

Varied had been the types selected by Rome for the episcopal office in Natchez. Bishops Chanche and Elder were native Americans and Southerners, both eminent scholars and educators; Bishop Van de Velde was a native of Belgium, an educator, a university president and one time Provincial of the Society of Jesus; Bishop Janssen1 was a son of Holland, parentage, Cathedral rector and for a time administrator of the Diocese of Richmond; Bishops Heslin and Gunn were sons of the Emerald Isle of Saints and Scholars, the former carried to the United States on the wings of zeal for missionary enterprise, the latter answering the call of religious obedience to teach the students of his order on the Catholic University Campus in Washington. Yet each was eminent in his power of adoption to the conditions that mark a missionary diocese in our Southland; each cast his lot wholeheartedly with his people, to whom he became father and
friend, as well as shepherd and leader; each was received, revered and held in affection by his spiritual children and those not of the household of the Catholic Faith. Truly a beautiful picture of the unity that marks the relationship in the Church between shepherd and flock, the one becoming as St. Paul of old “All things to all men”, the other recognizing in the Shepherd the indelible mark of the priesthood and the power and authority in which Christ clothed His apostles and their successors. It is no small credit to this Diocese that it gave

The Church in the United States four Archbishops—Blanc, Lery and Janssen of New Orleans and Elder of Cincinnati—and one Bishop—Meershaert of Oklahoma.

In its seventh Bishop the See of Natchez has a son of the very soil of the Deep South, heir to its rich culture and venerable traditions, as well as to the charm of character which is the product of a pious Catholic home and a well reared Catholic education. The schools of his native Mobile, Mount St. Mary’s College of Emmitsburg and the American College Seminary in Rome constitute his excellent educational background. Priestly service as Rector of the Cathedral and Chancellor of the Diocese of Mobile supplied exceptional administrative experience.
Efficiency and success in his tasks singled out Doctor Gerow in the eye of Rome, when he was ordained only fifteen years, for the exalted position of Bishop of Natchez.

**THE APOSTLE OF CATHOLIC ACTION** is the title by which we would characterize Bishop Gerow's administration. True to the spirit of the Church in this modern age he has drawn together the priests by means of regular conferences and paternal solicitude for their welfare, stimulated the cultivation of vocations to the priesthood among the sons of the Diocese, organized the more systematic instruction of the children through the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine and Religious Vocation Schools, systematized the support of the institutions of charity and welded together for Catholic Action the womanhood of the Diocese through the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women. He has extended the Kingdom of Christ materially by encouraging the erection of twenty seven new churches, chapels and schools and by the beautification of this historic sacred edifice, while spiritually he inspires priests, religious and laity with an ardent love of the Church and zeal for the cause of Christ. May his years in the episcopate be lengthened and his works ever blessed by God, Whose honor he strives to promote through the salvation of souls!
THE MESSAGE OF THE CHURCH.

The story of the Diocese of Natchez reveals a galaxy of apostolic men in the Bishops and priests who through these hundred years have carried with honor and unselfish devotion the message of the Church to hillside and fireside, to rural isolation and concentrated civic centers. Churches, schools and institutions wherein the fire of Christian charity is kept ever brightly glowing are the material evidences of episcopal inspiration and leadership, of priestly labor and sacrifice, of the devotion of consecrated virgins in the religious orders and of the generous cooperation of a laity, that prizes above all earthly possessions the gift of faith and membership in the one true Church.

Through these human and material instruments the Church carried consistently the divine message entrusted to her by Christ Jesus her Founder: "Going therefore teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28:19)

To the rugged explorers and settlers this message brought spiritual strength, courage and patient restraint; to the Indian aborigines and the Colored Race it brought saving truth,
regenerating grace and the dawn of civilization; in the progressive development of city, 
countryside and state and nation this message added to the fundamentals of truth, holiness 
and charity also the blessing of superior education, culture and every civic virtue. In 
State and Nation the history of the century reveals a soulstirring record of lights and 
shadows, of successes and occasional failures, of progress and setbacks, of glory and dis­ 
appointment, of peace and war; in all and through all the Church of Natchez, in the fullness 
of her responsibility and sanction has played her part nobly, and devotedly and generously. 
Prelate and priest, the consecrated men and women of God who forsake all to follow 
Christ and minister to humanity's needs, laymen and women of every station and walk of life 
have participated in the building up of a spiritual structure, vigorous, beneficent, beauti­ 
ful to dwell upon. May God deign to accept our humble tribute of homage and thanksgiving 
and hold the present generation worthy of passing on to those yet unborn this precious and 
glorious heritage, enhanced by its own contribution of glowing fervour during the first 
cycle of a new century.
of Indian outrages. During the British occupation from 1763 to 1779, the incoming settlers were naturally non-Catholics. For fifty years, in fact, there were no Catholic records and no trace of priestly presence.

