

From Convent to Pentecost

My Escape From The Cloistered Convent

by

Charlotte Keckler

(“Eckler” in this text)

as dictated to Nilah (Eunilah) Rutledge (married name Mean)

Rose of Sharon Books Halifax NS

{Information on back-cover of paperback edition, 2nd printing 1999:

Charlotte already fled twice from the dark grip of cloistered convent life when she walked into one of my evangelistic meetings. She gave her heart to Jesus. The Lord led us to travel together, and we ministered for fourteen years across North America. I preached the Gospel and she gave her Testimony. But some of her story was never told. It was the summer of '57 {1957} that we traveled from New Brunswick, Canada, to California via the southern route, driving through Texas, Mexico, Arizona, and Utah. It was on that trip that Charlotte dictated to me her complete life story. I wrote it down, then typed it and placed it in a brown paper envelope. She said, “I don’t want this published until I am dead and gone.” Forty-one years have passed by. My close friends have encouraged me to publish it. I have written it just like it was told to me, neither adding to nor deleting from, except in instances of some names and places. Her story needs to be heard. *Sister Nilah.*}

Acknowledgments

To my husband, John, who has been my companion these 41 years. He has stood by me, encouraged me in every endeavour, and has been so patient and so kind, seems to never tire nor be discouraged.

To Michael Blume, my Assistant Pastor, who so ably preaches the Word of God, counsels the youth and the old, and in preparing this book for publication, he has edited, typeset this manuscript and did all the artwork.

Sister Nilah

Statement

The names of many people and many places in this story have been purposely changed to protect the innocent. The names of specific religious movements have been deleted, also, for we do not wish to demean a particular group of people. This volume is not intended to speak against the sincerity of the common religious adherents of certain religious movements, although leadership in such movements has been commented upon by Charlotte due to her experiences with them. It is intended to relate the

true and personal story of a woman who was delivered from darkness and experienced the wonderful saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

{In this OCR-ed text, the names have been left as in the original. Please note, however, Charlotte's actual surname was Keckler, not Eckler. The latter is the altered form employed in the original for the reasons stated above.}

The only other changes made regarded the mention of Communism in comparing her ordeal with the tortures inflicted by the communist regimes. In such instances, since Communism has all but vanished today, we have altered the text to refer to it in its present context as a bygone issue, whereas in her day she wrote of it as a present reality.

Her story has been printed before by others in minor formats, without her personal involvement. In many such cases there was a deletion of all references to her Pentecostal experience of receiving God's Spirit while speaking in tongues, and her water Baptism in Jesus' name, of which she often spoke while giving her testimony. This volume includes that wonderful account.

Charlotte did not tell part of what happened to her as she gave her public Testimony. This is the first release of Charlotte's own writings, printed with her explicit instructions, and has the complete story of her conversion. We pray that all souls who have not experienced the wonderful plan of salvation, as related in Acts 2:38, come to that truth, as Charlotte found it after her deliverance from cloistered convent life. May this book work to that end.

Foreword

As a very young man, due to intrigue and curiosity concerning the experiences of Sister Charlotte, almost on a lark, I made my initial visit to a Pentecostal Church. Her story was so fascinating to me that I went back to that meeting several nights. The preaching of Sister Nilah gripped my heart and I found the Lord as a result.

The book, *From Convent to Pentecost*, is insightful, shocking, and unearths some error that some may have forgotten. I thank Sister Charlotte for jolting our memory and for re-reminding us of the fallacy of apostate religion. "The memory of the just is blessed." I believe that many will rise up at the judgment seat of Christ and call her blessed. Thank God for the ministry of Sister Charlotte and her comrade, Sister Nilah.

I commend the reading of this book to all. Some may find it difficult to digest. But, I knew Sister Charlotte as a woman of highest integrity. I believe the true report! I am eternally in debt to her and Sister Nilah.

T. F. Tenney Superintendent Louisiana District, UPCI

Preface

In the year 1948 we began the church in Napa, California. Sis. Nilah and the ex-cloistered nun were known throughout our district as the ideal evangelistic team, Sis. Nilah, playing the piano, singing and preaching, would bring the congregation back from the story of the ex-nun to face the salvation message of today. Sis. Charlotte detailed her life as a nun and held our attention each night. Many

could not believe these heartbreaking events could happen in a so-called church. Sis Charlotte saved several girls from becoming cloistered nuns.

As you read the transcript of her testimony, you will feel her determination to expose a false religion. The priests and “the Knights” would come to our meetings, and as she spoke she challenged them to prove her wrong. She told of her conversion to Jesus Christ; that there was only one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.

Sis. Charlotte lived in Napa, California, and attended New Life Tabernacle during the last years of her life. She was a blessing to be with and to talk to about the Lord. Our church loved her and cared for her in her old age. As she passed on to be with Jesus, one of our sisters was holding her hand and singing to her.

This testimony will make you appreciate the truth of salvation that brings peace and joy and adds no sorrow for wasted time in life, Jesus is the reason! So each of us, through our own testimonies, will tell the true story of Jesus and His love.

Rev. Paul Price Superintendent Western District, UPCI

From Convent to Pentecost

Chapter 1

My “Calling”

It was a beautiful April morning in Iowa, in the year 1898. With the resurrection of Spring from the cold death of winter came the tiny blades of grass peeping through the ground. The maple trees budded, the fragrance of apple blossoms filled the air and the tulips that stood in their gorgeous array finished the color scheme in front of the two-storey frame house to welcome baby Charlotte into the Eckler family. I was the fifth child of a family of nine. Shortly thereafter, my family moved from Iowa to a small town in western Kansas.

I was baptized by Father H. in St. Joseph’s Church when eight days old, and was confirmed at the age of twelve.

While attending the Parochial School, I greatly admired the Holy Sisters who were my teachers. My ambition was to be like Sister Margaret. She often talked to me about the convent and about becoming “the Bride of Christ.”

One day, Sister Margaret and Sister Ramona came home from school with me Father H. was already there. The Church and manse were across the street from our home. During the course of the conversation, I asked permission from my father to speak. To the astonishment of father and mother, I announced my desire to enter the Convent and be a little nursing Sister. Father and mother burst into tears of great joy and pride. The thought that I had chosen such a holy vocation overwhelmed them. My father took me between his knees and hugged me approvingly. Father H remarked, “God hath chosen her.”

Having finished Grammar School, plans were made for me to enter the convent boarding school fifty-eight miles away. The small town newspaper heralded the joyous news of my entry into the convent.

Walking by our neighbour's house one day, I saw the person we had known as Aunt Sarah. She called me aside as if to let me in on a secret. She mentioned the newspaper article, and then, with saddened face, told me that convents were horrible institutions. She said I was deluded and would be sorry if I entered one. I immediately defended myself and repeated what the Holy Father had told me: "It will be a place of meditation and prayer, eating our meals in silence, and doing penance for the lost souls in purgatory. If I am obedient to my superiors, and never murmur or complain, I am promised to go immediately into the presence of God at death and escape Purgatory.

However, Aunt Sarah's words clung to me and I repeated them to my father that evening. He was very indignant and promised me a severe whipping if I ever stopped and talked to that heretic again. Knowing my father never promised punishment without having kept his word, I always crossed over and walked on the other side of the street to avoid meeting Aunt Sarah.

The day before I left home arrived. I wanted to bid Aunt Sarah good-bye. This precious soul was known throughout the community as "The Cookie Woman." If anyone became ill, their pain was lessened by a small figure coming up the steps with a basket of choice cookies. She not only taught the young people in her Church class, but ministered to the sick and would speak of Jesus and His love.

Having seen her cut roses in her flower garden, I stepped over very cautiously and in a low tone said, "I'm leaving tomorrow for the convent. I just wanted to tell you good-bye."

Tears came to her eyes and very sadly and haltingly she said, "Good-bye." She then spoke words I never forgot during my next twenty-two years in the convent, "Charlotte, I shall never miss one day praying for you that God will deliver and bring you out of that place."

Those were strange words I heard that day, but in a short time afterwards I learned my lesson well, for in the next several years I sought my Patron Saint for deliverance from the horror of convent life, and found that she failed me. I kneeled and kissed the toes of the saints and pled for help, but only found that they refused to help me. When my body grew sick, from being tortured and laid in a dirty dungeon beneath the convent, I often thought of Aunt Sarah and her God. "Why hadn't He answered her prayer?" I also remembered her words, "You are deluded, my Dear, convents are horrible institutions."

I am certain that had any objective observer saw me, one would have readily concluded that I was very religious and conscientious concerning "my calling." I faithfully performed all of the ritualistic requirements, observed unfailing the rules of order and prayed daily to my Patron Saint regarding the will of God for my life.

Chapter 2

Going Away

At the tender age of thirteen, with soft, brown curls, blue eyes and fair complexion and a healthy body, I boarded the train with mother and father for my Convent schooling. I was given the privilege of taking my dolls, doll clothes, family pictures and other paraphernalia I was also told I could write once a month to my family.

Oh, the thrill to think that I would be the Spouse of Jesus Christ! Father and mother could not have been happier had their son become President of the United States.

After being in St. Joseph's Convent a few months, I was transferred to St. Teresa of the Little Flower Convent, fifteen hundred miles away from home on the coast. I lived in a convent that was in close proximity to a Hospital.

Life in this convent involved frequent visits to the Hospital by tunnel where I trained to be a registered nurse. My plans were to be a Nursing Sister of the open Order. During my nurse's training the Mother Superior influenced and persuaded me to enter a Cloister. A Cloister is a secluded and confining convent in which we could receive no visitors and experience a life completely shut away from the outside world. I would never leave the convent for even a visit outside into the world. Incessantly, Mother Superior told me I had the qualifications to make a good cloistered Nun, and how nurses were needed in the Cloister.

Because I was very religious and conscientious, I prayed daily before my Patron Saint as to the will of God in my life. Up until that time, everything was still beautiful. What an honour was offered to me! Why wouldn't I want to become the Bride of Christ? Why wouldn't I want to suffer penance for the lost and dying? After all, my Father Confessor had told me of how the brutality of earthly husbands could be. To become a Bride for Christ was to enjoy bliss of the highest order! To be married in this world might bring disaster and possible deprivation of many necessities. Furthermore, to suffer penance for the lost and dying would not only result in joy and blessings in this life, but eternal bliss and a throne in Heaven.

Chapter 3

The White Veil

In Maskell's *Monumenta Ritualia* is printed a form for the consecration of Nuns:

“On the day of profession, the novices, clad in white, each bearing on the right arm the habit that the religion and profession requireth, with the veil, ring, and scroll of her profession attached upon said habit, and in her left hand bearing a taper without light, go in procession from the place where they were arrayed towards the western door of the choir, with looks bent on the ground, singing the response, *Audivi vocem*. Passing through the choir and going up to the altar, they lay their veils, rings and scrolls on the right end of it Then they take the oath of Chastity, and after receiving the habit from the Bishop return whence they came.

“After the Credo, the Virgins return to the western door of the choir bearing tapers in their right hand. The rite proceeds: after the litanies each makes her profession before the Bishop and Abbess and signs her scroll of profession with the cross.

“After the Psalm, *Domine quis habitabit*, during which the virgins prostrate themselves, they rise and go with the Bishop to the right hand of the altar, and taking their veils therefrom, hold them in their hands with their faces turned toward the Bishop. He standing in his place blesses the virgins' hands with orisons.

“The second prayer is: ‘O God, creator of all things visible and invisible, be merciful with us, and

vouchsafe to bless and sanctify with the streams of Thy grace these veils which are the type of holiness, and the sign of humility. Thy servants deserve through Thy gift, to take and hallow them in heart and body.’

“Every virgin, before the Bishop puts the veil upon her head, kisses his hand.

“Being veiled, she sings, ‘The Lord hath clothed me with a garment woven of gold, and with immense jewels hath he adorned me.’

“The ritual of the ring succeeds, followed by the long Benediction, during which the virgins lie prostrate. Before, their veils over their eyes. After the Communion, each gives up her taper to the Bishop, after kissing his hand, and he gives to them all his benediction.

“Then the Abbess pulls their veils down beneath their chins, and so they remain for three days. On the third day, after they have communicated, the Abbess lifts up their veils, and from that time on, they go and come as other Nuns in a convent.”

This above ancient form of taking the veil in a convent has been very slightly changed in our day.

At the age of sixteen, I took the white veil. I became the Bride of Jesus Christ, at least so I thought. My father gave me fifteen hundred dollars for my dowry, and would have attended the ceremony had my mother not been ill.

Dressed in a beautiful white wedding gown, I walked down the chapel aisle of the Monastery. Following me were six little sisters who were my attendants (bridesmaids). At the altar I stood by my silent partner, Jesus Christ, the One I was espoused to. Father N. — Bishop of that Diocese — performed the wedding ceremony and sealed my vows by placing a tiny gold wedding band on the finger of my right hand.

I would never marry in the outside world. I forfeited my right to wifehood and motherhood.

As far as I was then concerned, I would never know the love or strength or courage of a husband. My arms would never hold a tiny one, God’s bundle of sunshine. This I had surrendered, forfeited forever, to be a slave for Christ and the Church.

Chapter 4

My Funeral

After finishing my nurse’s training and my schooling, I decided to take my Black Veil and become a Cloistered Nun. I was of age and could make my own choice.

Indeed, I attended my own funeral. A crude casket made of rough boards, by the hands of the little Nuns, was placed at the altar in the chapel. During the ceremony, I stepped into the open faced casket and was covered with a heavy drape mortel. For nine hours I lay in that casket for the purpose of dying out to the world, affections and lusts — trying to forget mother, father, brothers, sisters, home and its memories.

The heavy drape mortel, or black pall commonly used to drape caskets, was heavily incensed, making it difficult to breathe while the priest chanted and said prayers and completed the ceremony.

At the end of the ceremony, I stepped out of the casket, walked to the rear of the altar into a small room. There before the priests — the Bishop and the Mother Superior of the Convent — I took my final vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. I signed them in blood taken from the lobe of my ear.

The first vow was that of Poverty. Its significance was that I would never legally own anything in this world. Any property to which I might be entitled by virtue of a testamentary gift would go to the Church. I could not claim it — even the habit and shoes I wore would not be mine. I vowed to be a pauper.

The next vow of Chastity signified that I would never marry. I would always remain a virgin. My only Bridegroom would be Jesus Christ.

To take the third vow of Obedience meant subjection to my superiors. the Rev. Mother, the Bishop, and the hierarchy of the Church. I would not act upon my own conscience. From that point on, I would not think, complain, see nor hear. Independent thinking was no longer a part of my life. Complete acceptance in even respect of all that was said by the superiors in position became my life. I became a mechanical human being. We were taught that whatever we did through obedience to the Mother Superior or the priests would not be held against us by God no matter how wrong.

Perfect obedience required a soul without will or intellect. In other words, a Nun becomes a mere robot who is owned by the Priest. the Bishop and the Mother Superior.

The Mother Superior then informed me I had to suffer as Jesus suffered on the cross at Calvary, and read the following to me

1	In the Garden of Olives I shed....	62,200 tears
	In the Garden of Olives I shed....	97, 300 drops of blood
2	On my body I received...	667 strokes
3	On my cheeks....	110 strokes
4	On my neck....	107 strokes
5	On my back....	380 strokes
6	On my breast....	77 strokes
7	On my head....	108 strokes
8	On my side....	38 strokes
9	On my shoulders....	62 strokes
10	On my arms....	44 strokes
11	On my feet....	32 strokes
12	On my mouth....	30 strokes
13	They spat in my face....	32 times
14	They pushed at my feet....	370 times

15	They have thrown me down to the	38 times	ground....
16	They pulled me by the beard....	many times	
17	By the crown of thorns I received....	100 wounds	
18	I have pleaded for your salvation...	900 times	
19	For your conversion....	162 times	
20	I was in agony....	19 times	
21	I carried the cross to Calvary....	320 steps	

A plenary indulgence and sorrow for your sins. Escape entirely the pains of Purgatory. Reward them as martyrs who shed their blood for the faith.

The next morning I received my first penance. Mother Superior took me to the penance chamber. It was rather barren, with the exception of some devices of torture. Then Mother Superior, with the aid of two Nuns, stripped me to the waist and draped me over a huge wooden cross. Then as Mother Superior watched, the two Nuns whipped me with the flagellation whip, which consisted of six large leather straps with a sharp piece of metal attached to each end, protruding from the base of a round stick approximately eighteen inches long.

I was not washed or medically treated after this penance. The blood soaked into my clothes and dried in the wounds, making the wounds all the more painful as I continued work until evening. I was in such a bloody mess when I entered my cell to sleep that I could not remove the inner garments.

When the bell rang at midnight for all the Nuns to go to the chapel to recite the breviary for one hour, I arose and took my place at the altar with bleeding back, broken heart and exhausted body. There were no kind words or mercy offered. After all, had I not taken a vow that I would suffer as Jesus did in Gethsemane?

Chapter 5

Identification Gone — Shaved Like a Convict

My hair had also been cut, every hair was removed by clippers. Even the hair is sold to the highest bidder, so nothing is lost.

My name was changed. I lost all identification. I was named after my Patron Saint — Sister Patricia. If in the future my family or friends would come to the speak room and ask for Charlotte, the Mother Superior would answer from behind the black grail, “There is no one here by that name.” If they would call for me by church name, and I were ill or locked in a dungeon beneath the ground, or if (as some cases I have known of) I died a horrible death, the Mother Superior would have another Nun step to the big black grail and imitate my voice. (Of course, you can’t be seen, only heard.) The following colloquy had taken place many times:

Relative speaks: “Hello, how are you?”

Nun: “I’m fine, thank-you.”

“You don’t sound natural, Charlotte.” “I have a cold. My voice is bad.”

“Do you have plenty to eat?”

“Yes, we have plenty to eat.”

Why did we lie? Because the Mother Superior was standing beside us. We dared not tell the truth for fear of the consequences. On occasions, a relative brought choice food to the convent. As the bell rang, the Mother Superior answered at the black grail; a small gate with shelves automatically opened, received the food, and automatically closed. But did the Nun receive the choice cake or special fruit? No! She remained on her rigid diet. The priests and Mother Superior were to enjoy the delicacy.

I well remember one occasion when Mother Superior called me. As I came into her presence, I bowed, kissed her feet as usual, and awaited my instructions. She then presented me with a lovely box of cookies saying, “These came from your mother.” With great joy I reached out to take the cookies only to be repulsed with the stern rebuke, “You selfish thing! How could you eat these cookies, with millions in the outside world dying of hunger?”

I turned shamefaced and tiptoed back to my cell and knelt on my prayer board and poured out my tears to my Patron Saint and the Virgin Mary. Who got the cookies? Your guess is as good as mine — but I’ve always felt that Mother Superior and the priest enjoyed them to the fullest extent.

Chapter 6

Out of the Casket into Shame

I walked out of the room where I had taken my last vows, into an adjoining room. There I received the shock of my life.

Up to that moment, everything was beautiful as far as purity was concerned. Then a priest walked over to my side, locked his arm through mine, and told me that we were going to the Bridal Chamber. In horror I broke the hold and unhesitatingly told him, “Never!” Then with tears I proceeded to tell him how I was reared and taught by my mother before entering the convent. Mother said, “Charlotte, I’d rather dig your grave and bury you with my own hands, than to know you ever lost your virtue.” She explained what virtue was and for what purpose God made my body.

At that moment the Mother Superior came in and reminded me of my obligation as the Bride of Christ. I was told that the Priest represented Christ and that his body was sanctified and holy, therefore, whatever he did was not sin.

I continued to cry until the Mother Superior stopped me and said, “We all felt as you do when we entered the convent, but you will feel differently after living here a while.”

It was then I wanted to run — go back home — but I found the doors were locked. I also found the high cement walls surrounding the convent had a decoration of broken chipped glass and spikes on the top so no one would attempt to climb over. The twenty foot gate of the wall was also locked.

Ask any priest why so many cloistered convents have either the high stone wall with broken glass and spikes cemented at the top and a huge gate that’s always locked, or a high fence with barbed wire

slanting in at the top like prisons. He will no doubt answer, “To keep the world out.” But I’ll give you another answer. “It’s not to keep the world out, but to keep the Nuns in.”

Chapter 7

Death in the Dark

We arose every morning at 4:30 A.M. and were given only five minutes to dress. Our habit, or clothes, consisted of high top black shoes that were worn until they were out. We would then go barefooted. We also wore black stockings, three skirts touching the floor, bodice attached to the veil that covered the face, arms and complete body to the hips. The starched, white gimp was fitted tightly around the head and neck, leaving the face uncovered (that is, when the veil was thrown back). Considering the clothes we had to wear, plus the rosary and scapular added, we really had to hurry to be dressed in five minutes.

I recall, one morning, I was all dressed except for one shoe. I put it under my arm and marched to the refectory with the other Nuns. I was so nervous, I dropped my shoe and thus broke silence. As a result, the Mother Superior had me step out of line and took me through a narrow stairway leading to the dungeon beneath the ground. She locked me in this dungeon, just wide enough for me to reach out either way and touch the walls with my fingers. The ceiling was high and the floor was a dirt floor. Mother Superior left me there three days and nights without food or water. This disciplinary action was employed to teach me that the rules of the convent were to be strictly obeyed and that I was to never be careless again and break silence.

Each morning before going to the refectory for breakfast, we were given an office duty. Frequently I had to scrub the refectory floor. After I completed the chores satisfactorily, Mother Superior might have inspected and said, “Do it all over again nicely.” I was often motivated to retaliate, but I dared not for my punishment would be severe. This, we were told, was a method of teaching us humility.

Our breakfast consisted of one slice of dark bread and a cup of black coffee — no sugar or cream. Our only other meal was at four o’clock and consisted of soup made with vegetables and water. We had no meat nor seasoning as they were not allowed. A cup of coffee or a glass of skim milk constituted our beverage.

This was our diet 365 days a year — with the exception of Christmas Day. Wonderful Christmas! — how we looked forward to it. We each had a spoonful of syrup to supplement our rigid diet. That syrup shone like gold in our tin pan (our china plate). Rest assured the syrup lasted as long as possible. Is it any wonder that the Nuns die young? Their healthy, plump bodies become emaciated and skeletons with the skin stretched over them after a few years in a Cloistered Convent. This explains why it was not uncommon to have seen one of us steal potato peelings when we worked in the kitchen, and stuff them into our pockets. We were always hungry!

I can recall being so hungry that I thought I would go mad — especially during the times when I was placed in the dungeon for days without food. It was then I even tried to gnaw the woodwork. My mind felt like it would snap if they didn’t give me food.

We were brought there to be the Brides of Christ, but we found ourselves turned into fornicators with

the priests, thieves for stealing food, murderers for having hearts filled with hatred and vengeance, liars and tattlers. Every Nun spied on the other. You dared not trust one soul in the convent. The Nun's only hope was Hell here, and Hell hereafter.

We had many jobs in the convent. Besides cooking, cleaning and laundering huge bundles the priests brought from the outside, many hours were spent in prayer, chanting, and doing penance.

One penance took place in the laundry room. We washed the old-fashioned way — that is, with tub and washboard. Naturally, a lot of water spilled on the concrete floor and became very filthy as we worked. On one occasion the Mother Superior told me to stoop down and make the sign of the cross with my tongue on that floor. Seeing the look of disgust and anger on my face, she made me continue to lick the likeness of crosses on that concrete floor through the soapy, filthy water until my tongue was swollen and bleeding. That, too, was to humble me and make me a better Nun.

We also sewed, knitted, and embroidered for the Church Bazaars and other institutions. We made the holy garments for the Bishops, Cardinals and Priests.

A little Nun who may have been sick with raging fever and unable to have left her bed, nevertheless, had to sew or embroider so long as her hands were well. There is no mercy passed out in a Cloistered Convent!

If a Nun was obedient to her superiors and suffered her penance without having murmured or complained, or if she willingly gave her body to the priests, her penance was less severe. She was permitted some recreation as a result of her obedience. When the Mother Superior so willed, we were allowed in the yard between the convent and the high wall, to play a game such as bean bag. Sometimes we just stretched out on the grass and relaxed the entire twenty or thirty minutes. This was seldom my privilege, since I had acted against my conscience to obey all that my superiors had asked me to do and was punished.

We retired to our cells at 9:30 P.M.. The heights were turned out and the Mother Superior locked us in like criminals in a penitentiary. Our bedroom cells were arranged in one long row. They were opened to the Mother Superior's gaze so she could check on all the Nuns. In our cells we had a narrow cot made of a slab of wood, one blanket (no pillow), and a crucifix in the room and a prayer board. As we knelt on our prayer boards, we felt tiny, sharp wires prick our knees. The tiny, sharp wires protruded upward through the bottom board, which made our praying very painful.

One night, while all was dark and silent, I heard the moaning of Sister Rosie in the next cell. Her moans reached the ears of Mother Superior and soon I heard those death-chilling words from that hard, callused individual. She spoke softly to Sister Rosie, "Here. Take this glass and drink, and you won't suffer any more."

Sister Rosie drank the contents of that glass. Mother Superior returned to her room. Suddenly, Sister Rosie screamed out, "My God, my God, I'm dying!"

We were certain that Mother Superior had poisoned her, but we dared not ask questions. Another Nun and I undressed her cold lifeless body the next day and carried her to the lime pit. There we sprinkled lime and chemicals over her nude body. That mixture would not only eat the flesh, but destroy the stench.

Of course we had no funeral — no high mass or low mass — no candles or flowers. Her death was not

reported to her family or to the law. She was just another Nun in eternity via the lime pit route.

Mother Superior knew that dead Nuns didn't talk, but did she know that Almighty God had designed a plan declaring, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap?" Had she never read about His thundering voice at the Judgment Day spoken of in the book of Revelation:

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerors, and idolators, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

Chapter 8

Why the Priests Should Marry

Convents and monasteries suppress and destroy all natural affection. In convents we were forbidden to express our feelings to any one. I dared not say, "I think you're beautiful, Sister Teresa." If the Mother surmised or had a suspicion that two little Nuns were friendly, she immediately separated them. They were never privileged to work together again. Therefore, each Nun was an enemy of the other. If you violated a rule, the Mother Superior was informed and you received the punishment, while the tattler was rewarded. You can understand this when you realize it placed the tattler in favour with the Mother Superior — and to have been in her favour placed one in favour with God.

Thousands of priests, monks and bishops are forbidden to marry — in violation of Gods laws. Evidently they never read the Holy Bible where the Apostle Paul instructed Timothy that, "A Bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife..." (I Timothy 3:2).

He also instructed the younger women to marry, bear children and guide the house in I Timothy 5:14. He certainly didn't intend for them to be Nuns and refuse marriage by hiding themselves away behind cloistered walls.

The aged Paul the Apostle looked across the stream of time and prophesied to Timothy in the fourth chapter of the same book bearing his name:

"In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing .spirits, and doctrines of devils ... forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving."

Celibacy of priesthood produces contamination and pollution under the conditions that they must live. I quote the following passage from Father Chiniquy's book entitled "The Priest, The Woman and The Confessional."

"... After a long and hard journey through the darkness and the storm we arrived at the house of a dying priest. 'The doctor has honestly warned me that death is very near, and I feel that I am just now dying. Is it too late to ask and obtain pardon?' asked the dying priest. 'No, my dear sir, it is not too late, if you sincerely regret your sins. Throw, yourself into the arms of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, make your confession without any more delay: I will absolve you and you will be saved.' said Father Chiniquy. 'But I have never made a good confession. Will you help me to make a general one?' It was my duty to grant him his request, and the rest of the night was spent by me in hearing the confession of his whole

life. The iniquities he had committed were simply and surprisingly horrible — unmentionable! No human tongue can express them, few human ears would consent to hear them. In his confession he stated, ‘The number of married and unmarried females I have heard in the confessional was fifteen hundred, of whom I have destroyed at least one thousand by questioning them on the most depraved things, for the simple pleasure of gratifying my own corrupt heart. without letting them know anything of my sinful thoughts and criminal desires toward them. But I’ve also destroyed the purity of ninety-five of those penitents who consented to sin with me.’”

The confessional is a cesspool of sin. I do not say this because I have any animosity in my heart against priests. On the contrary, I pity them. By the diabolical power of Satan, they have been deprived of the grand, holy and divine remedy which God has given man against his own concupiscence — holy marriage. They are placed unprotected and unguarded in the most perilous, difficult and irresponsible, moral dangers which human ingenuity or depravity can conceive.

Those unmarried men are forced from morning until night to be in the midst of beautiful girls and tempting, charming women, who have to tell them things in the confessional that would melt the hardest steel. Can you expect them to be angels and not men?

No wonder God looked upon the lonely Adam in the Garden of Eden and said, “It is not good for man to be alone.” Therefore He made Eve and gave her in marriage to Adam. Adam chose to partake of the forbidden fruit and to exchange paradise for a dark, cruel world, rather than be separated from Eve, the one he loved. Love is the one ingredient that goes into every recipe to make a wonderful marriage, a happy home, a glorious church and a triumphal entrance into Heaven.

Holy Scripture states:

“Let every man have his own wife, to avoid fornication. “ I Cor. 7:2

Surely God ordained the marriage of the great Apostle Peter. Even in his praying for the sick, he mentioned his mother-in-law. Neither could I force myself to believe the Apostle Peter renounced his vows, forsook a lonely woman and refused to meet his marital obligations. If so, he would be classed as an infidel according to I Timothy 5:8.

Priests claim to represent God in the mass and the confessional. But I read in I Corinthians 3:16-17:

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy. which temple ye are. “

Yet priests have made sex perverts out of thousands of altar boys.

When I see priests walking down the street with a filthy cigar or cigarette in their mouths, also bleary-eyed with intoxicating liquor, I am repulsed at the idea of their claim to be Christ’s representatives on earth.

They teach our youth to smoke and drink (as long as they do not drink to excess and become drunken). They are also taught that they can steal up to \$40.00 and it’s not a mortal sin. They are not restrained in partaking of worldly pleasures and can be found in the theater, dance hall, billiard hall or the gambling den.