The conquest of Baton Rouge and Natchez in 1719 restored Spanish sovereignty to this wilderness, where missionaries arrived from the Irish Seminary in Salamanca. Father William Savage, Gregory White, and Constantine McNenna, who founded the Church of San Salvador in the heart of Natchez. For a decade of years under the kindly rule of the Spanish authorities, the church seemed to have prospered, but progress was checked again by the departure of the priests and many of their flock, when on March 30, 1738, Spain recognized the claim of the Protestant States to the Mississippi Territory.

Under The American Flag

For a period of forty years, 1798 to 1837, the scattered Catholics of Mississippi clung tenaciously by handfuls of priests from New Orleans. On January 7, 1802, they formed the "Roman Catholic Society of Natchez," which was bought from the United States government for $10,000 by the French Consul. Standing today the beautiful Cathedral and Bishop's House. The church then was under the direction of Father John Berchmans, who later became Bishop of New Orleans.

The New Era Dawns

July 28, 1817, is the important date in the Catholic annals of the U.S.A. The Catholic Church, on that date, upon the recommendation of the hierarchy assembled in the Third Provincial Council of Baltimore, consecrated the Most Reverend Father Anthony Blanc, who was yet more a Bishop himself as he was apostolic delegate to the United States. His work was praised and recognized; and his justice continued for his piety and learning.

Catholicity in Mississippi did not begin 100 years ago; it dates back to that romantic day in 1541, when the great Francis Xavier, one of St. Francis and a Trinitarian, when the inspired singer: "Great are the works of the Lord, and the thinking of his soul to God. Amidst the realms of the earth and the far off regions of the horizon of civilization. Ceaseless labor, self-sacrifice, and personal poverty and every effort to enlighten a people, to mitigate their sufferings, to teach them the fundamental truths of religion, to mitigate the world's ills, was to be his lot, and his last resting-place was a cottage.

Catholicity was then established on San Salvador in the heart of Natchez. May 27, 1642, their leader lay sick unto the east (Boston and New York this month), and in the hospital of St. Sulpice reached the other side of the Mississippi in 1641.

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In its seventh Bishop, the See of Natchez has a son of the very soil of the deep south, heir to its rich culture and venerable traditions, as well as to the charm of character which is the product of pious Catholic home and a well-rounded Catholic education. The schools of his native Mobile, Mount St. Mary's College of Emmitsburg and the American College Seminary in Rome constitute his excellent educational background. Priestly service as rector of the Cathedral and Chancellor of the Diocese of Mobile supplied his apothecary of administrative experience. Efficiency and success in his tasks singled out Doctor Gerow in the eye of Rome, and the Diocese of Mobile supplied the material evidences of his extraordinary abilities. He was ordained only fifteen years for the exalted position of Bishop of Natchez.

The Apostle of Catholic Action is the title by which we would characterize Bishop Gerow's administration. True to the spirit of the church in this modern age he has drawn together the sagacity of the Catholic Women. He extended the Kingdom of Christ materially by encouraging the erection of 27 new churches, chapels and schools, and by the recent beautification of this historic sacred edifice, while spiritually he inspires priests, religious and laity with an ardent love for the consecrated virgins in the religious orders and of the generous cooperation of a laity that prizes above all earthly possessions the gift of faith and membership in the one true church.

The Message Of The Church.

The story of the Diocese of Natchez reveals a galaxy of apostolic men in the bishops and priests who through these hundred years have carried with honor and unselfish devotion the message of the church to hillside and five mining; to rural isolation and concentration of civic centers. Churches, schools and institutions wherein the fire of Christian charity is kept ever brightly glowing are the material evidences of episcopal inspiration and leadership of priestly labor and sacrifice, of the devotion of consecrated virgins in the religious orders and of the generous cooperation of a laity that prizes above all earthly possessions the gift of faith and membership in the one true church.

Through these human and material instruments the church conveyed consistently the divine message entrusted to her by Christ Jesus, her Founder. "Going therefore teach ye all nations," apportioned in the Name of the Father and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost." (Matt. 28, 19.) To the rugged explorers and settlers this message brought spiritual strength, courage and patient restraint; to the Indian

NEXT: What people try a criminal suspect by hurling spears at him?
Fishers of Men Among Fishermen in Louisiana.

By One of the Fishers.

We bid you follow the Mississippi River below New Orleans towards the great Delta ere it enters the Gulf of Mexico. If we can believe, that the inhabitants of an area to some extent absorb the characteristics of their physical surroundings, then the Mississippi is a fair clue to the physical makeup and character of the people of this Lower Louisiana Coast. Everlasting winding, changing, rising to great enthusiasm, then dying down to the lowest ebb.

The waters of the big river that flow out yonder towards the sea have touched the soil of many states and carried along the rich loam, the sticky clay and the shiny mud of them all. So, too, is it with the people of the Lower Coast. They are a veritable hodgepodge of nationalities and races, a varied mixture of descendants of the French, Spanish, Italian, Yugoslav, Dalmatian, Russian, Polish, Irish, German and Filipino extraction. Like the River they are rough and gruff in their bearing and yet often suspicious, insidious and deceptive in their ways. Calumny and slander are for many a favorite pastime. The men work in orange groves, trapping, fishing, trawling for shrimp and working extensive oyster beds. Naturally in such work one expects to find a rough set. The avocation of not a few seems to be drinking, gambling and sensuality. In the use of profanity many excel. Religion is generally at a low ebb. Ignorance and pride walk in the same stride; the intensely ignorant among these people are likewise sensitively proud. They believe exactly what they wish; although nearly all are Catholics in name, yet in reality comparatively few are practical. On occasions, even those that come to church, make remarks to one another as: "Do you believe what the Priest said" (in his sermon) or "I don't confess that; that's none of the Priest's business." Many have very little consideration for religion or decorum in Church, while away their time discussing their neighbor's dress, playing with their watches, or defacing the pews. Parents are criminally indulgent with their children; some do not send their children at all to catechetical instruction, with others the least excuse is sufficient to keep them at home frequently.
One of the biggest problems is race prejudice. We have here whites, negroes and mulattoes of many shades. Each of these classes hates the other and for a mulatto to be one shade lighter than his neighbor is sufficient reason for considering himself superior. Some of these colored people who claim to know the family trees of the whites will tell you that they are just as good as these. In the church and school the sharpest color lines are drawn. A priest is often called a "nigheh loveh" because he insists on doing his duty towards the Colored and tries to modify the awful negrophobia, which is coloring and blackening the hearts of so many. These people have inherited the superstition of their ancestry or fallen prey to the voodicism of the negro. Some of the superstitious practices are extremely ridiculous. They have various remedies or "remades" as they call them—tying a string with nine knots about the affected part, will cure sprained ankles or wrists. Water taken from the river, with a certain amount of salt added, whilst certain prayers are said, will cure "sun-pain." The person is immersed in this water, then without drying the body, put to bed. To prove that the patient is cured, they will take a glass of water, invert it on the patient's head and press it down tightly; then it is raised on one side; this raising admits air, causing bubbles to ascend in the glass. Now you must be convinced that the patient is cured. "Can't you see how the heat stroke is leaving the person and causing the water to boil!" Roach Tea; they boil the large water roaches, which abound here, in water as one would tea leaves, and give this tea to the sick child to drink to cure fevers and other diseases. To prevent influenza wear garlic as a nosegay or boutonniere! So that baby may teeth properly, hang a vertebra of a rattle snake about its neck. These are but few of the voodicistic practices, that are found frequently enough among both white and colored.

The Better Side.

But withall, these people have many beautiful traits and characteristics. They are noted for their hospitality and always seem light hearted and easy going. Their indifference and lukewarmness in matters of religion seem to be reasonably
excusable. For many years there was only one priest in this section of seventy-five miles with only two churches. There were no roads. The good Father had to walk, ride a bicycle, travel by boat or train. The train and railway equipment were of a type that should have been discarded fifty years ago. Oftentimes on Sunday priest and people had to wait till one o'clock in the afternoon for Mass. This train was the surest and the quickest means of travel between the two churches. A trip to New Orleans meant traveling a whole day and anight by boat. Even today some of the mission stations can be visited only by boat. Often the missionary must arise at one A.M. from his bed in the bunk house at the Naval Station down the river to catch the mail boat. Traveling in this mail boat becomes exceedingly tedious, especially when the mosquitoes are active or when one has as his fellow passenger a saleslady of the notorious anti-catholic Judge Rutherford.