Can you picture our lovely Lord Jesus Christ, who knew no sin, walking down the street with a cigarette between His lips or liquor on His breath? No, a thousand times no!

I remember the one Nun who continued to refuse each priest that came to call on her. One particular day the Mother Superior locked her in her cell in company with four priests who were all intoxicated. They each took their turn in ravishing her, both body and soul. When their hellish, lustful, bestial natures had been satisfied, that poor Nun was a complete physical, mental and nervous wreck. She looked like a poor animal that a bunch of hogs mauled, chewed and slobbered over. To think this takes place in the name of religion and not a red light district is incredible.

The Holy Bible declares in the Book of Revelation, Seventeenth Chapter, that this Babylon (Rome) is a whore with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. It describes her as being arrayed in purple and scarlet colors, decked with gold, precious stones and pearls and having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication. Upon her head is written, "Mystery, Babylon the Great, The Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth. She is drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus"

The Bible declares, in picturesque form, that Babylon sits on seven mountains

Chapter 9

Glass Casket

My first experience with a funeral and death in the convent took place soon after my perpetual vows were made.

I was summoned to the Martyr's Room at approximately nine o'clock and was told to stand vigil over a dead Nun until another Nun came to relieve me. After so many minutes I was to sprinkle ashes and holy water over her dead body, while I repeated my learned prayers in Latin (not audibly, of course).

The dead Nun was still dressed in her holy habit, stretched on a cooling board. The only other fixture in the room was the candlestick stand with seven candles burning.

Needless to say, in that semi-darkness alone with a dead Nun, and the deathly silence that accompanied it, the room felt ghostly, and I trembled with fear. We Nuns were taught to walk on our tip-toes and never break silence. Therefore, the Nun who came to take my place arrived without my knowledge. When she tapped me on the shoulder it terrified me and I let out a blood-curdling scream!

For this mistake, I was sent back to the dungeon for three days and nights to sleep on a cold, clammy dirt floor. I lived there in my own filth, for there were no toilet facilities. There was no food to ease the gnawing in my stomach, no water to quench my insatiable thirst, no blanket to keep me warm at night. This I suffered for breaking silence.

After we made our perpetual vows, we became sheaves of Rome. We learned that we had sold our birthrights for a mess of theological pottage.

Poor deluded souls, suffering a life of crucial poverty and penance. Every time we whipped our bodies until the blood flowed, we felt we escaped one hundred days in future purgatory!

Down underneath the ground we had our secret place of burial. Some Nuns and priests were buried in the crypts in the wall (that is, if they were lucky enough to escape the lime pit). Their names were

engraved upon the wall.

Once a year during the Lenten Season a Nun gave her life for the faith. Very much like the Hindus of India, a glass covered casket was rolled to the center of the chapel (one flight underground). While the ceremony was performed, amidst chanting prayers, a little Nun was then sealed and pushed back into the crypt in the wall. However, before the casket was placed into the crypt, we Nuns were allowed to look on that martyr through the glass lid. Yes, her face was twisted, her fists clenched and her knees almost drawn to her chin. Sometimes they reached their heads and had handfuls of hair clutched between their fingers.

Horrible suffering! Oh, yes. In a moment all the air was gone — she died quickly. Perhaps she felt those short moments of agony were far less than years of living in a convent — sometimes in a dungeon, sometimes walking on sharp rocks, cold, hungry, beaten, kneeling on peas and giving her body to lustful, carnal priests.

We were taught that if we died a martyr, we would be canonized after death.

Chapter 10

Mortification

Being a very close friend to Sakie Oka, after her arrival in the mainland U.S. from Hawaii, I learned that Buddhism, Shintoism and Hinduism are very similar. She had been born and reared in the religion of Shintoism and Buddhism and had been very devoutly involved in that religion. One day she heard the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ through an American Missionary, Helen Bradley, and was converted.

One evening while getting ready for service, Sakie pointed to her scarred back. It looked like she had been burned by cigarette butts, but, no, she explained, “My Buddhist mother burned me with punk to punish me when I was a naughty girl.”

Very similar to punk, we too burned our bodies in the convent to appease the wrath of an angry God. The more bums we inflicted on our bodies, the more honour and glory were bestowed upon us — so the Mother Superior informed us.

We also whipped our bodies until the blood flowed. The little Nun who spilled the most blood was recognized as the most devout and greater lover of her bridegroom, Jesus Christ.

One day we were all lined up in a row and were given straight pins. We were admonished to inflict pain on our own bodies by placing the pin through our cheeks. We believed the more times we drove the pin through our cheeks, the more holy we became, and proved our devotion to God.

Hindus walk through live coals of fire and drive sharp knives or swords through their cheeks, then appear at their temples after so many days of physical suffering to receive their reward. Similarly, we little Nuns in the convents walked on sharp rocks, went on long fasts and starvation diets, mutilated our bodies, suffered mortification, believing that as long as we did these things we made God happy and would be rewarded.

I’m so glad God delivered me from the convent and let me hear the good news of the Gospel. There I

learned that God is love and full of compassion. He is not willing that any should suffer, but that all should come to repentance and have life and that more abundantly.

I'm fully aware of the Bible truth that Paul taught, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." However, nowhere in the Bible did the Apostles or Disciples inflict pain on their own bodies. Their suffering came from their enemies who opposed their preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, their healing the sick, casting out devils, performing miracles, and baptizing candidates in the lovely Name of Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Paul taught that Jesus suffered once and for all, according to Hebrews 10: 10.

Chapter 11

Communism Versus Religious Bondage

When I first left the convent, I read about the evil force of Communism. I read about the brainwashing of our soldiers upon their capture. Such an experience made one go for days without sleep. Through endless interrogation, the mind was tortured as well as the body.

When thorough brainwashing had been completed, an American boy would have stood before his own mother and denied her. He would have appeared before the American chiefs of war and have declared that he hated America and capitalism. He would have praised communism, upholding the philosophy of Marx and Lenin. Had he truly been converted? No. He had been brainwashed. He had been changed into another person.

So it was in the Convent. Our names were changed and all identification was taken away. We were taught to hate father and mother for the love of God. There would be many Nuns who would defend this system. They would choose death rather than liberty even though they had wasted away until they were mere skeletons showing the print of their teeth through their cheeks. Their eyes would be back in their heads leaving large hollows.

Why would many Nuns not choose liberty? Take the example of the eagle that was chained all its life. One day the chain was removed. Did it move? Did it fly and soar above the clouds? No. It had been captivated and bound too many years. It continued to stand in the same cliff, the only home it knew and felt secure in. The white, feathery clouds and the spacious blue sky that could have been its flying world were far too high for its imprisoned mind. The carcass of a kid goat lay on the ledge of the cliff below, but the journey downward was far too precipitous. The chain of the years had bound the eagle both soul and body.

When the Government of Mexico ordered all their convents opened and every Nun taken out, some of those Nuns begged for death. Some wailed, "But where shall we go? What shall we do? We have no home but the convent." After all, we must realize that some were aged. Their lives debauched by lustful priests. Freedom in an outside world that they hadn't seen since a child caused a hysteria of fear.

Some old Nuns were found in the deep recesses of a cloistered convent almost twenty years after the convents were opened. They had never left and the law had never found the secret underground rooms all those years.

One converted Open Order Nun was speaking in Los Angeles. She told how God had delivered her from a Convent and saved her to save others. She was a very stalwart, husky woman and seemed strong enough to wage a battle with any priest. She had crossed into Mexico and came into contact with a couple of old Nuns who were still in hiding.

She told of helping to carry each one to her car from a certain mountain cave. One complained of her neck hurting. Upon investigation she found a worm burrowed deep in her neck, much like the men experienced in prisons in Russia. She felt led of the Lord to take those old Nuns down a certain road. Sure enough she found a light in a certain house. When they halted, a dear saint of God came out and said, "Bring them in. I've been praying to the Lord, and the Lord told me that you were coming."

I wonder what has happened to hundreds of Nuns who were forced to leave the Mexican convents. Are they in some underground cave? Have they been shipped to convents in some foreign country across the waters? Only God knows the answer, that is, aside from the poor, forsaken Nun.

Brainwashing has become a common expression in our vocabulary since World War II. However, the world links it only to the Communists. We immediately think of Russia, Red China, and Hungary, etc. But let me paint a picture in your mind of this horrible crime in a Closed Convent where I was an eye-witness.

I have seen a little Nun strapped to a chair under a fountain of water. The faucet would be turned on to allow one drop of water at a time to fall on her head, the most vital part where the brain is located. This would continue for hours before she was released. I have seen some Nuns whose eyes became crossed. Others went raving mad and were placed in chains in the dungeon below, while others crumpled to the floor when released.

I've also seen a red rubber cap very similar to an ordinary bathing cap placed on a Nun for punishment. In a minute and a half she was on the floor writhing and foaming at the mouth like a mad dog. If left on for over three minutes, she was a corpse. I cannot describe the mechanism of that cap as I never had the privilege of inspecting it. But I have worn it and it felt like a thousand wires were piercing my brain. The mental torture was excruciating.

Convents are un-American, ungodly, inhuman and horribly corrupting. The Siberian labour camps cannot equal the Convents that have enslaved beautiful young girls, tortured their brains, broken their bodies, subjected them to the lusts of evil priests, and buried them in lime pits.

Chapter 12

Babies Born

In the bassinet basking in the sun lay a tiny bundle from heaven. Mother is now placing the steaming potatoes and the grilled steak on the table along with her crisp lettuce salad and hot buns.

Coming down the walk after a hard day's work, Daddy peaks into the bassinet. Just one glimpse and tiny feet start furiously kicking. Though words are inarticulate, the eyes speak volumes and the fat little chubby hands reach all the way to the heart. Daddy can't resist. Into his arms come the sweetest thing Heaven ever made.

He strolls into the house carrying him like a bag of sugar. He places his other arm around his wife and with a hug exclaims, “Honey, I’m the richest man in town! I have you and the baby and the great, big God of the universe is my Father.”

The above picture is the way God planned family life. The Christian father who is the temporal head of the home (according to Joshua 24:15), a devoted godly wife and mother (Proverbs 31), and children to bless the home (Psalm 127.3).

The Bible declares in Hebrews 13:4 that marriage is honorable in all things and the bed undefiled, but whoremongers and adulterers will God judge. With much shame I describe how babies are born in the convent contrary to God’s laws as well as the laws of our land.

Some Nuns, like girls in the various homes, willingly yield their bodies to the priest who may come as father confessor, or who may come along with a group of priests to feast as the Nuns are ordered to prepare a banquet for them.

Other Nuns will fight to retain their virtue to the last straw while some are made to submit. But what is a Nun’s strength after long days of fasting penance and suffering to be compared with the priest’s strong, healthy body, especially after he’s eaten and drunk?

Many priests come from a banquet to a convent. This explains why many Nuns become pregnant the same night and is the reason many babies are born about the same time.

On one particular occasion I was ushered into the baby ward after I had helped deliver many of them. Mother Superior informed me that my duty was to snuff the life out of each of these babies after the priests sprinkled holy water on their tiny heads and anointed them. Mother Superior assured me it was painless, and she instructed me to place my hand over its mouth, and at the same time hold its nose between my thumb and forefinger, shutting off all air. She also explained that if these babies could talk they would thank you so much for taking their lives so they could go to Heaven and not have to live in a world of suffering.

Of course all these babies are abnormal, as the healthy, normal babies are taken out of the convent and placed in orphanages for adoption for a sizable sum of money.

Although I had fought with the priests and hated them with a perfect hatred, along with my hatred for the Mother Superior, I could not stoop to murder innocent babies. This I refused to do. I stood up straight with my shoulders erect and with a firm resolute jaw. cried, “Reverend Mother, you can kill me or do anything you like, but I will not kill those babies.”

I don’t know who carried out their Gestapo orders and muffled the cries of those tiny infants. I only know I had to suffer at the hands of the Mother Superior for my refusal to obey.

During the Second and Third Centuries, when the church was persecuted by Imperial Rome, pregnant women’s stomachs were slashed open, and their unborn babies were murdered. Infants were thrown against the walls crushing their brains in efforts to annihilate the Christians.

In the maternity ward of the Hospital I have seen mothers in labor pain — over twenty-four hours excruciating pain — until she wailed, groaned, even screamed and said, “I can’t stand it! Let me die!” Then with the help of nurses, the suturing knife of the obstetrician and anesthesia, she delivered her baby. After the normal surgical procedure, she was wheeled into her private room. Having come out from under the anesthetic, she lifted her hazy eyes to her husband. While he clasped her hand, his lips

quivered, his eyes filled with tears, he whispered, “Darling, this is the last baby we’ll ever have. The suffering is too great.”

With those words of tenderness, that look of sympathy and understanding, she lost sight of the obstetrical ward, her pain lessened, she sighed, “But, honey, you’re worth it. And I’d do it all over again for you.”

Then when the nurse came with the little bundle and nestled it close to the mother’s breast for its first feeding, her heart was filled with rapture and joy immeasurable.

How sweet the above picture, but how heartless and cruel the one I will now describe.

Sister Clarissa was lying on a hard cot made of wood, no springs, no mattress. Her moans were muffled as she dare not give vent to her feelings, although she was in hard labor. Pains came closer together and soon the baby would be born. She had no husband to hold her hand and speak kindly. There was no nurse to give her anesthesia to lessen her pain. I delivered her baby and cut the umbilical cord while the Mother Superior supervised.

Going down to the valley of the shadow of death to bring forth life seemed not to be sufficient pain. The Mother Superior, dissatisfied with shouting, summoned the priest and immediately baptized and anointed its little head. Then the Mother Superior placed her hand over the baby’s mouth and nostrils and smothered it to death as Sister Clarissa watched from her cot. Like a wounded animal, a strange moan escape from her lips. There were no words spoken, and no explanations were given. Oh, yes, the baby was abnormal. But did that give the Mother Superior the prerogative or the power to take life? However, no law ever crosses the threshold of a Closed Convent. No death records are compiled. So death stalks through every room from chapel to dungeon, showing no partiality.

Perhaps the Mother Superior hated Sister Clarissa without a cause and delighted in her suffering, or Sister Clarissa might have been the pretty young Nun that Father Confessor had lately chosen in place of the Mother Superior. Mother Superior’s heart then could be filled with jealousy, and she waited for the opportunity to seek revenge.

Mother Superiors were once pretty, young women. They’ve often become infatuated with various priests. For the first few years, for instance, Father Hansfor may have always called for Mother Cabrini when he came to the convent. As she grew older and as other beautiful young Nuns came into the convent, Sister Lorenzo was chosen in her stead. This accounted for the great jealousy. It also accounted for much suffering some Nuns received from Mother Superior. Aside from that, a Nun may have continued to refuse a certain priest each time he called. When this happened, the Mother Superior and the Priest united their devilish, fiendish minds and devised a punishment for that Nun that only Satan could inspire.

For example, I was stretched out on a plain board and told to stick out my tongue. The Mother Superior then drove an ice-pick through my tongue, pinning me steadfast for hours. I lost much blood, even until I felt weak, My tongue became so swollen that I did not get it back into my mouth after I was released.

Even as I write this chapter, I can hear people exclaim, “It can’t be true. People with sane minds cannot commit such crimes.” I ask you, my friend, were Hirohito and his criminal chiefs of war sane when they marched our boys on the Island of Corrigador? Some of them fainted under the hot, tropical sun only to be slain outright while the remaining ones dug their own graves, had their hands and feet severed from their limbs and were dumped in those graves like a bag of sand still alive. Yet still, were

the Japanese sane when they took our Canadian boys that were in Hong Kong and cut their tongues out and sliced off their flesh bit by bit? No, they were not insane. They were demon-possessed. Satan, the prince of this world, has complete control over their lives just as he has over the Mother Superiors in Cloistered Convents. Their names should be changed from Mother Superior to Legion, the same name Luke recorded in his Gospel account of the man who was filled with many devils. His habitation was among the sepulchers. Even chains and fetters could not hold him. Only Jesus could tame and clothe him in body, soul and mind.

Pray with me that the God of Heaven will pull the cover off every Convent, loosen every soul and save every honest heart. My heart's desire is to see every Nun, Priest and Mother Superior saved by the Blood of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 13

Why Girls Enter the Convent So Young

I entered the Convent boarding school at the age of thirteen. I never had a date with the opposite sex. In fact, I still played with dolls I knew nothing of the affairs of this world. Why was I encouraged to leave father, mother, brothers and sisters at such a tender young age? Would it not have been better for me to have finished High School and college and then at twenty-one, chosen my vocation at life?

1. The prelates knew fully well they would have merely had dozens of Nuns who chose a life of austerity, celibacy and mortification, instead of thousands as they now have, were they old enough to understand.
2. It's much easier to put blinders on a young colt than on an old horse. And it is easier to erase the love of home and parents, too.

We were taught that a Nun's enemies are those of her own household. In the affairs of salvation, our families became carnal enemies. The true spouse and Nun, who tells her family she doesn't know them, becomes the true wife of God.

Priests influence little girls to enter a convent through the confessional. Since the priest acts as a doctor of the soul, he assumes he has the right to ask the most intimate questions, even to the probing of secrets of the soul in the confessional. Needless to say, he knows more about his penitents than even the nearest relatives. The husband would be shocked if he knew the secrets of his wife's life as the priest knows them. Likewise, parents will never know their children as the priest knows them. Therefore, the priest chooses to influence girls with a strong, healthy body and mind. Also he chooses girls with a background of wealth and influence in the community. If, after all, the father is wealthy, does that not mean more money in the coffers? I entered the convent with a \$1,500,00 check for my dowry.

Once a priest is convinced a certain girl should enter a convent, he never ceases talking to her, as well as her parents, about how God has chosen a vocation for her: The nunnery. He might even acquire permission from her parents to take her to the nearby Open Order Convent to spend a weekend. Of course, she will pay room and board. There she is hidden away from the world. She spends long hours in the Chapel where hymns are sung and rosaries are recited. All her meals will be eaten in silence. The very air is charged with mystery and novelty. Then the priest offers her a throne in Heaven if she

forsakes mother, father and loved ones.

These spiritual dope-peddlers attempt to destroy the marriage vows ordained by God. They tell the adolescent mind that if they refuse convent life and marry, their husband might be cruel to them by beating and failing to support them and their offspring. In other words, they convince them that marriage is a gamble, so they decide to take the White Veil and become a Bride of Christ.

Too bad the first visit wasn't to a Cloistered Convent where she could have heard the screams of those flagellated or the death moans from the dungeon beneath the ground.

Soon after I had taken my Black Veil I was taken into the Penance Chamber. Looking up I noticed two ropes dangling from the ceiling. Mother Superior stood me with my face towards the wall and my hands lifted above my head. She then clamped the two metal bands that were attached to the ropes to my thumbs. Then with the aid of a pulley, Mother Superior slowly lifted me higher and higher until my toes barely touched the floor. The whole weight of my body hung from my two thumbs and onto my toes. After only a few hours, the pain was unbearable. My arms felt as though they were being pulled out of their sockets.

After several hours I waited to be released, but one day went by... And then another and another! Then I saw the figure of a Nun approach, "Surely she will release me," I thought. But no, she only left some food on a shelf directly in front of my face, and disappeared.

I wondered how I could get to the food, especially the water, for my mouth felt parched. My thumbs were fastened to the rope on the pulley, I learned that, by moving my head and lapping water and eating like a dog, my one arm would come down a few inches while the other arm would be pulled still higher.

Surely I would be released to go to the bathroom, but no, I stood in my own human filth looking somewhat like an animal in a barnyard when released after nine days and nights.

You may wonder why I didn't attempt to break the ropes. Well, behind me there was a toilet stool with water running continually. On the lid of the toilet were sharp nails driven from underneath so the points protruded upward. In case I did lunge and break the ropes or twist my thumbs free, I would have been injured for life.

After nine days of horrible suffering they cut the ropes and let me down. Since I was covered with vermin and filth, they cut my clothes from my body. I could not walk, so they carried my swollen, limp body to the infirmary where I lay for several weeks only to recuperate for another penance.

The "Church" system reminds me of part of a certain poem, "Won't you come into my parlor, said the spider to the fly."

She will promise anything to her victim until she gets possession. Like a spider weaving its web, poor deluded souls in the convent are subject to any cruelty. We were held in bondage to fear and Hell.

I've been made to crawl for hundreds of feet on my knees with my arms folded across my chest, and my body erect until my knees would bleed. Still, I dared not stop, but had to continue crawling until the Mother Superior's desires were fulfilled. That was a common penance often repeated. Another oft repeated penance was to lick crosses on the floor with our tongues, whether in the Chapel, refectory, laundry room or on the filthy, basement floor.

While in the furnace room, Mother Superior took a poker and placed it into furnace until it was red hot. And then she burned a cross on my back. However, my penance in the furnace room was not nearly as severe as Sister Francis'. She entered the convent wearing a small ring, Mother Superior took it from her finger, and placed on the little finger of a statue of the baby Jesus.

One day Sister Francis discovered that the baby Jesus was wearing her ring. She slipped it off the statues finger and placed it back on her finger not thinking of the consequences that would follow. No sooner had the Mother Superior noticed the transition when Sister Francis was summoned to the furnace room.

There her hands were securely fastened to a hot water pipe, while Mother Superior took a sizzling hot poker and melted the ring from her finger. Not only did the ring melt, but all of Sis. Francis fingers on that hand had to be amputated due to the horrible injury.

Chapter 14

Deception

Judas betrayed our Lord for thirty pieces of silver even though he witnessed the healing of Blind Bartimaeus. He also witnessed the sightless man conning from the pool of Siloam exclaiming, "I can see! I can see!" after Jesus had made a plaster for his eyes composed of mud and spittle. Although Judas was an eyewitness of the multiplied bread and fishes that fed five thousand from a little boy's lunch basket, he still chose the glitter of earthly silver in preference to Heavenly gold. Satan deceived Judas, who in turn betrayed our Lord.

During the Lenten season in Mexico City, a large stuffed doll bearing the inscription Judas is paraded through the streets, tied to buses, cars and any moving vehicle. Then on Good Friday they bring all of their Judas' and make a huge pile and burn them.

While the Judas' go up in a furious blaze of fire and smoke, the Mexicans will dance around and chant, pray and delight in the fact that they were burning the devil.

Great crowds had gathered on the street to watch a parade. During a great fiesta, celebration is often hilarious, wild and boisterous. Suddenly, the laughter and wild jeering cease. And all is calm and a look of reverence appears on the faces of the bronze-faced people, intermingled with white-faced tourists from Europe and America. On one particular float, during such a festival, sat two priests and two Nuns dressed in their holy habits. Also on the float was the elaborate image of the Virgin Mary and another image of Christ.

One priest sat beside the image of Christ and called to the people, "Give to Jesus! Your offerings will make Him so happy that He will shed tears of joy for you!"

One by one, men and women walked over to the float and drop in money. Each time that money was given to the priest, real tears flowed down the image of Christ's face. After a while two policemen stopped the parade and investigated this float. To the surprise of hundreds of devoted, believing people the police found the head of the image filled with a wet sponge attached to a string in the priest's hands. When the mite box received a coin or bill, the priest merely pulled the string and water issued from the image's eyes making it appear as though Jesus was really crying. Thank God those policemen had the

nerve and courage to expose the fraud.

One tourist, who traveled extensively, reported seeing two skulls of Saint John the Baptist. One was on display in a magnificent church in the suburbs of Constantinople. The other in Edessa, having been put there in 761.

He questioned the sacristan about this last skull. He was stunned and his faith was shaken. The sacristan explained that it wasn't coincidental, but said, "Sir, the first skull you viewed was John as a boy. This one was of John when he was a man." This explanation might have satisfied a pure ignorant dupe, but this educated traveler was flabbergasted.

I'm told that sixty-one forgers of Saint Peter have been exhibited in various Cathedrals across the world. The "Church" claims to have the following:

- 1 The halter Judas hung himself with,
- 2 The wedding ring of the Virgin Mary,
- 3 A lock of Mary's hair,
- 4 Wedding veil of Mary.
- 5 Twenty four boards from the manger where Christ Jesus was born,
- 6 Jesus' first baby dress,
- 7 Jesus' first baby shoes,
- 8 Jesus' first baby shirt,
- 9 Tail of the ass that Jesus rode into Jerusalem,
- 10 Crown of thorns that Jesus wore,
- 11 Nails that nailed Jesus to the cross,
- 12 The spearhead that the Roman Soldier thrust into His side,
- 13 A part of Jesus' seamless robe,
- 14 A bottle of Joseph's breath which an angel caught while Joseph chopped wood,
- 15 A bottle of milk taken from Mary's breast in the Chapel of Scala Santa in Rome,
- 16 Bottles of tears while He hung on Calvary in the Chapel of Scala Santa in Rome,
- 17 The arm of Saint Andrew and the head of Saint Luke that were brought to Rome by Gregory the Great and given as gifts to the Monastery of Saint Andrew of Rome,
- 18 The bottle of blood and water taken from his Side on Calvary,
- 19 Part of the original cross on which Jesus hung.

If you were traveling in India you might wonder why you found so many people fishing in the famous, revered Ganges River. But on closer inspection you would discover that in the end of each pole is not a hook or bait but a relic, an image of Buddha. The more often little Buddha strikes the water, and the greater the splash, the greater reward this one will receive. He is building up a merit system in order to enter Nirvana and thus escape Karma. He is not catching trout or bass.

Poor deceived Indian people! No wonder they are willing to walk miles through forest jungles where tigers and other vicious animals roam, and wade through swollen, infested streams and scale precipitous mountain trails to our church conventions where they can hear more about the One Who has liberated them and set them free. His name is Jesus Christ.

One of the well-known missionaries in Colombia, South America, said these words, “When the ‘Church’ is in the minority, she is gentle and unsuspecting as a lamb. When in equality, she is like a tigress watching her little ones. But in the majority she is a roaring lion seeking her prey.”

Few people know why Peron lost the presidency in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Our newspapers picked up the propaganda that he was ousted because he was a dictator. Here is the true story.

A Holy Ghost preacher sent from God entered the capitol City of Buenos Aires and inquired of a man named Peron. He was refused admittance at the Presidential Palace and was mocked for making such a request as an audience with President Peron. The very idea of a commoner wishing to speak to the President! But as he purposely wandered around, knowing God sent him, he noticed that Peron’s servant was a cripple. He began talking to this servant about Jesus Christ and of His power to heal.

The missionary prayed for him and God immediately healed that crippled, deformed body and made him every whit whole. The good news spread like a prairie fire through the Presidential Palace. Very soon afterwards, a messenger was dispatched to this man of God to tell him that President Peron wanted to see him.

Breathing a prayer of thanks, Missionary Hicks was ushered into the presence of Mr. Peron. While explaining about the miracle of healing that had happened to his servant, he witnessed to him about Jesus Christ. Mr. Peron was so impressed that he fell upon his knees and prayed in the presence of this evangelical preacher.

As a result of this meeting, Mr. Peron gave permission to Missionary Hicks to have an evangelical meeting in Buenos Aires’ largest auditorium. A thing unheard of in that country!

What a glorious revival it was! Thousands attended, including Mr. Peron. The blind people were made to see, the crippled walked again, the deaf were made to hear and the dumb to speak. The demon-possessed minds were restored and diseases such as cancer and tuberculosis faded into oblivion after being exposed to the rays of faith produced by the man of God.

Scores of people both rich and poor filled the altars and gave their hearts to God. As a result of this meeting Mr. Peron admitted that Evangelicals were possessors of salvation, and, in the future, the State Church would be relegated to just another church and not the government-recognized church of Argentina.

Mr. Peron took certain priests off the government payroll, and he also took power from the hierarchy. But Mr. Peron and all of Argentina were soon to learn that she doesn’t relinquish authority and power without a fight, even if it means bloodshed.

Soon the battle raged. Rebellion, internal strife. Civil War in Argentina. Peron the Dictator ousted, were in our newspaper’s headlines. In smaller print we read of Peron being a traitor living in immorality. His wife, though in the grave, was not left in peace, but derided and mocked for having lived in luxury and spending Argentina’s millions. Finally, Peron fled into exile. His president’s chair was filled by a loyal Church member. Was he demoted and exiled because he was cruel? No! The truth is that the Church

Hierarchy waged the war behind the scenes simply because Peron recognized Protestantism and took power from the State Church.

This religious power delves into politics and deceives the nations, but it even finds its way to the ignorant, unlearned and backward villages of our United States and Canada. While in a small town in New Brunswick, Canada, we conducted a series of meetings giving my testimony. A group of Church members attended from another nearby town. One day while I visited friends there, some women knocked at the back door and asked to speak to me. During the course of our conversation, they trembled and said, “We do not dare return to your meetings, Father N, said he would turn us into into green pigs if he caught us in that Protestant meeting.” No doubt those poor women ever attended a school. Place them in the illiterate class of society and laugh them off if you want to, but I know it to be factual that the priests kept them in ignorance, superstitions and poverty. If a priest can turn a wafer into the literal body of Jesus Christ, and wine into His blood at “Holy Communion,” why wouldn’t it be just as simple to turn human beings into green pigs?

Saint Paul spoke on Holy Communion in his epistle I Corinthians Chapter Eleven.

For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you. That the Lord Jesus the [same] night in which he was betrayed took bread.’ And when he had given thanks, he brake [it], and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also [he took] the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink [it]. in remembrance of me.

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of [that] bread, and drink of [that] cup.

If the doctrine of Transubstantiation is true, why did not Paul, in his conclusion, admonish these Corinthians to “examine himself and so let him eat of Christ’s flesh and drink His blood?” Instead, he admonished them, “Let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup.” Why? Simply because the Bible makes it plain that Jesus was standing there in His own human body and presented them bread and the fruit of the vine as a memorial of His death at Calvary. Neither did Jesus drain any blood out of His veins and give the disciples to drink nor ask them to gnaw on his flesh.

I’m reminded of an incident that took place several years ago. A priest was determined to win this particular lady into the faith. Her persistent ways held him aloof, however, she offered to bake the wafer for the Holy Communion. The priest granted her request, thinking this kind gesture was a step towards conversion.