Today we have roads surfaced with oyster and other sea shells. The priest can travel more speedily and can give better and more efficient service to his people. But to drive an auto down here is very expensive, as the shells cut the tires and the lime dust eats the paint off the car. Still the poor people must walk, and if you wish to enjoy a walk, don't choose a shell road. The shells are very uneven; besides being very uncomfortable, they cut and ruin the shoes. So in coming to Mass on Sundays, folks are surely making a great sacrifice, and yet the attendance at Mass is increasing. If we add to this, that the mosquito, deer fly, sand fly, greenhead and other blood-sucking insects are always busy and hungry, we surely praise the endeavors of those who come to Sunday Mass and other services. Of course, even the priest experiences the avidity of these blood thirsty creatures, especially when he has a flat and must change the tire.

Education and Economics.

Although religion among these people is slowly, but steadily increasing, there are still many barriers to hurdle and obstacles to overcome. The missionaries are putting forth every effort, preaching in season and out of season, distributing
religious pamphlets, booklets and articles. Many of the colored and of the older white people cannot read. This makes it difficult to teach them the essentials of the Catholic Faith. We are called upon at times to prepare men and women fifty and more years old for their first Holy Communion. Especially is it hard to impart knowledge, religious or secular, to many of the negroes. These poor people have been grossly neglected in many ways but especially in education. Only of later years have efforts been made along the Coast to establish schools for the colored. In these schools the missionary is ably assisted by the Catholic teachers, most of them graduates of Xavier University of New Orleans, in teaching the children the Catechism and Bible History.

Another problem is how to support these colored schools. School taxes collected in the civil parish or county are used first of all for the white schools, leaving little for the support of the colored schools. Some of these colored schools are little more than shacks, while the white schools are beautiful up-to-date buildings. Often it happens that the colored children receive only three or four months of schooling, while the whites have a full school term.

These colored people with very few exceptions are extremely poor, barely eking out an existence. It is true, the soil is very productive, but the weeds are even more prolific than the fruit bearing plants; so to grow anything means a constant battle with the weeds and insects. Then when there is a fair crop, the market at New Orleans is frequently already glutted with foodstuffs imported from Florida and the tropical islands. Every attempt to organize these people into "cooperatives" has met with failure. First of all, one would be forced to have several cooperatives with identical aims and purposes, because the eternal color line will not permit folks to mix. Then the colored are distrustful for they know from experience that the whites often use them for their own purpose and then cast them aside. This creates an atmosphere of suspicion, which is hard to dispel.
The biggest disgrace that can befall any one down here is to be denied Christian burial. This has been used as a powerful urge to good folks out of their lethargy. More and more are making at least their Easter Duty, largely through fear that, when they die, they may not be permitted to "pass through the church," as they say. All in all there is no good reason for the missionary to be discouraged. He cannot fail to see some improvement; be it ever so slight, it is a most welcome ray of hope and satisfaction.

So our people, like the river, have their seemly and their unseemly sides. Here is found life's flotsam and jetsam, indifference and even moral turpitude side by side with innocence and beauty. Above all God's help is needed, that the tiny spark of faith may be fanned into a brilliant flame of an active and practical Catholicity; the grace that the seed of love planted in these human hearts, all dear to God, may through the efforts of Catholic teachers, sisters and priests sprout into stately trees whose branches will reach to the highest heavens. We in these truly missionary areas need the prayers of our fellow Catholics in the teeming religious centers of the North and East, their sympathetic understanding and a share in their charitable generosity. To aid the poor Missions at home is no less meritorious than to help spread the Faith in pagan lands.
One Year With The Chapel-Boat, Mary, Star of the Sea---