Mrs. A. wife of a devotee, baked the communion bread after receiving special instructions from the priest. She also made it her business to be in service for Holy Communion.

When the priest was about to place the Holy wafer on the tongue of his first penitent, Mrs. A. screamed out, “Father, are you sure you can turn that bread into the literal body of Christ?”

He assured her he could. Then she answered, “if you’re sure, then go ahead. But if not, I want to warn you that there is arsenic lead in that bread.”

Needless to say, Holy Communion service stopped immediately.

In the convent, Mother Superior came holding a dead rat and half a wafer of the Holy Communion. She held the rat in one hand by the tail and the wafer in the other. She exclaimed to the Nun, “See what God has done to this rat that dared to eat the holy wafer?”

That pantomime was a lesson in disguise to teach us the sacredness of “Holy Communion.” Although it was another lie, it placed added fear in our hearts.

In all countries where the Bible is a hidden book, you will find poverty, ignorance, superstition, darkness, bondage, illiteracy and illegitimacy.

After three hundred years of State Churchianity in South America, forty-eight percent of her population are born out of wedlock. Forty-five percent of Spain’s population are born out of wedlock. The oaths of celibacy doesn’t keep priests from being the fathers of many illegitimate babies.

One of our missionaries from Colombia, South America, reported, “Many Colombian couples with large families will come to our evangelical meetings and be convicted of their sins. They will arise and come to our altar and be converted. When preparing for water baptism, we often learn they have never been married, although they have lived together for many years, and sometimes have six, seven or as many as ten children.”

This missionary stated that at that time Colombians were taught to hate the Bible from infancy. It was a hidden book priests searched homes for Bibles. And if one was found, it was taken along with the other heretic’s Bibles and placed in a pile on the street and burned.

Priests led the mobs as they rioted and screamed, “We hate you! Go back home you foreign devils!” Then they raided our churches, broke down the doors and shattered the windows with rocks and stones. In one year, twenty-four churches in Colombia were burned. They also attempted to burn one missionary’s wife and baby alive!

A Colombian mob entered one church and forced eight young men to stand and face the wall, and then shot them in the back. Two of these men were not Christians, but willingly died as martyrs for the truth.

In Colombia, the Law cooperated fully with the priests. One woman came to the mission and found Christ. When she and her five children returned home, they found the door locked. The husband finally came and unlocked the door, and carried a hatchet in his hand. He struck his wife on the head making quite a gash, and then ordered her and the children to leave. He took all of her clothes and burned them. She and the children returned to the Mission where she was cared for. Beds were made on the church benches for them to sleep. Later God called one of her sons to preach the Gospel.

One evening the father heard his son preach and his heart was melted with tears trickling down his cheeks. And admissions of guilt, begging forgiveness, replaced the angry, cursing tongue. God gloriously filled him with the Holy Ghost. One week later. God in His infinite mercy reached down and called him home.

Praise the Lord for the thousands of converted Colombians! Many have sacrificed homes and families, spent days in jail, allowed their bodies to be beaten or their babies to be burned or murdered all because they stood for the Bible and its teaching — the infallible Word of God — and were filled with the Holy Ghost. No more “holy water,” no scapulars, no more relics, no more purgatory, no more bowing down to idols, and no more patron saints. There is no longer a wafer-god that they must eat every time they take holy communion. All they have is a living Christ who forgives all our iniquities.

I, too, feel as the Colombian who purchased his first Bible from the missionary. The missionary gave him this express warning, “Son, I’ll only sell you this Bible if you promise to hide it.” Why? The missionary tried to spare him persecution knowing he was a young convert.

With animated spirit the young man climbed on his bicycle and rode away. His prized possession tucked under some of his other belongings in the basket. He decided to stop at the barber and get a haircut, but every chair was filled. That meant a long wait. He forgot the missionary's warning and rushed out to his bicycle. He picked up his Bible and sat down to wait his turn while he read the Holy Scriptures.

A priest walked in to have his crown shaved. When he walked past the boy, he stopped and asked sharply, "What are you reading?!"

The boy replied, "The Bible."

The priest knocked it out of his hand. As the boy stooped to pick it up, the priest kicked him. The whole Barber shop went into an uproar. The police were summoned and the boy was taken to jail. He was not given a trial or court appearance; not even an opportunity to relate the facts.

In Colombia, because of the tropical heat, a well-known remark is often heard, "No one works between 11:00 A.M. and 2:00 P.M. except an Englishman and mad-dogs." However, the prison authorities compelled this boy to run around the compound with a huge stone on both shoulders during this time. And if (and he did) he fell or fainted from exhaustion, they merely picked him up and laid him in his cell block with neither food nor water. After five days of this treatment they released the boy without any explanation. Although he could hardly walk with his bleeding back and body, he made it over to the missionary's house.

When Brother T. looked down the road and saw him coming, he rose to meet him. The Colombian boy leaned his weary body against the wall of patio and spoke so softly and tenderly, "Just to think my Jesus would count me worthy to suffer for him."

It is doubtful the boy ever read Revelation 2:10.

"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried, be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of Life. "

Chapter 15

Houses of Mercy and Charity

I've never been in a House of Mercy and Charity, however I have met many women who were sent there as girls. Some were incorrigible while others were orphans or some little waifs unwanted by their parents. Therefore, they were picked up by the Law and placed in one of these Houses as a place of refuge.

I write this chapter from the testimonies of those who lived in these homes. I feel America needs to be warned so that our little girls can be spared.

We have scores of such institutions in America. The incorrigible are sent there by our courts without investigation of the Law. Many of the girls lived on the starvation diet such as one hard-boiled egg a day. They worked sixteen hours a day. Some of the children were too small to reach the ironing board, so they stood on a box and ironed clothes.

I talked to one of the first Police Matrons in Maine. I also talked with a case worker from New York. They related identical stories of taking little girls to those institutions. Upon their return each month, these little girls cried and begged to be taken out. They told of being brutally mistreated and how they worked as slaves. They told how they were restricted as prisoners and were half starved. To add to their suffering, the priests were seen there all hours of the day and night.

One father in northern New Brunswick, Canada, was persuaded to take his little girl to such a House convent since the mother had died and he had no one to care for the little child while he worked. She entered the convent at the age of eight and lived there four years.

Mr. Rudullo was allowed to come and visit little Betty each month. He was well pleased with the care his daughter received. One day after Betty reached her twelfth birthday, the Mother Superior met Mr. Rudullo at the receiving desk and told him he couldn't see his little girl that day. She was ill and couldn't have any visitors.

He went away feeling very badly. And it seemed the following month took so long to pass. Visitor's day finally rolled around and Mr. Rudullo again stood before the Mother Superior asking to see little Betty. She again told him that Betty was a very sick little girl and he couldn't see her. Mr. Rudullo became suspicious.

He left the convent and in a few hours returned with a wheelchair. With determination in his voice he said, "Mother, if Betty is too ill to walk put her in this wheelchair and roll her out, but I must see her today."

The Mother Superior realized she was caught in a trap. She took the wheelchair and was gone a very long time.

She emerged wheeling little Betty, who had heavy blankets wrapped around her as though some strange malady has fastened itself on the girl and she had been having chills.

Without a word, he tore the blankets away from Betty to substantiate his suspicions. Sure enough, just as a friend had intimated to him, little Betty, twelve years of age, was pregnant!

Needless to say, he was so furious and hurt that he immediately removed his child from the House convent. He was able to do this as much as she was not under the jurisdiction of the law. He took her to a maternity home to give birth to her illegitimate baby that was fathered by a priest.

While we were in Toronto, a beautiful and charming woman dressed in a chic, red, velvet dress, stood close to the altar. When the service was over, she asked to speak with me. Such sorrow and disappointment coupled with fear and frustration hid beneath her talkative eyes. She had soft, brown, flowing hair, and winsome smile. This was her story.

Her husband was killed in Pearl Harbor at the beginning of World War II. They had two lovely children, a boy and girl. They lived in New York, and later moved to Toronto. The Father Confessor of this particular Church was a handsome man with a great personality. He was a brilliant fellow and had climbed the ladder of success in the church-world. Indeed, he was Father Confessor in several local convents in addition to his large church.

During the course of time, having gone to confession and taken holy communion very often, she found herself deeply in love with him. He, too, allowed his heart to reach out and he confessed how that he loved her dearly. He influenced her to place her children in a boarding school so that he could be free to

come to her home as often as he liked. They lived as man and wife. She paid for the home and living expenses out of her deceased husband's insurance until most of it was gone. Not the church-world, her friends, nor her children knew anything about the double life she was living.

Soon they talked about marriage and he mentioned leaving the priesthood. His only fear was that her children would not be reconciled to accepting him as their Daddy and her husband when they had previously only known him as both priest and Father Confessor. However, she was tired of living common-law. She was tired of being a concubine and having to sacrifice her children while she lived with a priest. So they decided to give themselves a few days to think it over seriously and count the cost.

This former case-worker from New York stood there with tears coursing down her cheeks. She said, "This Friday, Father Valencia is letting me know if he is taking off his holy habit and forsaking the priesthood to marry me, or if he will remain priest and forsake me."

She then stated, "If he and I marry, we will be here to your service Friday night."

Friday night came, and I sat on the platform searching the crowd for this lady and her companion, but they never came.

Several weeks later we were in Napanee, Ontario, Canada. The phone rang and a strange voice said, "My relative, who was the lady who talked to you of marrying the priest while you were in Toronto, has taken the dreadful disease of leukemia and is very low. Please pray for her."

My heart ached to hear such news. Here was a lovely woman who had suffered the loss of her husband at Pearl Harbor. She had allowed her heart to love a man that used her at his own convenience, separating her from her two children. He had spent her insurance money and then had decided to remain a priest. She was dying of leukemia, a broken heart, a guilty conscience and a lost soul. But who cared?

She then believed the stories she heard from those little girls that she took to the House Convent when she was a case-worker. She understood why priests were always there and not just for confession time. She, too, had sold her birthright for a mess of theological pottage. She loved and gave her very soul to a man that was bound by the orders of the "Church" to continue in the priesthood, although he was guilty of adultery. Yet he would be excommunicated if he married according to the laws of Gods holy Bible.

Many girls get into trouble. Babies are nestled close to their hearts, conceived out of lust and passion, void of love, hope and the expectation derived from marriage as God has planned. Some are very young while others are older and have committed the same offenses before.

Seldom does a girl, regardless of her sinful nature, ever give birth to a little one but that the mother instinct comes to the front. Then she'll change her mind about wanting to see the tiny one and won't even want to hold it. Then, as if by spontaneous combustion, she bursts out saying, "I've changed my mind! I do want my baby! I do want to take it home with me!"

In the cloistered Convent, it was at that point when the Mother Superior informed the girl, "You've already signed away the baby. It's not even yours. Besides that, think of the baby's future. It will be better off adopted so it can have a daddy and a mother."

Yes, the Mother Superiors in the Houses as well as in their maternity homes made the girls sign away their babies before they were born.

While conducting a revival in Albuquerque, New Mexico, the Church was packed to capacity. Many attended, especially the Spanish speaking people. One night after service, some of the brethren brought a Spanish man the front to speak to me. He exclaimed through tears, “Sister Charlotte, I can believe your Testimony. Every word of it.”

He then proceeded to tell his life’s story.

“My, mother and father were killed in an automobile accident. Inasmuch as I was only fourteen years old, I was adopted by the sisters in ... Hospital in Denver, Colorado, as an errand boy.

“All through High School I continued to live at the Hospital and worked for the sisters. My job might be to wash windows or to carry out the garbage. Every once in a while, along with the trash. I was given a box similar to a shoebox to take to the furnace and burn. I would have never become suspicious had not the Mother Superior continually insisted that I never open the box, but to be sure and burn it.

“Curiosity got the best of me one day, and I opened the forbidden box. I almost fainted. Cold perspiration broke out upon me as I stood there looking into that box. Was I dreaming? Was it a ghoulish nightmare that I would soon awake from? Right before my very eyes, holding with my own two hands, to be put with the rest of the trash into the furnace fire, was a tiny, newborn baby. It, of course, was dead.

It was terrible! I felt horrible. The thought tore at my heart, ‘Have I been burning babies all this time?’ I had no alternative but to leave without even saying good-bye. I could not and I would not burn any more tiny, little bodies. I dared not tell the Mother Superior I had disobeyed her orders, and peaked into the forbidden box.

This stranger wept as he told me the above story. He then stated, “Do not quote my name. I fear for my life.”

Just whom did those babies belong to and why were they burned? He felt they belonged to the Open Order Sisters of that Hospital, and of that particular Diocese. The normal, healthy babies were no doubt transported to the orphanages and adopted out. But what about the blue baby, or the one that lives but an hour or is born dead? They wouldn’t dare publish the birth of a baby born to a Nun or a Sister. Perhaps the Mother Superior felt the little body should be cremated in the Hospital furnace fire instead of being buried in the cold ground.

Chapter 16

Humiliation

Maybe we hadn’t refused the priest or broken any other law of the convent, but perhaps the Mother Superior felt that we were proud and had to be humbled. Perhaps she saw a look of disgust on our faces when we performed our office duties that day. Maybe we refused to eat our bowl of soup at dinner, so she decided that it was best for her to break our proud, haughty spirit and humble us.

One day when we marched to the refectory to eat our dinner, a bowl of soup consisting of cooked vegetables in plain water with no seasoning and a cup of black coffee, was set before me. I refused to eat it because the aroma that met my nostrils was putrid. In fact, the soup was sour.

Nothing was said that day, but the next day when I sat down at our crude table, a few planks of boards stretched across saw-horses, the same bowl of soup was waiting for me. I could take my choice. I could either eat the rotten soup or starve. I attempted to eat it, but I turned deathly sick.

Since we didn't leave the table nor go anywhere without permission, I remained seated only to vomit the soup back into my plate. That was embarrassing enough. But to add to my embarrassment, humiliation and sick stomach, the Mother Superior stepped over to my side and said, "Now, you eat what's in your bowl!"

I know it's too horrible to imagine, but I was compelled to eat my own vomit. I became so deathly ill that I just kept vomiting and could not retain it.

What happened when soup is left? Nothing was wasted in the convent. The Nuns who worked in the Kitchen had to remove all the left-over soup, vomit and all, and place it into the big cooking vats, and add a little soda to sweeten it and serve it the next day.

Now you can understand why I'm thrilled over the luscious food the saints bring to us during our Revivals. When I open our refrigerator and see eggs, bacon, homogenized milk, tomatoes, lettuce, steaks, watermelons, strawberries, etc. I'm overwhelmed with joy.

Sometimes I cry when I sit down to a table of good food. I'm thankful to God for every bite of it. I only wish I could take the hot rolls, grilled steak, buttered corn and iced tea to the convent where I spent the better part of my life and share it with those half-starved Nuns. They would not be able to even digest such food now, though, because their stomachs would be shrunk. The steaks and rolls would be far too rich for their sick stomachs. After twenty-two years in a convent, I almost forgot how an egg, steak, and whole milk looked, let alone tasted.

I shall never forget Convent soup. In fact, I never want to see another soup regardless of its name or the ingredients. When the Doctor weighed me after I escaped from the convent, I tipped the scales at exactly eighty-nine pounds. My cheeks were so hollow that you could see the print of my teeth through the flesh.

May I insert a true story from Africa?

When dear Gladys Robinson returned from Liberia, West Africa, she told of being invited to a native's home for dinner. The family's child had attended our school in that jungle and learned to speak some English. When the nice, browned casserole, looking very much like baked macaroni, came in out of the oven, piping hot, the little, black face beamed at mother Robinson and said, "Mother Robinson, those are worms. You won't eat that."

She had quite a struggle trying to excuse herself from eating those baked worms. Even the native hostess suspicioned the little fellow had said something, and angrily she asked, "What did he say?" After all, she had taken precious time to dig those worms, wash them and bake them for the missionary!

But we Americans are not in the habit of eating worms, monkey and rice stew, and delicious snake meat. That is, except for we Nuns in the Cloistered Convents. I never had to eat a mouse like I know another Nun did, but I did have to eat a worm. It was one of those night-crawlers or fishing worms. Mother Superior had a number of them in a fruit jar. When she approached me, she merely lifted the jar lid and took out a nice, long earthworm and compelled me to eat it.

Where did she get those worms? Surely she hadn't been to the yard to dig them up from the soil. There was only one other source. The priests had to have brought them in from the outside.

You see, the priests and the Mother Superior were great pals. They really cooperated with each other. Sometimes we Nuns were instructed to lie on the floor in the form of a cross with our faces down. The remaining Nuns marched over our bodies for one hour or several hours depending upon how long the Mother Superior deemed necessary to humiliate us.

I have laid prostrate in the form of a cross for three days without food or water. I had to wash the Mother Superior's feet, only to be made to drink the dirty water when finished. This was truly humiliating. However, I have been so thirsty, especially when sick with raging fever, that I would have gladly washed the Mother Superiors feet and drank every drop of the dirty water just to cool my parched tongue.

Chapter 17

Convents Opened In Mexico

Spain, France, Poland, Hungary and Mexico have opened all of their Cloistered Convents because of government inspection. Why doesn't America open her Convents? My only answer is that America was founded under religious liberty. She isn't willing to wage a religious war to liberate a few Nuns. Therefore, people find it difficult to believe that cruelty and immorality takes place in American Convents. The public sees only the Sisters ministering to the sick, caring for the invalid or teaching in our schools. Therefore, it is hard for them to conceive in their minds things like dungeons, lime pits or cruelty of any nature behind those beautiful, brick structures and lovely terraces.

I've mentioned to people about Mexico and what the government discovered upon investigation. They only replied, "Oh, yes I know. But that was in Mexico where they were ignorant and heathenistic."

In May, 1934, Convents in Mexico were opened. We are told of a little Nun who wrote a note of the sufferings, hunger and mistreatment and slipped it out to an old wood-chopper. He in turn sent the note to the President of Mexico. The President went into action immediately by having staged a banquet in the Presidential Palace and invited all of the prelates. At the opportune moment, the President stood and spoke of the Convents and their land and then asked the prelates to take him on a tour of investigation through each Convent.

They said, "That's impossible. Those are religious orders and we're not allowed to go back where the Nuns live."

The President then called in the Militia, which he had in readiness, and compelled them to go into every convent. The President and the Nun, who slipped the note to the wood-chopper, and many others were killed in the semi-religious war that followed because of his command.

I now quote from The History of Puebla.

"On April 3, 1934, Detective Valente Quintana went to the Attorney General's office and reported the existence of several convents which were actually functioning in Puebla City. One of these was Saint Monica. On May 17, 1934, Valente Quintana and his workmate, Florence Gonzales, went to the federal

Public Ministry to show the data they had accumulated.

“The Judge ordered a search, and Valente Quintana accompanied by some Policemen went to Santa Monica Convent on May 18, 1934 early in the morning. Mr. Quintana went upstairs with his workmate. The first person he met was the doorkeeper, Guadalupe Zamorano D’Guerrero who was surprised at seeing the policemen. Mr. Quintana eagerly looked for a secret door and in his search he knocked over a flowerpot which was near to a closet. The vase fell down exposing a bell button. He pressed the button and just like magic a secret door in the back of the closet was opened and a Nun, Mary Margaret, appeared. Was she taking care of the secret door? Why did those Convents have secret doors? Why did it take the Law two weeks to find the secret door? The Government compelled them to leave and gave them forty-eight hours to do so.

“On October 28, 1934, this Convent of the Augustinian Nuns was turned over to the Direct Dominion of the Nation with the Federal Treasury Office occupying and managing it. It was converted into a Museum of Religious Art. They also put some things that were found in the convents of Saint Catherine the Capuchins and that of Our Lady of Sorrows which were discovered the same year in Santa Monica.

“In the Mother Superior’s cell was a picture of the Lord, a bed without a mattress, a little table with a crucifix, a praying desk with cilices or wires which have sharp points.”

We Nuns also had a bed consisting of the slab of wood, no mattress or pillow and only one blanket. We also had the prayer desk with wires having sharp points, for that was where we knelt and prayed. Even though it meant agony, we had to kneel on these sharp wires and repeat our learned prayers. You could also notice Mother Superior’s cell window from which she watched the novices.

Among the portraits on the wall was Mary Mother of Rosary, who continually suffered because her divine husband told her He liked to see her suffer. Also the portrait of Mother Hyacinth, Mary Niclas, of the Sacred Heart of Jesus who gave satisfaction to God by torturing herself so hard that she got sick and was in danger of death.

The above is written in Mexican History and inscribed with the portraits of Saint Monica Convent Museum. So, if you doubt the fact that Nuns suffer, go to Mexico and tour the Convents.

The secret entrance into the Nun’s Chapel was discovered by Valente Quintana by taking away a wooden box found in the Mother Superior’s bathroom. Tourists go in on their hands and knees into the Nun’s chapel. Here is where the Nuns said the Stations of the Cross while they carried a huge rope about their necks and crowns of thorns on their heads, while the blood trickled down their faces.

Santa Monica has a crucifix that was taken from a niche in the Saint Monica Church. It belonged to a Jew, James D’Alvarado, who bought the crucifix to mock at it. He was reported to the Inquisitors of the Holy Office and was condemned to be burned alive as an obstinate heretic. The burning took place publicly in the Garden of Saint Dominic in Mexico City.

In the sacristy of the convent they found a secret trap door under a rug in the corner. There a spiral stairway that led to the meditation room below. In pitch darkness, Nuns meditated all alone before a crucifix and a skull. Her meditation was upon death. Afterwards she flagellated her body. In a long rack are the habits and the leather belts. Leather belts that were worn in the convent had sharp metallic points. The belt was placed around our naked wastes to wear all day while we worked. We looked like pieces of beefsteak when we were allowed to remove it at the end of the day.

In the rear of this long, dark room there was a large, lifelike crucifix. Here we brought a dead Nun and stood vigil, and sprinkled holy water and ashes all over the dead body before we took it to the cemetery. At the corner there was a door that led to Saint Monica Church from which the priest came into the convent to lead the spiritual services for the Nuns. Who said, “Priests don’t come to convents?”

There was also a confessional box here and a catafalque for requiem masses.

I continue to quote from this same book:

“A big screen communicating with Saint Monica Church through which the Nuns attended the Church Services without being seen and whereby the choir sometimes heard sacred songs and other times heard screams.

“By taking hold of a rope, one is led through a hole into the cemetery. On the walls you will see the tombs of the Nuns and some priests with names inscribed therein.”

Try to figure out how they had a funeral for a priest in a girls’ cloistered convent, and buried him there instead of in the church cemetery. Then, when you have figured out that puzzle, figure out why Bishop Francis Paul Vazques’ heart was cut out of his body and pickled in alcohol, along with the tongue of Father Ignatius Parra y Crespo. Also, in another box on display are two petrified hearts of two other benefactors. How did these people ever get into a cloistered convent, especially to leave their last remains? Could it have been one of those times when confession was over, and the Nuns ganged up on the holy Father and tore him from limb to limb because he inflicted too much suffering upon them?

The History of Puebla tells of the discovery of a bone depository in 1936 that contained the skulls of forty-nine Nuns. The date was August 1, 1835. In other words, there was the lime-pit where deformed babies, disobedient Nuns and a few priests were laid for their final resting place. Chemicals and lime ate the flesh and took care of the stench. Only the bones were left to tell the tale.

In 1951 we conducted a Revival in southern California for a fine pastor who just returned from Mexico City. He stated that the Government had made another raid on convents and found one to be in operation even though it was ordered closed sixteen years before. They found twenty old Nuns who refused to obey eviction orders. However, the Law compelled them to leave in 1950.

In The History of Puebla, it states,

“The last door of Saint Monica Convent found by Detective Valente Quintana was concealed with a poor landscape that was disguised with flowerpots, honeysuckle palms, etc. By this door the Nuns got the big bundles for the Kitchen.”

I’ve heard of whisky stills that operated in the hills and mountains of Kentucky and Virginia during Prohibition days where the law couldn’t find them, or were afraid to investigate if they did know where they were. I’ve also heard that vice rings operated within blocks of Police Stations for years before they were uncovered. But here is a Religious Convent that operated sixteen years contrary to the law of Mexico within blocks of the Police Station, and they couldn’t even find the entrance.

Chapter 18

Death March

Now and then a little Nun decided she no longer wanted to remain a Nun in the cloister. When she broke the news to the Superior, she was told to go into a certain room and get on her knees and tell God just how she feels. Having felt she was alone, she made a general confession to God, then she confessed her innermost thoughts. She was not told, nor had she any idea, that the room had been wired so that her superiors heard every word.

All of a sudden she heard a voice. She heard her name called, and the voice from out of space spoke, "I am God." Little did this Nun realize that the voice was that of a priest and not God.

He told her to walk to a certain room. She went, but she never returned.

She was picked up and placed in one of the three vats that was six feet long, four feet wide and four feet deep. It had a machine much like a food grinder on one end and on the other end there was a funnel that led to a river beneath the convent. Here the little Nun's body was pulverized then flushed through the funnel into the cold river beneath the Convent.

Why did she have to meet with such hellish torture and cruel death? She was tortured and killed because she complained and rebelled against the Convent and her Superiors. She made up her mind to leave the place, but they changed her mind. These vats were also used to destroy unbelievers or heretics.

Across from the convent stood a building called the Waxatorium. All the figures there were made of wax. If you entered you would have seen the likenesses of a Nun and two priests. One priest held a poker that was placed into the furnace until the end was fiery red with heat to the eyes of the Nun. An ex-priest explained that she was being punished for disobedience for having refused those priests.

I, too, wondered why these figures of wax, so revealing to the world, were ever made. No doubt they were fashioned and designed for convent eyes alone, as a warning to other Nuns. When the Government made the surprise attack, this was also taken and placed in the Museum for the world to see.

Chapter 19

Nuns and Priests Who Attempt to Escape

It is said that a Nun can leave any convent any time she so desires. I refute that statement. Five minutes after I took my last vow when I was made to understand by Mother Superior that I had married Jesus Christ, and since the priests represented Christ, I was to be the priest's wife. I would have laid aside my holy habit and would have returned home. It was then that I was told that all doors were locked. There is no way of escape.

I was allowed to cry for a few minutes and then hushed. The Mother Superior informed me they all had

felt once like I did when they entered, but that I, too, would change my mind. I never did. The only reason I spent twenty-two years in a Cloistered Convent was due to the fact that I could find no way of escape. While in the dungeon below the Convent, I tried to dig a hole thinking I could dig through to the outside, but that was impossible. I also tried to take my life by severing a vein in my arm, but they reached me in time to close the wound. They didn't want us to die. They would rather that we lived and suffered by degrees.

When any Nun tried to escape, a loud buzzer would ring. Fear gripped the heart of every Nun. We all hurried to our cells and fell down on our prayer boards before our patron saint and prayed. Priests came running from every direction to halt the escaping Nun. Of course I had no way of knowing whether she made her escape or not. So many Nuns came up missing. We dared not ask any questions.

Perhaps some escaped, but more likely the missing Nun was taken to the dungeon or chained to the pit for a slow, agonizing death.

A monk once escaped and came to the Royal Oak Michigan Church and spoke. Each morning after the ex-monk left his room, Sister Kirby went to make up his bed and tidy up his room. But each morning she found that the bed hadn't been used. Her curiosity mingled with worry and concern made her ask, "Why aren't you sleeping in my bed? Is something wrong with it?"

He replied, "Oh no, Mrs. Kirby. Everything is lovely. The bed is just too pretty to be soiled."

He then explained, "While in the monastery, we suffered many things. We walked on sharp rocks, whipped our bodies until the blood flowed, etc. While sleeping in the cold, my feet became frostbitten and then they cracked and bled. Even today blood oozes from them, therefore I took a newspaper and lay on the floor."

Mrs. Kirby said, "Brother, even if you mess the bed and we have to burn the mattress when you leave, you must not sleep on the floor in my house. You must sleep on the bed."

Before he left their home, he asked for prayer and said, "I shall return if I remain free, but if you should never see me again, then you will know they have recaptured me."

Sister Kirby said they never saw him again.

While we were in Nova Scotia, Canada, a lady attended our Revival. She was acquainted with the patients of a mental Hospital. She spoke of a little Nun in the mental ward who was not insane but normal in every sense. She told me how happy this Nun would be if I paid her a visit.

Along with three others, I made the short trip to the mental institution. I noticed the strange look given me by the girl at the desk when I asked for this Nun by name. We were soon ushered into the Doctor's office when we were told we couldn't see her.

He explained, "Her parents have signed her into this institution. We are not allowed to permit anyone to see her except her family, the priests and the sisters of charity."

One of her nurses also attended our meetings. She made this remark, "I have talked to her doctor. We both know this Nun is not mentally ill. She begs for release but her family signed her in and pays for her hospitalization and we cannot release her."

This Nun, after having been an Open Order Sister for several years, returned to her home and told them

she was through with convent life, and was taking off her holy habit. Through the influence of their local priest, they had her put into this mental institution rather than see her leave the sisterhood.

The nurse continued by saying, “The lady across the hall from this Nun has a radio. She invited the Nun to listen to religious programs with her. The sister was enjoying the radio ministry immensely until one day the sisters of charity came in and told her it was a terrible sin for her to listen to those heretics and forbade her to ever listen again. In fact they placed such mortal fear in her soul that she felt compelled to close her door the next time the old lady had her radio playing.”

This poor sister may have spent her remaining days in an insane institution simply because she dared to run from an open order convent.

Doctor Yoman was quite a pal to Father Carter. The Doctor, having no claims to any religion, became very friendly with the priest and they often played golf together. The doctor had a great desire to see the inside of a cloistered convent.

He kept pondering and scheming until he thought upon a great plan. He invited the priest over for an evening. He had plenty of tempting liquor on hand and poured a drink for his guest and for himself. He continued to fill the priest’s glass while he slowly sipped from his glass making it last much longer. Then he saw the priest’s eyes become glassy and his tongue quite thick. He immediately went to work on his great plan.

“Now,” he said. “We have plenty of good liquor. Where can we find some women?”

The priest replied, “That’s easy. I know where there are plenty of women.”

He took the Doctor into his bedroom and dressed him in one of his Holy Habits. They drove out to a convent. Most convents are outside the City limits.

Of course they didn’t enter through the front door of the convent, but through a tunnel arriving at the rear entrance. Since they were holy fathers, the Mother Superior gave them full liberty with the Nuns.

Doctor Yoman made it his business to explain to five Nuns who appeared to be half-starved and cowered like wounded animals, “I’m your friend. I did not come here to harm you, but to help you.”

He then told them, “if you’ll follow me, I’ll take you out of here.”

They followed him to the exit. One became terrified and ran back. But the other four Nuns followed him to freedom. All four Nuns were taken to a rest home to regain strength and health. Two of them were pregnant. Each of them weighed less than a hundred pounds.

I later heard that the two gave birth to their offspring but didn’t have the privilege of loving and caring for them because both babies died.

While we were in Bay City, Texas, a note was handed to me during service. It had been placed in the offering plate. It stated, “There is another ex-Nun in the City. She lives at 233 Oak Street. Why don’t you call on her?”

I was only too glad and eager to do so, and in a matter of hours I was knocking at this door. A middle-aged lady answered. I told her who I was and my purpose for coming. She looked me over to see whether or not she could trust me. And then she invited me in.

This Baptist landlady said, “Yes, Mary McLane lives with me but she isn’t home today.” Then she told

me Mary McLane's story:

A Mother Superior went to Ireland recruiting young girls for American Convents. She promised them a good education, a good profession such as nursing and the privilege of living in beautiful America. Mary accepted the call along with several others. After she was in the Open Order Convent for only two years she decided she would rather live a different life and asked to leave.

She was referred to the Bishop. However, she waited fourteen years before she was released. Then, at the age of thirty-two, she found herself on the outside in a strange country. No relatives, no friends and no money. Since she was a sister in the nursing profession, and inasmuch as hospitals were in dire need of nurses, she readily secured a job at the City Hospital.

Mrs. Snow, the landlady, wondered why she seemed to be so mysterious and never became acquainted with her. One day she decided to sit by her bedroom door and wait until Mary came out so she could invite her to eat with her.

At the table, Mary broke down in tears and said, "This is the first time I've sat at a family table for sixteen years."

She explained that she had been a sister in the convent. When she received her first paycheck she burst into tears of joy and exclaimed, "This is the first money I've made in my life!"

If it took sixteen years of legal transactions for an Open Order Sister to leave a Convent, how and when would a Cloistered Nun ever get permission to leave? The answer is: They don't.

Did Sister Mary have full liberty of conscience and soul? Could she come and go at will without being molested?

"I only know," Mrs. Snow said, "the priest has hounded her every footstep. They come here to the house and talk to her and then they wait for her at the Hospital. I told one priest to never set foot on my property again. Mary McLane is afraid of every stranger. She's even afraid to walk alone, especially after dark."

I know of another Nun, who would have taken her last vow in four more months, that escaped. They were sending her to a foreign country since she hadn't yet taken her perpetual vows — vows that seal a Nun behind cloistered walls for the balance of her life. She was given the privilege of going to the convent in her home town with the accompaniment of Mother Superior. There she could speak to her family through the black grail.

However, the Mother Superior called the Mother's House and asked if she could go to the House of Retreat of Albany and allow Sister Theresa to go to Springfield alone. She assured them Sister Theresa had been faithful and loyal and could be trusted. Of course two other Nuns were to meet her at Springfield depot and escort her to the Convent.

She arrived in Springfield with a real snow storm in progress. When she alighted from the train there was no one waiting for her. Instead of going inside the depot to see if two old Nuns were there, she hurried down the street to her mother's home. She took off the holy habit and decided to stay home until the priests and sisters called on her.

She was fully persuaded to return when she suddenly broke her leg. The doctor could not release her for several weeks. And in the meantime she heard the Gospel and was converted.

She testified to the thousands of people in our churches throughout America about the brutal treatment she received in the convent although she was just a postulant. She spoke of being strung up by her thumbs with only her toes touching the floor for nine days and nights, lapping her food and water from a shelf directly in front of her face. She later became a victim of tuberculosis as a result of this penance. She told how that hands were placed in a vice and broken. She endured many forms of penance and punishments that drew her no closer to God than where she was.

She traveled with a Japanese girl from Hawaii who was converted to Christ from Buddhism and Shintoism. They served as missionaries in Hawaii for a short term. The little Japanese girl died in the fall of 1953. Sister Theresa grieved over the death of her companion until she herself became deathly ill. Her physician sent her to a Hospital.

When the Superior learned Sister Theresa had been a Nun of the Cloister, she isolated her from all friends, allowing only one to visit her. The patient in the next bed said Mother Superior drew a screen around Sister Theresa each night and talked to her in low tones. Theresa must have experienced a complete brainwashing, since she knelt and kissed the priest's ring and asked for holy communion before leaving the Hospital.

When we visited Sister Theresa, our hearts cried out in despair. Something terrible had happened. Her eyelids were drooped. She talked double-talk. She berated those who had befriended her. She cried and then she laughed. She was mixed up. She cried when she should have laughed, and laughed when she should have cried. We couldn't figure out the score. Had she had been doped, brainwashed or broken until her mental capacity could not function properly?

At any rate she was taken into a convent. One of her last letters to us said, "I'm so unhappy since my companion died that I've decided to go to a place where I'll have to rise early and work so hard that I won't have time to think or grieve. But don't worry, I'll take Christ with me."

That last statement made me to know she was deluded. How could Christ go with her, when she would have to break the second commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or likeness of anything that is in heaven above or that which is in the earth beneath," the very first day in the convent?

My prayer for Sister Theresa is that she hasn't violated God's law that would place her in the category of 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12.

"And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish: because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

Father McIntyre had a large Hospital in New York. When he left the priesthood, he dismissed all Church authority from the board, all the way down to the nursing sisters. He turned the entire Hospital into a General Clinic. Then he published a book entitled "The Padre." It is the story of a Priest's life.

You ask if he has been persecuted? Large lights burned around his house continually so that no one could lurk around in the dark. On his desk laid a pistol. There was also a big club hanging on the wall of his office. Priests have tried to keep their patients from his hospital. They've also tried to keep his book from being published and then boycotted every bookstore that sold his book.

I rejoice to hear of a Nun who escaped this year of this writing. However, my heart soon filled with sadness and pain and horror as she related the awful price another Nun paid for trying to run away.

“While in the convent,” said Sister Helen, “Sister Margaret ran away. Because of fear she returned, giving herself up. She felt surely they would forgive her because of her act of sorrow and contrition in returning. But instead, Mother Superior had two Nuns take Sister Margaret, and set her on a hot, cook stove. Needless to say, her little body was not merely scorched or singed, but literally cooked. She died from the burns.

“I was fortunate to have the privilege of escaping,” said Sister Helen, “But God pity me if I ever had to return. I shall never forget the price Sister Margaret had to pay. Oh, the agony and the pain! The awful screams that echoed as her flesh stuck to the stove and seared like a piece of meat. I know because I was one of the Nuns who was compelled to hold her onto the stove.”

One of the most thrilling and dramatic escapes was told by Sister Martina. Having escaped when jobs were not too plentiful, she joined a circus. In one of her idle hours, she was took stroll and passed by a tent where she heard singing. She became accustomed to tents where loud, gruff voices invited curiosity-seekers to come in and gaze upon the fattest woman in the world, or to come and see the trapeze artists and clowns who made a large crowd laugh, or clap their hands in ecstasy. But here was a different tent. People were singing and clapping their hands while an unseen light illuminated their faces. Everyone seemed so happy. She slipped into an empty chair and there she watched and listened attentively.

Soon the old-fashioned gospel preacher took his Bible and preached Christ. An altar call was given and she watched men, women and children file from their seats to a long bench in the front. It seemed like everyone began to talk at the same time, and yet their eyes were closed and they looked as though they were praying. Sister Martina thought it was all very strange. But she felt within herself that these people had peace, joy — oh, such joy! — and love as they sang.

She was glad the circus was going to be in town several days. It would give her a chance to go back to that meeting. Sister Martina went to the Revival several nights. Then the glorious miracle took place! God spoke to her heart and convicted her of sin. God laid the very message on the preacher’s heart to enlighten her on Bible truths that were so hidden in the convent. Without hesitation she found herself among the seekers at the altar bench.

Someone came to her and explained how Christ had died on Calvary to save her soul from sin and hell. She could look to Christ and ask him to forgive her of all her sins, according to I John 1:9. He would wash her and make her white as snow, Isaiah 1:18.

She was more than willing to confess her sins to God and having done so, peace like a mighty flood engulfed her soul. She raised her hands toward heaven and prayed, worshipped and adored Him when the second tidal wave gushed over her soul. She was filled with the mighty Baptism of the Holy Ghost! As on the day of Pentecost, spoken of in the Book of Acts, the Second Chapter, God took her lips of clay and spoke through her in other tongues.

She of course could no longer continue at the circus. Her whole life was changed. Sin no longer held dominion over her body and soul. A lady minister asked Sister Martina to accompany her on an evangelistic tour. One day while Evangelist Irene Rader was away, Sister Martina walked to the church alone. Immediately her enemies picked her up and took her back to the Convent. While they were

burning her body, trying to force her to say she was sorry that she ran away, the Holy Ghost moved on Sister Martina and she began to speak in tongues.

This unusual phenomenon terrified her oppressors. The priests had them to sew her burning garments together as well as possible. Then he told her to take that demon out of here before she saturates the entire place with evil. They bound her hands and feet, gagged her mouth and quietly brought her back on the porch of the same home.

During Sister Martina's absence, Evangelist Irene and the saints prayed fervently for God to deliver her from her enemies and to bring her back to them, because they had a pretty good idea what had happened.

On this night they heard a groan, or perhaps it was more like a whine. When Mr. Loren, who was the father in the home where Sister Martina and Sister Irene were staying during the Revival, opened the door, there lay Sister Martina bound and gagged. Oh, how they all thanked God for her return! Surely God had answered their prayer.

I've heard of hotels, restaurants and circus's enticing some pretty, young girls to work, promising them salary above the average. However, once hired and inside they found that they were connected to a vice ring such as white slavery or maybe compelled to be a prostitute in a house of ill fame. One young lady in Illinois told the horrid story, of obtaining a job in a hotel in St. Louis. She was whisked away in Oklahoma and finally across the Mexican border she became a victim of white slavery. She finally escaped but was fearful for her life.

It is horrible to think that men living in beautiful America have turned inns, playhouses and even homes into houses of white slavery — places of rendezvous, camouflaged by palms, foliage, flowers and soft music and dim-coloured lights.

What is more cruel or disappointing to a girl than to have been enticed by a black-robed priest to give her life to God by entering a convent and having found her bedroom cell frequented by many men — priests? Then, if she ever dreamed of escaping, she, too, was covered with a heavy veil and transported to a convent in any State or Country her superiors desired. If she complained that her forms of penance were too painful, Mother Superior added to her suffering. If she ever escaped, she, too, had to live in fear of being picked up on the street and returned to the convent, fed poisoned food, or being jabbed with a poisoned needle, etc. Holy Scripture warns every child of God:

“Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” (Matt 10:28).

Chapter 20

Jealousy is Cruel as the Grave (Song of Solomon 8:6)

In the convent, jealousy ran rampantly. We had no God to give us self-assurance or confidence. Neither did we have faith in ourselves, much less have faith in those sisters and priests for whom we worked and came in contact with.

One Nun had breast cancer. She was in the last stages of the disease and badly needed medical

attention. In fact, the offensive odor filled the room and we were nauseated to even breathe the air in that room.

Sister Anna was summoned by the Mother Superior to dress the cancerous breast and drain the corruption into a cup. After this procedure, Sister Anna was compelled by Mother Theresa to drink the contents! Of all brutal treatments administered in the convent, I felt this was the most horrible.

Soon the same, hideous cancer that spread throughout Sister Anna's body gripped Sister Theresa's body and death was inevitable. But what if she did die? Another beautiful flower would take her place, although it, too, would soon wither and die in the convent atmosphere.

My turn came to work in the kitchen with five other Nuns. I prepared the potatoes for soup. I lost so much weight and strength through heavy forms of penance and such a rigid diet that I dropped the pan of potatoes while lifting them to the table to peel them. Mother Superior became very indignant because I was so careless to break holy silence. She quickly returned and threw a meat cleaver at my face. To ward off the blow, I threw up my hands. The meat cleaver struck my hand and glanced off, striking my breast. Several double stitches had to be taken to sew the wound in my breast, all because I dropped a pan of potatoes and broke silence.

Sometimes a few Nuns were chosen to do penance by laying flat on the floor while the other Nuns walked over us and stepped on our stomachs as they passed over. This gave great opportunity for a jealous Nun to seek revenge. She not only stepped in the pit of our stomachs, but screwed her heel at the same time. This resulted in terrible injuries and caused Nuns to suffer the rest of their lives.

One day while I prayed and chanted in the chapel, Mother Superior addressed me. As was the custom, I fell prostrate before her and kissed her feet. When I lifted my head so that my inquiring eyes met my gaze, she threw something that set my face on fire. I do not know what it was. It may have been acid or some flammable mixture concocted by the Mother and her helpers, or a very potent poison used as a means to kill me or injure and mar my face as a lifetime reminder. I only know I went stone blind. My face burned as if it were held over an open fire. It must have been when one of the Mother Superiors' fits of temper exploded and her jealous nature was seeking revenge. She didn't really want me to die or to go blind, because dead or blind Nuns could not do the work we were required to do.

She called in an outside "Church" doctor to treat me, which they did only on very rare occasions. He inquired as to how my eyes were injured. The Mother Superior very nonchalantly pointed to me while I laid on the infirmary cot and said, "She injured them."

I wanted to scream out and say, "Mother, why did you lie? You know you burned my eyes!" But I didn't dare tell the truth. After medication, he bandaged my eyes and said, "After a few days I will return to remove these bandages." And with that, he left.

Hope and then doubt surged through my brain. Would I ever see again? I kept telling myself that I would see after the doctor removed the bandages.

Along with the blindness, I had an unquenchable thirst. When a Nun passed my cot I whispered, "Water." Each Nun, however, had to pass me by. Of course, they weren't allowed to go near any water.

Seemingly weeks went by before the doctor returned. There was enough darkness and dreariness that prevailed in the convent with two good eyes. But, oh! — how dark with two blind eyes and a deathly silence broken only by the chants in the chapel, or by a board that creaked in the floor as the Nuns tip-

toed to their several duties.

Finally Mother Superior opened the door of the Infirmary and presented Dr. Currello. I was so happy that he didn't fail to come. With kind words and gentle hands he took off layers of gauze. With great expectancy I waited for him to remove the last layer, but the thrill turned to chill. My hopes fled into despair. My dreams shattered like crystal in a great banquet hall. Yes, I was blind. Blinded forever, I presumed. I couldn't see the doctor's form nor any other object in the room. I couldn't distinguish light from darkness.

However, as time passed on I began to see a little light. A few weeks later I began to discern objects about me. Then, thank God, I was able to see again, not normally, but to the extent that I could move around and perform my duties as a Nun.

Just a few years ago, after having been out of the convent for a considerable length of time, I went to an optician to secure a pair of glasses. After checking my eyes, he exclaimed, "Lady, you've had a severe injury. I'm afraid these glasses will be the last ones you'll ever purchase. You're gradually going blind. You only have four percent vision in one eye and only eight percent in the other!"

That was bad news, however not startling. I was told that a yellow strip of fleshly tissue had formed on the eyeball from the burn. From the Doctor's office I went to the Pastor of the local church where I was speaking. The pastor and saints had special prayer for me. As a result, the Lord graciously and marvelously healed my body and gave me the eyes normal for a woman of my age.

On another occasion, Mother Superior addressed me as I stood at the head of the stairway. When I prostrated myself at her feet, she pushed me causing me to fall the full length of the stairs. When I landed at the bottom of the stairs, I struck something very sharp that lacerated my hip severely. I lost consciousness, and when I survived, Mother Superior stood over me with a surgical needle and cat-gut thread. I didn't expect her to give me an anesthetic, but would let me agonizingly watch her, in butcher-style, take the stitches to sew up the gap in my hip. But, no. She placed the needle in my hand and compelled me to sew the wound in my own hip. I took a stitch and fainted, only to be revived and forced to continue the sewing operation. It was quite a gash, and I bled profusely. Though I sat in a pool of blood, while my hands shook and my heart pounded, I finally sewed the last stitch.

Chapter 21

Chained

I lived on the farm as a little girl. My father believed that binder twine and baling wire were indispensable. How could a man farm without them? In a Cloistered Convent, the whip, the flagellation cord and the chains were indispensable instruments. How could a Mother Superior carry out her Gestapo orders without them?

Sometimes our waists were made bare and a heavy log-chain was secured around them while several feet of it dangled to the floor. We carried it all day while we performed our duties. The chain moved with each vibration of the body, and this of course wore into the flesh. Soon the skin became inflamed and there was a burning, itching sensation. The skin wore off and we felt the pain of raw flesh against

cold iron. At the end of the day we were badly bruised and bloody. The weight of that chain tired us also.

In the Bible. Mark wrote of a maniac named Legion who lived in a cemetery. He, too, was bound with chains and fetters. But his demonic power gave him strength to break every shackle. It was a weird, ghostly sight to see Legion with his body unclothed. Blotches of blood were on his face, arms and legs because he struck the tomb stones, trees and bushes. To have seen his wild eyes staring and to have heard his bloodcurdling screams as he walked or ran continuously like a lion caged in a zoo, would have made the hair stand on your head. Sinful men tried to chain him, thinking only of their own profession. Jesus came and liberated him, mind, soul and body.

Isn't it strange that in a convent, little Nuns are chained to prove their love for God? In the Bible days, Jesus proved His love by breaking the chains and setting men and women free. In the penance chamber we had a table just long enough and wide enough to fit the human body. We were compelled to lie down with our faces upward. We stretched out our arms and legs so that our hands and feet extended over the edge of the table. Then a heavy log chain was fastened to each wrist and ankle.

After a few hours, the weight of those chains made one feel as though her brain would snap. The pain was excruciating, yet we could not move. We could not even change position. The log-chains held us down to the extent that we might as well have been nailed to the table. Again we were bruised and the skin was torn. For three days we suffered in this position. Perhaps you wonder why so many forms of penance lasted three days. I, too, wondered why. Perhaps it was because Jesus died and spent three days in the bowels of the earth before He arose and conquered death, hell and the grave. Too bad we couldn't arise victoriously from our chains.

Death stalked through each room and cell and then laughed at those of us who could do nothing but stand by, and remarked, "Just a little while and I'll be back for you."

Hell, with its flaming and torturous fires of retribution, overflowed its banks and seeped into the convent to give us a foretaste of life hereafter. The grave? Ah, it would have been a peaceful thought just to dream of kind and gentle hands lowering your body to soft mother earth where lilies and roses adorn the casket lid. The grave that is cold and clammy, that separates loved ones from their families, was not as repulsive to a little Nun. Our daily walks were within the shadow of death and our graves were the lime pits. Our hereafter was a Hell with a sizzling, crackling fire because relatives forgot to pay the priest for mass to pray and thereby deliver our poor souls. We only had the hope of Purgatory due to our disobedience towards our superiors, which made us unworthy of heaven.

While I was in the dungeon below the ground, I heard screams and moans. I thought to myself that if the opportunity ever afforded itself, I would investigate that part of the convent.

One day Mother Superior became very ill. I was the registered nurse who was called in to care for her. I was instructed to give her certain pills every four hours. I read the label on the bottle and it warned they were very powerful. I came to the conclusion that if one pill for every four hours would make her well, then about a half dozen pills dissolved in one glass should kill her. After all, she had hurt and wounded so many of us. I was happy for the opportunity to retaliate. I also thought this would be a great opportunity to go to the dungeon under the ground beyond where I had spent so much time and see if I could find out where those screams and moans came from.

Twilight had turned into night and all had gone into their cells to sleep. I asked myself, "Should I give

her the glass of pills now?” “No,” I thought. It would be better to wait until 1:00 A.M. for the simple fact that all Nuns rose at seven minutes before 12:00 A.M. and dressed. and then went to the chapel and recited the breviary for one hour. Then they returned to bed.

12:30 A.M. came, then 12:45 A.M. I got very nervous. I heard the Nuns as they tip-toed back into their cells. All was quiet except for the Mother Superior’s breathing and a little groan as she tossed in pain. I dissolved the pills into the glass of water and lifted Mother Superior’s head to give her the medicine. Her gurgling sound echoed like a waterfall. But it seemed like silence next to my beating heart. She swallowed the last drop and I put her head back down.

It was then that I became extremely frightened. What would happen to me if they found the Mother Superior dead? I got the stomach pump and tried to empty her stomach. I massaged her body, for already her pulse was weak, and she seemed so pale. I used what medical knowledge I had and did everything within my power, and slowly her pulse returned to normal.

She looked as though she were resting well and I figured she would have a nice, long sleep. I grabbed her keys and slipped from her room. I moved cautiously down the steps and moved past the familiar dungeon cell and beyond the penance chamber. I wasted little time at the entrance to the pit and headed in the direction from which I thought I heard those awful sounds during my dungeon days.

It seemed I heard a mournful cry that was familiar, but it was very distant. I stopped. Breathlessly, I listened. Was that not the same horrible cry? I could not lose my way. I understood there were thirty-five miles of under-tunnel passageways in this convent. If I ever got lost, who would find me? And what business would I have down here anyway? Then I saw rows of bars. It looked like a penitentiary with one cell block after another. I stepped closer and peered through the bars, and when I did, a shudder went through my soul. I saw human beings in chains. Some were standing, but most of them were slumped. They did not lay nor were set down because they couldn’t. Chains were fastened about their waists and about each wrist. When they could no longer stand because of lost strength they simply slumped over.

I counted approximately nineteen cells. Some of them made no noise, so I assumed they were dead. It looked to me as though the flesh had started to rot on a few of them. The stench nauseated me. Rigor-mortis had already set in some. At one end there were a few who still felt and thought. They intermittently gave forth the most blood-curdling screams. Others just let out a pitiful cry that would chill your blood and pierce your very soul.

I stood there trembling and finally managed to ask in a low tone, “Why are you here?” I received no answer. Then I asked, “How long were you here?” Again I received no answer. I wanted to help them, but how could I? I did not have food, medical aid, nor even a room with a bed to offer them. Although I had Mother Superior’s keys, and had opened the doors leading to this hellish place, how could I help these poor, unfortunate half-dead Nuns? If I found the key on the ring to open their cells, how could I have released the chains that bound them? Or still, what could I have done for them after I released them? I had no place to hide nor care for them. Not once did it occur to me to try and find the key that unlocked the outside gate. But even if I had thought of that, I could not possibly have carried those semi-alive, emaciated skeletons to safety. Death was soon to arrive and it was best for me to step out of its pathway.

Why were those poor Nuns placed in those chains and made to die a slow, agonizing death? I don’t know. I surmised it could have been the death punishment for continued disobedience. More likely,

however, was the probability that they became mentally unbalanced through severe forms of penance. That was their Alcatraz.

With Mother Superior's keys clutched tightly to my hands, I began the long trek back to my post of duty. I had seen all I cared to see and even more. I felt frustrated and wanted to run. But at the same time I wanted to linger. I seemed cold but yet warm. I wanted to cry and at the same time wished I had a stick of dynamite so that I could blow the entire convent off the face of the earth. I realized that I, too, was just another inmate and that if I failed to walk softly, chains waited for me. They could have very easily (and without much effort), taken down one of those skeletons and thrown them into the lime pit and made room for another Nun like me. So my boiling temperature descended to a lower degree. My anger subsided. I regained my composure and made my way back to the Mother Superior's room to see if she was dead or alive.

She was still asleep when I arrived. After some time she awoke with a sigh. "My," she said, "I must have had a long sleep."

"Yes, Mother," I replied. "You've had a very long sleep."

Chapter 22

Banquet for Thirty-Five Priests

Food is something that is not only necessary, but it is always tempting for human beings as well as animals. Any convention, home-coming or reunion is spiced with delicious meals prepared for the occasion. Traveling down the highway we read the Billboards, "Chicken in the Basket," or "Sizzling steak with Apple Pie a la Mode for Dessert." These signs are so tempting that we automatically pull up in front of a restaurant at 11:00 A.M. instead of 12:00 or 12:30 as planned. Why this starved feeling so suddenly? The eyes saw, the brain received the message, the news was carried to the mouth, saliva gathered and the whole body went into action to receive what the eyes had seen.

Did not God say in the first chapter of Genesis that he made everything? When He saw it, behold, it was very good.

As I traveled through the valleys of California, I marveled at the acres of beautiful oranges, nectarines, peaches, walnuts, almonds and layers upon layers of huge grapes. I didn't pass by a field of strawberries without having bought a box or two. To me, the strawberry is one of God's great miracles. I don't suppose anyone would ever get as thrilled and excited over food as a little Nun. Perhaps one who has lived in an overpopulated China, and has never had all the food he wanted at any one time, or a Bishop's prisoner of war who almost starved to death might crave it equally.

We Nuns were always hungry. Our one slice of bread and coffee in the morning and bowl of soup and glass of skimmed milk in the evening just didn't satisfy the gnawing hunger.

While I worked in the kitchen, I actually stole potato peelings, slipped them into the pocket of my habit and ate them after going to bed. If caught stealing, we had to pay, even though the theft consisted of dirty, potato peelings.

Once, having stolen food, I was forced to swallow a spoonful of hot cayenne pepper. I felt as though I

were on fire. Not only were my mouth and tongue burned, but also my esophagus and stomach. I felt that I had a taste of real Hell. That, however, did not keep us from stealing. The great desire for food overshadowed the fear of punishment. Some had their hands placed in a vice and squeezed. Others were compelled to lay their hands on a flat table while a heavy weight came down from the ceiling and crushed them. This was done in order to deeply impress and impregnate our minds with the consequences we had to take for thievery. We were reminded that we had signed a vow of poverty and were denied the niceties of life.

It was not an uncommon thing for priests to come to the convent by ones, twos, or even a half dozen, for the sake of confession, or retreat, or for base and lewd desires for satisfying their lusts.

On one particular occasion, thirty-five priests came for a banquet. The ham and all the trimmings arrived ahead for all the Nuns to prepare. We placed linen cloths and napkins on the table to which we added beautiful china and silver for the “most holy reverends.”

Can you imagine the aroma of that baked ham wafting through the air of that dense stifled convent? Then imagine those thin, pale hands cooking lovely dishes of vegetables, preparing salad and even dessert, but not even allowed to taste or sample any of the delicacies. Also think of the choice liquor imported for a fun and hilarious evening that would follow the supper. Laughter and smiles would replace, and drown out the sorrowful eyes. Deathly silence was broken occasionally by stern commandments or rebukes from the Mother Superior. Outbursts of revenge from a Nun being whipped, chained or hurt in some ridiculous manner sometimes disturbed the quiet.

The ham had just come out of the oven and was placed in the center of the table surrounded by other tempting dishes. The table looked heavenly to our eyes — eyes that were sunken back into our heads like two burned holes in a blanket. The priests sat down to eat. Six of us Nuns stood behind the table against the wall to serve. No, we didn't sit down to eat. Remember, we took a vow of poverty. But, oh, how our mouths watered as we gazed upon that banquet table and served the holy fathers! Oh, for just a little taste! We were denied that privilege, too.

One Nun was overcome. Her body slid down the wall and she fell to the floor. She was merely taken away and replaced by another waitress.

Finally the meal was over. The dishes were removed, and we served the liquor. It wasn't long until the refectory looked like a typical tavern. Tongues became thick. Obscene and filthy jokes were told. There were the “Holy” fathers, who then resembled skid-row bums drunk to excess, which made them even more repulsive and silly. Some spilled their drinks, and let the foaming liquid run off the table and onto the floor. Others lost their equilibrium and fell to the floor like debauched, drunken sots. Some vomited all over themselves, the table and the floor missing nothing within distance. There was nothing about the affair that was humorous or laughable to me. It was repulsive.

When the hour became late and it was time for the Nuns to go to the chapel to pray, we were obliged to help those father confessors through the tunnel to the monastery. We carried some of them. When we arrived at the monastery, we were ordered to help undress and put to bed those lewd and unchaste priests. Of course we were watched, guarded and guided by Mother Superior's sentinels, lest we foolishly or “accidentally-on-purpose” dropped one like a bag of sugar along the passageway. They also watched in case we attempted an escape while in the monastery.

I often wondered what God thought of such a banquet. Read His infallible word:

Prov 20:1 Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby, is not wise.

Christ promised the unfaithful servant, who drank, beat and caroused, a portion with the unbelievers in Hell, in Luke 12:46. Habakkuk reads, “Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!” (Hab. 2:15)

Wise Solomon declared, “Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things” (Proverbs 23:29-33).

Mr. Alexander Cruden, author of Cruden’s Complete Concordance, explains the conditions that existed in Palestine. He wrote,

“Water was scanty and likely to be infected. Wine and milk were therefore the common beverages. “

Paul admonished Timothy, “Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake and thine often infirmities” (I Tim. 5:23).

Peter speaks, “For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries “ (I Peter 4.3).

You ask, “But did not Jesus turn the water into wine at a wedding?”

Yes, He did. But you must bear in mind that the Bible speaks of new wine and old wine. Fruit of the vine and new wine are synonymous terms. Jesus gave His disciples a cup containing fruit of the vine (Mark 14:23).

He then said, “I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God. “

Then in Acts 2:13, mockers accused those disciples who were filled with the Holy Ghost of being drunk on new wine. Evidently they wouldn’t drink the old intoxicating wine, for even Daniel refused to drink the king’s wine in Daniel 1:8.

Many herbalists and health specialists will recommend special diets of fruit juices, especially grape juice, to counteract stomach disorders. I have even heard of patients going on a pure grape juice diet to destroy stomach cancer.