On April 21st. of this year 1937, the chapel-boat, Mary, Star of the Sea completed its first year of service to the swampers of the Atchafalaya Basin. Although there was no external celebration, there was inner rejoicing among the poor who have been the beneficiaries of this experiment in religious service. Masses, communions, and rosaries were offered at each mission-post in thanksgiving to God for this signal favor, granted them through the beneficence of unknown friends. Prayers of impetration too, were offered to God for those who had made this service possible—the understanding Shepherd of souls who had recognized, at his very entrance into this diocese, the urgent necessity of doing something to save these more or less neglected souls to the faith of their fathers. The other friends too who have chosen to remain unknown were not forgotten as the simple prayer of a simple folk assailed the heights of heaven for their benefactors. And so the day passed into history—a history living, not on the written page, but in the hearts and on the lips of a people who have sacrificed much to retain the modicum of religious tenets and practices bequeathed to them by their forefathers. Theirs has been a strange tradition perhaps, to the world outside, but none the less real to these primitive inhabitants of the swamps. Of Acadian and Spanish stock mostly, they have inherited the religious simplicity of the one and the fiery courage and dogged tenacity of the other. For over fifty years, they have withstood with splendid courage, the approaches of non-Catholic denominations to subvert them from their faith, with offers that might prove enticing even to more sophisticated minds. This is the background, and to complete the setting we need but mention the fact that the swamp population is of a nomadic and retiring character. Some of the religious indifference and negligence found here is to a great extent attributable to these peculiarities.
On April 21, 1936 the chapel-boat, Mary, Star of the Sea makes its bow on this vast stage of approximately 900 square miles. The mission-posts are situated in three different civil parishes. Bayou Pigeon in Iberville parish is west of Pierre Part, where the parish church is situated. Here we find 58 Catholic families representing 289 souls. The second station is Belle River in Assumption parish, southwest of Pierre Part, here we have 73 families, totaling 306 souls. Finally there is 4-mile bayou at the southern most end of Lake Verret, having a total of 33 families or 187 souls. The fourth mission has been consolidated with Belle River, at the request of the 20 families who inhabit Bayou Godel; only four miles from Belle River. So the Belle River mission becomes the most important from a standpoint of population. With the addition of the Bayou Godel populace, we now have 93 families belonging to this mission.

The chapel-boat left Pierre Part April 21st. headed for Bayou Pigeon, a distance of 12 miles away, which was covered in 4 hours. A strong current was encountered in Bay Natchez and lower Grand River, for this was during the flood period (Feb. to June). When we arrived at indigo bayou, where the first house-boats as well as homesteads appear, we gave the well-known signal, the ringing of a large hand-bell and the people started out, afoot on top the levee or rowing and paddling along the bayou, to get to the landing as fast as the chapel-boat. They helped us land and make it fast; the gang plank was lowered and the rush was on for seats. Children crowded into every nook and corner and some were seated on the altar platform, at the Communion rail and even in the aisles. The men, as usual waited until the last minute and then came up on the porch while we recited the rosary. This was followed by religious instructions. The catechists presented their star pupils for commendation, while the prize tail-enders with woe begone looks in their faces,
awaited condemnation. However, the best were none too wise and after an hour of questions which were mostly answered by the questioner, we called it a day and proceeded to the confessional. As the women folk returned home to take care of the smaller children, others came to go to confession. At 6:00 o'clock all is quiet, save an occasional hoot from an owl or a base solo by some solitary bull-frog on the banks of the bayou. Needless to say, the pastor and his faithful "bedeau" (sexton) don't need any sedative to go to sleep. Next morning at day break, the bayou country was alive, as boats began to sputter and backfire until the very woods resounded with the staccato of gasoline motors. Fishermen and woodsmen were leaving for their day's work in bayou and swamp. Hardly a half-hour later, voices of women and children could be heard outside on the levee. They were congregating for Mass. After a very primitive priming up the chapel was opened and again they poured into every corner and overflowed upon the porch. One hundred and three, mostly women and children attended this first Mass. Confessions were heard and at this Mass 64 received Holy Communion. After Mass, catechism and baptism, then the remainder of the morning is given to visiting the sick. In the afternoon is reserved for those who wish to consult the pastor. At 5:00 o'clock rosary was said, followed by catechism and confessions. Next morning Mass was said at 6:00 o'clock—117 assisted and 29 received Holy Communion. Then a final catechetical instruction and we were ready to shove off. The boys hang around to help untie the ropes and in a few minutes we were on our way towards Belle River, 22 miles south. We enjoyed a favorable current the whole way and covered the distance in 4½ hours. Here we tied up for 24 hours, while I returned to Pierre Part to say Mass the next morning and attend to the sick.
At noon, the 23rd. of April we left Belle River for 4-Mile Bayou, 12 miles away, a trip which required three hours. Here again, the same routine was followed for two days. The first day, 114 assisted at Mass and 51 received Holy Communion. On the second day, 85 were present at Mass and 30 received. Leaving 4-Mile Bayou we travelled across Lake Verret, a shallow lake about 14 miles long, to return to Pierre Part, where the chapel-boat remained a whole week before proceeding to Belle River for two days services there. At Belle River, the first service found 131 present out of which 35 approached the altar rail and on the next day 92 were present at Mass and 16 received. I have tried to draw a pen picture of the country, its people and my plan of service. The statistics gathered during this first year are tabulated below for brevity's sake.