I quoted the above scriptures to prove that the wine we are accustomed to today couldn’t possibly be the same as Jesus made at the wedding feast at Cana. In Proverbs 20:1, Habakkuk 2:15 and other Old Testament Scriptures, the word, “Wine” in Hebrew is “yahyin,” meaning fermented wine. But in Proverbs 3:10 where he spoke of wine being a blessing, and in Nehemiah 10:39 where the wine was brought as an offering to the sanctuary, the original word is “teeroshe,” meaning the freshly pressed juice of the grape. In Acts 2:13 where the disciples were accused of drunkenness and filled with the Holy Ghost, the Greek word is “gleukos,” and also means freshly pressed grape juice.

Jesus was offered sour wine or vinegar (ox-os) on the cross, but refused to drink to numb His pain.

The whole world knows what today’s wine will do to human beings. Look at the bower or skid-row in New York City where there live 30,000 drunken derelicts. Go to any skid-row section in any city and

watch the winos, and then ask yourself, Did God put His approval on that intoxicating drink?

Visit the thousands of homes where children are abandoned and left to pacify in poorly lit, filthy shacks, hungry, fearful and lonely while momma and daddy are at the tavern drinking. Then go to the courtrooms and see those little children torn from their parents and placed in foster homes, or in orphanages because the parents linger at the bottle and are judged incompetent parents.

Countries consuming much alcohol became a prey to their enemies. Their boys became cannon fodder for the enemy simply because their soldiers were drenched with alcohol. France is leery of her future because her school-children drink alcoholic beverages instead of milk. Therefore, some are drunk while mere babies. Their heads lay helplessly on their school desk. They are unable to master their lessons.

Intoxication can break up a home, destroy a youth, cause blood on our highways, fill jails and prisons to overflowing and make nations to fall. And remember this: Priests and all of their boozing crowd will follow right along with the rest of the sinful drunken mobs into a place called Hell.

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess: but be filled with the Spirit” (Eph 5:18). Remember, “Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God” (I Cor 6:10).

Chapter 23

The Cross

“And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me” (Matthew 10:38).

In the convent, the above statement was taken literally. Lenten season was a dreaded season. In that particular time of year, Nuns flagellated their bodies until the blood flowed freely. The reason? To imitate Christ. We also had a crown of thorns, that was supposed to resemble Christ’s crown, placed on our heads. The thorns pierced our brow until the skin broke and our blood flowed. Sometimes a slow drizzle continued until our face was quite bloody and our eyes were dim with the sticky substance.

Constantine, the heathen Babylonian Pontiff, who for political reasons embraced Christianity, claimed to have seen in the sky a shiny cross bearing the motto, “Hoc Signo Vinces,” which meant, “By This Sign thou shalt Conquer.” This bloody man of war killed people right and left, taking full liberty for murdering with the sign of the cross as his credentials. Later he was canonized.

In Arizona, New Mexico, and Old Mexico, “Church” Indians still carry on with their barbaric rites and heathen ceremonies. Self-mortification by various ways of torturing their own bodies is exhibited especially with whippings, fastings and dragging the cross. Some have allowed their bodies to be nailed to the cross in Christ-like fashion. Others prove their devotion to Christ by beating themselves unmercifully while their blood flowed to the ground. Some crawl the fourteen stations of the cross. Others wear the crown of thorns and drag the cross the length of the fourteen stations.

In an article entitled, “The Brothers of Blood, “ in Time Magazine of September I, 1958, a very descriptive picture is portrayed of the Brotherhood of Penitents. I quote:

“...Archbishop of New Mexico presented a book of religious music to a weather-beaten old man. The man on whom the Archbishop smiled was Don Miguel Archibeque, long time head of the self-torturing

sect called Penitentes, which was officially banned by the Church for almost one hundred years. When Archbishop John B. Lamy set out from Cincinnati for New Mexico in 1850 after the United States arrested the territory from Mexico he was shocked at the gory appearance that the penitents, also known as the Brothers of the Blood of Christ, exacted upon themselves. Finally he banned the group. But the Penitentes went underground. Their practices gradually softened and in 1947, the Church once again recognized the Hermandad de Nuestro Padre Jesus. “

“Today in the mountain villages of New Mexico and Southern Colorado the Hermanos, or brothers, have 135 chapter houses called Moradas with a total membership of more than twelve hundred. Membership is open to all male adults and most of the year the Penitentes seem no different than any other religious society of ardent [Church members — ed.]. But the Penitentes still suffer for their sins. Near each Morada is a hill called Calvary, usually surmounted by a cross which stands there all year long.”

“During Easter Week on Wednesday, Thursday and Good Friday, the Penitentes stage processions between Morada and Calvary. Some are stripped to their waists with thorny cactus bound around their chests. Some scourging themselves every few steps with sharp bladed yucca leaves until the blood saturates their trousers, and you would see some staggering under fifteen foot crosses. Some of them crawl upon the sharp stones on lacerated knees and hands, and each, beneath the black hood that conceals his identity, recites the prayers of penance.”

“These processions are tame compared to those of bygone days when it was not uncommon for a member of a Morada to have himself crucified, bound to a cross with horse-hair cords, or sometimes, it is even said, nailed. Today the more serious flagellations are limited to the privacy of the Morada. Still, there are tales that penitentes have died as the result of their self-punishment. And a legend persists that in this event the dead man’s shoes are left on his doorstep as evidence to his family of what happened.”

“Some Churches defend the Brotherhood as an outlet for passionate Spanish piety. Archbishop Edwin V. Byrne presented the Book of Traditional Albados, devotional songs to Don Miguel Archibeque in appreciation of the important role his brotherhood had in the development and preservation of this beautiful expression of the true vocation of New Mexico Spanish people. “

We heathen Nuns did all the forms of penance of suffering the cross in the same manner as the heathen Indians. The Fourteen Stations of the Cross became quite a bloody route after a while. Our knees cracked and bled, and blood oozed from our thorn-pierced heads and dribbled to the ground as we wore the Christ-like crown of thorns.

Sometimes during the Lenten season we were given one blanket and sent to the trunk room to sleep. It was bitter cold. Therefore we may have walked or tried to run to keep the blood circulating in our veins. We may have felt numbness creeping over us, but we refused to let our tired bodies succumb to death by freezing, so we started moving again. Even at that, however, we acquired frost-bitten hands and feet from that penance. Sometimes we were required to walk on sharp rocks and sleep on the jagged stones — that is, we attempted to sleep.

I’ve heard of animals tasting or smelling blood until no one could corral them. They demanded more blood, even if they were being bitten, cut or fired upon with a gun.

Close by Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, little Betty and her sister were out a few feet from their backyard picking berries. Without notice, a big, Brown Bear appeared. Instead of running from them, he headed

right toward them. They ran to the house screaming. One girl managed to get into the door, but the bear made a lunge and caught the sister. She stumbled on the doorstep. Mother came in time to grab the child's feet to try to pull the child from the bear who had the girl's head in its mouth.

The bear won out, and carried its victim in the woods amidst its crying and screaming.

The Mounties were called and a posse of men with loaded guns went on a search. They found only a portion of the body, and arm, or something of the sort, the head and some entrails strewn upon the ground. The bear left that much for his second meal. The men stood there and waited for the bear's return. Before long, a rustling of leaves was heard and then a broken twig, all of which sounded like a mighty noise of an oak falling to their tensed nerves. Their eyes darted a searching glance in every direction. And then, at the same moment, came a vicious carnivorous beast headed straight toward them.

Most animals, even bear, will run when they see a man, and more so when they see a group of men. But not this bear. When he moved in their direction, they opened fire and killed him. They were ordered by authorities to open the bear's stomach. When they did, they found it empty with the exception of the portions of the child's body.

Explanation: Starvation and a quest for blood caused him to go contrary to the very laws of nature and go on a rampage to devour human flesh.

Evidently Mother Superior was affected the same way. Blood called for more blood. Suffering only led to more suffering. Often we stood in the form of the cross of hours. We dared not let our arms drop from exhaustion without having paid the penalty. Some of us, however, did faint. But a cold pail of water dashed upon us brought us back to consciousness where we could finish our penance.

In the Middle Ages between 1095 and 1270 A.D., the theory was advanced that Palestine, with its holy and revered spots, such as where Jesus was crucified, His sepulcher, the Garden of Gethsemane, etc., should belong to the Christian world and not the Mohammedans and Turks. So the political and ecclesiastical forces combined their efforts to launch the Crusades.

They turned out to be a ruthless, quarreling, murderous group of pilgrims who plundered and ravished the cities as they migrated to the holy land. They fought, killed and finally won. Having reached Palestine, they compelled the inhabitants to build their castles, palaces and fortresses. Degraded to slavery, they cried for Moslem rule as it was lighter than this "Christian" rule.

The first Crusade was proclaimed in 1095 at the Council of Claremont, where a multitude of knights assumed the cross as a badge and enlisted for the war against the Saracens.

Of all Crusades, the most pitiful and disgusting was the Children's Crusade. Imagine children embarking on a thousand mile trip, meeting with hostile Turks, Mohammedans and wild beasts that devoured many of them. Yet, with the sanction of the "Holy one" and the holy cross as their badge of distinction, they started to conquer the Holy Land. Yes, they failed miserably and conquered nothing. However, death conquered many of them. It turned out to be a bloody route. Children were diseased and ravaged and the Black Plague came in for the final count.

A beautiful woman in her early thirties came with her family to our services. She inquired as to our mode of Baptism after kneeling at the altar one night. One night, without warning, her brain snapped. She became mentally unbalanced. When I visited her in the Hospital I asked her doctor the reason for

her sudden breakdown. The doctor replied, “This didn’t happen overnight. This has been building up for months, probably years.”

I asked her husband what had been bothering her. He told how Elma and her sister had come to this city earning such low wages that they could hardly get enough food to keep body and soul together. The sister contracted tuberculosis and died. Elma grieved for her dead sister for days, weeks and months. Then to add to her troubles, her mother sent Elma the crucifix that laid on her sister’s casket. Later when Elma had gone home to visit her families, something happened that she could not quite get the gist of. She simply turned to him and said, “I’ll never go back to the ‘Church’ again.” This made a breach between Elma and her French speaking family.

Between grief, worry and fear, Elma broke. She turned gray seemingly overnight. Her pretty face and bright eyes changed to a blank expression. And she took up to searching each passing individual. Here, again, the cross enslaved instead of liberated. Elma was enclosed behind mental bars.

For God’s sake and for Elma’s sake, why didn’t her mother send a Bible instead of the dead sister’s crucifix? Why wasn’t she told to read God’s word about Heaven with its streets of pure gold and shiny gates of pearl, which awaits every true Christian? She could have looked forward to that great reunion day when we’ll no longer be separated by the cold, chilly river of death, but sit down together in God’s great dining hall at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. If she had read God’s Word, she would have learned that God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and a sound mind (2 Tim. 1:7).

In the early part of 1945, with a friend I entered an Evangelical Church. I heard a young lady, named Sister Nilah, preaching about the cross. At first I thought about rising, walking out the door and going home. I mused in my heart that the cross was just a hoax. Furthermore if this church believed in the cross as the others did, then I wasn’t interested. I could only think of the cross as suffering in different ways. I stood for hours in the form of the cross, or laid prostrate on the floor in the shape of the cross while the other Nuns stepped over me and on me. While washing clothes in the laundry room I had to lick a cross with my tongue until it was swollen and bleeding. I carried a huge, wooden cross draped over my shoulder past the Stations of the Cross with Mother Superior reading the sufferings of Jesus to me:

“In the Garden of Olives I shed 62,200 tears, 97,300 drops of blood, and by the crown of thorns a hundred wounds, and I carried the cross to Calvary 320 steps. Reward them as martyrs.”

Then she told us we must suffer as Jesus did, and she meant every word of it.

However, respect for my friend and the church caused me to remain seated. The preacher went on to say, “Jesus suffered and bore the pain for you. He died that you might be set free. He suffered once and for all.”

She depicted a loving, merciful Savior: Christ, with spiked nails driven in His hands and feet, blood dripping on the ground below while Roman soldiers gambled for His seamless robe. Then, with broken voice and in tones of pathos, she described Him looking down to His followers and the contemptible crowd milling about. He asked John to look after His mother, and then cried to His Father above, “Forgive them,” referring to the soldiers and those who had sentenced Him, “For they know not what they do.”

My embittered heart turned to love and compassion. Here I learned that the cross and Calvary were to

liberate instead of enslave me. This young lady evangelist, Sister Nilah, told me Jesus had paid the debt for my sins and Calvary was never meant to be enacted again. Cruel hands had nailed him to the wooden tree. Religious priests leading the mob had witnessed how he was supposedly a fraud and a devil, and caused Pilate, the Governor, to relinquish his jurisdiction over Him, so they could scourge, mock and finally crucify Him. But now I was visualizing a Christ with scarred hands and riven side with so much love and understanding, beckoning me to leave all and take my spiritual cross and follow Him.

When the altar call was given, I did not hesitate to arise with the little crowd of seekers and fall on my knees at the altar. There I wept my way through to God. He filled me with the gift of the Holy Ghost. When Jesus arose from the dead and cried, “All power is given unto me both in Heaven and in earth,” never again would He be crucified on the old Roman cross.

That night in March, 1945, was when God sealed my future and destiny. Never again would I bow down to the old Roman cross. Never again would my fingers caress the rosary and pray a prayer on each bead holding to the crucifix. I had learned to know and to love the One who hung on that cross; Jesus, my Lord and my God.

Chapter 24

Superintendent of Hell — The Devil

The Lord has nothing good that the Devil does not have a counterfeit for. Job wrote that when God called a conference, His sons appeared to receive their instructions. But who else came along? The nosy, old Devil. When asked for his report, he chuckled and said, “I’ve just been walking up and down going to and fro in the earth.” That’s one time the Devil told the truth. He hadn’t missed a place in the whole earth. I thought he spent most of his vacations in our convent, for who could inspire such heinous, inhuman forms of penance and suffering but Satan, himself?

For instance, let one of your small children tell a lie or talk out of turn. You might spank him or even wash out his mouth with soap for lying, but Mother Superior had something better than soap: Red cayenne pepper! A dose of one spoonful as instructed by the Mother Superior almost lifted the top off our heads. And we felt it clear down to our toes. The Devil must have walked up and down through the earth seeking recruits of Hell. When he reached our convent and conversed with Mother Superior, she offered him her assistance by telling him, “I have various ways of torturing and burning these Nuns so as to give them a foretaste of that Lake of Fire called Hell.”

One day she had me stripped to my waist and then proceeded to place a mustard plaster on my back. The plaster consisted of dry mustard and warm water that formed a soft paste. It was well spread from neck to waist and from shoulder to shoulder, so that I could receive the full benefit of it. I put my clothes over the plaster and continued my duties as usual. Need I tell you that I burned as though someone had set my back on fire? Anyone knows if they leave a dry mustard plaster on themselves for any length of time, the pain of arthritis and neuritis will probably subside, but another pain will arise from the burning flesh. I was really blistered when I undressed for bed at the end of the day.

We also were given a dark, leather vest. The inside of it was covered with prickly wires. Before we

dressed in our complete habit, the wire vest was placed on our bare skin and we continued throughout the day as usual. This vest affected the whole body. Not only were we in pain by the wires having pierced into our flesh, but it was nerve-racking. With every twist or movement of the body the tiny wires clawed and dug into our skin. Though the wounds were superficial, the continued scratching agitated every nerve. Forms of penance like this led to the disease of neurosis because the whole nervous system became disarranged.

However, the above penance was mild compared to the water treatment, previously written in a former chapter, where each drop of water fell in the same spot of the brain until the eyes crossed and some went mad.

One thing about the devil, that old slough-foot, he is the same in China as in America. His tactics in the Orient are very similar to those in the Convent. One of our dear missionaries who spent forty years in China is now aged and in retirement on the west coast as of this writing. However, not only because of her heart and age, but because of the Communistic regime, she was forced to turn to America. Nevertheless, her dear Chinese Christians continued to send her reports. They were somber and heart-rending indeed. Some of the Chinese Christians have been shot down in cold blood. Others have been tortured by degrees by the Communists. Some have turned up missing because they would not give up Christ.

One report told of certain Chinese saints who were placed in wooden boxes with just the torso in the box. The arms, legs and head protruded through the holes cut specifically for that purpose. Then the communists took starved white rats and placed them in the same box with the Christians. You can imagine what happened. Those rats gnawed on those living bodies until they bled and then died. What an awful way to die, bite by bite. Screaming, begging and crying did not help. This was their penalty for embracing Christianity.

In the same report she was told how other Chinese Christians were held by the Communists while a soldier poured red, hot, molten lead down their throats. They would heat the lead until it turned from cold metal to a fiery liquid substance. Then they opened their mouths by force and poured. This suffering was limited, however, because death came very quickly. Not so with the boxed Christians eaten by starved rats. Suffering would tarry away for hours, and they would wait for the top layer to be eaten and then the second. Finally the vital organs were devoured before death claimed them.

How grateful I am, after having been in a convent and saw the Mother Harlot and the Tiber fulfilling Revelation's prophecy, to be delivered from the convent. I came out to shockingly find a world fighting against, and at the same time, embracing the beast of Communism (Revelation 17), for a judgment in which God the righteous Judge shall judge the world (Acts 17:31).

Mother Superior will account to God for the little Nuns backs that she burned with a red, hot poker, and those who were flagellated, tortured and buried in a lime pit. The Communists will also account for the whipping, the water treatment on the brain and the diets of hot, molten lead fed to the Christians.

The Communists say there is no hereafter, neither Heaven nor Hell. The proclamation of the existence of purgatory was made in the year 1438 AD. The devil is the instigator and the propagator of both doctrines. The Communist doctrine of eternity causes men to be as cruel as Leo the Lion-hearted, with no guilt or shame, neither to fear any repercussion nor judgment. The latter doctrine causes men to refuse the benefits of Calvary or to seek the New Birth, as did Nicodemus. Therefore, they live in sin until death knocks at their door, depending upon the priests and payments for masses to get them out of

Purgatorial fires into Heaven.

November is Purgatory Month. Millions of dollars pour through the coffers for priests to say mass to release those poor souls from the burning inferno. At the “Church,” and especially in the convent, the picture of Purgatory with its flaming, cleansing fires is continually held before our eyes as a warning. Thank God that neither the Apostles nor our Lord ever taught of Purgatory. It was just the opposite.

“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Heb. 9:27).

At the judgment, Revelation 20:11-15 reads that the dead, both small and great, will stand before God to be judged out of the books. Death and Hell (or the grave), and all those whose names are not found written in the book of Life, will be cast into the Lake of Fire. In the tenth verse of the same chapter, is described Hell’s main occupants, and the Devil is at the head of the list. So, my friend, don’t let the Devil deceive you by impressing on your mind that if you’re not ready to meet God when you die, the Purgatorial fires will cleanse your heart, and then you can go onto the Presence of God. There is no Purgatory. Do not let the devil slip over to the other side of the fence, either, and convince you there is no judgment day.

While we were on vacation with friends, we visited Yellowstone National Park. I was awestruck with the unusual as well as the magnitude and the magnificence of that Park. I was both amused and shocked at the bear and deer that strolled by the rustic, log cabins. However, nothing fascinated nor enthralled me as much as the geysers of water, boiling rapidly as a tea kettle emitting steam and foam from the bowels of the earth. Other geysers intermittently shot or propelled forcibly upward their seething, hot liquid until it reached hundreds of feet in the air, such as the famous Old Faithful geyser.

I stood on that Wyoming soil and reasoned within my mind that there had to be a heat to cause such water to boil. And fire makes heat. Then I reviewed the Holy Scriptures. “Hell from beneath,” of which wrote Solomon and Isaiah. There is the Rich man who was tormented by the flames in Hell who lined his eyes to paradise and cried for a drop of water according to Dr. Luke. Mark wrote of Hell where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.

The Bible plainly warns us of the great Judgment. If we have chosen to follow Satan on earth and have refused the Christ of Calvary, and our names are not found in the Book of Life, then we will have to spend eternity with our leader, Satan, in Hell. But it will have been our own choice.

Paul made his choice for Christ. Therefore, when facing death he cried:

“The time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.”

Paul wrote in behalf of the born-again, blood-washed child of God as well as of himself in Philippians 1:23:

“having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ. “

Now look to John the Beloved as he wrote what Jesus told him.

“In my Father’s house are many mansions.. I go to prepare a place for you. ...I will come again, and receive you unto myself that where I am, there ye may be also.”

Chapter 25

Water

Water, water everywhere, and all the boards did shrink, Water, water everywhere and not a drop to drink.

Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner.

Water has given life to the thirsty body and has been a burying ground for many soldiers and travelers as well as Nuns in a convent. When Adoniram Judson told a Missionary Board he would go to Burma, it meant taking a young, tender wife and a precious baby into a land where no Christian foot had ever trodden.

Rangoon was the City of the Golden Sun. It was the city of temples, priests, superstition and tropical heat. It would perhaps welcome this couple with their white-faced baby, that is, if they could endure the long voyage across the ocean and reach Burmese soil. However, that little bundle of sweetness slipped from them. Death tore from that brave couple the gift of God that was so briefly enjoyed. The ocean liner became their funeral parlor. They lowered the Judson baby into the sea where the briny deep became its grave. Burma would then receive a couple seasoned with tears, agony and self-denial. Their ocean journey was their extra-curriculum for Missionary endeavor.

When five young men, all fine specimens of manhood, took their young wives and children from America to Ecuador they had but one motive in mind. They wanted to reach those uncivilized; heathen Indians for Christ. They were informed that these Indians belonged to a savage tribe. They specialized in shrinking heads after they killed a person with strange and various ways. Their children were taught to endure pain without crying and whimpering. They could stealthily move through the jungle with their bows and arrows, never breaking a twig or making a noise to arouse the white man's suspicions.

The missionaries learned to trade with the Indians by circling this dry riverbed and then letting down certain gadgets in a bucket from the plane. The Indians took things out of the bucket and put in their trinkets in exchange. The Indian women seemed to be easier to civilize and Christianize. While they tried to teach them the Gospel, many warriors appeared at the jungle edge and moved in on the missionaries. Fear gripped the heart of the missionaries as they radioed back to their wives, "They are coming. We will tell the results later." However, they never called nor spoke on the radio again.

Each missionary was pierced by an arrow. The army had to go in with machine guns, and spray the outskirts of the jungle and then carry away the dead bodies for burial.

Again, old man River had moved over and left a sandy beach head so that the uncivilized could be contacted and told of the love of a Savior. Yet, what seemed to be like a golden opportunity given by divine providence proved to be the white man's slaughtering ground. The riverbed was an open target. Death again was victor.

Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico is an outstanding attraction for tourists all over the world. Approximately 500,000 people at least annually take the three and one half hour tour down the narrow passages to view the stalactites and stalagmites and rock formations in the King's Palace, the Papoose and in the Queen's Room. Down into the dark recesses of the Caverns they intently listen to lectures of how this unusual phenomenon was brought into existence many millions of years ago by a cataclysm, and how the flood waters finally receded while the earth belched and rolled in a violent earthquake.

A flock of bats, several million in number, make the caves their home this day, coming out only at night to feed on insects outside the cave. This huge mass of bats coming out en masse gave the secret of the Cave away to man, and thus brought about man's exploration.

While traveling down the eight hundred feet under the ground at Carlsbad, I had many memories of the tunnels, narrow passageways and dungeons in the convent. The cold and clammy atmosphere, coupled with the twenty seconds of complete darkness and silence, made a vivid sequence to my convent days. As the lights came back on, I almost felt as though I would hear the Mother Superior call out, "Sister Patricia!"

I watched and listened to the tiny drops of water tumbling down from the caves ceiling. They formed icicles or made some grotesque form on the floor. I bowed over the guardrail and peered into the "Devil's Bottomless Pit." There, I listened to the hidden stream of water trickling through the cave. It really flooded my soul with horrible memories.

Many days while I lingered between death and life in the dark, dirty dungeon beneath the surface of the ground I could hear water trickling.

In one convent in Mexico, mentioned in a previous chapter, we were told how the vats that pulverized the bodies of disobedient Nuns opened as trap doors to the river below.

In our convent we had an image in the form of the Virgin Mary called the Iron Virgin. When a Nun was past redemption or had been judged worthy of death the Mother Superior took her to this iron statue that looked like a petrified mummy without hands, arms, legs or feet. The head and bust formed a perfect replica of the pictures and images we held in the highest honor and esteem, representing Christ's mother. This image stood upright and had the shape and the form of a woman, the perfect size for a Nun.

The artificers who shaped and chiseled out the Iron Maiden decided to fill her abdomen with huge, sharp knives instead of cement and plaster. The Iron Virgin appeared to be harmless and was venerated. Then the Mother Superior stepped on a little foot-pedal and the Iron Virgin sprung open to receive another Nun condemned to death. The poor Nun didn't know her sentence until it was too late. The Mother Superior shoved the culprit forward and the Virgin rapidly and automatically clasped and closed in on her. Immediately the dozen or more knives pierced through her body. The bloodcurdling screams diminished quickly as death in its awful silence soon took over.

The Mother Superior then tripped the trap door at the base of the image that permitted the punctured, ripped and sliced body of the Nun to drop out of sight into the stream of water that ran below. Who knows? — perhaps the stream led into a river, lake or ocean. A Nun's sliced body would have made a delicious meal for fish and other water creatures. One thing was certain. Had they looked, the authorities would never have found her body. Her dissected body was an easy prey for any carnivorous, cold-blooded aquatic animal.

In a past issue of Life Magazine, an article entitled "Ripley Auction" told of rare and unusual antiques being sold for fabulous prices. Mr. John Arthur, a red-headed New Yorker, was the busiest bidder. He previously bought the world rights to Ripley's Believe-It-Or-Not in addition to Ripley's Chinese Houseboat, Monlei, and several van loads from Ripley's home.

At this auction, he purchased several items for \$50,000.00 including a statue of Saint Patrick, also a torture device called Iron Maiden. This was pictured in Life Magazine being opened wide with sharp

knives protruding sideways. Mr. Arthur stood in the image in back of the knives for the picture. This Iron Maiden was almost identical to the one we had in our convent.

As I looked at the pictures in Life Magazine I couldn't help but wonder from what convent it came. Also, I wondered how did it ever get into Ripley's possession.

Sometimes we got very thirsty, especially after some severe penance that resulted in our isolation in the infirmary with a raging fever. More than likely, however, that was when we didn't have a drop to drink.

I remember being held with my hands in front of me as someone held my nose while another Nun was instructed to pour dirty water down my throat. Since they held my nostrils tightly and I had no hands or feet with which to fight back, they continued to pour until I became nauseated and deathly sick, but they did not stop. My stomach swelled and I felt as though as though my bladder would burst. They finally decided I had enough. I broke out in bold hives all over my body adding misery to misery.

These horrible sufferings might have been inflicted on us as a regular penance so that we could obtain perfection and holiness, or greater love or humility, or greater piety. Still, we may have been subjected to this suffering for having disobeyed some rule of the convent, or having refused to submit our bodies to the lusts of carnal priests.

One particular time we washed a lot of bloody cloth out of the bathtub that was actually a metal horse tank. After this task was completed, Mother Superior told me to climb into this cold bloody water while I was dressed only in my nightgown. She then placed one hand on the back of my neck and the other on my stomach and began dowsing me face forward several times. I fought the water, having tried to not inhale or swallow the filthy stuff. But the harder I tried not to, the more I swallowed. I became strangled and started coughing, thereby gulping down the unsanitary, putrid water by the mouthfuls. After several dunkings, Mother Superior and her helpers took my blue, limp body from the cold water in the chilly tub and whipped me. The whip consisted of several straps very much like an old sewing machine treadle belt. The thin, wet, muslin gown didn't ward off the blows too well. They beat my wet, shaking body until I was black and blue and I finally fell to the floor in a faint. Nevertheless two Nuns tried to hold me up while the other wielded the whip.

Also in the penance chamber was a deep hole, much like a drinking well. I peered down this hole and wondered what would come next. I soon learned, as well as the other Nuns who received the same treatment.

I was placed in the hole while the other Nuns started the bucket brigade. As each Nun marched by, a bucket of ice-cold water was poured on my nude body. This was to break my will and make me more obedient and humble. After several pails of water had been dumped on me, Mother stopped the water bucket procession and brought me out. My teeth more than chattered. I was almost frozen to death. My body shook as though I had a convulsion, and I suffered many days from the chilling episode.

One day, having known it was my day to scrub, I approached Mother Superior and said, "Mother, may I be excused from scrubbing today?" I reasoned within myself, "Huh! Maybe another Nun would take my place that day as I held up my inflamed, cracked hands for her inspection."

She replied, "Come with me. I'll do something for your hands."

After proceeding to this particular place, she made me stand still and wait. She had another Nun mix some lime with water, after which she forced me to kneel down and place my hands in the solution. My

hands felt as though they were being bathed in lye water They were already cracked and opened and inflamed, so the lime solution seeped into the cracks, and caused them to burn as with a fever. It wasn't long after this that my hands bled.

Finally, she permitted me to rise and to take my hands out of the pan. After reprimanding me for complaining, I was ordered to return to my post and do my scrubbing. And scrub I did!

Did it matter if the scrub water contained germs that might endanger my hands to a worse infection? Or did it matter if a little blood oozed into the waters? It was soon discolored anyhow.

In the foregoing paragraphs, I've tried to describe the power and force as well as the beauty and the terror of water. It can be very calm in deceitfulness.

In closing this chapter go with me to the riverside. A crowd is gathered while a preacher walks slowly out into the stream. Another follows and another until a group dressed in white are standing waiting to be baptized in the lovely name of Jesus. Listen to the group on the shore as they sing:

“Shall we gather at the River, Where bright angel feet have trod, With its crystal tide forever, Flowing by the throne of God.”

Now come with me to that first pearly gate in the New Jerusalem. As it opens, walk with me down Glory Avenue until we reach the throne. Then view that crystal stream of water proceeding forth from the sanctuary of God. Listen to these saints sing!

“On the margin of the river, Washing up its silver spray, We will walk and worship ever, All the happy golden day.

“Ere we reach the shining River, Lay we every burden down, Grace our spirits will deliver, And provide a robe and crown.”

Chapter 26

War

Peter warned us that in the last days preceding Christ's return to rapture his church, 'Ye shall see signs in the heavens above and signs in the earth beneath, blood and fire and vapour of smoke.' Remember, when this was prophesied there were no airplanes, submarines or jets with which to fight a bloody war in the skies as well as under water. The stage is now set for Christ's return. Jesus warned of how one nation would rise against another, and perplexing problems would surmount until heart trouble would reach an all time peak because of fear of the present and coming events.

This is being fulfilled before our very eyes. Surely Christ's coming is at hand. If ever a scripture made my heart beat doubly fast with fear it was when I read an account of an impending war, yea the most horrible war of all. We are warned blood will run in the streets as high as the horses' bridles. This is a war that will involve both politics and religion, the beast and the harlot spoken of in Revelation.

There's also the warning of juvenile delinquency, of parents and children at enmity with one another, and turning love into hatred and finally into murder in Mark 13:12.

In our convent we were prepared for an attack of the enemy. Moreover we were prepared for war,

religious or political. I well remember the many large, heavy boxes that arrived at the convent. We were instructed to place them in a dry storeroom under the ground. It was a long time, perhaps years, before I learned what those boxes, stacked and stored so neatly, contained. I found out we concealed shipments of ammunition and arms. Since we Nuns were never trained to fire a gun, I judged they were not to ward off an attack on the convent. Why were they there? I never learned the answer. We were never told. I do have my suspicions.

In the convent war already began, that is, in our hearts. And that war was carried out in the most savage and grotesque forms of punishment, and resulted in plenty of blood, rape, knifing, imprisonment and even murder. However, this was the form of a single combat in their own style with the innocent and untrained being drenched in their own blood. The Mother Superior and the Priests came out victoriously and more than conquerors.

I remember when Sister Francis, condemned for some wrong, was ordered to Mother Superior's bedroom, as she alone had a nice, soft bed. As mentioned previously, we Nuns only had a slab of wood for a bed. In Mother Superior's room, Sister Francis was ordered to lie down on the bare springs. The feather bed was placed on top of her. Then a priest, four Nuns, including the writer who was compelled to, and the Mother Superior, got on that little thing and stomped her to death.

I remember it took a lot of stomping before the last moan escaped her lips. I also remember how I tried not to stomp too hard. I didn't want to hurt her, but had I refused they would have likely given me the same treatment. Besides, some other Nun would have taken my place and helped to kill her.

After Sister Francis drew her last breath, we lifted the feather bed from her squashed body. Her eyelids were not closed. Death didn't favor us in that. Those glassy, wounded eyes seemed to accuse us although they were dead and immovable.

I thought surely we could now be discharged and go to some other convent duty. But, no, neither the priest nor the Mother Superior wanted their hands to come into contact with her defiled, rebellious soul, and lifeless body. Therefore we Nuns removed her habit. We dared not be wasteful and extravagant by having home a Nun with her habit on, and took her to the lime-pit. There we sprinkled her body with lime and chemicals to eat the flesh and leave no stench.

I had but one ambition when I first came out in to the world after having escaped the Convent. I wanted to work and save every dime possible to buy enough dynamite and blow up every convent I could get to. Bitterness and revenge filled my heart. Yet at the same time, my heart yearned for those little Nuns who were not as fortunate as I in escaping. I felt I would be doing them a favor giving them sudden death rather than long years of torture and continual suffering. Thank God, He saved me and removed all the bitterness. Now, instead of dynamite, I would love to tell everyone, including Mother Superior and the priests, of Christ's saving grace.

A War Correspondent wrote of atrocities in Colombia. In the Convent there was a secret war — secret as far as the world was concerned, for our newspapers never carried such accounts, was waged.

Dry Wind, a book born out of the atrocities committed in Colombia, was published in Argentina. You are not likely to read the book in Spanish as I did. The following translation from the Latin American Evangelist shows the depths of depravity and cruelty to which men have fallen in the name of religion. The author, Daniel Caicedo, a medical doctor, wrote of the village priest blessing the dead and dying of the massacre of hundreds of citizens in the villages of Ceylan. He described the priest's "fervent

mystical look as an officiator at a sacred rite.” Yes, a sacred rite — as eyes, tongues and hearts were cut out from the still suffering victims. He gave an eyewitness account of the death of believers in Jesus Christ.

“No more than ten of us remained alive from Andinopolis an La Primavera. They fell upon these towns which have been converted to the gospel and demolished them. It was horrible. I took refuge in a chicken house from which I saw the assassination of Pastor Davidson and the family that worked for him. The servant and two little girls were mistreated by about twenty policemen. Afterwards they buried their bayonets in them. Since the mother was pregnant they knifed her in the stomach taking out the six month fetus. “

“Pastor Davidson on his knees with his hands tied was forced to watch them in their crimes. With his eyes turned toward Heaven He implored the Lord Jesus to give him strength.

His lips repeated the Twenty-Third Psalm, ‘The Lord is my Shepherd. Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.’

“A machete cut open his face from ear to ear. The policeman shouted, ‘Long live Christ the King! Long Live the Conservative Party!’ The victim did not let one sound escape. His only expression was in his eyes. The police conscious of this fact. pierced the eves until they fell out. The saint continued on his knees in a pool of blood. Other police intervened and beat him with their belt buckles. The saint fell face to the ground, and the detectives and policemen began to jump on him No one knew when he actually died. However when they took and crucified him, blood no longer flowed from his wounds.”

“If you could have seen the fervor with which those Christians died. You would realize that their Lord Jesus Christ had not abandoned them in those moments. They were burned alive and tied to trees with wire and wet down with gasoline. The pain must have been tremendous. Yet there was not a word of blasphemy. There were some shouts of desperation, and once in a while you heard the name of Christ. Some helped to strengthen others.”

Now let me quote to you what was said about religious strife in Colombia recorded in the Daily News of Bangor. Maine.

“[A Church official — ed.] ...appealed tonight to religiously torn and strife-stricken Colombia to ‘Turn to Christian brotherly love in this grave moment of your history.’ ...leaders in Colombia protested for more than a year over the acts of violence against their missionaries. They have blamed the Colombian government, the ...Hierarchy and the Conservative Party for allowing these incidents to occur. Their government has replied that it deplores religious strife but cannot guarantee protection if they persist in trying to win converts in what is officially a... [“Church”— ed.] country.”

Russia with its Kruchevs and Lenins wanted dominion over the entire world. Hitler had his gas chambers in Auschwitz and Dachau. Stalin and Kruschev had their prison and labour camps in the Siberian desert while slave labor camps (camouflaged as Convents) exist throughout the world.

Chapter 27

Earthly Saints — Sisters of Mercy

Thousands of Nuns all over the world minister without pay to the sick, care for invalids, teach in schools, beg for the poor and a thousand other charitable acts in every field of labor from medicine to science.

No wonder this so-called “Church” is the richest in the world. Her thousands of workers, Nuns, labor for nothing. In the Cloister we do a little of everything. We washed, scrubbed, painted walls, dug tunnels, sewed and even made small tombstones for the graves of Mother Superiors. We made Altar Cloths, gowns for the images such as the Twelve Apostles. We also made stoles for the priests and Bishops and do fancy work for outside bazaars.

Remember their “Church” Orphanage in Tijuana, Mexico, and the plea the sisters made for help? It was such a dire need that the people of California sent clothing and miscellaneous articles. The orphanage lacked sufficient wash basins, towels and similar necessities.

Sisters of Open Orders perform many charitable acts. One of their most important jobs is to nurse the sick and to operate Hospitals.

In the convent, we nurses had to care for the sick and performed many operations. It was very rare that the Convent called in an outsider doctor. We had some surgical equipment in our infirmary, but not the most modern, I’ll assure you. Even our surgical knives and scissors were quite dull.

Sister Helen was great with child when the Nuns laid her out on our crude operating table. Although the nine months required to bring forth a normal healthy baby had not elapsed, Sister Paula took the surgical knife and made the incision in Sister Helen’s abdomen without administering any anesthetic.

Although this was an imitation of Cesarean birth, it was far from a perfect job. The Nuns opened almost the entire abdomen. Then they removed from the womb the fetus, not fully developed, but alive. Quickly, the priest administered the rite of baptism and sprinkled holy water over its little head, then anointed it with oil to reassure its departing soul.

Poor Helen, still conscious as she watched the entire procedure, lay there without a motion. She didn’t scream. She did not even moan. Her eyes questioned as though to ask, “What next?”

The operation was crude all right, but where was the cat-gut and why didn’t the Mother Superior order her abdomen sewed? Why did she lie there like a butchered hog? The nurses hadn’t sterilized the instruments. There was no salve, iodine, mircuralchrome or medication had been used. Then one of the most cruel, demon-inspired acts I have ever seen took place. I do not know what wrong Sister Helen committed. But with an open, bleeding abdomen she was dragged into another room. The boards of the floor were removed and she was thrown into the dark, dirty hole. The boards were put back into place and six Nuns were instructed to continually march around that hole and sprinkle holy water upon the floor.

After approximately four hours, six other Nuns relieved the first group and continued the holy march. One shift was changed to another until the last moan was heard from the hole. When death moved in it

took the place of pain. Holy water was exchanged for lime and chemicals. After all, the holy water was used to drive away the evil spirits. However, lime and chemicals do a better job of removing the stench, dissolving the flesh.

Of course not all the operations were performed by surgical knives nor in the infirmary in our convent. I had a felon on the first finger of my right hand. It throbbed with pain. Swollen and vellow it was ready to be opened with a needle. I approached Mother Superior and laid my hand on the kitchen work table. The pain lessened when the blood did not flow so freely to the finger. I wanted her to see my hand so she would understand why I asked to be excused from scrubbing. Without a moment's hesitation or warning, she reached for the butcher knife and chopped off the side of my finger. One thing was certain: It was lanced! I wouldn't be bothered with that felon any longer, as it was gone. But so was a part of my finger.

However, I still had to scrub. Perhaps she felt the hot soapy scrub water would act as an antibiotic to the germ infection. A little blood in the water wouldn't hurt the floor.

Yes, we Nuns, both Open Order and Cloister, performed many charitable acts. We nursed the sick and even performed operations when necessary either with surgical knife or plain butcher knife.

We even signed death certificates when necessary.

Chapter 28

Playing Checkers

I have read of the uncivilized Indians of Ecuador, how they teach and train their children to suffer without crying or showing any emotion. Blood doesn't terrify those Indians' wee ones. They laugh in the face of pain and adversity. Along with our suffering in the convent as a penance, or for breaking a rule, or for refusing our bodies to a priest, or because of the jealousy of the Mother Superior, we may be required to test our strength or devotion to God and love for Mary. Many times this punishment is instituted as a warning and a deterrent to disobedience "lest a worse thing come upon you."

Often times were made to lie on the floor while heavy weights were attached to our heads. Other times our hands and feet were fastened to a contraption whereby the hands and feet were drawn in back of our bodies until we felt as if they were drawn out of their sockets. This penance, along with the vise (which we shall later describe) may have been implemented to make us recant or say we were sorry for some evil we have spoken against the convent or our superiors. The pulley kept drawing back our hands and feet until the agony was so great we finally yielded and said we're sorry.

The vise was a machine, or two pieces of metal consisting of iron or steel which opened wide enough to grasp a Nun; that is, a rebellious or disobedient Nun. On each end of the vise was a crank which Mother Superior turned. With each turn the steel or iron on each side of the Nun's body was drawn together, gradually squeezing out her very life, and or, cracking and breaking the bones. This would occur unless the Nun cried out for forgiveness and recanted and said she was sorry. Then the Mother Superior may have released her before it was too late.

During the period of the Great Reformation, a live drama was portrayed of a beautiful young woman who chose death because she dared to let her conscience speak. During those dark days the Inquisitors

burned to the stake, tortured on the rack, slashed heads from bodies with the sword, crushed with the vise, imprisoned and inflicted thousands of other heinous tortures on anyone who disagreed, even if it was a small doctrinal matter at stake.

Fox's Book of Martyrs describes the full picture of wives watching husbands burn at the stake, babies snatched from the breasts of mothers and tortured while they watched. Some had their flesh cut from their bodies, layer by layer, while the Inquisitors stood by asking, "Now will you recant?"

On one particular day (and as on most occasions there was a huge crowd watching), the hired tormentors took the young man who had been accused of heresy and placed him in the vise. Slowly, but surely, the vise moved closer together with each turn of the crank. The young Christian was trying to hold out and stay true to His God, but the pain was greater than his faith. Finally he screamed, "I give up. I recant!" With that statement they released the vise and set him free. With looks of devilish glee and satisfaction they watched the young man writhing on the ground. The vise had injured him internally, probably crushing many bones.

The recantation, the surrender, had not given him his life, nor did it erase the pain. In a matter of moments, death summoned him home. As the crowd watched, a lovely young lady (not suspected as a heretic) began screaming to the dying lad, "Thou fool, thou fool — five more minutes and Heaven would have been yours!"

As she uttered that statement the tantalized Inquisitors grabbed her, "We'll give you the same medicine, and see how strong you are!" Into the same vise they shoved her body as though it were a piece of beef or pork being shoved into a freezer. Mocking and jeering they turned the crank of the vise, only to pause and question, "Are you sorry? Will you recant and beg forgiveness for being a heretic?"

She replied, until the last breath and the sound of cracking bones ceased, "Never, never will I deny Him!"

Upon one occasion in the convent I was taken to a chamber to see and get a good look at a dying Nun. Before my eyes a Nun was strung up, her feet next to the ceiling, while her head hung toward the floor. Blood ran from her nose and mouth. She was not yet dead. however, she did not speak. The dripping blood and strung-up body was a witness in itself, without her spoken testimony. I was not permitted to ask questions. I was informed as to why I was allowed to see her at this particular moment and I was told it was a warning to me if I again refused to obey my superiors or refused to humble myself and willingly yield to every penance without murmuring or complaining. I was not to forget that I took a vow and therefore became the spouse of Christ (actually a priest, as he represented Christ). I, too, would be strung up by the feet should I forget! That would have been the end of Sister Patricia. (Remember, they took away my real name and gave me the name of Patricia).

One day Mother Superior summoned me to her room. There at the tables sat a half-drunken priest with a game of checkers. Evidently Mother Superior had played the game and it had reached the boring stage, and she felt she had more interesting work to attend, I was the unlucky Nun chosen to play checkers with Father Chateaux. I was an uninterested party, so it made no difference whether the red or black were mine. It merely added to my boredom to have to sit across from this so-called "Father" who was half drunk. His face was inflamed by alcohol, his bleary eyes were drooping and his nose was so red it resembled a strawberry. Every time he breathed the room reeked with alcohol. This in itself was contemptible, but something else was bothering.

Over on the other side of the room was a little Nun lying on a cot. Having tried to hide my anxiety, I played checkers fervently, that is, until Mother Superior left the room, and then I slowed up.

Father Chateaux said, “You don’t play checkers too well today.”

I replied, “No Father, I’m sick.”

With that I stood up and walked over to the cot. To my amazement it was Sister Cecelia, the one who, because of her fairness and beauty, I had feasted my eyes upon when she entered the convent a very short time before. She had such a look of innocence! I breathed a prayer, “Oh God, don’t let her live here and find it all a farce and have her life desecrated and debauched and her heart broken!”

Then I stood and looked into her eyes and tried to read the answer for which my soul searched. Neither of us spoke (that would have broken a rule of the convent), but her eyes spoke volumes, enough to last until eternity.

There lay a Nun I had secretly admired and loved. What had she done to bring her to this dying cot? I took the chance to reach out to her. After all, the priest was far too drunk to tattle or to speak intelligently to the Mother Superior about my actions.

Sister Cecelia broke out in a cold perspiration and beads of sweat stood out on her forehead. I took the sleeve of my habit and wiped away the perspiration. She lifted her eyes in a gesture of thanks and breathed deeply. That was all. The end came so beautifully. Neither mother or dad were there with a cool wash cloth to bathe her feverish brow. She had no husband or children to flock around her to lavish love or affection on her dying soul. But thank God, one time in twenty-two years, I had the privilege of standing by the dying and giving forth a ray of love and expression of sympathy, with the sleeve of my habit which served a wash cloth and a hand that was supposed to be playing checkers

I felt the death angel favoured her. I was so glad he came early to bear her soul away while she was still young and the beauty of youth and innocence remained.

Chapter 29

Escape

It was my time to work in the kitchen. We had to open the kitchen door and step down about three or four steps to a small landing where the garbage can set, to empty scraps such as potato peelings. (We didn’t throw away the food.)

Stranger than fiction, I lifted my eyes and saw a man who took away the full can of garbage and replaced it with an empty can. Why hadn’t I ever seen him before? I never gave any thought as to how we disposed of the garbage in all the twenty two years of my convent life.

Just then a great idea struck! Perhaps the garbage man might help me escape, I decided to steal some paper from the grocery list tab which hung on the kitchen wall, and write a note to him. I finally did this, and took several days, waiting for my chance to grab the pencil and write a fine when no one looked.

I finished my note, and outlined some of the sufferings in the convent and asked him if he would please

help me escape. If so, “Leave a note in the empty garbage can.”

I waited until the garbage can was filled and then took the chance of having placed the note on the top of the can beneath the lid. Like a frightened rabbit, and both thrilled and chilled at the very idea of escape, I waited impatiently for the man to return. At the same time I tried to figure a way to get back to the landing without arousing suspicion.

That evening, while in the kitchen, I broke my crucifix and laid it on the table. Supper was over, the dishes washed, and we all left the kitchen at the same time.

Having figured that he had plenty of time to have come and gone, I approached the Mother Superior and told her I had broken my Crucifix and had left it on the kitchen table, I asked permission to go and get it. When she asked me how I broke it (we all lied in the convent — Mother Superior was a habitual liar) and said it had accidentally broken. She gave me permission to go and get it and told me to return at once.

I really moved quickly, and instead of going to the table for my crucifix I went straight to the garbage can! With trembling hands I lifted the lid and there was a tiny piece of paper. It read, “I am leaving the door open, also the big iron gate. Come on out!” For a moment I couldn’t move, and my feet froze to the that cement landing!

I finally managed to reach the door knob! Sure enough, it wasn’t locked, it opened at my touch, I walked out and then turned and flipped the lock latch so it would be locked in case someone missed me and came searching. I crossed the small lawn to the big iron gate which was hinged to the mammoth concrete wall surrounding the convent. It was so wonderful to be free, and to see sunshine, green trees and mother earth again.

I reached over to open the iron gate, but to my amazement and bewilderment the gate was not unlocked as he had promised! Was it a trick, or had the gate been locked accidentally by the wind after he had opened it? I didn’t know, but I did know that there I was between the convent and the eighteen to twenty-foot high walls. The door behind me was locked and the gate in front of me was locked.

I became frantic! I knew what happened to Nuns that tried to escape. Close to the iron gate was a small sapling tree. I weighed less than one hundred pounds, but having remembered how as a child I used to scale a pole or tree with my brothers. I decided to try and scale that huge gate. The gate had round bars rising upward with a cross piece fitted close to the bottom and another about one and one half feet from the top, forming quite a ledge. I placed one foot against the tree and the other against the gate and started climbing.

The tree was quite young and limber and soon bent over. I had to continue the climb with both hands and feet until I reached the ledge. There, it was wide enough for me to stand and take a good look at the ground below. Mustering up my courage, I gathered up my three long skirts and made a jump for freedom. Unlucky me! My skirts caught on the sharp points of the gate and there I hung.

It looked as though I tried to imitate a bird by having tried to fly. Such fear and frustration overwhelmed me. I remembered how it was when other Nuns tried to escape, when the loud buzzer rang out the news, and we Nuns all ran to our cells and got down on our prayer boards and prayed. Priests came running from every, direction to catch the culprit.

I’ve often wondered if that was the time my hair turned gray! We had no mirrors in the convent and I

had no idea that when my hair began to grow it would grow a crop of grayish-white hair! Neither did I know I had wrinkles and had grown old. It was a shock the first time I looked in a mirror!

I reached back somehow, and unsnapped two of my skirts at the belt. After that, the third skirt tore on the point and I fell the eighteen or twenty feet to the ground.

It grew darker, so I rested only a few moments. My fears subsided and I quit shaking, so I crawled out and moved on. I walked all night. When dawn came, I hid behind some boards and timber piled by a fence. When night came I emerged from my hiding place and started walking. Where to? I didn't know. Only one thought prevailed: To get as far away from the convent as possible!

The hard fall knocked me unconscious. When I rallied myself together, sharp pains came from my right arm and shoulder, as though it tore through my flesh. I noticed that a sliver of bone pierced through the flesh. Evidently I fell on my right arm and shoulder and they were broken.

Regardless of the pain, however, I had won the battle! The convent, with its gray shadows and the huge thick walls topped with chipped glass, were behind me. I was on the other side, the side which spelled liberty and freedom!

I got up and walked in the twilight. I didn't know which way to go. I didn't even know the country I was in, for I had only heard the name faintly. I was brought to this convent heavily veiled. I soon realized I was in a rural area and a long distance from town, which made it more difficult to escape.

The outside world looked so strange. I walked a short way when fear made me think someone followed me. Perhaps only the wind blew, or my feet touched the leaves and made them crackle. I lived in a quiet world too long, even nature that ran its free course terrified me!

I saw a small building and crawled into it, not having known whether it was a chicken house or a dog kennel. I didn't walk on the road, but rather in the field just inside the fence. Fast moving cars whizzed by me. How they frightened me! After all, when I entered the convent in 1911 cars were neither numerous nor popular. I only saw about two, and one of those two belonged to my father. They certainly didn't travel too fast then, and just a bit faster than the horse and buggy. Now, to me, it seemed as though they were going like lightning.

The third day I hid in a straw stack. The animals were fed there and had burrowed into it, making an alcove that was ideal for a poor, escaping Nun to hide and rest in. By then, I was so faint from lack of food and water! My broken arm and hand swelled terribly and turned feverish. Red streaks went up my arm and my fingers turned bluish green. I feared that gangrene or blood poisoning had set in. I came to the conclusion that I had to seek help and risk the chance of being turned over to convent spies. I also realized I was a pauper. I didn't even own the clothes I wore, for they belonged to the convent. How and who could I ask for help?

When dusk came, I saw a little farmhouse built up on stilts. It seemed rather common so I walked up to the door and knocked. A man came to the door and I asked him for a drink of water. He took one look at me and called his wife who came over, opened the screen door and told me to come in. What wonderful words! I stepped into their humble, little dwelling and sat down at their kitchen table. Besides the table with the red-checkered table cloth there was a one armed rocking chair, and old fashioned cook stove and cupboard. The kerosene lamp with its flickering light had sent out a beacon to this runaway slave and then it lighted this cozy little kitchen, having dismissed the darkness wherever it was carried.

That little old mother, Mrs. Wright, gave me the drink I asked for and then she poured milk into a pan and set it on the stove. When it was warm she brought it over for me to drink. I gulped it down quickly. It had hardly touched my stomach when it came back up. It was much too rich for me. I hadn't drank any whole milk for twenty two years! My stomach could not retain it.

Without warning I vomited all over everything, including the table and floor. By natural instinct I got up and started to run as I was accustomed to being beaten for offenses of that nature in the convent. But this dear old mother and dad assured me that a mistake didn't infuriate them; neither did they scold me for it. She stooped and cleaned up the mess, then washed her hands. She took another pan and put it on the stove. I watched her pour in water and add sugar. After it was heated she came over to my side, pulled up a chair and fed me the sugared water from a teaspoon.

Dad Wright asked me to tell him where I came from. He examined my hand and arm which were so swollen and throbbled with each heartbeat. He saw it was broken and the sliver of bone protruded from the flesh. When he said he had to get a doctor for me I begged and pleaded that he shouldn't, for I ran away from the convent and would never go back. They recognized my fear and promised me I had nothing to be afraid of. Mr. Wright hitched up his horse and buggy (they had neither car nor telephone) and drove into town to summon the doctor.

When the doctor arrived, and before he finished examining me, he walked around my chair and cursed madly. This terrified me! I couldn't understand the reason for it. However, he stopped cursing and pacing long enough to tell me he was not angry at me, but he would have liked to get his hands on the fellows who were responsible for my condition.

I must have looked like a scare-crow or a ghost. My cheeks were so sunken in, that an egg could have rested in the hollow. Also, the imprint of my teeth could be seen through the flesh.

Doctor Aitken insisted I needed care badly and that I would have to go to the Hospital to receive it. I cried out that I had no money to pay for Hospital care. He stormed that it wasn't money that I needed but hospitalization, and he was going to see that I had the medical care I needed.

He placed me in his car and drove me to Drs. Richardson and Mooney Hospital. When I arrived there, they placed me on a machine to measure my weight. I tipped the scales at eighty-nine pounds!

I was placed in a private room, on clean white sheets spread on a bed with mattress and springs. The soft bed (after twenty-two years on a slab of wood) was most appealing and luxurious, but uncomfortable. I had become accustomed to my hard convent bed and could not adjust to the softness of this bed. Therefore, when the nurse left I slipped out of bed and laid myself on the floor so that I could rest and get a little sleep. This displeased the hospital staff. The nurse pleaded with me not to get on the floor again as they tried to build up my strength and health and that I thwarted their purpose.

The first operation I was to undergo at the hospital was to have my arm and shoulder, that were broken by the fall from the gate, set. Because this had been neglected so many days, they started to knit already. The swelling and inflammation had to go down before the doctor could set them. This ordeal took two weeks. Then they had to be re-broken so that he could reset them correctly. I remained in that hospital approximately three and one half months, and the little old farm couple never forsook me. They made regular visits via horse and buggy to the hospital. They often brought bouquets of flowers to dress up my hospital room and at the same time built up my morale.

When it came time for my release. Doctor Aitken came in and told me my recovery had come along

splendidly and that I was then strong enough to leave the hospital, but not able to go to work yet. He made arrangements with me to go home with him if I thought I would like to spend some time with him and his wife in their home.

This kind doctor had treated me three and a half months without pay, and was then willing to turn his home into a rest home for this forgotten slave. I hardly knew how to answer him. I was overjoyed! Hardly had he made this kind offer to me when two little old people got out of their buggy, ascended the hospital steps, got permission from the desk clerk and walked into my room. Dear old Mr. and Mrs. Wright had made the trip to town especially to take me home with them that day. After another interview with the doctor, I made my choice. I told the doctor that if it wouldn't offend him I thought I would prefer to go home with the old couple, since they lived in the country which gave me a feeling of security.

AT HOME WITH THE WRIGHTS

Time came to adjust to normal living. I found myself tip-toeing around the house, afraid to make any noise. It was difficult for me to lift my head and look and face people, or the world. I had moved about with downcast eyes too long.

I would never go to town with the folks, partly through fear and partly because I had forgotten how to act in public. The third reason (which was actually the greatest) was because my hair had hardly grown. It felt like stubble in a corn patch and I was embarrassed. My fear was so great the first few weeks. At the slightest noise I would run and hide under the bed until Mr. and Mrs. Wright returned home.

I doubt that either of these dear old souls had ever taken a course in therapeutics or psychology; however, their loving, kind hearts sensed my need and their wisdom prompted me to do things at the right time and opportune moment.

Although this seems very childish, I will long remember the day they returned home with a bag of colored pieces of candy and putting it in my lap. I ran through the house with joy, clasping the bag of candy! Like a youngster, I gave each of them a piece and took one for myself I asked them to place the bag on the top shelf of the cupboard. Perhaps I was returning to my childhood and started to live my life over, forgetting twenty-two years of convent life.

As my health improved I joined Mrs. Wright in the general household duties such as dusting, making beds, etc. I was also delighted just to gather the eggs in the evening.

One Saturday (the Wrights' regular day to go to town and shop for groceries) they returned with another bag all nicely wrapped and tied. Dad Wright dropped it into my hands and stood back with a gleam in his eye, Mother Wright, too, became excited and assisted me in untying it.

Dad Wright slipped out to the kitchen and got the piece of mirror (the only one in the house) and waited while I finally got the lid off. It was a transformation! What fun we did have, getting that wig on my head. I took another run for joy. Just to think that I then looked like a normal human being and not like a peeled onion!

The next time they went to town I stepped up in the buggy as big as you please! The joy in my heart kept pace with the trot of the horses!

Chapter 30

Second Foster Home

I stayed over a year with Mother and Dad Wright, however I was becoming very anxious to go back to my country and see if my family was alive and well. In order to do this, I had to secure a job with pay. Mr. and Mrs. Wright contacted some friends who offered me a light housekeeping job in addition to taking care of their two small children.

The Gardners were lovely people. They paid me a salary each week and gave me a fruit jar to use as a savings bank. Just think — prior to this I had lived almost four decades and had never received any salary or wage. It was quite a thrill to empty the jar's contents and count, but it seemed there would never be enough for my fare home.

I stayed with the Gardners approximately nine months, which seemed forever to my anxious heart that yearned to see my people once again. During all this time I remained under medical care, as well as the surveillance of Doctor Aitken.

One day a letter came from the doctor stating that I was well enough to begin my journey home. The letter also told the Gardners to take me to town and buy what clothes I needed and suitcase; also to change my money into American currency. On Thursday at 1:30 P.M. he said he would come and take me to the train.

The next morning I was up bright and early. Mrs. Gardner took me shopping in Crowel's Department Store. We hurried over to the dress racks because I was very much in need of a dress to travel in. I was shocked when I saw the length of the dresses, and I thought the short sleeves and low necks were outrageous, (Of course they weren't immodest, just regular street dresses, but I had been accustomed to wearing a Nun's habit with a skirt reaching to my ankles, high stiff collar and long sleeves. Only my face and hands were uncovered and even my face was partly covered by the veil).

I simply could not wear a dress like that, I thought. Mrs. Gardner advised me to make my own selection of clothes so that I would be perfectly satisfied.

I picked a typical Mother Hubbard dress. I chose a hat which brought remarks such as. "Where did that hat come from?" "Noah's Ark?" I didn't buy a pair of ladies' high-heeled slippers, or even dress oxfords. I bought a pair of high, black-top shoes!