**MAYOU PIGEON**

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**BELLE RIVER**

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Grand total for the year—6,531 attendances at Mass, 2,151 Communions, 28 Baptisms, 7 marriages, and collections amounting to $192.95.

During this past year the chapel-boat service has passed through the experimental stage and is now an established reality. We have discovered and carefully noted its advantages and drawbacks. Notable especially among the former, has been the elimination of that bugbear "distance". Time and again, we heard that excuse, "We live too far". How the chapel-boat very often anchors at their very door. Holy Mother Church sends her servants to invite her children to the heavenly banquet; she insists on their attendance, and their excuses are not accepted as valid; so now we go into the byways and the waterways of life and attempt to kindly compel them to fill the chairs reserved for them at the king's table. The church's ministries to this scattered flock has been simplified and systematized, so that the burden placed on the pastor's shoulders has been considerably lessened. Each mission station is visited once a month for two days. They know the schedule and guide themselves accordingly. In former years children were brought to the parish church for baptism at any time. If the pastor happened to be absent at the time, the child was deprived of baptism for a month or two more. The pastor's work is also made easier because
the chapel-boat has practically done away with the uncertainty of water travel. Many a time in former years, I was up at 4:00 A.M. awaiting daybreak to leave for one of the missions, when a heavy rain or a dense fog would prevent my leaving. This was gladly taken up as an excuse by the "ones of little faith" to miss Mass next time the mission was visited. Now we can leave early in the afternoon and reach anyone of the missions before nightfall. Confessions can be heard in the late evening or cool morning hours and Mass said at 6:00 or 6:30 o'clock, leaving ample time for catechetical instructions before school hours.

The drawbacks are few and not so serious, we can sum them up under the headings of time and high cost of operation. Average towing speed is between 3 and 4 miles an hour and the monthly round trip takes the chapel over a 60 mile route so the actual running time each trip is between 15 and 18 hours. Gasoline is consumed at the rate of 3 gallons per running hour. So in a year, it means about 200 hours towing or "en route" and the consumption of about 600 gallons of gasoline; add to this the many miles travelled in making sick calls and in parish service and one has a good idea why time and cost of operation are important items in this new service. In former years, the pastor usually went alone to the mission stations once a month in a gasoline launch. Now he must have a helper to man the chapel-boat while he does the piloting. Now to come down to particulars—the total expenditures for the first year amounted to $490.26; $151.21 for fuel, $139.15 for repairs and alterations, $100.00 for help and upkeep, $27.65 for food, and $77.25 for incidentals. As stated before $192.95 was collected among the parishioners. Father Greco and the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary of St. Maurice Church, the chapel-boat has been outfitted from stem to stern and
they are always ready to help, and even anticipate the needs of the pastor. To their donations of supplies they have added cash amounting to $68.25. To the above donations, His Grace, our Archbishop has added $250.00 to cover each monthly deficit.

A word now of explanation about the ordinary collections—
The amount is small, very true, but I could hardly stress church support. I had to be satisfied with simply explaining the 5th. precept of the church. The non-Catholics with whom they had come in contact had warned them that this new service would cost them a "pretty penny".
And we know how rankly the cockle grows and how laboriously the good grain is made to bear fruit. By nature, these swamrers are as tenacious of their nickels as they have been of their faith. Seven years ago, when I arrived at Pierre Part, I could not understand their aloofness—they shunned all strangers like lepers. So one day I asked an old gentleman why this suspicion of every stranger who penetrated into their "Lost world". He very naively replied, "Ah Père un chat echaude craint l'eau fraide" ("Oh, Father, a scalded cat fears even cold water"). So I resolved to do my scalding with lukewarm water if possible. And so perhaps my seven years with the swampers have not been what the world would call a "howling success" financially. However, I look to the future with a well-substantiated hope of improvement. I am satisfied that the hardships and heart-aches of pioneering have been counterbalanced by the joy of working for souls in God's great outdoors. A carefully kept motor-log has recorded the ups and downs of the first year so that they may be compared to other years or to other similar ventures. On February 22, 1937, I made an entry in the log which illustrates how the unexpected can happen. Returning from 4-Mile Bayou, we were lost in a fog for over an hour, when
suddenly a northwester blew up and we found out we were about in the middle of Lake Verret. To make matters worse, as the squall increased the motor began to miss. For a while I could sympathize with St. Peter, when he woke up the Savior with his famous "Save us, O Lord, we perish". It was not so much the fear but it was uncomfortable to see the waves wash over the tow-boat while the motor stuttered badly and the "bedeau" shivered from the northwester—so he said. No wonder St. Peter prayed.