Looking back on that day now, I can understand why people laughed and snickered when I walked down the street, I dressed more like the gay '90's than the Twentieth Century modern woman. I remember crying because people laughed at me. I remember some turned around and stared at me with cynical grins as I passed by on the street. No, I wasn't a gypsy, a moron, or an oddity from planet Mars. I was just a Cloistered Nun, a Twentieth Century Slave, who had been isolated from society, hidden in an underground world, from even the light of the sun, for twenty-two years.

I emerged from my spiritual prison a typical heathen, a woman from another world, with a mind and ideas fifty years behind the times.

Chapter 31

Going Home to Mother and Dad

Dr. Aitken made it possible for me to get my visa. He also made up the deficit in my funds to pay my fare. As he promised, on Thursday at 1:30 P.M. he arrived to take me to the train depot.

It seemed that the sun indeed shone upon my life again. Rays of hope beamed forth like specks of gold from the bottom of a crystal stream. Life was really going to be worth living, after all.

Mrs. Gardner has sewn extra money in my clothes as a precautionary measure against pickpockets. In case I was careless enough to lose my purse, I would still have a little money.

With warnings of what to do and what not to do, and where to change trains, boats, etc., and amidst tearful farewells. I boarded the train never again to see those who had been my ministering angels. I tried to tell both the Doctor and the old couple that I was sure my mother and father would reimburse them, I was well aware of the fact, however, that I could never repay these dear loved ones in dollars and cents, even if my parents were millionaires! They had saved me from death and my soul from Hell!

With my brand new suitcase lodged in the rack above me, and holding on to my purse for dear life, I sat down in the cushioned chair of the train for my ride homeward. I rolled merrily along, gazing out the window at a new world. Everything was beautiful to me: the cattle grazing on the hillside, the crops that would soon be harvested, the tiny quiet villages and the happy looking faces. Even the water wasn't rough, but it was marvelously placid and peaceful as we crossed.

The old train wheels seemed to be singing a chorus, "I'm going home, I'm going home!" I was so excited and so happy it was hard for me to remain seated, as admonished by the conductor, while the train was in motion.

After several days of traveling, my body grew weary but my spirit remained vivacious. Evidently the doctor had explained my past life to the first conductor and asked him to watch over me carefully. He often strolled through the coach and talked with me. Upon one occasion he presented me with a silver dollar. It was my very first one, and I prized it. He saw to it that I remained on the train until we reached the port of entry and there he helped me through Customs and directed me to the very coach that was to carry me to my parents' home in Falls City, Nebraska, where I had spent my childhood days, just a few miles from my birthplace in Iowa.

It was impossible for me to remain calm and composed when I heard the conductor call out that the next stop would be Falls City, Nebraska, I hadn't forgotten the warning that I was to remain seated while the train was in motion, but my heart was beating like a trip-hammer. The seat could no longer contain me. I jumped, grabbed my suitcase and marched to the train exit. When the train stopped, I hastened down the train steps. I lifted up my eyes and saw a new depot. The old familiar depot was gone. That gave me a bewildered feeling. I walked up to the ticket agent and asked him if he knew where William Eckler lived. He walked out of his office to the sidewalk and pointed down the street and told me it was five blocks straight down.

I refused to let anyone carry my luggage, nor did I want a cab. I walked briskly toward the old homeplace I recognized the lot where I had played as a child. But where was the familiar two-story, white frame house? In its place stood a beautiful brick structure, dignified and resolute. I was greatly puzzled. However, I walked up to the door and knocked.

An old gray-haired man with stooped shoulders and slender body answered. I asked him if he could tell me where I could find Mr. William Eckler. Throwing back his shoulders, which seemed to add inches to his height, he gazed at me until I felt he fairly viewed my soul. (As the old saying goes, he looked a hole through me). Still staring at me, he asked, “And who are you?”

“I’m Charlotte Eckler,” I meekly replied.

His body trembled. His hands vibrated as with palsy while his eyes became misty with tears. With tremulous voice he blurted out, “Hookie is it you?” (Hookie was the pet name dad had given me when I was a small child).

I cried. “Dad, is it you?” I remembered my father as a well-built man. tall, shoulders erect with dark and curly hair. Everything about him looked different then. Twenty-two years made a drastic change. Of course, he was almost seventy years old then, and all things considered, he climbed the ladder of time remarkably well.

In about the next breath I asked about Mom, I wondered whether she were still alive. He evaded my question and asked why I was there. I told him I ran away from the convent and that I would never go back, that I would take my life first.

My dad said, “Hookie, I can see you’re a sick girl, but when you get well you will have to go back.” It would have been far better had my dad never made that statement, for I had too much hatred and poison in my system for him to even insinuate that I would ever return to that hellish place!

The conversation changed, however, and he invited me into the house. He immediately took me into the sun porch which had been turned into a bright, cheerful bedroom. There on a hospital bed laid a tiny figure, weighing much less than a hundred pounds. She seemed to have very little more than skin stretched over her bones. She didn’t speak when I entered, and she never moved a hand or foot. Her eyes rolled to one side and caught me in her glance. Dad broke the ghastly silence by telling me that was my mother! He said she had been an invalid for about seven years. After two strokes, her body was left totally paralyzed. Her beautiful, long hair had been cut because of her bedridden condition. Her mind was still normal and she could hear and see although she was not able to answer or express her feelings except with her eyes. She did not recognize me and it was very difficult to make her understand. Finally, however, her eyes announced to Dad that she knew it was Charlotte.

Evidently the long and arduous trip, the shock of seeing mother in her paralytic condition and the stone-like expression on my father’s face when I said I would have to go back to the convent, were too much for my weak body. I felt ill and asked if I might lie down. Dad took me to a bedroom and said that it would be mine as long as I remained there.

Mother’s nurse was summoned to my bedside and after she took a look at me she said that dad had better call a doctor for me. A pain in my stomach had become very acute.

I walked a doctor about Dad’s age. He started towards mother’s room, but Dad called to him and asked him to come to the guest bedroom, (This doctor had been our family physician for years). When father asked the doctor if he knew who I was, he merely looked puzzled and answered that he didn’t think he did. Dad said, “This is Hookie. Remember? You brought her into the world about thirty-seven years ago.”

The doctor said he could scarcely believe that, but that he had a way of knowing. He asked the nurse to

remove my clothes so that he could examine me. He told Dad that he remembered a birthmark on my back, which resembled a smoking pipe. He said if it was still there he would believe it was Hookie, otherwise he would not. He found the birthmark, which was about the only part of my body that resembled the little girl with blonde curls three decades ago.

Uncle John, my father's brother who lived about five hundred miles away, was contacted. He expressed delight at having me come. He was a very lonely man since he had buried his wife, Aunt Maime, just a few months previous. He said I would be real company for him.

Uncle John was a real father and pal to me. I recuperated quickly while in his charge. He was the real dose of medicine I had need of Being wanted and loved aided my speedy recovery.

He spoke as if that was really my home and as though he wanted me to stay forever. My very soul was delighted with the privilege of waiting on him, fixing his breakfast before he went to the office in the morning and supper in the evening when he returned from work.

I also enjoyed the freedom he allowed. His company was my company. If it was only a visit to a neighbour, I was invited to go along. We became inseparable pals — Uncle John and I.

He ordered that I be admitted to the hospital immediately. The diagnosis: I had a complete nervous breakdown! Various doctors and specialists treated and examined me and, after some time, I was released to go back home.

I was given the exclusive privilege of sitting in Dad's big armchair by the table and bookcase. A stack of magazines was placed within reach, however, I found it impossible to read or concentrate on anything. Dr. Henshaw advised my father that I should be sent away to a completely different atmosphere where I could fully recover.

Chapter 32

Kidnapped and Returned to the Convent

Uncle John and I had spent a delightful evening with our neighbors, the Hancocks. A couple of days later, Uncle John mentioned that he had left a package at the Hancocks and asked if I would go and pick it up for him. They lived only four blocks over and I was only too happy to go on the errand for him. I fleetingly wondered why my uncle permitted me to go alone. I had tuberculosis of the bone in one of my hips and in both hospitals had a certain medicine injected into the marrow of the bone to counteract the disease. Without warning, the hip would often give way and I would fall down. But I knew that Uncle John was in constant contact with my doctor, so I felt that the doctor had told him I was much improved and that I could walk that short distance without any serious repercussions.

I walked only a short distance, about two blocks, when I became very uneasy. I heard footsteps which alarmed me. When I walked fast they would walk fast. When I slowed my pace, they did also. The suspense was terrifying. They were gaining ground and coming closer each moment!

I turned around to see who was following me. Four priests, dressed in civilian clothes, called me "Sister Patricia" which was my church name. They ordered me to be quiet, not to make any noise at all and to cross the street and crawl into their parked automobile. I was too frightened to do anything else.

There was no one around to help me, even if I could have found my voice to help me. As a dog reluctantly crawls to its master to be chained, so I crawled into their sleek black car. I wasn't permitted to sit either in the front or back seat, but was shoved to the floor and made to lie down. They threw a dirty rug over me and ordered me not to let out one sound. Two priests sat in the front seat and the other two sat in the back.

We drove the rest of the afternoon and all night, and finally arrived early the following morning. The car hardly started when I asked where they were taking me and what they were going to do with me, I was told to be quiet and ask no questions.

The rug was filthy. I was stifled and could hardly breathe. I tried to sit up but was shoved to the floor again. This time the two burly men put their feet on me to be sure I didn't wiggle loose and sit up, because, you know, I might accidentally move and draw the attention of someone from a nearby car!

When they took their feet from off me and let me sit up I saw something that gave me the sincere desire to commit suicide. However, that wasn't my privilege either. I was facing another convent! I recognized it as a convent immediately. I didn't have to read "St. Mary's" or "St. Claire" on the gate. The building, the wall, the high fence and the very atmosphere were convincing evidence of my suspicions.

Two priests walked beside me while the other two followed behind. Rest assured, I was not escorted by four priests through the front door and front gate of the convent. Close beside this convent was a school, church, priest's manse, etc. They walked me right up the steps into the living room of the priest's manse and right on through the dining room and kitchen. Then the door leading into the basement was opened. From the basement we moved through a tunnel right into the convent.

I soon found out I was in another Cloistered Convent! And to my surprise, I soon teamed that American Convents can be almost as cruel as foreign convents, but not quite as medieval.

This convent was approximately five hundred miles from my uncle's home and a thousand miles from my father's house. Nevertheless, the convent was fully prepared for my arrival. Evidently the clever scheme of kidnapping and illegally carrying me across two States into the third, where the convent was located, had been pre-planned. Therefore, the Convent, the Mother Superior and her collaborators had been informed and were waiting for me!

Mother Superior was the first of the convent crew to greet me. She tapped a bell and two Nuns appeared. They escorted me to the penance chamber and quickly bound my hands and feet, as directed by the Mother Superior.

A plumber's torch was lighted. Then Sister Antoinette and Sister Fredericka picked me up bodily. One grabbed my bound feet and the other grabbed my shoulders. They hoisted me up in the air and then lowered my body over the torch, holding my back to the flames. Mother Superior walked over to my side as I dangled in the air feeling the heat but not close enough to the torch to burn. She ordered me to recant, but I refused to talk. Again she ordered me to recant and confess that I was sorry for having run away from the convent. After she gave the order the third time and I remained smug and silent, (I wasn't so- and knew I'd run away again, given the opportunity). She lowered her lip and told them to lower me.

The blaze from the torch caught my clothes on fire. I fought with all the strength I had, but I was unable to resist very much. They kept dropping me closer to the fire until I gladly screamed, "I recant!"

I'm sorry I ran away!" With that confession Mother Superior ordered the two Nuns to lay me on the slab of wood (a bed) in the infirmary. My back was quite badly burned and I'm thankful they turned me over and put me on my stomach. The shock was as disastrous as the bum so I didn't recuperate or walk for many days.

The burning process was but my initiation into this convent. They had many more forms of penance and surprises awaiting me! I was refused a clean habit when I arose from my sick bed. I was allowed only a dirty Nun's habit which I wore until it rotted on my body. They also took my shoes and forced me to go barefoot.

The refectory was almost identical to the one in the foreign country. I viewed the crude table on saw horses. on which sat the familiar tin cup for drinking and the tin pan (our china plate). However, the slice of bread, coffee, and soup was lacking from my place. The mystery was soon solved. I was made to stand with my nose in the comer to eat alone. For further punishment and humiliation, the next day I had to eat dry potatoes off the floor like a dog! Even an obedient Nun might have to beg two spoonfuls of soup from each Nun until her pan was filled, if she was late for a meal.

Once I was caught whispering, so my mouth was stuffed with dirty rags. Should I, or any Nun, have fallen to the floor from exhaustion, our mouths were not emptied, nor would anyone stop and check our pulses or expressions. We were deserted and left to roll and squirm in agony for two or three days.

Each day I had to bow down before each Nun and ask forgiveness for having run away from the convent. This went on for weeks.

There was the same standard of immorality here as in the other convents. The priests came in as our Father Confessors, invaded our cells (with Mother Superior's permission), and robbed the Nuns of their virtue. If they were repulsed or refused by us, we were kicked in the stomach, or struck in the mouth with doubled fists, cutting our lips and making our blood flow! They connived with Mother Superior to place extra forms of penance upon us, more severe than those previous, because we refused them.

Since the writing of this chapter, Easter Week has arrived. Lenten season was always dreaded in the convent. Those were dark days. We dragged heavy log chains about our waist and sat on the floor and ate our soup with ropes hanging about our necks. Often at night we slept under the bed instead of on top. We fasted ten of forty days. We had to imitate Christ by wearing a crown of thorns. It was our duty to enter the Meditation room and stand vigil before a skull (if there was no dead Nun available), and there we had to meditate upon death for an hour.

We spilled our blood as Christ did by the flagellation whip. After a heavy penance we fell down before the Virgin Mary and asked her to hold back the avenging wrath of her Son, Jesus. We then fell at the feet of the Crucifix and cried, "Sweetheart, Jesus, all of this suffering for you."

It would be mere repetition to tell you of the sufferings and forms of penance inflicted on us in that convent as they were practically identical to those in the last convent. However, I will try to explain why all Mother Superiors are so hard-hearted and cruel, and also, how they obtain their position as Reverend Mother!

Just as Judas Iscariot was chosen by our Lord to betray Christ, so it was with Reverend Mother! Judas was not predestined to carry out his wicked scheme for thirty pieces of silver, however the plan was foreordained. Judas, succumbing to deceit, treachery and greed, chose himself to fulfill the plot.

Likewise, the Mother Superior is not cruel and hard because of her position. It is just the opposite. She is chosen because she is cruel and can wield a whip without flinching. She is trained and educated for the job. All Mother Superiors are past middle-age and some are quite old. This means she, at one time, was a novice and a postulant, having taken her vows thus becoming a full fledged Nun like the rest. She, too, has undergone severe forms of penance and has suffered much. Perhaps she has home many children. As the same heat that will melt wax and harden steel, so we find human beings are made of different mettle. Suffering will mellow and make some hearts tender, while other hearts become hardened and learn to seek vengeance.

The Mother Superior must be in good standing with the priests, superiors, and the hierarchy in general. This means she has submitted her body and will to the priests without murmuring or complaining.

Almost all human beings have loved somebody or something during their span of life. Perhaps this Mother Superior had been courted and fondled by one certain priest for several years. All of a sudden, in such a situation, a priest might turn his attentions on another, perhaps younger, Nun who has just taken her perpetual vows. If ever any Nun could look forward to severe punishments and untold agony it would be that inexperienced one who stole the affections of “Father Doyle” from “Mother Cabrini.” The Mother Superior’s jealous heart will seek revenge on the innocent because she has been set aside like an old shoe.

We were taught that the Mother Superior is neither a man nor a woman, but Christ among us. However, we soon learn that they are the “Cat’s Paw,” dealing treachery and punishment when young, as commanded. Therefore, they achieved position or succeeded their superior as Stalin did Lenin, and as Kruschev did Molotov!

Popery locks up noble young women for papal convenience. It has been said, “A doctor hides his mistakes by a spade.” A priest hides his with a white veil!

We are called impostors, frauds, devils, yellow renegades and communists because we leave the convent. But who, rich or poor, bond or free, intellectual or illiterate, can escape the deluge of bad names with communist heading the list, if he should speak openly against the Church?

Chapter 33

Second Escape

I rode over my conscience and yielded to many base desires and committed many sins in order to obey my superiors. I did this hoping to gain favor so the heavy forms of penance would be lifted and the suffering eased.

After I had been there for approximately twenty-eight months, and several of which months had passed without my having any black marks chalked up against me for disobedience or stubbornness, I was given the privilege of accompanying twenty other Nuns to the enclosed yard for a period of recreation. We were permitted to play “bean bag” or to leisurely stroll through the yard. It was such a blessing to touch Mother Earth. Many of us sprawled out on the ground and buried our faces in the soft green grass!

Suddenly I heard a loud noise by the big iron gate! Curiosity made each of us stop what we were doing

and take a peek through the bars. Yet we didn't want the others to know we had been aroused and that we even dared to cast an eye through the gate to the outside world!

A rickety, clattering old coal truck, that sounded like a bucket of bolts, emerged on the scene. After a squealing sound of brakes, it stopped right by the gate! A man, black as the coal itself, hopped out of the cab and took a wheel-barrow from the top and filled it with chunks of coal.

We certainly weren't supposed to look upon a man (a priest isn't recognized as a man in the Confessional or Mass, but as the Christ), so it was very difficult to watch this procedure, and at the same time act as though we were completely ignoring it!

This strange man took a key, unlocked the gate, pushed the wheel-barrow of coal through and slammed the gate again so that the big lock would fasten. He quickly rolled his load to the convent door, unlocked it, emptied his burden in the basement, and returned. Never before had we beheld such a phenomenon. Surely this man must be mixed up on his schedule. Never before had anyone dared to invade the privacy of the Nuns!

As I watched this procedure, a bright thought flashed through my brain as he made his second trip. Why couldn't I dash through to the outside when he returned with his empty wheel-barrow and unlocked the gate? However, I didn't have the nerve to try.

Then something wonderful happened! The gate didn't slam as hard as it did the other time, neither did I hear the slide lock jam on his third trip in, I waited breathlessly until he passed by me. I arose and began sauntering around, stooping here and there and plucking spears of grass. I glanced at the gate, and sure enough, it hadn't locked! In fact, the gate was hardly shut. I made a lunge against it and flung it open.

I made my getaway, even though I slid and fell on the cinders while pushing the gate open. That didn't stop me. I rose and slammed the gate shut. then ran for my life. I refused to turn around and look back at the other Nuns for fear I would be apprehended.

The veil of my habit kept falling on my face and I ran directly into a man. The head-on collision frightened him almost as much as it did me! He certainly wasn't expecting a Nun to plow into him in broad daylight! I took advantage of my blunder and excitedly asked him if he would hide me. I tried to explain to him that I escaped from the convent and feared I would be caught and returned because all the other Nuns had seen me run away.

He became almost as nervous as though it were he escaping and running for his life. However, he told me to follow him. He just put sonic hay into his barn and told me that I could hide there. I just reached the top of the ladder leading to the haymow when he told me to come back down for he had a better place for me to hide. He ran towards his house with me at his heels. We ran into the kitchen and he took a broom, hoisted off the lid to the attic, boosted me up through the hole and yelled to me to put the lid back into place.

I don't know how he explained to his wife about hiding a strange woman up in his attic, who had literally knocked him off his feet, but she allowed me to walk the floor over her for twenty-four hours without suspicion or jealousy!

God was good to me! He directed my steps and allowed this kind, hospitable couple to give me lodging. They sent up blankets, a pillow, and food. I remained in their attic all that evening and the next

day. The following evening they helped me down from the attic, packed a nice lunch in a shoe box and gave me some clothes and money. With my Nun's habit wrapped in a bundle under my arm, and the box of food in my hand I set off with the same determination and vision that Patrick Henry had when he said, "GIVE ME LIBERTY OR GIVE ME DEATH."

These kind people gave me a road map, pointing out the exact route to Uncle John's home, five hundred miles away. I started walking. I also hitch-hiked a few rides. During all of this, I turned out to be a first-class "bum." I was a clean one, however, and I didn't hop trains or gather around the camp fire with other bums and sing lullabies. Nor did I carve a notch on the tree or porch of a good handout, because this girl wasn't coming back! What I mean is, I stopped at various homes along the route and begged for food and water. Some were very kind to me, while others slammed the door in my face. Some let me sleep on their porch, even offered me a blanket. Others even gave me small change. Eventually I collected enough to finish the last lap of my journey by train.

RETURN TO UNCLE JOHN'S

Uncle John looked very surprised and somewhat bewildered when I knocked and walked in. He seemed so honest and sincere when he asked me where I had been. I thought to myself, "That was quite a silly question." I mean, as if he didn't know! Without another word he walked into another room and returned with a telegram in his hand. With trembling voice he read.

John, don't worry about Charlotte. She is in safe keeping.

Signed,

William Eckler.

So my Dad had been responsible for my being picked up and carried back to the convent by four Priests! Hatred really welled up in my heart. Dad, who had seen my broken body after I first escaped. He was the one who had paid the hospital bill and spent a tremendous amount with dentists because my mouth had been full of rotten, decayed teeth. Some had been broken and were nothing more than snags. I simply came to the conclusions that he was only my father in the physical sense and didn't deserve the title of "Father." I actually loathed and despised him! In my heart I said, "Dad, I never want to see you again!"

Later, my heart softened and there was a reconciliation between Dad and I. Nevertheless, I never fully trusted him again.

When my health and strength were restored I learned to drive an automobile. About this time my mother had gained some strength after a second paralytic stroke, and for a while it looked like she might fully recover.

During the interval, before her third stroke which caused her death, she begged to see her baby boy, Chet, who was in California. He trained for the priesthood, finished his studies and served in a local pastorate under the direction of an older priest, Father Senith. So Dad, Mother and I made the trip from Kansas to Los Angeles via Highway 66, the Southern route.

It was in late spring and nature was dressed in its prettiest. Even the desert was in bloom. As we passed the outskirts of the Painted Desert and journeyed by the Grand Canyon, waves of excitement and joy burst forth from our hearts and lips as we admired the handiwork of God. The real thrill, as well as a chill came when the old Dodge climbed "Needles Mountain" dropping us into sunny California.

Chet and I were strangers. He had been born after I entered the convent in 1911. Now we really felt strange to each other as he stood there erect in his holy habit. I, who had taken off my Nun's habit and renounced all that pertained to it, sensed the awful barrier of our diversified feelings.

Mother beamed as she looked at her boy. Although he was a grown man, he was still the baby boy to mom. I held back my tears and forced myself to keep from telling him that I wished he had chosen any profession but that of priesthood. I almost told him that men who had worn the collar backwards, as he did, had ravished my soul along with thousands of other Nuns who could not help themselves.

However, I felt it was useless to talk now! After all, he was a priest and would follow a priest's course! I reasoned there was no point of spoiling the last bit of vacation and happiness Mom would have with her son.

That fall, the third paralytic stroke struck mom's feeble body. She never regained consciousness but succumbed quietly to death.

Chapter 34

Uncle John's Conversion

"Charlotte, something wonderful has happened to me since you left," remarked uncle John. His face was beaming to me as he spoke and related his conversion to me step by step.

"Mr. and Mrs. Arthur are my next-door neighbours. He was an alcoholic and was very cruel to his wife and children. They were often very hungry and were deprived of the necessary clothes and the very essentials of life. Paint had worn off their house and it looked more like a shack than a home.

"One Sunday morning I noticed the entire Arthur family leaving the house, all dressed up in nice clean clothes as though they were really going somewhere.

"My wife, Maime, had taken a serious illness. Who should knock on our door but Mr. and Mrs. Arthur asking if they might pray for my wife. This good-for-nothing drunkard asking to pray in my home really astonished me. He must have noticed the expression on my face for he told me he didn't drink any more.

Nor did he do any of the other wicked things he used to do. He said God had saved him from all of that.

"Then without rosary beads or prayer book they began to pray for Maime. How they prayed! Heaven couldn't help but listen. And God answered their prayers. Maime rose from her sick bed and lived another year.

"When Maime died about a year later she left me very lonely and broken-hearted. She and I had walked this long road together and now I had to finish traveling alone. My lonely heart reached out for a friend — someone to help. The Arthur's filled that vacancy.

"They sort of pampered me and often would bring me a bowl of hot soup and a tasty snack or a delicious pie. Mr. Arthur asked me to go to Church with him. I was lonely and curious to see what kind of church could perform such a miracle in Mr. Arthur's life. I was eager to accept his invitation.

"The Full Gospel Temple seated about twenty-five hundred people. The two balconies were filled with

young people, about five hundred in number. And they began to sing. I wondered if Heaven would be like this. I went along several nights trying to understand the preaching, and not realizing that the singing I heard was by those who had been filled with the Holy Ghost.

“As the evangelist came to the close of his sermon one night, I felt a heavy burden of conviction and I ran down the middle aisle with both hands raised toward Heaven crying, ‘My God, I’m lost! Pray for me.’

“Charlotte, I’m sixty-seven years old and I have never missed taking Holy Communion every morning for several years, but I left a pool of tears on that altar as I wept before God. When I arose someone suggested I get back down on my knees and worship the Lord. They told me He would fill me with the Holy Ghost. And in a matter of minutes the Lord gloriously filled me with the Gift of the Holy Ghost.”

Uncle John’s joyous expression and animated spirit, as he told me of his conversion, were very convincing. However, I just couldn’t understand all he was telling me. I do remember that I was rather disgusted when I heard uncle John praying for me both morning and night. Now that I understand, I’m so thankful that he did pray and that God answered those prayers.

After I had been back with Uncle John about two years, one gray morning he arose not feeling very well. He said he was sick but that he had to go down to the office for a while. He returned early in the afternoon and went back to bed. On Tuesday he grew worse. And on Wednesday even worse. Thursday he called me to his side and told me he was going home to be with Jesus. He told me that as soon as he was gone he wanted me to send a telegram to his two sisters and to my father. He also asked me to tell them his funeral would be in the Full Gospel Temple.

With fear and amazement I asked him if he had ever told the family about leaving the Church. He told me he hadn’t, saying he was an old man and felt he couldn’t take the criticism and probable ostracization of the family.

And Friday afternoon at 4:30 the death angel came for Uncle John. My world seemed to collapse. The only true friend and relative I could trust and lean upon had taken the death route to a City beyond.

I sent the telegrams as instructed. However, not a relative came to Uncle John’s funeral, They never sent any messages of sympathy. They didn’t send a wreath or a spray of flowers — not even a thistle. I was the only relative who followed the casket to its resting place.

The Pastor’s wife sat beside me in the mourners’ pew so I would not be alone. At the cemetery, Aunt Maime’s relatives approached me and told me to remain in Uncle John’s home as long as I desired. They told me to go to same Corner Grocery and purchase everything I needed, and that when the estate was settled everything would be taken care of.

Chapter 35

The Little Black Book — My Conversion

I took the examination to nurse in Davenport, Iowa, and was called to work in St. Luke’s Hospital under the same doctor who had taken care of me during my recent illness. I had taken nurse’s training in my early Convent years because I had planned to be a Sister of the Nursing profession. After I had

qualified to become a Registered Nurse, Mother Superior convinced me that I had the qualities for a cloistered Nun. So I entered the Cloistered Convent instead.

Mrs. Wardlow entered the Hospital for an abdominal operation. Since I was a surgical nurse I was chosen to be her special nurse. I heard her praying before the anesthesia took effect and then I heard her thank God for sparing her life as she regained consciousness.

One day she asked me if I would read the 91st Psalm to her from the Bible. She pointed to a little black book in her suitcase under the dresser. I picked up the Bible and began fumbling through it. I was embarrassed to tears. I asked her where I would find the 91st Psalm. Although I was reared up in a devout home, and I had spent twenty-two years in a religious order, I had never read a Bible.

Very kindly she told me to hand the Bible to her and she would find it for me.

I began reading:

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD. He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust ... For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

What beautiful words! I wondered why this book had been hidden from me.

Saints from the Full Gospel Assembly came and prayed for Mrs. Wardlow. On the tenth day the doctor released her from the Hospital in my care. I was asked to go to her home and continue to help her, for her case was special and the doctor gave me his consent.

On Mrs. Wardlow's second day at home, I went out to the kitchen to prepare some broth for her. I turned from the stove and gasped as I saw Mrs. Wardlow standing in the doorway! I rebuked her severely and told her she was not to be on her feet so quickly after such an operation. She merely asked me what I was fixing for her lunch, to which I replied I had some good, nourishing broth. She laughingly told me she didn't want broth and that she wanted some pork chops.

I dropped everything and went to the phone and called her doctor. He came out immediately and tried to explain to her that eating pork chops would be committing suicide.

Mrs. Wardlow told him, "Doctor, you performed the operation and did a splendid job, but God has done what you couldn't do. He has healed me, therefore I'm perfectly whole."

I might add that Mrs. Wardlow lived for many years and always enjoyed pork chops.

One evening she invited me to go to a little Mission where a Revival was being held. I sat in the back while she walked briskly to the front pew and sat down.

The minister preached, "There is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus."

Those words struck into my heart like a dagger! I kept repeating them over and over so that I wouldn't forget them. I reasoned in my mind, "One mediator?" And I had been praying to Saint Mary, Saint Joseph, the Apostles and a host of others, believing that Virgin Mary could intercede to Jesus for me.

When I arrived home that night I asked permission to take the Bible she had given me and go down to the basement. There alone with God I searched the Scriptures and prayed until the wee hours of the morning.

I continued attending the Revival services and also continued spending the after-hours in the basement.

I was determined to understand the Bible and find God.

The fourth night I stayed in the basement until 4:00 A.M. and then slipped to my cot in my patient's room and went to sleep.

I dreamed that one of the ladies in the church had led me out to a beautiful flower garden. Following her down the path we came to a small foot-bridge. She hurried across. I attempted to follow but it opened up as I got to the center, and I fell into the flames of fire.