I realize that this report is incomplete and that more astute minds could make a marvelous study and write revealing facts about the very events which transpire daily under my unseeing eyes. However, I have tried to expose a cross-section of humanity which is clamoring for study and understanding before their problems can be fully solved. I have posited many premises and drawn few conclusions. Deep in my heart are many convictions which time and riper experience alone can prove or disprove. And so, kind reader, I leave these facts to be judged at their worth, feeling that there is plenty room for discussion, decision, and action.

To those whose generosity and interest have made the inauguration of this work possible, we proffer sentiments of benevolence and gratitude—asking God, the "Father of the Poor" to bless them beyond earthly measure for we know that as long as you did it for one of these His least brethren, you did it for Him.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Rev. Jules S. Toups
Pierre Part
participation in public life must ever be permitted to mar the dignity
that is yours because you are women, destined primarily to exercise a
determining influence upon human society through the home and family.
But your Alma Mater also senses the responsibility of training you for
leadership, Catholic leadership, in your future vocations and careers
as professional women, as business women, as women engaged in one form
or another of public life. The Holy Father’s challenge charges you
with a new responsibility, with a new importance, with a new distinc-
tion, the distinction of presenting a solid militant front for the
preservation of the spiritual and moral ideals of the Church, for the
spread of social justice and righteousness and for genuine culture
according to the best Christian traditions. On this distinction I
congratulate you and ask God to bless your noble efforts to prove
yourselves worthy of it. I salute you in the words of His Holiness:
"Courage then, Catholic women and girls! Work without ceasing, without
allowing yourselves ever to be discouraged by difficulties or obstacles.
May you be - under the standard of Christ the King, under the patronage
of His wonderful Mother - restorers of home, family and society."
The dedication of an entire week to a comprehensive study and discussion of education through the multiple modern means of communication is a design lofty in conception and rich in the promise of beneficial results. Many and glorious are the achievements of the broad vision of education that prevails in America, realized with no end of sacrifice on a scale unequaled in any other age or country. But we are far from unanimity of thought or uniformity of practice even in fundamental principles, not to speak of the content of education or the method of imparting knowledge and training to children and youthful minds. Too much experimenting, impatience for quick results, a constant striving after novelties in the form as well as in the matter taught keep education and educators in a state of flux, if not confusion, that is little conducive to the stability and order necessary for the best results. Material aims too often and too generally obscure the fundamental purpose of education. To equip a youth to attain a comfortable position in life and place within his reach the attainment of great wealth may be praiseworthy, but it is far more important to train that youth in the
right use of his godgiven faculties of intellect, will and memory and to set before him ideals of life and action that are based on honor, honesty, self-control and a sense of accountability in the last analysis to the Divine Creator, when the latter sits in judgment over the souls of all men and scrutinizes their most secret acts and motives.

Because of her fundamental regard for these considerations, few functions of the Church are more frequently or more vehemently challenged, assailed, criticized and condemned, than her attitude on the all absorbing problem of education. Her right to a place in the field of education, her educational aims and ideals, principles and methods are a constant source of controversy. Too often has a skeptical, antagonistic world made rough the road and thorny the paths over which the Church leads men to the limpid fountains of truth as well as holiness, that have been committed by divine authority to her keeping.