I began screaming, which wakened sister Wardlow as well as myself. I told what I had dreamed and she jumped up in bed and told me God was showing me that I was lost. At last I was convinced and I promised God if He would allow me to attend one more Gospel Service I would surely go to the altar.

Evening came. I sat waiting breathlessly for the minister to finish his sermon. He had hardly ended when I began weeping and ran down the aisle crying out as loud as Uncle John had, "Pray for me. I'm lost!"

I had my rosary with me and began praying on the beads. Someone kindly took them from me and said I didn't need them, that I should just talk to Jesus.

At first I began to name every act and sin audibly to God. Again a dear saint of God whispered in my ear that I didn't have to tell my sins to the people, but just breathe them to Jesus. She told me He alone could hear and forgive my every cry.

Many moments passed as my tears of repentance fell on that altar. My burden lifted and I felt clean all over as God forgave every sin. I startled everyone by jumping up to my feet and asking sister Wardlow to take me to the telegraph office immediately. Then I wrote three pages to Dad, explaining my conversion.

As I handed the sheets to the telegraph operator, he remarked that it would cost me a lot of money to send that. But I insisted every word was necessary, and I was only too glad to pay. So the telegram went on its way.

The following days I went about my work rejoicing in the fact that I truly knew Christ. Sister Wardlow's home is up on a high terrace. I heard the brakes of a car screech as it came to a sudden halt in the street below. I parted the curtains and looked out.

Was I seeing things? No. My eyes weren't deceiving me. I ran to Sister Wardlow and told her that my Dad and two priests were coming up the steps and asked her what I should do. She told me to invite them in and remember that I was a Christian now.

Dad immediately blurted out that he had come to take me home with him. I unhesitatingly told him I was sorry that I couldn't go, but that I had to go back to the Mission where I could hear more of the Gospel.

For me to stand on my own two feet and make my own decision seemed to shock Dad. I had been a mere robot for most of my life. I'd been under the jurisdiction of my father until I entered the Convent. And then I began adhering to the rules and laws of the Convent by strict obedience for almost a quarter of a century.

Dad insisted that I get my clothes and return with him, but I refused again. When the priests and Dad understood my determined decision, the atmosphere changed. My father's confessor stepped over and

told me I had damned my soul and that I wouldn't even have a chance in Purgatory. He told me that the day would come when I would want to crawl back to the Church and ask forgiveness for my sins.

I asked him to show me in the Bible where I had to confess my sins to man, and I would begin crawling right now. That statement so infuriated him that he grabbed my Bible and flung it on the floor, grinding it under his heel and breaking the binding. This merely proved to me that he had no love for the Bible but regarded it as trash.

Father Blankenship then began pronouncing the curses of the Church upon me. Some were so filthy and vulgar that actually it would be too obscene to print. However, the following is a bit of the sacred ritual of the curses for the damned.

He named every vital organ of my body and put a curse on each. He asked the maggots to devour each organ. He put a curse on my eyes that they would fall out of my head and rot. This particular curse terrified me for a moment. I remembered when I had my eyes burned with some potent liquid which Mother Superior threw in my face while I knelt in prayer in the chapel of the Convent. I recalled the horror of gross darkness for many days. I didn't want to go blind and be unable to read the Bible that had grown so dear to my heart.

The last final curse was finally uttered by the "Most Reverend." When they started to leave, Dad turned to me once more, called me by my childhood pet name and said, "Hookie, you won't go home with me?" Through tears I told him I couldn't go and leave what I had found.

As he stepped out the door and got into the car with the two priests I wondered in my heart if I would ever see my Dad again. I picked up my crushed Bible, retired to the bedroom and there spilled many tears as I talked it over with my new Friend, Jesus Christ, my counselor.

Chapter 36

The Holy Ghost

The year was 1945. Sister Wardlow picked up a newspaper and read,

REVIVAL NOW IN PROGRESS Young Teenage Evangelist Playing, Preaching and Singing the Old-Fashioned Gospel in Davenport Mission.

Sister Wardlow and I made preparations to attend the Revival. We left Molene and drove through Rock Island and crossed on the ferry to Davenport. We reached the Mission just as they were singing Gospel Hymns.

The speaker was announced and a very young girl, Sister Nilah, arose and began preaching. I soon laid aside my traditional ideas of a woman preacher. She spoke on the subject of Water Baptism.



Sister Nilah Preaching the Gospel

I listened attentively as she explained from Holy Scripture that Baptism was by immersion (Acts 8:38; Romans 6:4). Being buried with Christ as the Apostle Paul taught, refutes any idea of sprinkling or pouring water on the head as an act of Baptism. The very Greek word of Baptism means to plunge, to dip, to cover and to immerse.

When I heard Sister Nilah say that no babies were baptized in the Bible, that they were first believers (Mark 16:16) which required thinking, older minds, it shocked me. She challenged the congregation to find just one example of infant baptism or sprinkling or pouring in the Bible.

She climaxed her sermon by saying that most churches baptize their candidates by using the Trinity formula handed down by the so-called hierarchical “Church” who had received it from paganism. The congregation seemed to be shocked at this statement. But she continued by saying that Jesus, in Matthew 28:19, never did mean for ministers to repeat those words, but to obey them. When the disciples found out what the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost was, they baptized every New Testament convert in the name of Jesus. Thus she proved Acts 2:38 was not a contradiction but a fulfillment of Matthew 28:19. Hence every New Testament candidate was immersed in water baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus.

When the service closed, I asked Sister Wardlow if she thought it would be permissible for me to go to Sister Nilah or the Pastor and obtain all the scriptures they had on this subject. She thought that was a good idea.

I received a whole page of scripture references and we left the meeting. Everybody retired except me, and I slept in the basement with reference sheet and Bible in hand and began searching to see if what Sister Nilah had preached was in God’s Word. I also prayed to Jesus not to let me err or get into anything false. While I was in prayer, the Lord gave me a vision! And on the white-washed wall of that basement came the scripture:

REPENT AND BE BAPTIZED EVERY ONE OF YOU IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS AND YE SHALL RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST.

The words were in huge, bold, block, black letters.

I ran halfway up the basement stairway and yelled to Sister Wardlow to come down and see what was

written on the basement wall. She hurried to the stairway and leaned over the banister peering intently at the side of the wall where I was pointing. However, she turned to me and told me she didn't see a thing. I read the words to her, but she turned and smiled approvingly at me and told me God had given me this vision that was just for me.

At the very next service I promptly arose during the testimonial service after they had sung a chorus entitled "I'm One of Them," and testified saying, "Praise God, I'm going to be one of them. I want to be baptized in the lovely name of Jesus!"

The next stirring message preached by Sis. Nilah was on "The Baptism of the Holy Ghost."

I had been christened in the "Church" when I was eight years old. My godfather and my godmother had been informed that the few grains of salt that had been placed on my tongue were the Holy Ghost and therefore would preserve me throughout my life. Now Nilah preached that the Holy Ghost was a gift from God as well as a birth. She explained that everyone should receive it to be in the Bride of Christ. She told of the 120 disciples including the mother of Jesus who tarried ten days until they were filled with the Spirit and came forth speaking in other tongues — languages.

I again went to Sis. Nilah and asked for all the scriptural references and returned to Mrs. Wardlow's basement and prayed. I told God that if this was truly of Him and that if the Holy Ghost was for me I wanted it. Otherwise, I asked Him to close the door.

Then God gave me this Scripture. "And call no man your father upon the earth, for one is your Father which is in Heaven" (Matthew 23:9).

Since that time I have never addressed a priest as "Father."

We had been taught that the Virgin Mary is the Gateway to Heaven. But Jesus said:

"I am the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh to the Father but by me" (John 14:6).

Not by the Virgin Mary or the Priest, but by Jesus Christ, could we get to the Father. Jesus also said:

"I am the door. If any man enter in he shall be saved" (John 10:9).

"Behold I, Jesus, stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

I went back to the Church with full assurance that the Lord Jesus was leading me.

The priest had called and disturbed me until I cried so hard I felt I wouldn't go to Church. I was so ashamed of my swollen eyes and tear-stained face. But Sister Wardlow told me that this might be the very night that God would do something special for me, and I had better go to Church with her.

Sis. Nilah preached "The Crucifixion of the Cross." The very word "Cross" was repulsive to me. I could only think of the old wooden cross and how I had suffered in the Convent. I dragged it, was pinned to it, was flagellated on it, was laid prostrate in the form of it while other Nuns had stepped over me and on me, and I even licked the form of it on concrete in the laundry room. I had fainted carrying the cross, only to be brought back to consciousness by cold water dashed in my face. Sometimes I was compelled to lie in the form of the cross for three days.

However, Sis. Nilah told of the love of Christ as He hung between Heaven and earth. The nails could not hold Him there, but His love for mankind did. The congregation wept as she preached One by one

they filled the altar and shook her hand. As I stepped up, she clasped my hand and whispered, “Aren’t you going to pray?”

I fell on my knees and began to weep. I promised the Lord my all, that I would go where He wanted me to go and do His bidding. As I surrendered my will to Him, praises came from my lips. In a matter of minutes, God took control of these lips of clay and began speaking through me in the heavenly language that only God can speak. The Holy Ghost filled and saturated me, until I forgot the soiled Mission floor, the beautiful, pastel pink dress I was wearing and the well-set curls. I could hardly walk straight down the aisle to the exit. Surely I was drunk on the power of God, just as the disciples were in the second Chapter of Acts.

Revival Services continued in this Iowa City for five full weeks. Winter, with its cold, weathering hand, gave way to Spring’s budding green. The last Sunday was a full day of service, 10:00A.M. Sunday School and 11:00 A.M. Worship. In the afternoon, Pastor Karl Neilson, congregation, Sis. Nilah and myself drove to the Mississippi River and began to sing. Sis Nilah played the accordian and led the group singing, while another played the guitar:

Shall we gather at the river,

The beautiful, the beautiful River, Gather with the saints at the River, That vows from the Throne of God,

Then Pastor Neilson and Sis. Nilah took me by the hand, leading me into the water. In water, waist deep, Sis. Nilah delivered a message to all who stood on the riverbank. “God is not a Trinity, but is One, ‘One Lord, One Faith, and one baptism.’ And ‘Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the Name of Jesus.’”

She preached on the goodness of God and declared that Jesus died, so must we repent and die to sin. Jesus was buried, so must we be buried by water baptism in His precious Name. And Christ was resurrected, so shall we be resurrected by the Holy Ghost.

She then took me by the hand again and said, “Upon the profession of your faith, and obedience to God’s divine Word, I now baptize you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and to receive the Holy Ghost — buried with Christ.”

The saints continued to sing.

Precious Name, O how sweet, Hope of Earth and joy of Heaven, Precious Name, O how sweet, Hope of Earth and Joy of Heaven.

Chapter 37

My Family

I hardly became acquainted with my family when again they severed all connections. The fact that I had left the “Church” and had embraced the full salvation in another Church embittered them. Less than one month after my conversion I received a telegram that stated, “Your father died. Funeral at 9:00 A.M. Thursday.”

I sent a beautiful wreath of flowers but refrained from attending my father's funeral. I feared there might be trickery in the wind or that a snare laid wait for me if I returned home.

Sure enough, had I gone, there was a trap designed for my recapture to be sent back to the Convent. I shall explain this later in this chapter.

A few days after I received the telegram telling of my father's death, I received a phone call. The clerk at the desk of the Hotel where I was staying announced the arrival of my brother, the priest, and two younger sisters. Would I please come down to the lobby to meet them.

Just one glance told me they came for trouble. We hardly exchanged greetings when Chet scowled and remarked, "You sent your father and your mother to early graves by leaving the Church." All three spoke bitterly and resentfully of my joining the Pentecostal faith.

After I felt they had said just about enough, I stepped over to Chet and took hold of his coat lapel. I looked into his face and said, "Chet, why don't you come clean and let your sisters know just what the priesthood is really like? How many girls have you deceived and robbed of their virtue?"

The words were scarcely out of my mouth when my brother struck me a severe blow sending me reeling to the floor. The clerk at the desk came to my rescue and helped me to my feet. Turning to my brother standing there in his holy Habit, so haughty and angry, the clerk said, "Reverend, this is the first time I've ever seen a minister strike a woman."

My brother and my sisters were not ashamed, but they merely turned on their heels and walked away.

My youngest sister was chosen as administratrix of the will and the family estate. While I was in Wisconsin in a Revival Meeting with Reverend Michaels, I was notified that my family was suing me for twelve thousand dollars that my mother had given me before her death. Mother had asked me to buy a car and a fur coat and to invest the remainder for my future. Mom realized that my brothers and sisters were married and had security. The better part of my life had been spent in the Convent and I returned to face the unknown world as a pauper, a sick woman with a broken heart. When signing the papers before the old banker, she said, "I want you to dress like your sisters."

They falsely proved in court that I had influenced my mother to sign papers when she was incapable because of her illness. Since mother and the banker had both died, I had no witness to verify or validate my claim. I therefore lost everything including the money, fur coat, car, and even my trunk of clothes containing my personal belongings. My sisters came secretly and took them from my apartment while I was away.



Sister Nilah and Sis. Charlotte in their early days together

After my conversion, the young evangelist, Sis. Nilah, asked me to travel on the evangelistic field with her. First I journeyed with her to Chicago, then to her home in Illinois. From there we went on to her next Revival in another town in Illinois. I traveled as a visitor and a friend paying my own expenses.

In the month of August I spoke publicly for the first time. It was in a small town of Ohio that I gave my first Testimony of Convent Life. Sis. Nilah and I have traveled together fourteen years from State to State and Province to Province giving the Testimony and preaching the old-fashioned Gospel.



Nilah and Charlotte

Many repercussions were brought on as I spoke and broadcasted the truth of Convent Life across the country. Mean and threatening letters began pouring in from my family as well as the priests. I was told to quit giving the Testimony or I would have to take the consequences. Finally I didn't even open the letters, but just put them away. I thought, "Why keep weeping?"

Almost two years had elapsed when one day the postman handed me a letter. I told Sis. Nilah that it was from my youngest sister, Babe. I told her I felt led to open it. The letter read, "Please, forgive me for all I have said and done. I'm very sick. If you'll only come home, I believe I'll become better."

Christmas, the day I was to meet my family, that is my sister's family, arrived with holly, tinsel and joyous faces. The nearer I got to Babe's home, the harder my heart was beating. My brother-in-law and niece ran out of the house to greet me the moment I drove into the yard. They threw their arms about me, and crying, asked for my forgiveness. After they had told me of Babe's illness and how she had returned from the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, to die, they took me in to see her. Carl, her husband had been informed that her illness was no longer ulcers, but cancer of the stomach.

I fell on my knees beside Babe as she looked through tears and asked forgiveness. "Babe," I announced, "I have good news for you. The Lord can heal as well as save your soul."

Reverend William Branham came to Vandalia, Illinois, and was holding a healing campaign in a huge tent. I made a bed in the back-seat of our car so that I could take Babe. We also took a young blonde girl, who was a deaf mute, and her mother along to the meeting.

The crowd was huge. The sick and diseased came from near and afar to have this man of God pray for them. We waited four days before Babe and the deaf mute could be prayed for. When Brother Branham looked at Betty, he had great compassion. He prayed earnestly. Then in a low voice he said, "Betty, say 'Hallelujah.'"

Her eyes sparkled and she spoke fluently. Of course she had no vocabulary, so she merely repeated what she heard. The crowd cried, clapped their hands and in unison praised God for this great miracle.

When Babe beheld the miracle of Betty's healing, excitement mingled with faith and began to fill her heart. The preacher merely touched Babe and said, "The Lord bless you." She walked to the back of the tent, fell to her knees and cried, "I'm healed! I'm healed!"

Words failed when I tried to express my thankfulness to God. However, with tears flooding my face, I lifted my eyes heavenward and praised Him for His goodness to us.

Following that night's service we went to the restaurant. Babe had not been able to eat anything solid for several weeks. She looked at me in surprise and bewilderment when I asked the waitress to bring her the largest T-bone steak they had. I turned to her and said that she could eat every bite of it in Jesus' Name. Just about that time little Betty shouted "Hallelujah! Thank-you, Jesus!" — the very words that she had heard at the tent.

In a matter of seconds our table was surrounded by friends and curiosity seekers. Seated at this table were the evidences of two mighty miracles that stirred all Vandalia.

My sister, Babe, and I kept in close contact with one another. Friendship turned into close fellowship. And fellowship turned into devoted love and sisterly understanding. Several months had passed when I received a card from Babe saying my father had gone to her home for a visit and wanted to see me.

I couldn't understand this. Had not Dad died? I had even sent a wreath to his funeral. However, I drove to my sister's home where my Dad met me at the door. Although he never asked forgiveness for the past, he did place his arm across my shoulder and told me it was good to see me.

Why had I received a telegram telling me Dad had died? It was finally revealed that a clever trap had been set to take me back to the Convent had I gone to Dad's funeral. Thank God that His wisdom was imparted to my heart when I decided not to attend. Dad seemed changed and was truly glad to see me. Now I knew that God was answering prayer for my family.

The following year, Sis. Nilah and I journeyed to California and visited Dad. He gave me Chet's address, the brother who struck me in the hotel lobby while in his priestly habit. While I was in Los Angeles, I phoned Chet, having no idea how I would be received or what to expect. He seemed elated that I had called and asked me to come to his home that day.

Following his directions, I drove straight to his home. I received the shock of my life when Chet met me at the car dressed in civilian clothes, and introduced the lady standing beside him as his wife. At the very first opportunity I had to be alone with him I eagerly questioned him as to how, why and when he had left the priesthood and married.

He looked at me and cried. "Charlotte, your face has haunted me since I struck you that day." And he continued, "I married my housekeeper as I felt it was the most honourable thing I could do."

Because of much prayer and because I refused to retaliate and because I had returned good for evil, my family saw that Christ was real in my life. One by one they left the "Church" and started to attend various Evangelical Churches. However, at this writing, none of me brothers and sisters have experienced the Born-Again experience. But just to have left the "Church" and its idolatry to attend an Evangelical Church was a big step in the right direction.

Dad died while we were speaking at the New Brunswick, Canada, campmeeting in 1953. I wish I knew if that he was saved. but I must leave him in the hands of a merciful Saviour. He did fall on his knees and repeat a sinner's prayer before we bade him farewell the last time and journeyed eastward. Joshua in the Old Testament stated, "As for me and my house, we shall serve the Lord."

Appendage

The Cost of Revealing the Truth



*Nilah and Charlotte in their white dresses
they often wore together in Revivals*

Anyone who arises against the “Church” and her teachings is branded as a Communist. Any monk, priest or Nun, who dares to reveal the hidden sin of the Church is excommunicated, anathematized and scandalized as a reprobate and termed a strumpet.

I received notes, telegrams and telephone calls threatening my life if I dared to return to the pulpit to give my Testimony of Convent life. While I was in Oakland, California, at the Forget-Me-Not Mission, a large crowd filled the hall for my lecture. Meanwhile a body of antagonists, mostly girl students, jammed the hall and stairway and ganged in the back of the building refusing to take a seat.

I hardly began my lecture when hands began waving and loud talking broke the silence of the audience. They demanded that I stop talking and answer their questions. When I refused and asked someone to summon the Police they merely moved out to the hallway and recruited more opponent students to aid them in their fight to defend the faith. A policeman came to the scene and talked to some of the students. He then sent word to the one in charge, saying he was ready to go off duty but would stay if

we were ready to close the meeting.

We closed the meeting immediately even though we were just beginning to take the offering. The angry mob was now at the bottom of the stairs that was the only entrance or exit to the hall. They filled the sidewalk and watched the door waiting for me to come down. However, I didn't wait for the congregation to leave before me as was my usual custom, but slipped down the stairs and through the crowd flanked by a body guard of faithful, devoted women to the car. His chauffeur had the motor going and was ready to leave when I got into the car.

The mob watched closely for me as the last ones filed out of the Hall. They wouldn't believe I was gone and waited there at the entrance for several hours. Once again, scripture was repeated: Jesus was about to be cast over the brow of a hill by an angry religious mob, but passed through the midst of them and went his way, (Luke 4:29-30).

One hot summer we were in a two week revival in Alexandria, Louisiana. Again the antagonists became infuriated at my Testimony and sought revenge. Several nights, to ensure my safety, the Pastor's wife escorted me through the Church basement and backyard to the parsonage.



Another picture of Nilah and Charlotte

One night the Pastor and Evangelist stepped to the door to shake hands with the departing visitors. I was kneeling in prayer at the rostrum while several knelt at the altar seeking God.

Suddenly two Baptist ladies called out, "There they go for Charlotte!"

Two women had slipped to the front, walked right over the altar, grabbed my hand and lifted me to my feet and began interrogating me. The pastor was soon at my side, but neither he, the Church, the altar service nor the praying people deterred those women from passing their angry remarks.

They said such cruel and bitter things that the atmosphere became charged with fear and every seeker arose from the altar of prayer. Our closing service was held while strange, suspicious looking men watched our car and took down license numbers, etc., until we didn't know what to expect. Finally we slipped the keys of car to one of the saints so that they could drive it home.

As we ate lunch in the Pastor's home, the phone rang continually. There were many threats and abusive remarks. One person demanded to know whether Sister Charlotte was there. The Pastor meekly replied, "If you can see over this phone, you'll know. Otherwise you'll never know."

Finally a call came saying that if I was not out of town by midnight, all roads would be blocked. That hot, humid night we had to close every window in our bedroom. The following morning we were slipped from the pastor's car to our car and were followed by several friends out of the city to ensure our safety.

At the following General Conference, we saw the Pastor's wife who told us they had received a telephone call right after we had left, offering them a thousand dollars if they would only tell them what route we took out of the city.

In Mississippi, several men stalked into our service and demanded attention at the close of the message. They were reeking with alcohol, yet they dared to stand at our altar disregarding those that were praying at the altar and made scathing belligerent remarks.

They later produced a letter that offered one thousand dollars to the congregation or Pastor if they could prove that Sis. Charlotte had been a Nun. Sis. Nilah read the letter to the audience and said, "We would offer two thousand dollars if they could prove Sis. Charlotte was not a Nun."

Again the law emphasized to those men that to disturb a church service was a serious offense under our American Constitutional Bill of Rights.

On the east coast several student priests from a nearby University attended our meeting. They heckled and called me names until the police were forced to remove one bodily and several others were ordered out.

Sometime I do not dare to drive our car for my life is in danger. I've moved from place to place and from room to room because the danger was so great. One day in 1948 in California, I was led from the church through an alley and transported by car to a country home after a stop-over in a friend's house. In the country three watch-dogs kept a constant vigil over the occupants of the house, the pastor and the family, as well as my co-worker and myself.

About 2:00 A.M. we were awakened by our bedroom door opening and heard a voice, "Don't be frightened. A car is coming into our driveway, so I'm getting a gun from our closet."

The dogs barked furiously, however, the car got in sight of the house, made a quick turn and left without the driver saying hello or good-bye. Evidently, the vicious looking dogs didn't give the occupants of the car a very cordial welcome.

While I was in Illinois, one of my teeth began to pain very badly and I had to seek immediate help. I went to the only dentist available that Saturday afternoon. While I was sitting in the dentist's chair he told me I didn't have to have the tooth pulled out but desensitized. It would take three treatments. He was very gentle with me, so I made arrangements to return the following Monday and Tuesday.

Monday, the dentist was a changed man. He hurt me so badly that I had to push his hand from my mouth and cry out in pain.

He coldly remarked, "If I'm to help you I have to hurt you."

The pain was so excruciating that on the second attempt I jerked away from him and got out of the

dentist's chair and told him to cancel my next appointment. I paid him what I owed and left.

The following day I arrived in Decatur, Illinois. I needed a Dentist. but I made sure that I went to one that was well known and recommended to me by trusted friends.

When Dr. Shaw looked into my mouth he exclaimed that I had a very bad burn that must have been done with acid. It took several weeks and several treatments to heal my mouth.

In Maine, five weeks' worth of rent was paid in advance for a Hall for our meetings. The woman who was head of a Church group, the chauffeur for the local priest and the proprietor of a "Church" Bookstore were the three stooges chosen to heckle, laugh, talk, read aloud — anything they could think of to disrupt the meetings.

One man carried a huge Bible to of one of the front seats, and there stood and read out aloud while I spoke from the pulpit.

When we approached the police about these disorders, they informed us we would have to pay a stipulated amount each night for police surveillance. However, they said they would send a policeman.

After a few nights had elapsed. the chief with two other policemen came in at the close of the service and asked to speak to the minister in charge. They informed him I was not to speak or give the testimony of Convent Life again or they would serve an injunction against the hall and close the doors. They said that if I insisted on speaking then they would meet us in court the next morning.

Inasmuch as they did not serve me with a summons, I refused to go to court. However, our two ministers did go, but were asked where the women were. When Rev. Corke told them we didn't come with him in the court the police asked them if they thought they were running the court, and told them to tell their story to the judge.

The Jewish judge read off his little spiel to Rev. Corke and Rev. Ireland, and likewise forbade my giving the testimony in the city. When Rev. Corke asked what the written law said, the judge cynically retorted that he had just read him the law. He further remarked that there would be a reporter at the meeting. And in case I attempted to give my Testimony they would be notified.

It seemed hopeless, so that night I didn't speak.

The following day we contacted a very prominent attorney who had been with the State Legislature for seven years. He was very indignant to think that the men who were authorized to represent the Law had defrauded and deceived us by the deceptive act of reading a fraudulent law. He gave me the green light to enter the hall and continue my Testimony. And if I was molested or an injunction was served, I was to say or do nothing. He said he would take the case and be glad to represent me in court. He also said it wouldn't make a difference if there were a dozen reporters at the meeting. Only a Court Licensed Recorder's Note could stand as valid evidence in court.

We returned to the Hall. There sat the three supposed reporters — the lady from the "Church" group, the Priest's chauffeur and the proprietor of the Bookstore. When I arose to speak and informed them I was here to continue my Testimony, and that I had already seen a lawyer and that there was no law to stop me, they wilted. We told them to notify their chief of what I said. They realized their deceptive game was over and they meekly walked out. There were no repercussions.

When we were speaking in Maine, a group comprised mostly of students from the nearby University

came to disrupt the meetings. As usual they screamed hateful bigoted words while I attempted to speak. Some left when they were ordered to do so, and others had to be carried from the Tabernacle. We finally required several Policemen nightly to keep the peace.

One night a couple of priests came with a group. When our song director asked all the ministers to come to the platform, they also arose and came forward. They sat unabashed directly in front of me with their collars on backwards.



Nilah and Charlotte

When I began to speak, one priest arose and interrupted to ask what Convent that I was in. Our Superintendent, Rev. Corke, stepped over to him and asked him to sit down. A few minutes passed and he again jumped to his feet and mumbled a question. When he was apprehended by some of the ministers sitting on the platform, and when he saw two officers of the law strolling down the aisle toward him, he muttered that he wanted to know how to get saved. With that, the two priests arose and walked away. When the officers asked them why they interrupted the meeting, they said they didn't know they weren't allowed to ask questions.

Again the place where we stayed had to be guarded so we wouldn't be molested.

During other meetings, word was passed to our ministers that more antagonists were coming to the tentmeeting in a body to break up the services. We asked the police for protection and were informed that one lone elderly policeman was on duty and couldn't help us much. We called on the Mounties for help, only to be informed that the town was an incorporated town and therefore they could not do anything unless summoned by the local town law.

We then appealed to the mayor, but while our young ministers who were in charge of the tent meetings were in the mayor's yard, a group of men came and surrounded them. They had been heavily drinking and ordered one preacher into the truck and ordered him not to say another word. They railed and cursed and wanted to know where the Nun was. They said if it weren't for the law they would string me up just as I'd claimed was done in the Convent.

The mayor, seeing that we were in the minority, played ball with the crowd. He spoke of the World Wars and how the men fought side by side, and how that there was no bickering or discrimination until we came to town. He also spoke of how we violated the health and sanitation laws because we had services and allowed someone to guard the tent day and night without proper facilities. We were advised to take down the tent and leave town.

The mayor promised to give us protection while we were removing the tent. The mob came that night — approximately one thousand strong. However, when the people heard and realized what the men were doing, they turned out in a great body to assure us freedom of speech.

Some came equipped for a real fight with stones, pipe, etc. Several fights broke out, but our ministers took down the tent and fought with no one.

We searched in four nearby cities to find a hall in which to continue our meetings. But fear of a mob riot prevented our getting a suitable building. Just as we were about to give up after a week of fruitless searching, the Knights of Pythias Hall was offered to us. There the Police and Orangemen combined gave us the freedom of speech without being molested or without any annoyance.

Many people were converted in that Revival.

One of our last harrowing episodes took place in Arizona. The Revival was gaining momentum and the crowd increasing nightly when forty or fifty teenagers filed into the church. They shuffled feet, moved chairs, jeered, mocked and laughed and even attempted to smoke while we prayed.

After several nights of their threats, cursing and our mental agitation, the law was summoned. They acted quickly squelching the disturbance by taking a few of the guilty ones to jail via the paddy wagon.



Sister Charlotte

In closing I plead to all who love freedom of religion, freedom of speech and freedom of the press to not let Old Glory crumple to the ground and to be submerged in the black hearts of foreign potentates and religionists. Let the doors of democracy forever swing open to brave, loving hearts who will embrace her and thrill at her side. Place the Bible not only in your library but engrave its passages upon the tables of your hearts. Remember, our America formed its laws and government by the Holy pages of the Bible. Hate it, loathe it, or burn it as they did during the Holy Inquisition, and again the burning stakes and the torturing crosses and the smelly, dark, dungeons will replace our pretty little churches and our happy people and a happy America.

The big oak tree did not fall because of the rain, the hailstones or the great wind. It fell because termites ate away the heart. Therefore it rotted within and fell without.

The great Apostle Peter spoke,

“Whether to hearken to you or to God, judge ye. But we cannot but speak the things which we have heard and seen.”



Sister Charlotte in later years of Evangelism

Charlotte



Sister Charlotte before a Church Service

Charlotte went to be with the Lord in Napa, California, on September 28, 1983, at the age of 85 years. She was born April 12, 1898.