She would be false to her mission did the Church fail to exercise faithfully and consistently the ministry of teaching. Instituted to perpetuate to the end of time the work of Him, Whom practically all the world is willing to accept at least as teacher par excellence, Who proclaimed Himself "the way, the truth and the life", "a light come into the world", she
is conscious of an inviolable mandate: "Going therefore, teach all nations, whatsoever I have commanded you" - And thus for nineteen hundred years has the Church exercised her prerogative as teacher and educator to all humanity. No type of human being is a stranger in her schools. In apostolic days Jew and Gentile, Roman, Greek and sun-baked African sat beneath her rostra; in medieval times the stern characters that descended from the frigid north mingled freely with the mellow tempered sons of Southern Europe in monastic and episcopal schools in pursuit of the knowledge, human and divine, that constituted the base of the mold in which was cast and crystalized the new civilization called christian. In that world were evolved and perfected the educational forms and traditions which constitute the background of all that is best in human science, culture and achievement. The entire structure of our modern educational system, from its primary forms to the perfection of the university program, has its foundation in the development of the Church's concept of the mission and function of this great service to humanity.

The Church is not content with partial fulfillment of her mission as educator. Based upon
her high concept of the nature and destiny of man, she aims at the education of the whole
being for the attainment of his complete destiny. With the Church the spiritual nature of
man and his immortality is not a theory or guess but a solemn truth derived from divine
revelation as well as the application of our reasoning faculties and the conclusions of the
broadest experience with human kind for many centuries, in all gradations of development and in
every conceivable circumstance of life. Education with the Church means the preparation of
the whole man - body, memory, intellect and will - for the full destiny intended by the
Creator - life and happiness in eternity as well as security and contentment in time. Her
concept of man lifts him up as high above all visible creation as a spiritual imperishable
nature rises above the crumbling forms of matter; her vision of man's destiny is in reality
unending, for it leads him to the very throne of God in eternally enduring happiness - "You
shall indeed have sorrow, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy; and your joy shall no
more take from you" -

This is why the content of education as envisioned by the Church includes of necessity a
thorough knowledge of revealed religion with its implications of implicit though informed faith
and of a profound sense of righteousness. Catholic education aims not to make man a machine however delicately mechanized but an intelligent, moral being, capable of self-determination and of a soul life that transcends all else in dignity and satisfaction. It reaches down to the very soul of man, sees in it the image of the Creator and strives to fashion its habits of thought and action in conformity with the divine intelligence and power that called it into being. The content of education as envisioned by the Church rises even above the plane of the soul, making bold to ken the very God, not rashly but wisely, under the guiding hand of revelation. Thus, no other educational vision, be it ever so broad or comprehensive, is as complete or as exalted as is that of the Church. She neglects no form of human science, embraces every form of human experience, promotes solicitously every form of human progress, calculated to advance man's welfare and happiness, and adds to all this the wealth of spiritual values that accrue logically from his essential spirituality, immortality and the ultimate prospect of association with his God.

From all this we can readily understand why the Church cannot content herself with what is commonly known as secular education. It also explains why she insists on proclaiming to
to her adherents, in season and out of season, the duty of providing for an adequate religious and moral education and training for their children. It also accounts for the fact that the Church spares no expense and her faithful children shirk no sacrifice, when there is question of providing such an education wherever possible for their offspring. Throughout the United States of America there are today some ten thousand educational institutions, ranging from the primary grade school to the university, with a combined registration of more than two millions of pupils. The teaching staffs include priests, brothers, sisters and lay persons in excess of fifty thousand in number. The principal equipment runs in value into hundreds of millions of dollars. This vast network of education is second only to the system of public education in the United States of America and represents a contribution on behalf of the members of the Catholic Church to the educational and cultural program of the country, unequaled by any other civic or religious body.

Over every catholic school building and campus may be found the double emblem, the cross as the symbol of our undying faith, the flag as the symbol of our unwavering allegiance, love
and devotion to our glorious country. On the corner stone of every catholic institution of
learning there is inscribed the twofold dedication - "For God and Country" - , which serves
as the inspirational watchword of the services rendered within its hallowed walls, sacred
to the most worthy objects of man's service, love of God and patriotic adherence to his
country's ideals. Among the personnel of our teaching staffs there never arises the question
of loyalty or disloyalty to our American Constitution, that precious document which guarantees
to all true Americans equal rights and security in the exercise of religious worship and
freedom in education. Loyalty to country and its sacred institutions is for them a moral duty
for which they feel accountable to Him, Who gave to the world for all times the inspiring
principle: "Render to God the things that are God's; and to Caesar the things that are Caesar's"-
It is in accordance with this principle that the Church educates and trains her youth not only
to holiness and righteousness, but also to the highest degree of usefulness to human society,
and unselfish attachment to the ideals that brought our nation into being and to the Constitu-
tion that is the best guarantee that democratic freedom shall not perish from the earth.